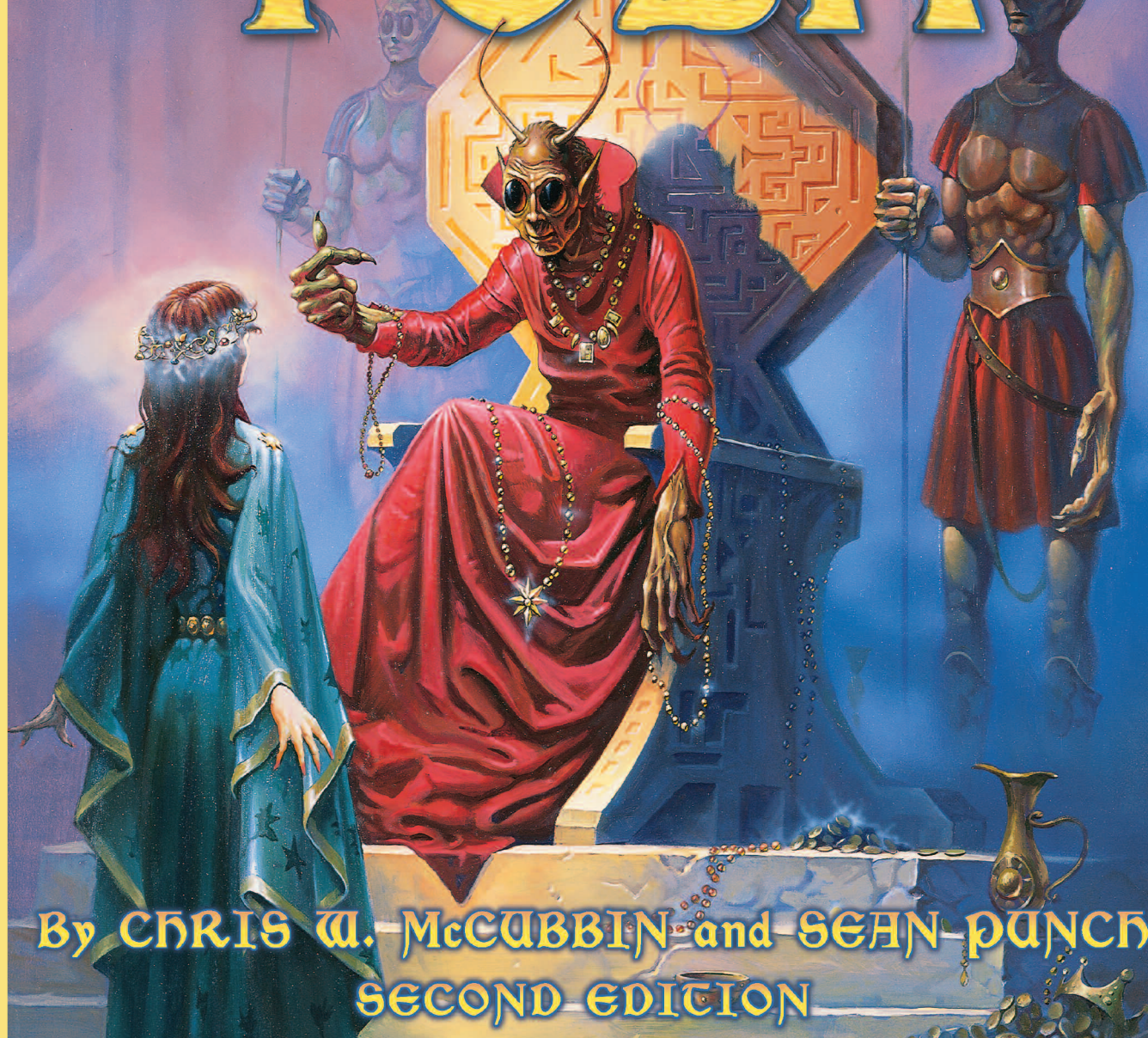


G U R P S[®]

FANTASY FOLK



By CHRIS W. McCUBBIN and SEAN PUNCH
SECOND EDITION

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

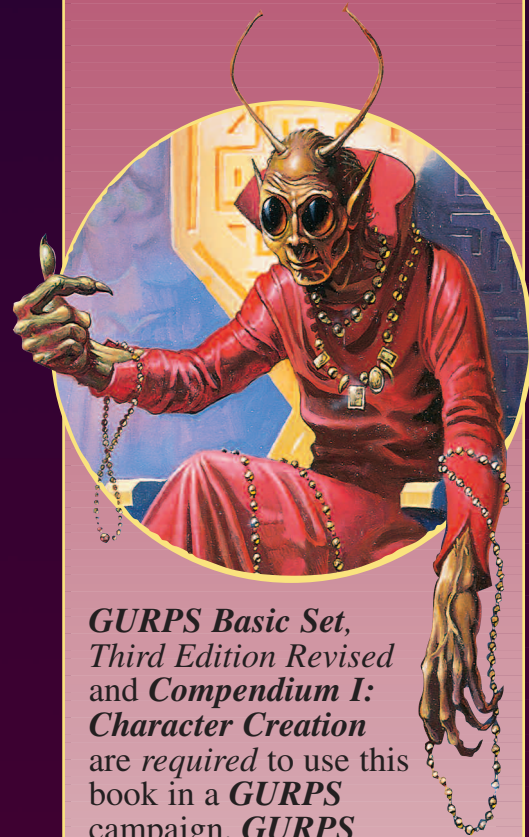
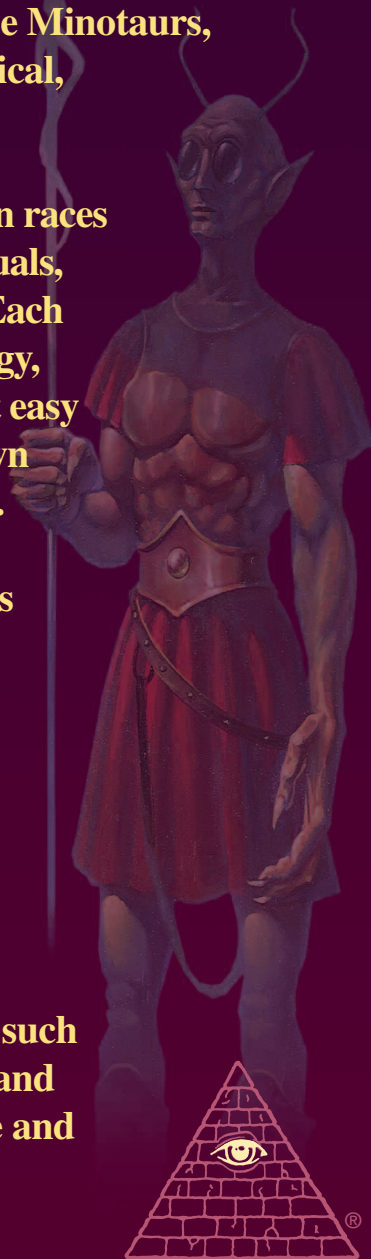
GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

From the tiny, winged Ellyllon to treetop-tall Giants, this book brings 24 nonhuman fantasy races to the *Generic Universal Roleplaying System*.

This book includes new, expanded versions of such fantasy “standards” as Elves, Dwarves, Orcs and Halflings, as well as exotica like savage Minotaurs, four-armed Insect Warriors and magical, mischievous Leprechauns.

GURPS Fantasy Folk treats nonhuman races as unique cultures made up of individuals, not as sketchily-defined “monsters.” Each race has its own well-defined psychology, ecology, culture and politics, making it easy for GMs and players to create their own fully-developed nonhuman characters. Also included are campaign notes, adventure seeds and sample characters for each race.

And there are complete rules for generating your own fantasy races! The *Fantasy Folk* race creation rules allow the GM to customize his nonhumans. Included are racial advantages like Winged Flight and Cultural Adaptability, disadvantages such as Slave Mentality and Invertebrate, and unique racial features like Mindshare and innate skills and magic spells.



GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition Revised and *Compendium I: Character Creation* are required to use this book in a *GURPS* campaign. *GURPS Fantasy Folk* can also be used as a sourcebook for any roleplaying system.

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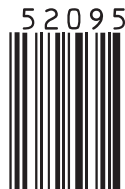
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SECOND EDITION, SECOND PRINTING
PUBLISHED OCTOBER 2000

ISBN 1-55634-309-4



9 781556 343094



Printed in the
U.S.A.

STEVE JACKSON GAMES
www.sjgames.com

G U R P S[®]

FANTASY FOLK

SECOND EDITION

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AND SEAN PUNCH

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ISBN 1-55634-309-4

2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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INTRODUCTION

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for *GURPS*. It also covers the hobby's top games – *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun*, and many more – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *In Nomine*, *Illuminati*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre*, and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

New supplements and adventures. *GURPS* continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web – see below.

Q&A. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata, updates, and hundreds of pages of information. We also have conferences on Compuserve and AOL. *GURPS* has its own Usenet group, too: rec.games.frp.gurps.

GURPSnet. Much of the online discussion of *GURPS* happens on this e-mail list. To join, send mail to majordomo@io.com with "subscribe GURPSnet-L" in the body, or point your World Wide Web browser to gurpsnet.sjgames.com/.

The *GURPS Fantasy Folk* Web page is at www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/fantasyfolk.

Page References

See *GURPS Compendium I*, p. 181, for a list of abbreviations for *GURPS* titles, or for the most recent list, visit our Web site at www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html.

Page references that begin with a B refer to the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition Revised*; e.g., p. B22 refers to page 22 of the *Basic Set*. M refers to *GURPS Magic*, FB refers to *GURPS Fantasy Bestiary*, PS refers to *GURPS Psionics*, and G refers to *GURPS Grimoire*.

Mankind has been imagining other races since ages before he conceived the idea of writing down stories – legends abound concerning spirits, gods, demons, monsters, fairies, and infinitely more. This book is designed to allow the *GURPS* GM to take full advantage of the possibilities of nonhuman fantasy races. *GURPS Fantasy Folk* is really two books in one. The first is a comprehensive racial generation system that allows the GM to define and embody any race he can imagine, or to translate his favorite races from fantastic fiction, or from other roleplaying systems, to *GURPS*.

The second uses this system to create official *GURPS* versions of 24 races – some are mainstays of fantasy literature, others have never been seen before.

GURPS Fantasy Folk can be used with only the *GURPS Basic Set*, but GMs will find their enjoyment of their multi-racial fantasy universe enhanced greatly if they also use *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Grimoire*. *GURPS Fantasy* and *GURPS Fantasy II* are not necessary, but *Fantasy Folk* can enrich roleplaying both on the world of Yrth and in the Mad Lands. Fantasy races can also enhance campaigns set in the worlds of *GURPS China*, *GURPS Horror*, *GURPS Japan*, *GURPS Supers*, *GURPS Time Travel*, and even *GURPS Ice Age*. The racial generation rules in this book are similar to those given in *GURPS Aliens*. Each book includes a few advantages and disadvantages that the other doesn't have, to fit the different genres. This book also includes many updated point costs, which should also be used for alien races. See the sidebar on p. 5.

Inspiration

It is impossible to catalog every influential author in a lifetime of fantasy reading, but a few whose ideas helped shape this book include J.R.R. Tolkien, H.P. Lovecraft, Fritz Lieber, C.S. Lewis, Michael Moorcock, Stephen R. Donaldson, Donna Barr, Larry Niven, Wendy Pini, and William Messner-Loebs.

About the Authors

Chris W. McCubbin is a nongraduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in English. He comes to games by way of the comics industry – he previously worked as an editor at Fantagraphics Books on their magazines *The Comics Journal* and *Amazing Heroes*. Since Chris first wrote *Fantasy Folk*, he's gone on to work at Origin Systems writing computer game documentation and hint books. He's presently one of the owners of Incan Monkey God Studios (www.incanmonkey.com). Chris lives in Austin with his wife, Lynette, his gracefully aging cat, Polychrome, and his dog, Penny. Write him at cwm@io.com

Sean "Dr. Kromm" Punch is the *GURPS* Line Editor at SJ Games. Editor or revisor of over a dozen *GURPS* books, he is also the author of *GURPS Wizards* and *GURPS Undead*, coauthor of *GURPS Y2K*, and compiler of *GURPS Compendium I* and *II*, *GURPS Lite*, and *GURPS GM'S Screen*. Sean has been a fanatical gamer since 1979. His other interests include biotechnology, cinema, military science, tigers, and wine. He and his wife, Bonnie, presently live in Montréal, Québec with four cats and one bird.

RACE GENERATION

Although this supplement contains a plethora of ready-made nonhuman races, these should not be the be-all and end-all of a campaign involving non-human intelligence. Far from it! This chapter allows the GM to create (or recreate) an infinity of character races. Of course, it is impossible to encapsulate in a few pages every magical, mythical and biological possibility for life on Earth – the GM is encouraged to use his imagination and should feel free to design and implement any new abilities he desires.

If these rules have a bias, it's towards races that can freely interact with humanity – creatures that are neither so strange as to be incomprehensible, or so powerful as to overwhelm the poor little humans. Nonetheless, the imaginative GM can use these rules as a foundation for building some truly bizarre sentients.

A word of caution: it will soon become apparent to gamers who are already familiar with the *character* generation rules that these *racial* generation rules have fewer arbitrary limitations and balancing factors than do the rules for creating individual characters. While such balancing factors were incorporated into the character generation rules to make it harder for players to unbalance the campaign, such safeguards have not been introduced for racial creation because this is intended to be a *GM's* system, and the GM is free to decide what is or is not balanced in his campaign. This lack of balancing factors means that it *is* possible to abuse these racial generation rules to create a race that has a significant advantage in points or effectiveness over normal human characters. It is simply assumed that the GM will not wish to allow such races, or at least allow them as PCs. To this end, while unbalanced racial creation is not completely impossible using the following rules, we have attempted to provide enough guidance herein to keep less-experienced GMs from *accidentally* creating an unbalanced race. As is always the case in *GURPS*, the GM may choose to ignore or modify *any* of the rules in this book in any way that he sees fit. Of course, if such modifications are made, we can no longer ensure that the modified rules will be balanced or that the resulting races will be compatible with future *GURPS* adventures or sourcebooks.

Changes from the First Edition

There have been three main changes from the first edition of *GURPS Fantasy Folk*. In all cases, individual racial descriptions and examples have been modified to reflect these changes.

The first change was to bring the costs of racial advantages and disadvantages into line with similar ones appearing in *GURPS Supers*, in an effort to keep *GURPS* true to its name. In the same vein, point costs were slightly revised in a few other places to make the rules feel more consistent.

Secondly, many useful advantages and disadvantages from other *GURPS* books were added in a slightly modified racial form. A handful of entirely new traits were added as well, including Injury Tolerance and Mana Enhancer.

Finally, a few abilities were totally rewritten in response to comments from *GURPS* players at large. The most noticeable changes are: a revised Flight advantage and Flight skill, the replacement of the Increased ST advantage with a modified form of the Enhanced ST advantage from *GURPS Supers*, new costs for racial and group skill bonuses, and a revised Healing advantage that is in line with psionic healing as it will appear in the eventual second edition of *GURPS Psionics*.

As well, some totally new material has been added, including an appendix (p. 140) that summarizes racial cost breakdowns.



FANTASY FOLK vs. ALIENS

The racial generation system used here originally appeared in *GURPS Aliens*. The reader will notice several significant changes between that book and this. These differences arose for several reasons.

Many advantages and disadvantages from *Aliens* were left out of *Fantasy Folk* because they were only appropriate in a science fiction milieu. Increased and Decreased Life Support (for very large or small races) have disappeared and have been replaced with Inconvenient Size. The Broadcast, Field Sense, High-Technology, and Radio Hearing advantages, the Dampen and Surge attacks and the Anaerobic, Involuntary Dampen and Planetbound disadvantages have disappeared entirely, as they are inappropriate to a non-SF campaign. They have been replaced with such fantasy-oriented elements as Mana Dampener and the Racial Magic rules. In a number of places the text has been slightly amended to emphasize the fantastic, rather than the scientific, impact of an ability.

NPC Races vs. PC Races

Throughout this book, the reader will repeatedly encounter the terms “NPC race” and “PC race.” A PC race is one which the players are allowed access to at the time of character creation, while a NPC race is one which the GM has reserved for personal use. We wish to make it clear from the outset that the use of these terms is merely intended to remind the GM that not every race that can be designed using the rules in this book will automatically be appropriate for players to use as PCs. However, it should also be pointed out that there is no “official” distinction between a NPC race and a PC race – as always, that is a decision that each GM should make on a case-by-case basis.

There are myriad reasons why a GM may choose to apply the “NPC race” designation to a given race. For example, the GM may have a plot that requires a race be completely unknown to the players or openly antagonistic toward all of the PCs without exception. The GM may feel that a race would be too difficult for the players to roleplay enjoyably. The GM may simply be concerned that a race possesses traits that might upset campaign balance or be too easily abused by the players. Whatever the reason, the GM has the final say on which races are allowed as PCs. The authors caution GMs not to be *too* restrictive, however – races that are traditionally considered NPCs in other games can often prove to be wonderful roleplaying challenges as PCs in *GURPS*!

Continued on next page . . .

The Generation Process

In game terms, the meat and bones of creating nonhumans lies in selecting an assortment of characteristic modifiers, advantages, disadvantages, and skills which will, under normal circumstances, apply to every member of the race. Just as in character creation, each of these advantages and disadvantages has a positive or negative point value. All of these are totalled together to find a final point value, positive or negative, which each member of the race either pays or takes as a bonus.

Most (though not all) of the character advantages, disadvantages, and skills can be taken racially. The point value generally remains the same, though there are several exceptions.

Racial disadvantages and quirks are generally not applied against a character’s normal limit of -40 points of disadvantages and -5 points of quirks. However, if a PC race is particularly powerful *and* possesses more than -20 points worth of racial disadvantages, the GM may wish to consider limiting PC members of that race to only -20 or -30 points of personal disadvantages. This somewhat offsets the powerful abilities of such races, and prevents the campaign from becoming a freak show.

Racial Attribute Modifiers

Racial attribute modifiers are used to determine the attribute scores of an *average* member of a race whose racial average attribute scores differ from the human norm of 10. They essentially serve to offset the central value of the race’s attribute distribution. These modifiers are treated as a special case of racial advantages and disadvantages.

Racial attribute modifiers are paid for according to the table on p. B13, reading attributes above 10 as bonuses and attributes below 10 as a penalties. These bonuses or penalties are applied to every member of the race.

Example: A racial -1 to IQ, giving a racial average IQ of 9, would cost -10; a racial +3 to ST, giving a racial average ST of 13, would cost +30; and a racial +4 to HT, giving a racial average HT of 14, would cost +45.

When raising or lowering characteristics, an individual character pays for its attribute score *before* the racial modifier is applied.

Example: A character who has paid to be a member of a race with +3 ST wants a final ST of 16. He would first pay 30 points to buy his strength up to 13, then add the racial bonus of +3. If he later wanted to use earned character points to increase his strength still further, he would pay 30 more points (twice the difference between 13 – its ST without the racial modifier – and 14) to increase his ST to 17. See p. B81.

Thus, it costs a *race* the same number of points to offset the central value of an attribute distribution by *N* as it costs an *individual* of any race to purchase an attribute that differs from its racial average score by *N*.

Limiting Racial Attribute Bonuses

Racial attribute bonuses can result in fairly significant cost breaks for characters who wish to purchase high levels of an attribute. For instance, the character in the example above has effectively paid 60 points for ST 16, as opposed to the usual 80 points – a savings of 20 points.

Generally, this effect can be justified as being a kind of built-in compensation for the fact that racial packages force players to purchase abilities in an all-or-nothing fashion, tying up points in abilities that might in fact be useless or even undesirable to a particular character, which can severely limit flexibility during character design. In some cases, however, a racial package can give significant attribute bonuses without costing the player anything in flexibility,

which may lead to abuse. GMs who are worried about such attribute bonuses unbalancing the campaign may wish to consider using one or more of the following optional rules, especially for player-designed races:

Countervailing Attribute Modifiers: for every +1 in racial attribute bonuses taken by a PC race, a fixed amount of penalties must be taken as well. A suggested ratio is -1 in penalties for every +2 in bonuses.

Maximum Individual Attribute Bonus: no PC race can have a racial attribute bonus that exceeds some limit. A suggested maximum bonus is +3.

Maximum Total Attribute Bonus: no PC race can have racial attribute modifiers whose total point value exceeds some limit. A suggested maximum point value is 50 points.

They Cost What They Cost: races simply do not *have* attribute modifiers – they are merely given suggested attribute levels. The cost of attribute modifiers is subtracted from the cost of the racial template, and members of all races buy their attributes on the usual attribute chart on p. B13. In this case, the GM should insist that PC members of a race purchase attributes that are in line with the racial average (e.g., no Giants with ST 10!).

Extra Limbs

Fantastic fiction is full of multi-limbed creatures – monsters, aliens, and run-of-the-mill mutants. Extra limbs, or limbs with unusual abilities, are treated as advantages.

Arms

If a limb can be used to manipulate, it's an arm, regardless of where it grows or what it looks like. Any normal arm can be used to strike a blow which does (thrust-2) damage based on ST. To do extra damage with an arm, see *Strikers* (p. 10). Characters have two arms at no cost. Extra arms have a base cost of 10 points each.

Coordination

Extra arms allow extra actions. A three-handed creature could perform a two-handed task (e.g., firing a crossbow) and a one-handed task (e.g., swinging a sword) at the same time. He could not aim two weapons unless he had Independently Focusable Eyes (see p. 26).



NPC Races vs. PC Races (Continued)

In order to guide GMs in making such decisions, an effort has been made to distinguish those racial packages, traits or optional rules that would (in the authors' opinion) be more appropriate for NPC races than for PC races. Again, this is not meant to supersede GM judgement – the GM always has the final say when it comes to deciding what is allowed or not.

They Look Like They Look

In establishing racial advantages and disadvantages, every effort has been made to avoid assigning point values to purely cosmetic alterations in the race's anatomy, and instead to concentrate on those abilities which affect play. The GM will not find in this chapter a Tall or Short advantage, or a point value for a race that slithers around on a snake's tail instead of legs. The GM must look deeper than that, and determine the actual game effects of such outward changes. The giant humanoid PC, for instance, would certainly have great ST, and perhaps a better Move. Very large races often also have the Inconvenient Size disadvantage, representing the difficulty in accommodating such characters in cramped quarters. The snake man need be no different from humans, unless the GM decides to give him a different Move or a special attack with his tail.

Perhaps the single most important thing to keep in mind when designing non-human races is that outward appearance is only a "special effect!" The race only pays for the significant consequences (positive and negative) that result from its bodily structure. Nothing can unbalance the multi-racial campaign as thoroughly as assigning point values to racial characteristics unnecessarily.

This does not mean that the race must be treated exactly like humans just because they have a racial value of 0. There will be real game differences between the humans and other races – Giants can reach the top shelf without a stool, Snake Men will take a long time going through doors. However, such differences are, in game terms, trivial, and therefore worth no points.

It is ultimately up to the GM, as always, to determine which racial abilities cross the line dividing special effects from advantages and disadvantages.

Sub-Races

To bring more variety to a nonhuman race, the GM may define subraces within the race. A subrace is a recognized, significant portion of the race which differs significantly from the norm in game terms. See *Dwarves and Gnomes*, p. 50, for an example.

In some races, for example, the sexes may have radical physiological and psychological differences. In some cases, there's little to tell an outsider that male and female (and any other genders) are part of the same race.

There are also true subspecies – members of the same species who have separated themselves from the main branch long enough to evolve significant differences. Usually, however, the two types can interbreed, raising the possibility of half-breeds. In fantasy, completely different races can often interbreed!

In yet another variation on this idea, the GM can specify that one out of every 10, 1,000, or 1,000,000 births, at random, results in a member of the subrace. Such characters will often possess powers far beyond the rest of the race (at a suitably higher point cost), and may well be sterile, explaining why they haven't evolved into the dominant line.

Flying Races and the Flight Skill

Fantasy is full of beings who can fly, including dragons, fairies, giant birds, and winged horses. For flying races – whether they fly via a magic spell, psionic levitation or wings – flight is as natural and as effortless as walking is for landbound creatures. However, in the same way that landbound creatures have to be taught to execute tactical movement or complex acrobatics, flying creatures must train in order to fight while airborne or carry out complex aerial maneuvers. This ability is covered by the Flight skill.

Flight (Physical/Average)
Default varies

This is the skill to use a non-technological Flight power *well*, for acrobatics, tight turns, and so on. The Flight skill *requires* specialization (see p. B43) in a particular mode of flight. Each specialization of the Flight skill defaults to every other at -2. In all cases, the Perfect Balance advantage gives +1 to the Flight skill, and the 3D Spatial Sense advantage gives +2.

Continued on next page . . .

A creature with multiple arms can use all of them in concert during normal situations (to repair a watch, for example), or during instinctive actions such as grappling in close combat or catching a thrown object. The ability to make multiple combat actions of other kinds is paid for separately, however (see the *Full Coordination* advantage, p. 25).

Modified Strength

Any race may “buy” extra strength (relative to normal body strength) for some or all of its arms. This ST applies only to efforts to lift, throw, punch, or use weapons. Arm ST is bought up (or down) as follows:

For one arm: 30% of cost for overall body strength.

For a set of two arms: 50% of cost for overall body strength.

This is additive.

Example: All Huks have four arms (20 points). Purple Huks have two arms with 2 points of extra ST; this costs them 50% of the normal cost for +2 ST, or 50% of 20 points, or an extra 10 points. Blue Huks have three strong arms; this costs them 80% of 20, or 16 points. Green Huks have four strong arms; this costs them 100% of 20, or 20 points.

Modified Dexterity

A race may purchase extra DX (relative to normal DX) for some or all of its arms. This DX applies to anything done with that arm or hand. If a task requires more than one hand, and they don't have the same DX, use the lower DX. Arm DX is bought up (or down) as follows:

For one arm: 60% of cost for overall body DX.

For a set of two arms: 80% of cost for overall body DX.

If a race has more than two arms, all with high DX, the race must buy the appropriate high DX for the whole creature.

Extra Flexibility

Arms may be designed for great flexibility, compared to human arms. They may be tentacles, or they may just be multi-jointed. Such arms are not necessarily strong or weak; they are not necessarily either dexterous or clumsy. Those abilities and disabilities are bought separately.

The effect of this is simply that any arms that can reach each other can work together, regardless of body positioning, general layout, or “right” and “left.”

Cost is 10 points (for the whole creature), or 5 points (for a single limb, for example an elephant's trunk).

Constriction Attacks

A race with Extra Flexibility may also take a constriction attack for 15 points. In order to make a constriction attack the individual must first successfully grapple its opponent. Then roll a quick contest of ST. If the constrictor wins, the victim takes as much damage as he lost by. If the victim wins, he takes no damage.

To constrict successfully, the constricting limb must be twice as long in hexes as the victim's size in hexes. So to constrict a human (size 1 hex) the constricting limb must be at least 2 hexes long.

Longer or Shorter Arms

Arms may be made longer or shorter, relative to human arms. For game purposes, human arms have a reach of 1. When ancient/medieval weapons are used, subtract 1 from any weapon's reach if it is held by short arms, and add 1 or more to the reach of a weapon held by longer arms.



Shorter arms cost only 5 points per additional arm. These arms have reach 0 (close combat only), and don't have the leverage to use any weapon which must be swung. If *all* of a race's arms are short, it is -2 on any attempt to grapple. If a two-armed race has two short arms, this is a -10 point disadvantage.

Longer arms cost +10 per arm for each extra hex of reach. Each extra hex of reach also adds +1 to the creature's *normal* swing damage, and +2 to any attempt to grapple. Note that long arms can be attacked in other hexes, as though they were long weapons (see p. B110).

Close Combat with Extra Arms

Extra arms give a huge advantage in close combat. You cannot punch with more than one arm at a time unless you have Full Coordination (p. 25). But you may *grapple* with all at once. Every extra arm (of regular length or longer), over and above the generic set of two, gives a +2 on any attempt to grapple or pin, or to break free from a grapple or pin. Other limbs do not help.

No Physical Attack

If the arm can manipulate but cannot attack physically (due to structure or lack of ST in that limb) each such arm only costs 5 points. Generally that limb can be used to wield a firearm or similar ranged weapon, but cannot attack physically. An example of such a limb might be a monkey's prehensile tail. If these arms are also *short* (see above), the cost is only 2 points per arm.

Legs

If a limb cannot manipulate, but can be walked on, it is a leg. The "default" number of legs is two. A leg is assumed to be able to kick with a range of 1, doing thrust/crushing damage. Each additional hex of range costs 10 points. Extra damage is purchased per *Strikers*, below. If the legs can't kick for damage, reduce the total leg cost by 5 points.

Three or four legs cost 5 points; if the individual loses a leg, it can continue to move at half speed (round down). Loss of a second leg causes it to fall.

Cost to have five or six legs is 10 points. Each leg lost reduces speed by 2 until only three legs are left. At that point, speed is only 2. Loss of one more leg causes the individual to fall.

Cost to have seven or more legs is 15 points. Each leg lost reduces speed by 1 until only three legs are left. At that point, speed is only 2. Loss of one more leg causes the individual to fall.

Feet Manipulators

Any limb which can manipulate should be purchased as a short Extra Arm (5 points) with Nuisance Effect: Temporary Disadvantage (Legless while using Extra Arms, -35%), for 4 points. This means that if a person with feet manipulators is using his feet as arms, he can't walk or run; he can still sit, float (in space or liquid) or fly, of course.

Flying Races and the Flight Skill (Continued)

Note that these rules differ slightly from those presented on p. B242 and under the Levitation skill in *GURPS Psionics*. Note as well that since the Flight skill defaults to DX for flying races, they effectively get 2 points in the Flight skill for free and can buy their skill up from this default (see p. B44).

Specializations of the Flight Skill:

Flight (Gliding)

This is the Flight skill for winged beings whose Flight has the *Gliding* limitation. It defaults to DX for races that can glide naturally, and to DX-4 for beings (such as supers or wizards) who somehow gain the ability to glide unnaturally.

Flight (Unwinged)

This is the Flight skill for beings whose Flight involves some means other than wings – be that an air jet, a magic spell, a psi talent or generic "super" Flight. It defaults to DX for races that can fly this way naturally. For a psi using the PK Levitation skill, or for a wizard using the Flight or Hawk Flight spell, it defaults to DX-4; however, such flyers receive a bonus equal to 1/3 their skill with the psi ability or spell being used – these skills largely represent the ability to activate the power, but give a slight bonus for controlling that power as well. In all other cases, this skill defaults to a flat DX-4.

Flight (Winged)

This is the Flight skill for beings whose Flight has the *Winged* limitation. It defaults to DX for races that can fly naturally, and to DX-4 for beings (such as winged supers or wizards using the *Shapeshift (Giant Eagle)* spell) who somehow gain the ability to sprout wings and fly unnaturally.

Flying Races in Combat

The full rules for combat while flying can be found on p. B139; the rules for dropping objects from a great height can be found on p. B131. Where these rules differ from those in the *Basic Set*, these rules take precedence.

Attacks

Weapon use is difficult in flight. If a flying being tries to attack with a weapon (forcing the character to divide its attention between flying and attacking), it is at an extra -4 to hit. *Double* this penalty if the character's Flight skill is lower than its DX. This penalty does not apply to natural attacks (clawing, biting, etc.) made by members of flying races. Note that the speed of a flying being relative to its target counts into the range/speed total for a ranged weapon attack.

When flying beings use hand weapons against foes on the ground, use the modifications for relative height (p. B123). Weapon reach becomes very important! Do not worry about the relative height of two battling flyers, however.

Note that flyers often have very high Move scores, so realistically they should probably be able to cover more ground on the *Step* portion of any *Step and . . .* maneuver. To reflect this, every 4 *full* points of flying Move gives the flyer 1 hex of Step (minimum 1). So a flyer with Move 0 to 7 has a Step of 1; Move 8 to 11 a Step of 2; Move 12 to 15 a Step of 3, and so on.

Defenses

Flying beings use Basic Speed (not flying Move) to calculate Dodge, just like everyone else. However, as they have an extra dimension to move in, they get a flat +2 to Dodge while flying (regardless of the exact nature of the flight). When taking the Retreat option on an active defense, a flyer may Retreat up to 3 hexes *upward*, if that would move the character away from the attacker. On the other hand, flying characters also have a -2 to Parry and Block. *Double* this penalty if the character's Flight skill is lower than its DX.



Teeth, Claws, and Strikers

In addition to unusual or modified limbs, races can have a variety of natural weapons. Some examples are given below.

Reach: All of the attacks below assume a reach of 0 hexes – close combat only – unless specified otherwise. Increase cost by 5 points for each additional hex.

Skill: In all cases, these attacks are made at DX. Some attack forms (e.g., tails) cannot be aimed well. An attack may be made at reduced DX – drop its cost by 1 point for each -1 DX.

Claws

15/40/55 points

The race has claws.

For 15 points, the claws do an extra +2 damage on any punch or kick (including martial arts attacks), and on any attack made with a Striker (see below).

For 40 points, the claws are *talons* 6 to 12 inches long, and do both thrust/impaling and swing/cutting damage

For 55 points, the claws are *long* talons, and do both thrust+2/impaling and swing+2/cutting damage.

Horns

Variable

Horns are bought as Strikers (see below). Cost can vary widely, depending on reach and damage. Horns with a reach of at least 1 hex can be used to parry blows at half DX. Two examples:

Butting Horns: 5 points. Blunt, heavy horns used for thrust/crushing attacks. Often used during charges. Reach C.

Long Tusks: 50 points. Found only on human-sized or larger races, these are large, pointed horns that can do a thrust/impaling attack or swing/cutting attack. Reach 1.

Spear

30 points

This is like a Striker, but usable only against a front hex (e.g., a rhinoceros horn, designed to be used in charges). Damage is thrust+1 impaling. Reach 1.

Spines

5/15 points

These are sharp spines located on strategic parts of the body, like those of a porcupine or an echidna. Spines are defensive weaponry, designed to discourage attackers. Spines cannot be used actively, but there is a DX-4 chance (DX-2 if attacked from the rear) of hitting any given foe on each turn of close combat. Foes who attempt to Grapple a being with spines are hit automatically; foes who attempt a Slam are hit for *maximum damage* automatically! Note that the Venom advantage (p. 32) *can* be used with spines.

Spines: 5 points. One or two inches long. Do 1d-2 impaling damage. Reach C.

Long Spines: 15 points. One or two *feet* long. Do 1d impaling damage. Reach C.

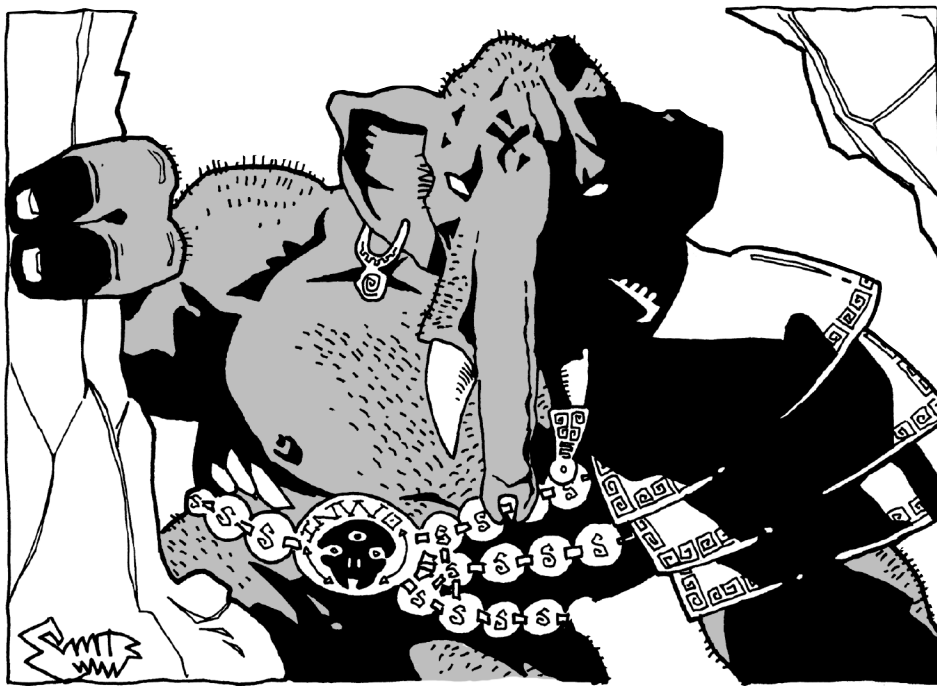
Strikers

5 points

If a limb or other body part can strike an aimed blow (rolling vs. DX) but can neither manipulate nor be used for walking (e.g., horns or a smashing tail), it is a "striker." Unmodified strikers do thrust/crushing damage, in close combat only.

Increasing Damage

To increase the damage done by a striker, arm, or leg, the Claws advantage (above) may be added. Note that this advantage only has to be purchased *once*



– no matter how many limbs or Strikers it modifies! If a race has eight arms, 15 points will buy +2 damage for all the arms; but Full Coordination (p. 25) is needed to attack with more than one at a time!

Teeth

0/5/10 points

Teeth do damage as described on p. B140. Normally, they are good in close combat only.

Blunt teeth: 0 points. Like those of most herbivores. Do crushing damage only. Figure damage using the table on p. B140, but halve actual ST.

Sharp Teeth: 5 points. Like those of most carnivores. Do cutting damage based on ST.

Fangs: 10 points. Like those of the sabertooth tiger. Do impaling damage based on ST.

Split ST for Hybrid Races

Some races are best described as “hybrids” of two distinct body types that differ radically in build and physical strength (e.g., a horse and a man, in the case of a Centaur). To determine the total cost of racial ST for such beings, first determine a ST score for each half of the hybrid being separately. Assign each half of the body either a regular ST modifier or an appropriate level of the Enhanced ST advantage. If either part of the body has no fine manipulators, then apply that limitation (- 40%) to the ST cost for that half of the body.

Note that hybrid races *never* qualify for the Natural limitation (see p. 24), for obvious reasons! Once a cost is arrived at for the ST of each half, *average* the two costs to determine the final racial ST cost. In almost every case, ST will be “split” along upper-body/lower-body lines. Upper-body ST will normally determine biting and hand weapon damage, Fatigue for spellcasting or psi use, and throwing ability, while lower-body ST will normally determine carrying capacity, damage with constriction attacks, kicking damage and travel Fatigue. Natural attacks that rely upon ST for damage use the ST of whatever half of the body they are attached to. The GM should establish all such details when designing the race. In all cases, individual ST adjustments modify *both* ST scores. Likewise, magic (or anything else) that affects ST will affect both ST scores equally.

Taboo Traits

The GM may rule at any time that it is impossible for individuals of a certain race to possess any given advantage, disadvantage, or skill. Not being able to buy a particular skill or advantage is not normally considered a disadvantage, and carries no point value. (This is necessary for game balance! If “cannot learn medical skills” was worth 10 points as a disadvantage, that would be a free 10 points for any player willing to abuse the spirit of the rules while creating a non-doctor character.)

The GM can also arbitrarily declare that a race gets a certain penalty with a skill of group of skills. Dwarves, for example, get a -2 with all missile weapons. There is likewise no point value attached to such limitations, under normal circumstances, for the same reasons.

The GM is cautioned about putting more than a few such “taboos” on any one race (although some racial traits will logically eliminate a whole host of possibilities – Sessile characters, for instance, are forbidden any further movement-related traits). The GM will find his players more easily accept such dicta if he presents them with a plausible cultural, psychological, or physiological reason for the taboo.

The one exception to the general rule of not giving out disadvantage points for a “taboo” is when a race receives a severe penalty on a skill that is *absolutely necessary for survival* in the campaign. In this one instance, the GM may wish to consider using the Incompetence disadvantage (p. 36).

Character Cost vs. Racial Strength

Part of the fun of playing nonhuman characters is dealing with “people” that are not only different from humans, but more than human. Many GMs will want to create at least a few PC and NPC races with physical and mental powers far beyond normal humans. In game terms, this means characters with a high racial point cost.

This creates an apparent contradiction in the campaign, however. The question arises, “If these guys are so great, why don’t they control the whole world?”

The most obvious answer is to say, “they do.” There’s no reason why humanity has to be the dominant race of the campaign. Mankind could be an insignificant minor race or an audacious upstart to the ancient civilizations of the nonhumans!

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Character Cost vs. Racial Strength (Continued)

However, even if the GM prefers an anthropocentric campaign like that set forth in *GURPS Fantasy*, he needn't forsake superhuman races. The factors that allow an individual to excel are quite different from those that allow one race to dominate another. A humanocentric story or campaign usually assumes that humanity has several advantages, relative to other races, that would never show up on an individual character sheet.

First, humans are *prolific*. A woman can easily bear 6 to 12 children in her lifetime. A single male can father children with a huge number of women. Other races might be strictly monogamous, or tied to a complex fertility cycle, or simply generally infertile, allowing humanity to dominate them through sheer numbers. This is borne out in nature, where extremely capable species such as the dominant carnivores inevitably have smaller numbers than "lesser" species.

Second, humans are *aggressive*. They tend to want money, property, and power for its own sake. A pragmatic race might let the humans move in and assume the burden of running things. The race might insist on a few basic rights, but would not necessarily want political power. An extremely powerful or supernatural race may simply pursue goals that humans cannot comprehend, leaving them to do as they please.

Finally, humans are *organized*. A super-race might never need to band together for protection from nature as humanity's ancestors did. Such a race might be quite at a loss to withstand an organized human military campaign or political program. Indeed, such a race might find real economic and cultural benefit in accepting organization by humanity.

Player-Created Races

Although the creation of nonhuman races for a campaign is primarily the responsibility of the GM, the adventurous GM might allow an especially good player or group to design races for their characters. Such player-generated races can add an appropriate feeling of randomness to the fantasy campaign. Of course, opportunistic players can also seriously undermine game balance if allowed to abuse these rules.

A few tips, then, for the GM whose players may be interested in creating their own races:

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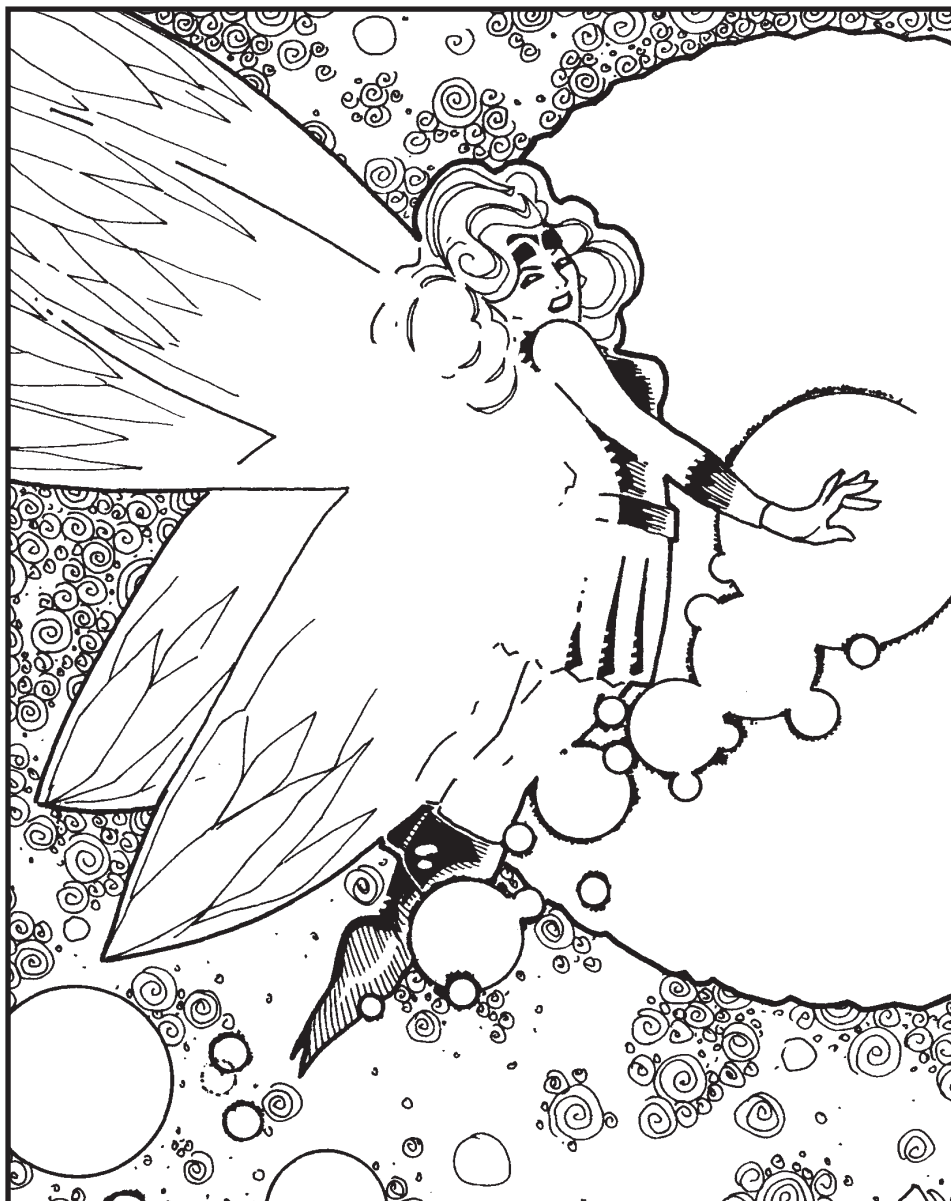
Racial Magic

Many fantasy races are, by definition, highly magical. There are several ways in which the GM can grant his races magical powers. *Advantages*: the GM can use any of the more exotic racial advantages and specify that they stem from the race's magical nature as a "special effect." Such advantages will not work in "no mana" zones; if regions of no mana are *particularly* common in the campaign world, the GM may decide to assess a -10% limitation to "magical" advantages. See the sidebar *Magical Creatures in a No-Mana Area* (p. 13) for further discussion of this matter.

Racial Knacks: the GM can define a racial knack for a certain spell. Knacks are an optional magical system found in *GURPS Magic*, p. 86.

Racially Learned Spells: these are completely normal spells – all rules and prerequisites apply. The only thing that distinguishes them is that they are (under normal conditions) taught to every member of the race at an early age. Generally speaking, a race with racially learned spells should also have racial Magery.

Racially Innate Spells: this is the main system used in this book. Rules for racially innate spells are explained on the following page.



Racially Innate Spells

A racially innate spell is almost identical to a normally-learned spell, except that the caster knows it intuitively; it wasn't *taught* to him. Races which live in a low or normal mana area must have racial Magery (see p. B147) before they can have racially innate spells. Any spell can be innate, but the GM is cautioned against granting the more powerful spells to PC races through this method.

The minimum cost for a racially innate spell is the number of points necessary to bring that race's skill to 12 (based on racial Magery and the race's default IQ), or one point, whichever is greater. Races whose skill with an innate spell is 15 or higher get the normal reductions on casting time, energy cost, etc.

Stupid Characters

If an individual has his IQ reduced to the point where his skill with a racially innate spell would fall below 12, it will not work. The GM may allow a player who voluntarily buys down his IQ during initial creation to also buy off innate spells. The GM does not *have* to allow this, however. If the character is allowed to buy off his innate spells at creation, those abilities can never be recovered (although the character can later learn the spell normally). If the character retains the innate spell, it is considered to be "dormant." If he later, through magic or experience, has his IQ or Magery raised to the point where his skill equals 12 or more, the ability activates and he can use the spell normally.

Prerequisites

The only prerequisite for the use of a racially innate spell is a personal skill of 12 or more with that spell. All other prerequisite spells, advantages and characteristics are disregarded. However, there are certain times when normal prerequisites become important:

a) Before the character can increase his skill with a racially innate spell, he must first acquire all the normal prerequisites to that spell. Example: a character has the racially innate spell Panic-13. Before he can raise his skill to 14 he would have to first learn the prerequisite spell Fear. (Note, however, that if the character increased his IQ, his skill with the spell would also rise automatically, without his needing to worry about prerequisites.)

b) Before the character can *use* the racially innate spell as a prerequisite, he must acquire all its normal prerequisite spells. Example: a character has the racially innate spell Darkness. He wishes to learn the spell Shape Darkness, which lists Darkness as a prerequisite. Before he can do so, however, he must learn the spells Continual Light and Light, the normal prerequisites of the Darkness spell.

c) Before the character can teach the spell to a mage of another race, both pupil and teacher must have acquired all the normal prerequisite spells.

Racial Knacks vs. Racially Innate Spells

Racial knacks (see previous page) and racially innate spells are two radically different ways of doing approximately the same thing: allowing characters to instinctively know magical spells. In general, knacks are more expensive than innate spells. However they are also much more efficient, in that knacks do not require skill rolls and operate independently of local mana levels or personal Magery and IQ levels. In general, it can be said that knacks will balance better with a campaign where the GM wishes to keep magic rare, and innate spells will fit in better in a campaign where magic is more common.

Player-Created Races (Continued)

Player-generated races work best in a campaign that already has a plethora of different races. If you're asking the whole party to play nonhumans, make sure you have a few ready-made PC races on hand for those who might not be interested in the extra game mechanics of racial creation.

The GM should closely oversee every step of the creation process. It's *his* campaign. *Nothing* that he doesn't approve of should be allowed, no matter how convincingly the player argues!

Be leery of player-created NPC races. Remember, NPC races should be somewhat mysterious to the players, and mystery is hard to maintain when the creator is a member of the party. If a player comes to you with a number of good NPC races, encourage him to start his own *GURPS Fantasy* campaign!

Magical Creatures in a No-Mana Area

Reality-hopping is a staple of roleplaying adventures, particularly in a multi-genre system such as *GURPS*.

One question that will arise in such a campaign is "what happens to a magical creature in a no-mana world?" The following ideas are provided to stimulate the GMs imagination.

The simplest answer to this dilemma is to simply assume magical creatures *can't* enter no-mana areas – trying to go into one would be like walking into a wall. Dimensional portals or gates will not transport such a creature into a no-mana world (possibly leaving them stranded, or sending them *somewhere else* . . .).

It's more entertaining, however, for the GM to specifically tailor each race's reaction to no-mana conditions. Many races would simply be deprived of their magical abilities. Sometimes this is simple – the race can no longer use its innate spells. Other times a radical physical transformation is involved. A member of a winged, humanoid race might suddenly find his wings missing or withering away. Or maybe the wings are still there, but will no longer support his weight. A Leprechaun (see p. 107) noble might suddenly find himself a five-foot tall human, or an Great Eagle (see p. 91) might be transformed into a bird of normal size and intellect. The change might even be more radical: Ellyllon (see p. 54) might become large butterflies in a no-mana world!

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Magical Creatures in a No-Mana Area (Continued)

A more problematical case is presented by races like the Centaurs, which are certainly magical in origin, but which don't actually violate any natural laws on a day-to-day basis. Would such creatures be changed in a no-mana area, or would they retain their now-freakish form?

Even if a race is not radically altered by translation to a no-mana world, the GM could rule that it requires mana in order to sustain its life force. In this case, mana deprivation should be treated as a Dependency (see p. 35), with the severity set by the GM, depending on how intrinsic the race's magic is.

Some extremely magical races might simply cease to exist in a no-mana area. Likely candidates for annihilation would include such races as the Ellyllon and Leprechauns.

On the other hand, a magical race might be unaffected in a no-mana area, carrying its mana supply with it, or within it. The Mana Enhancer advantage (p. 27) is particularly appropriate here. It's even conceivable that such a race could act as a catalyst, beginning a gradual (or abrupt!) change from a no-mana, to a low or higher mana world (GMs should remember that our "real" world is officially regarded as a low-mana area).

Encumbrance Rules for Non-Humanoid Races

The encumbrance levels on p. B76 assume ground movement by beings with a humanoid frame. For Horizontal (p. 36) or hybrid (p. 11) races with four or more legs (e.g., the Exalted Horses, p. 62), or for races that fly (e.g., the Winged Folk, p. 136), these levels are inappropriate. Instead, use the following Encumbrance levels:

Encumbrance Levels for Four-Legged Races

No Encumbrance (up to $2 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is unaffected.

Light Encumbrance (up to $6 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 2.

Medium Encumbrance (up to $10 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 4. Most races will find carrying more than this *extremely* uncomfortable.

Heavy Encumbrance (up to $15 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 6.

Extra-Heavy Encumbrance (up to $20 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 8, but never to less than 2.

Maximum Encumbrance (up to $30 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced to 1.

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Magic Resistance

It may be possible to take Magic Resistance in conjunction with a magical advantage or racial knack. This should be determined by the GM on a case-by-case basis. Characters with Magic Resistance may never use or learn racially learned spells. Characters from races with racially innate spells may only take Magic Resistance if they first buy off racial Magery and all innate spells. The GM may assess an Unusual Background cost if he feels this might jeopardize game balance. The GM may also declare that any given race is so magical that Magic Resistance is a complete impossibility for its members.



Filling in the Blanks

Once the GM has selected a new race's advantages, disadvantages and skills, he's ready to begin the real work of racial creation. Some questions that still need to be answered . . .

- What does the race look like? How big is it? How tall? What shape? What color? Does it have hair? What color? Does it have eyes? Does it have distinctive markings? What direction do its joints bend?

- Where and how was the race created? What environmental pressures combined to give the race its advantages and disadvantages?

- How does the race live? How do they govern themselves? Are they gregarious or solitary in nature? If gregarious do they favor large cities, small villages or family groups?

- How does the race think? Do they have a racial philosophy? Do they have a religion? Do they have many religions? How do they react in an emergency? Do they like new things, or are they complacent? Can they be trusted?

- How does the race get along with others? Do they fight among themselves? How do they react to new races? Suspiciously? Enthusiastically? Do they trade with other races? Are there other races they particularly like or dislike?

Example of Racial Creation

The Fantasy Ghosts will be used here as an example of racial design.

First, their attributes. Since Ghosts are incorporeal, their physical attributes will be largely irrelevant most of the time. Still, they become important when Ghosts have to interact with one-another, cast or resist spells, and so on. The GM decides that Ghosts should be weaker than Demons, Wraiths, and other nastier spirits, and assigns a -1 to ST for -10 points; however, the GM wants them to be able to power fairly major magical effects, so he offsets the low ST with 5 points of Extra Fatigue, for 15 points. As spirits go, Ghosts are hardy, enduring, and highly resistant to physical spells, so they also get a +5 HT, for 60 points.

The “classic” Ghost advantage is Insubstantiality. The GM decides that it seems reasonable that Ghosts would still be impeded by a Pentagram spell, affected normally by other spirits or by mages as Ethereal Body, and by most spells other than Missile spells – but not much else. The GM also rules that Ghosts are Insubstantial all of the time. This costs 40 points.

Other Ghost advantages are: Doesn’t Breathe [20], Doesn’t Eat/Drink [10], Immunity to Disease [10], Immunity to Poison [15], Night Vision [10] and Unaging [15]. The GM decides that Ghosts do not really qualify for Doesn’t Sleep, since he wants the Ghosts in his campaign to spend about 8 hours of each day completely out of touch, in the Spirit Realm. Finally, the GM decides to treat the Ghost’s traditional terrifying moaning, clanking of chains, etc., as a Penetrating Call [5].

A Ghost possesses certain other special abilities – levitating objects, making a room chill or dismal, foretelling death, and frightening mortals. The GM decides that these are best treated as racially innate spells, which means that Ghosts will need to have racial Magery 1 [15]. Since Ghosts can produce these effects easily, a Ghost of even average intelligence should have a skill of at least 15 (IQ + Magery + 4) with all of these spells. The innate spells of a Ghost are: Apportation, Cool (p. 27 of *GURPS Grimoire*), Death Vision, Gloom (p. 64 of *Grimoire*) and Terror. All five spells are M/H, so at 12 points per spell, this adds up to 60 points.

This all comes to a total of 265 points. Ghosts are fairly powerful supernatural beings. They also have some significant disadvantages, however.

For one thing, Ghosts are extremely magical creatures, and they could not exist in a no-mana area. The GM defines this as a constant Dependency on mana (a common “item”), worth -25 points. They are also Unhealing, and if damaged (probably by magic or by another Ghost), they can only ever be healed by magic [-30]. Like most unnatural creatures, Ghosts can’t be wounded past 0 HT; they just pass completely out of the mortal sphere when their HT is gone, making them Unliving [-50].

Folklore seems to list countless “cures” for haunting. Holy items in each room, mirrors at the windows, special incense, “spirit drums,” exorcisms, and so forth can all drive a Ghost away. The GM decides that this would be best handled as a Dread, which has a base value of -10 points. The GM rules that an exorcism merely has to be within earshot, or a holy sign within line of sight, to affect a Ghost – a range of 10 yards seems reasonable. This raises the value of the Dread to -20 points. The GM also rules that since Ghosts Dread a whole class of items that would individually be “Occasional” items, the whole list counts as a single Common item, which doubles the value of the Dread. Total cost: -40 points.

Traditionally, Ghosts are driven by the desire to conclude unfinished business, to seek vengeance, to seek proper burial for their body or to warn someone. The GM decides that this sounds like a total Obsession, worth -15 points. The exact Obsession is left up to the player, however.

Finally, Ghosts are scary and unnatural, and seeing one is almost universally regarded as being a bad omen. The GM decides that such supernatural fear merits a supernatural reaction penalty – a -6 sounds about right. This is worth -30 points.

This leaves Ghosts at an even 75 points, which is just within reach of a PC in a 100-point campaign.

The lesson of the Ghosts is, be flexible, and don’t let the rules get in the way of what you want. It’s your game, and you’re entitled to whatever races and creatures you want, at whatever point cost you find reasonable.



Encumbrance Rules for Non-Humanoid Races (Continued)

Encumbrance Levels for Flying Races

No Encumbrance (up to $2 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is unaffected.

Light Encumbrance (up to $6 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 4.

Medium Encumbrance (up to $10 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 8. If Move would be 0 or less, the individual cannot fly.

Heavy Encumbrance (up to $15 \times \text{ST}$):
Move is reduced by 12. If Move would be 0 or less, the individual cannot fly. No being can fly with greater than Heavy encumbrance.

Contests of ST for Very Small or Very Large Creatures

When resolving Contests of ST between two beings who both have ST scores of less than 6 or greater than 18, the ST scores should be scaled up or down by some constant factor to yield numbers within the range of a 3d roll, typically to around 10 or so. These “effective” ST scores should be used in the Contest in place of true ST. In this way, the *relative* ST of the two beings is what matters, not the absolute difference – which may be huge for large ST scores that differ by only a few percent, or negligible for small ST scores that differ by a large percentage.

Example 1: A ST 50 being is wrestling a ST 60 being. The GM reduces both ST scores by a factor of five – to 10 and 12, respectively. This makes the Contest a lot closer! This makes sense for beings whose ST differs by only 20%.

Example 2: A ST 2 being is wrestling a ST 1 being. The GM increases both ST scores by a factor of five – to 10 and 5, respectively. This makes the Contest a sure thing for the stronger being – which makes sense, since he is twice as strong.

How They Think

It's easy to figure out what nonhumans look like, and even how they act. The hardest part about playing a nonhuman character is deciding how they *think* – which is what roleplaying is all about.

Humanity's two primary motivations seem to be sex and material comfort. Other races might not share these. Dwarves, for instance, live for work for its own sake, while Elves strive for beauty (either to surround themselves in it, seek it out, or restore it where it has been lost). Halflings share humanity's motivations, though the priority seems to be reversed, with comfort more important than sex. Goblins live for curiosity and competition, while Orcs share humanity's priorities, but without the "finer instincts" of compassion and cooperation that tend to rein in human hedonism.

Of course, any ordinary creature must feel some instinct to preserve its young and itself, or the race will vanish. Races which lack this drive – perhaps the Faerie folk, or godlike races – would have psychologies that humanity would find literally incomprehensible.

When a player, in character, can think "These people don't want me to *lie*!" or "How can they ask me to *skip lunch*?" with the same fervor that a human might think "They can't expect me to *leave my children*!" . . . then he will be roleplaying in a nonhuman mindset.



Multiple Racial Templates

Certain unusual character concepts may actually require the use of two racial templates simultaneously. This is typically the case for undead characters. For example, a character could be both an Elf and a Ghost! In such a case, the GM should combine the two templates into a new template ("Elven Ghost," in our example) and calculate an overall point cost using the following rules:

Attributes

Any attribute modifiers (positive or negative) for the two templates are totalled to find the new attribute modifier. Example: an Elf (-1 ST, [-10]) who is also a Ghost (-1 ST, [-10]) would have a net -2 ST (-15 points, not -20).

Advantages and Disadvantages

In general, the new racial template will include all of the advantages and disadvantages of both templates. However, there are a few cases that merit special consideration:

1. Two traits are opposites that would clearly "cancel out": simply leave both of the opposing elements out of the new template. When the opposed traits are "levelled," such as Extra vs. Reduced Hit Points, they cancel out on a level by level basis, and only the final level is recorded. Example: 1 level of Strong Will [4] vs. 2 levels of Weak Will (-16) would result in 1 level of Weak Will [-8].

2. Two traits do not clearly cancel out but are clearly incompatible: keep only the trait that is associated with the "topmost" or "later" template. Discard the trait associated with the "underlying" template. Example: Ogres have racial Magic Resistance, while Ghosts have racial Magery. Since Ogres become Ghosts, Ogre Ghosts would have Magery, not Magic Resistance!

3. The same trait occurs in both templates: if the trait is "all or nothing," like High Pain Threshold or Night Vision, then the new template simply has that trait as well. If the trait is "levelled," like Magery or Reduced Move, then total the number of levels possessed by the two templates and include that total in the new template. Example: since both Elves and Ghosts have Magery 1 [15], Elven Ghosts get Magery 2 [25] as a racial advantage.

Other Traits

Using the guidelines given above, the GM should decide on a case-by-case basis which Taboo Traits, racial skill bonuses, racial Quirks and so forth will apply to a combined template. Generally speaking, opposed traits will tend to cancel out, while complimentary traits will tend to be enhanced.

Nonhuman PCs

The GM will certainly want to make at least a few nonhuman races available for use as PCs. Multi-racial adventuring parties are a staple of both heroic fantasy and fantasy roleplaying.

When designing races for PC use, balance becomes extremely important. The GM is cautioned against loading the race with a plethora of racial advantages and disadvantages. Remember, a nonhuman PC must go where the human PCs go and do what the human PCs do. It's all very well to look for a roleplaying challenge, but a sessile lava-dweller might be a bit much, unless his magic is *very* strong. For a 100-point campaign the total value of racial skills and advantages should be kept down as far below 200 points as possible. The final cost for the race should be kept between 100 points (the player should not have to dip into personal disadvantages just to pay the racial cost) and -25 (races that give an extremely high bonus tend to raise the question, "If this thing is so bad

off, why can it do so much more than my human can?”). These point values are intended as guidelines, not hard and fast rules. Extremely careful racial design can create a playable race that exceeds these numbers in any direction.

Buying Off Racial Advantages and Disadvantages

The player of a nonhuman PC can buy off racial advantages and disadvantages provided: 1) the GM consents; 2) the player can pay any points necessary; and 3) he can come up with a rational explanation for his character's departure from racial norm. Thinking up such explanations is the player's responsibility, though the GM can offer any alternate explanations he might wish on a “take it or leave it” basis.

The GM may assess new personal disadvantages against the player who departs from racial norm. For example, an Elf without Magical Aptitude might acquire a -5 point Social Stigma (second-class citizen) disadvantage with regard to his own people (which might explain why such a character decided to leave home and go adventuring). Remember, if the character already has 40 or more points of personal disadvantages, the GM can still assess whatever additional disadvantages he thinks appropriate, but the character will get no further character points – it simply drops in value.

If the GM feels that the player is seriously endangering game balance by buying off racial advantages and replacing them with personal enhancements, he may assess an appropriate Unusual Background cost. However, it is recommended that the character be allowed at least a few free points for every racial advantage he loses.

Once again, the GM must consent to all personal alterations of racial advantages and disadvantages. The GM may declare at any time that a player must retain a given advantage or disadvantage if he wants to play that race. Since it is inevitable that players will engage in some trading of racial traits, the GM might find it helpful when he's creating a PC race to define each racial advantage, disadvantage, and skill as cultural, psychological, or physiological in origin.

Cultural tendencies are the result of the character's early environment – customs, taboos, oral tradition and early training can all be sources of cultural tendencies. The character can buy these tendencies off pretty much at will. Other members of the race will regard the character who lacks cultural tendencies as odd . . . a nonconformist at best, and a heretic or criminal at worst.

Psychological tendencies are implanted directly into the individual's brain. Characters who lack these are probably either brain-damaged or mutants. Usually, other members of the same race will regard them as strange, perhaps even insane. Physiological tendencies are the result of the race's biology or physical structure. Characters lacking these are mutants, or the subject of radical surgical, magical, or genetic tampering. Other members of the same race will often regard such an individual as a freak or a cripple.

Even harder to get free of are the social disadvantages Social Stigma, bad Reputation, and Odious Racial Habit, which stem from the experience, expectations and prejudices of others, and not necessarily from any actual trait of the character. GMs should not allow these traits to be bought off at all during initial creation, or if they do they should also charge an appropriate Unusual Background.

The type classification of traits – cultural, psychological, or physiological – has no bearing on the point cost of the trait. The GM should adjudicate them on a case-by-case basis when deciding if it is possible for a PC to ignore a racial advantage or buy off a racial disadvantage. The GM should be more sympathetic to such requests if the player comes up with a good reason for the variance!



Undead Races

Undead beings (such as Ghosts, Liches, Vampires, and Wraiths) are generally portrayed as having a uniform set of unnatural traits. For example, Ghosts are typically incorporeal and cause fear in mortals. For this reason, such beings are best treated as “races,” even though a member of any race could in principle become undead. Undead racial templates should normally assume a human norm (see the Ghost, p. 14), with the *Multiple Racial Templates* rules (p. 16) being applied to construct versions for other races.

A few advantages and disadvantages are especially appropriate for the undead. These include: Appearance (Unattractive or worse), Compulsive Behavior (haunt one place, avoid holy items), Damage Resistance, Dark Vision, Dependency (on blood, mana, some evil ritual), Doesn't Breathe, Doesn't Eat or Drink, Doesn't Sleep, Dread (holy items, holy places), Enhanced ST, Eunuch (Sterile), High Pain Threshold, Immunity to Disease, Immunity to Poison, Injury Tolerance, Insubstantiality, Intolerance (living beings), Invulnerability (non-wooden weapons, non-magical weapons), Magery, Night Vision, Odious Racial Habit (bad smell, eerie sounds), Penetrating Call, Phobia (holy folk, the living), Reputation (usually bad), Silence, Social Stigma (Outcast), Unaging, Unfazeable, Unhealing, Unliving, Vulnerability (silver, holy items), and Weakness (sunlight, holy places).

Almost anything is possible. It is easier to decide when you can answer the following questions: How did the being become undead? What will finally lay it to rest? *Can* it be laid to rest? Is the being malevolent, neutral, or benevolent? What energy sustains it? Is the being an intangible specter or a tangible, walking corpse? Is it self-motivated or in the thrall of some Necromancer?

Finally, the GM must decide if the race is appropriate as a PC race or not. Most undead races will be worth a *lot* of points; however, this may not be a problem in a high-powered game!

See *GURPS Undead* for detailed racial templates of the most common types of undead creatures.



Racial Advantages

Below are notes on adapting *character* advantages from the *Basic Set* rules to *racial* advantages. If a specific advantage is not listed below, that advantage can be used racially with no change in point value or description.

Some advantages are culturally relative. Advantages like Attractiveness, Reputation, Status, and Voice cannot be expected to apply equally to every sentient race in the campaign. Generally, the GM should allow these to be taken if they apply to the majority of races in the campaign (this will often mean humanoids). In some campaigns it may be better to apply these advantages as they relate to the *dominant* race of the campaign (if the Elven queen thinks you're Attractive, it doesn't matter much what the street-sweeping Kobolds think of you). Note that if applied racially, these advantages will carry little weight with other members of the same race (you're no more Attractive than everybody else at home).

The Rule of 12

If evolution or the creator provides a certain advantage, that advantage generally works. Consequently, racial advantages which require an attribute roll will often work more efficiently than the characteristic might suggest. In game terms this means that in advantages where a characteristic roll is required, members of races with an average of less than 12 in that characteristic will roll at 12 or the individual's actual characteristic, whichever is higher.

Example: The Chromedomes and the Mudheads both have the Danger Sense advantage, which calls for an IQ roll. Average IQ for a Mudhead is 9, but the average for a Chromedome is 14. A Mudhead of average IQ would roll for Danger Sense at 12 or less, whereas an average Chromedome could use his actual IQ of 14. Likewise a genius Mudhead with an IQ of 15 could use his actual IQ for rolls. However a retarded Chromedome of IQ 11 would be stuck at that roll – his race lost their instinctive proficiency when racial IQ rose to 12.

Allies see p. B23

This advantage should not be used to indicate a political alliance. In game terms such alliances merely mean "this race is not our enemy" and carry no special game benefits.

A more proper racial use of this advantage would be a race, every adult member of which is "bonded" to a member of another race, sentient or animal.

Ambidexterity see p. B19

Bilaterally symmetrical vertebrate races are assumed to have an "on side" and an "off side," just as humans tend to be

right- or left-handed, unless the Ambidexterity advantage is bought. GMs may ignore this advantage as meaningless as regards non-bilaterally symmetrical races (e.g., octopoids, where many limbs radiate out from a central hub).

Animal Empathy see p. B19

The GM may rule that this will only work on creatures with some degree of biological similarity to the race in question. This advantage might not work on energy creatures made from pure mana, for instance. This advantage will also probably not work against true *monsters* – magical or mythical creatures created through sorcery or summoned into the world.

Charisma see p. B19

The force of personality which makes an individual or a race Charismatic is considered to be universal. Charisma always works, no matter how different from each other the user and the usee. Racial Charisma even works against members of the same race (Charismatic races tend to be harmonious, with everybody reacting to each other at whatever the bonus is).

Clerical Investment see p. B19

In a multiracial theocratic government, it is possible that a certain race would be officially designated a priest race, in which case this advantage would be suitable as a 5-point racial advantage. The GM could also declare a certain race as "holy people," with various divinely-granted special powers. In such a case, this advantage would be appropriate at higher point values.

Empathy see p. B20

See *Animal Empathy*, above. Also note that in a campaign that uses psi powers, this is a psi ability and so the entire race will be psionic. The GM should carefully weigh the consequences of introducing an entire race of telepaths into the campaign before giving a race this advantage.

Legal Enforcement Powers see p. B21

It is possible that in a multi-racial empire all members of the dominant race would have this advantage to some degree. It is also possible that an autocratic government would place one entire race in charge of security, as police or enforcers. Note that in such cases Legal Enforcement Powers would likely be somewhat curtailed when dealing with one's own race.

Magery

see p. B21

The GM should carefully weigh the consequences of introducing an entire race of mages into the campaign before giving a race this advantage. Notably, entire races of mages are hard to justify in a “rare” magic campaign.

Magic Resistance

see p. B21

Magic-resistant races will completely lack mages, possibly putting them at a severe disadvantage in a fantasy world. Optionally, the GM may allow PC members of such races to “sell off” *all* of their Magic Resistance in order to become mages. Such characters might well be regarded as freaks and have a bad Reputation amongst their kind.

Military Rank

see p. B22

Since Military Rank is usually relative to one’s unit, this is not normally suited for use as a racial advantage. Even if the entire race makes up a feared and respected crack military organization, that should probably be represented as racial Status and Reputation. With regards to their own unit, most members of that race would still have Rank 0.

Patron

see p. B24

There are several ways in which a whole race could have a Patron. Suppose, for instance, that the race is powerful and tight-knit. Telepathy or hive nature would help communication problems, but isn’t necessary. If there is a significant chance that any member of the race will receive help from any other members of the race when he gets in trouble, the race is its own Patron!

Or a super-powerful individual, or group of individuals, might “play god” (in fact, the patron might *be* a god) to a species, coming to the rescue in times of need. (For a science fiction example of this type of godlike Patron, see E.E. “Doc”

Smith’s Arisians in the Lensman series.) That would also qualify as a true racial Patron.

In any case, the important thing for a Patron to qualify as racial is that he, she or it has a chance of coming to help in any time of difficulty to any individual. Being willing to help out the capital city in case of siege is not enough.

The GM should be careful about letting the race take a superpowerful being such as a deity for a Patron. If other gods in the campaign intervene in the affairs of their worshippers regularly, this shouldn’t present a problem.

Psionics

see p. B22

None of the races found in this book are built with racial psionics, but if the GM allows psionic individuals in his campaign, he may want to design psionic races as well, using either the rules in the *Basic Set* or those from *GURPS Psionics*.

Reputation

see p. B23

Some racial disadvantages can actually lead to a race developing a good Reputation among others in the community. These include Code of Honor, Honesty, Truthfulness, and Sense of Duty.

Toughness

see p. B23

Note that additional DR can be purchased far more economically as the new racial advantage Damage Resistance (p. 22).

Unusual Background

see p. B23

This advantage is not suitable for racial use. Even if the entire species has a background that would be considered “strange” to humans, it is not an oddity within the culture – after all, everyone shares it! It would still be possible for individuals of the race to purchase this advantage.

Racial Disadvantages

As with advantages, many racial disadvantages will make sense only if the GM defines some arbitrary norm. For a disadvantage to qualify as *racial*, it must represent a handicap with respect to the majority of races in the campaign, or at least the dominant race in the campaign.

Many physical disadvantages are handicaps only by comparison to “normal” members of the same race. Physical disadvantages unsuitable for racial use include Age, Lameness, One Arm, One Eye, One Hand, One Leg, Overweight, Skinny, Terminally Ill, and Youth. See the sidebar on p. 7 for more information on physical appearance and disadvantages. The GM should always remember that a disadvantage that doesn’t affect the character is *not* worth any points! Finally, the GM should think before making a race insane. Races which are seriously out of touch with reality are probably headed for extinction, or at least subjugation. Disadvantages which would seriously reduce a race’s chance of survival include Major or Severe Delusions, Megalomania, Paranoia, and Severe Phobias. Minor Delusions, mild Obsessions, Phobias, and Quirks aren’t as dangerous.

Addiction/Alcoholism

see p. B30

For racial applications the GM should normally use Dependency (see p. 35). Note that any race with severe alcoholism is probably on the decline or on the bottom of the social ladder.

Combat Paralysis

see p. B32

At first glance, this may not seem to be a suitable racial disadvantage. But this type of behavior is very common in nature, where many real-world species are neurologically programmed to freeze when threatened. This can be combined with phobias about violence and possibly some form of Pacifism to create a truly interesting race of cowards!

Dependents

see p. B38

As with Allies (see p. 18). To qualify as a dependent, the bonded race would have to be rather weak and vulnerable.



Dwarfism *see Inconvenient Size, p. 36*

Enemies *see p. B39*

Under normal circumstances, this disadvantage is not suitable for racial use. The GM is advised to use Intolerance or bad Reputation, rather than Enemies, whenever possible. Enemies is only appropriate racially when the enemy race spends a significant portion of its time and energy looking for members of the race with the disadvantage. Racial enemies will seldom appear at frequencies greater than 9 or less (an exception might be a very primitive race with a formidable predator as an Enemy). For civilized races, the enemy appears on a 9 or less if the groups are actively at war (declared or not), and 6 or less if the groups are technically at peace, or if the race is normally well defended.

Eunuch *see p. B28*

For reasons that should be obvious, Eunuch is not suitable as a racial disadvantage. Certain subraces (see sidebar, p. 8), however, may be racially sterile. Likewise, crosses between two subraces might result in racially sterile offspring, like the terrestrial mule. In such cases, the disadvantage should be called "Sterile."

Flashbacks *see p. B240*

As a racial disadvantage, this can be interpreted as either a tendency for members of the race to revert to instinctive behavior, or as a tendency for members of the race to suffer from involuntary (and traumatic) episodes of "racial memory." The GM should specify at least one source of stress that is particularly likely to set off Flashbacks.

Gigantism *see Inconvenient Size, p. 36*

Illiteracy *see p. B33*

It is possible for a race to be neurologically incapable of comprehending written symbols. However, this disadvantage carries no additional point value in a campaign where illiteracy is the norm (see *Taboo Traits*, p. 11).

Kleptomania *see p. B34*

This tendency is found in such earthly species as the jackdaw and the pack rat.

Lecherousness *see p. B34*

There are several ways to interpret this.

1) The race spends so much time mating that individuals have little time for other pursuits.

2) Members of the race suffer severe mental or physical harm when deprived of the opposite sex (this is probably better bought as a Dependency; see p. 35).

3) This race is strongly attracted to members of another race, which does not normally reciprocate their attraction. This last would almost certainly qualify the race for some sort of Odious Racial Habit as well.

Mute *see p. B29*

Races with magical or psionic Telepathy, or any other mode of communication that is as efficient as speech, do not qualify for the Mute disadvantage. However, the GM should allow those races with alternate modes of communication to pay no cost for this mode, or receive a substantial discount, depending on how much more versatile and efficient than speech the new communication form is.

Odious Personal Habit *see p. B26*

Races known to exhibit particularly vile behavior qualify for the *Odious Racial Habit* disadvantage. This is identical to an Odious Personal Habit, but it is a trait of an entire race, not just an individual. Individuals who do not exhibit their race's Odious Racial Habits still receive the disadvantage – others will *assume* that the individual is as bad as the rest of its species! An individual's personal Reputation could eventually offset the reaction penalties from an Odious Racial Habit.

Paranoia *see p. B35*

See the caution against racial insanity (p. 19), but remember, you're not paranoid when everybody really is out to get you! Races from exceptionally dangerous areas may well *need* to be paranoid. It only becomes an inconvenience when members of that race visit safer climes.

Phobias *see p. B35*

Like Paranoia, a racial phobia may actually be a survival trait in certain environments. For example, a race from a swamp riddled with poisonous snakes might need to become Severely Ophiophobic. But what happens when that race's delegation is seated next to the Serpent Men at the Imperial court?

Reputation *see p. B17*

Perhaps the most common racial disadvantage of all. While it may be possible to conceal a personal tendency towards Kleptomania or Bad Temper, when such tendencies are species-wide it will rapidly become known that wise travelers keep their wallets in hand when around race X, and don't insult the members of race Y. Disadvantages that lend themselves to Reputations include Bad Temper, Berserk, Bloodlust, Bully, Compulsive Behavior, Compulsive Lying, Cowardice, Delusions, Fanaticism, Gluttony, Greed, Gullibility, Impulsiveness, Intolerance, Jealousy, Kleptomania, Laziness, Lecherousness, Megalomania, Miserliness, Odious Racial Habit, Overconfidence, Paranoia, Phobia, Pyromania, Sadism, Shyness, Stubbornness, Unluckiness, and Weak Will. Of course, some races are simply the victims of prejudice, and have no intrinsic traits which merit their bad reputations.

Skinny *see p. B29*

If the GM wants to create a race emaciated to the point of fragility, he should simply take a negative modifier to racial HT and ST, with perhaps a Vulnerability (see p. 38) to crushing attacks. The skinniness is a special effect! The Fragile disadvantage (see p. 36) might also be a substitute for Skinny.

Split Personality *see p. B37*

It would mean a great deal of extra work for the GM to design a race where every individual has two distinct personalities. However, the GM can tie radical personality swings to biological processes.

Stuttering *see p. B29*

It is most unlikely that a sentient race would ever evolve a language they all stuttered in! It is quite likely, however, that some races would have excessive trouble pronouncing the local *lingua franca*. If the race has other means of communication (psionics, magical telepathy, etc.), that *isn't* affected by this disadvantage, then they shouldn't receive any points for it!

Racial Skills

A distinction must be drawn between *racial skill bonuses* and *racially learned skills*.

Racial Skill Bonus

A *racial skill bonus* is a natural talent for a certain skill. It is expressed as, for instance, “+1 Forgery” or “+3 Bard.” Not every member of the race has the skill. Individuals get the benefit of the bonus only after they pay at least a half-point to actually learn the skill – not on default use.

The cost for a +1 racial bonus is equal to *half* the cost (from the table on p. B44) to learn the skill at DX (for physical skills) or IQ (for mental skills). The cost for a +2 racial bonus is equal to *half* the cost for IQ+1 or DX+1, and the cost for a +3 racial bonus is equal to *half* the cost for IQ+2 or DX+2. No racial skill bonus should ever exceed +3.

Racial skill bonuses apply to all of that skill’s specializations, even those which normally *require* specialization, such as Survival and Engineer.

Group Skill Bonuses

Occasionally, the GM may wish to make a certain race gifted in an *entire field* of endeavor. The archetypical fantasy race with such a knack are the skilful Dwarves (see p. 50). Group skill bonuses are designed to make this easy for the GM.

A group skill bonus can be bought for any reasonably related group of skills that the GM decides upon – including the skill groups in the *Basic Set*, with the exception of the Combat/Weapon, Magical, Psionic, and Thief/Spy groups. The cost is 6 points per +1 with those skills. It is recommended that GMs treat the Science group as a special case, and divide it into two sub-groups, each costing 6 points per +1: soft sciences (Anthropology, History, Literature, Psychology, etc.) and hard sciences (Alchemy, Architecture, Meteorology, Physiology, etc.). The Research skill should be regarded as belonging to both subgroups. Group skill bonuses should never be allowed on a less than racial basis. *Example:* Dwarves have a +3 with all Craft skills for 18 points.

The GM who wishes to grant a race a bonus with a small number of related skills – such as a small subset of one of the

groups in the *Basic Set* – can do so, and may amend the point cost to the extent that he finds reasonable. *Example:* Gnomes (see p. 50) have a +4 to Craft skills, but this does not apply to skills involving metalworking or engineering. The GM rules that Gnomes only have to pay 3 points per plus, or 12 points total.

Racially Learned Skills

A *racially learned skill* is an actual *automatic* level of proficiency which every member of the race acquires. In most cases, this will be innate or instinctive. For example, a race with padded feet might get an automatic proficiency in Stealth.

A racially learned skill is expressed as, for instance, “Alchemy at IQ,” or “Poetry at IQ+2.” Note that the actual level of skill possessed by an individual member of a race will vary according to the underlying attribute score of that individual. It is assumed that, while every member of the race receives the same instruction (or has the same feet!), the more intelligent members are able to apply the knowledge more efficiently and creatively. The “Rule of 12” does *not* apply to racially learned skills. Point cost of racially learned skills is figured according to the chart on page B44.

For skills where specialization is required, the GM may either set the specialization for the whole race or allow the player to select his character’s specialization.

Effects of Experience

Racial skill bonuses (including *group skill bonuses*) can never be increased through experience. When improving a skill through experience, disregard the racial bonus and calculate the new level based solely upon the points spent, then apply the racial skill bonus to the *final* skill level. For example, if a race has +1 Bard, it would cost a member of that race only 1 point to have Bard at IQ. If that character later wanted to raise Bard to IQ+1, it would cost 1 more point.

Racially learned skills may be increased the same as normally bought skills, either when the character is created or through experience. For example, if a certain race has Bow at DX, it would cost a character 4 points, straight from the chart on p. B44, to increase his skill to DX+1.

New Racial Advantages

Below are advantages that can be used to provide exotic abilities for fantasy races. This is not intended to be a complete list of all possible nonhuman powers. The GM is encouraged to come up with all the original nonhuman advantages he can think of. Many of the following advantages were adapted from meta-human powers in *GURPS Supers*. The GM desiring still more exotic abilities for his fantasy races is referred to that source for further inspiration.

When an advantage can be enhanced or limited in some special way, this will be noted in the description. The price for these enhancements and limitations is given as a percentage of the cost of the advantage. Enhancements increase the cost of the advantage (e.g., +10%); limitations reduce the cost (e.g., -10%). All enhancements and limitations are totalled before figuring cost. An advantage with +50% in enhancements and -30% in limitations has a net 20% extra cost. However, no matter what limitations are taken, the final cost of an advantage can never be less than 25% of the base cost.

Amphibious

10 points

The race is equally at home on land and in the water. Amphibians do not need the Swimming skill (p. B49); they automatically swim at their normal Move rate. Amphibians must still breathe (but see the *Gills* advantage on p. 25). There is no cost (positive or negative) for an aquatic race that can function normally in water but cannot function on land.

Body of Stone

8 points/level

The species is made of rock (this usually implies a silicon-based metabolism). The race gains PD 1 for every 4 levels (maximum PD 6) and DR 2 for every 3 levels. Damage from punches and kicks is raised by +2, but Move is reduced 20%.

Sonic and vibratory attacks are automatically “armor piercing” against stone creatures. This means that only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the target’s DR (round up) is effective.

Special Enhancement: The race’s body is amorphous rather than crystalline, and does not suffer the extra effect from sonic or vibratory attacks +30%.



Special limitation: The race cannot switch out of Body of Stone form. This is not especially crippling, though they look peculiar. -25%, plus the potential of Ugly or Hideous Appearance. This limitation should normally be applied to races with this advantage.

Brachiator **5 points**

The race can swing on vines and through the branches of trees with great speed and skill. They get Acrobatics at DX-2 and Climbing at DX for free. If the race has a racial average ST of 11 or less, individuals must use four limbs to brachiate. If the race has a racial average ST of 12 or more, individuals just need one pair of arms. Base Move while Brachiating is half the race's ground Move.

Breath-Holding **2 points/level**

Each level doubles the length of time that members of the race can hold their breath (see p. B91). This advantage can be combined with the Breath Control skill (p. B48).

Cast Iron Stomach **15 points**

The race can eat almost anything (gristle, spoiled milk, mildewy grain, half-rotten vegetables, fuzzy blue-green meat) as long as it's of the same biochemical base. Reduce food costs by 75%. Individuals receive a +4 to resist the effects of any poison, disease, or drug not tailored expressly for the race. Compare with Universal Digestion, p. 32.

Catfall **10 points**

The race subtracts 5 yards from a fall automatically (this is considered an automatic Acrobatics success; don't check again for it). A successful DX roll *halves* all damage taken from a fall.

Chameleon **7 points/level**

The race can blend into the surroundings. In any situation where being seen is a factor, members of the race have an additional +2 per level to their Stealth skill when perfectly still, or a +1 per level if moving.

This advantage will not help in the dark, or against someone relying on senses other than sight. Clothing reduces this bonus to +1 per level when motionless, with no bonus if moving, unless the clothing is, in the GM's judgement, camouflaged relative to the specific background at the moment.

Claws **See Teeth, Claws, and Strikers, p. 10**

Clinging **25 points**

The race can walk or crawl on walls or ceilings. Move is halved while using this advantage. An individual can stop at any point and stick to the surface without fear of falling.

If an individual is falling and tries to grab a wall before hitting the ground, the GM first decides whether the wall is within reach. If it is, a successful DX roll is needed to touch the wall. Once the wall has been grabbed, a successful ST roll must be made, modified at -1 for each 5 yards fallen. If the ST roll is failed, 5 yards are subtracted from the distance because of the slowing effect the failed clinging attempt had on the fall.

Special Limitation: Individuals can only cling to one particular substance. -30% for common materials like wood, rock, brick or metal. -50% for rare materials such as ice, rubber, etc.

Cultural Adaptability **25 points**

The race has an instinctive knack for getting along with everybody, no matter how physically or psychologically alien. This advantage includes 1 level of Charisma, 2 levels of Language Talent, and a +1 group skill bonus with the Social Skills group. When confronted with a completely alien concept or custom, the individual gets an IQ roll to understand what's going on and respond correctly. Finally, members of the race get an IQ roll when confronted with a Odious Racial Habit. If successful, they avoid the negative reaction modifier (note that this does not apply to Odious Personal Habits, only Odious Racial Habits).

Damage Resistance **Variable**

This functions as the Toughness advantage (see p. B23), but can be purchased in as many levels as desired. This DR will protect against both physical and energy attacks, but will not aid versus purely mental attacks such as most magic or psi. This may be armor, a magical force field, thick skin, or any other mechanism the GM may devise. The cost of this advantage depends on whether it applies against everything, or only against certain types of attacks. For example, a race might have extra resistance only against fire- or heat-based attacks.

Against Everything: 3 points per level of DR.

Common Attack Type: 2 points per level of DR.

Occasional Attack Type: 1 point per level of DR.

Rare Attack Type: ½ point per level of DR.

Very Rare Attack Type: ¼ point per level of DR.

Common Attack Types: Crushing (boulders, falling, fists, maces, trampling), Cutting/Impaling (arrows, claws, spears, swords), generic Energy, generic Living Things ("natural" attacks such as claws, feet, horns, and teeth – even Venom), generic Magic, Metal (such as weapons with metal heads).

Occasional Attack Types: Air, Cold/Ice, Earth, Electricity, Fire/Heat, Light, Plants, Sonic, Water.

Rare Attack Types: Acid, Poison, Radiation, Vibration.

Very Rare Attack Types: Cheese, Citrus Fruit, Mud.

Dark Vision

25 points

The race can see in absolute darkness, using some means other than light, radar or sonar. It cannot detect colors in the darkness.

Special Enhancement: The race can see colors in the dark, +20%.

Discriminatory Smell

15 points

The race can differentiate between (and recognize) people, places, and things by their odors. Members of the race have a sense of smell far beyond the human norm, and can determine distinctive odors for practically everything and anything they may encounter. An individual may memorize an odor by sniffing it for at least one minute and making a successful IQ roll. If this roll is failed, the individual may not attempt to memorize that odor again for at least one full day. Individuals get +4 on any task that utilizes the sense of smell (plus any Acute Smell bonuses), and receive +4 to the Tracking skill.

Doesn't Breathe

20 points

The race absorbs the oxygen it needs through osmosis. Individuals can't be strangled, and are immune to most gases (their bodies won't absorb anything harmful). Individuals will still suffocate in a vacuum, or anywhere else where there is no oxygen available. The race can live underwater as long as the water contains oxygen.

Doesn't Eat or Drink

10 points

The race does not require food. Its bodies are powered in some other manner (solar power or ambient magical energy, for example). Note that a sufficiently rare power source would qualify the race for the Dependency disadvantage; see p. 35.

Doesn't Sleep

20 points

The race does not need regular dormancy periods. Individuals can operate at full efficiency with only periodic breaks.

Early Maturation

5 points/level

Each level of this advantage halves the time to reach the age of majority (normally 18). A race with one level of this

advantage reaches maturity in 9 years, two levels 4.5 years. A race with one level of Extended Lifespan and one level of Early Maturation reaches maturity in 18 years.

Enhanced Move

10 points/level

Each level of Enhanced Move increases the race's maximum speed by the original Move score in one mode of locomotion (running, swimming, flying, etc.). Move is only increased if the individual is moving along a relatively straight, smooth course. Basic Speed, Dodge and Move in combat are unaffected, but anyone targeting the individual with a missile or thrown weapon will subtract a speed modifier appropriate to the individual's current speed. *Example:* A plains-dwelling race with a Move of 8 buys two levels of Enhanced Move (Running). Members of the race can now run at $8+8+8$, or 24.

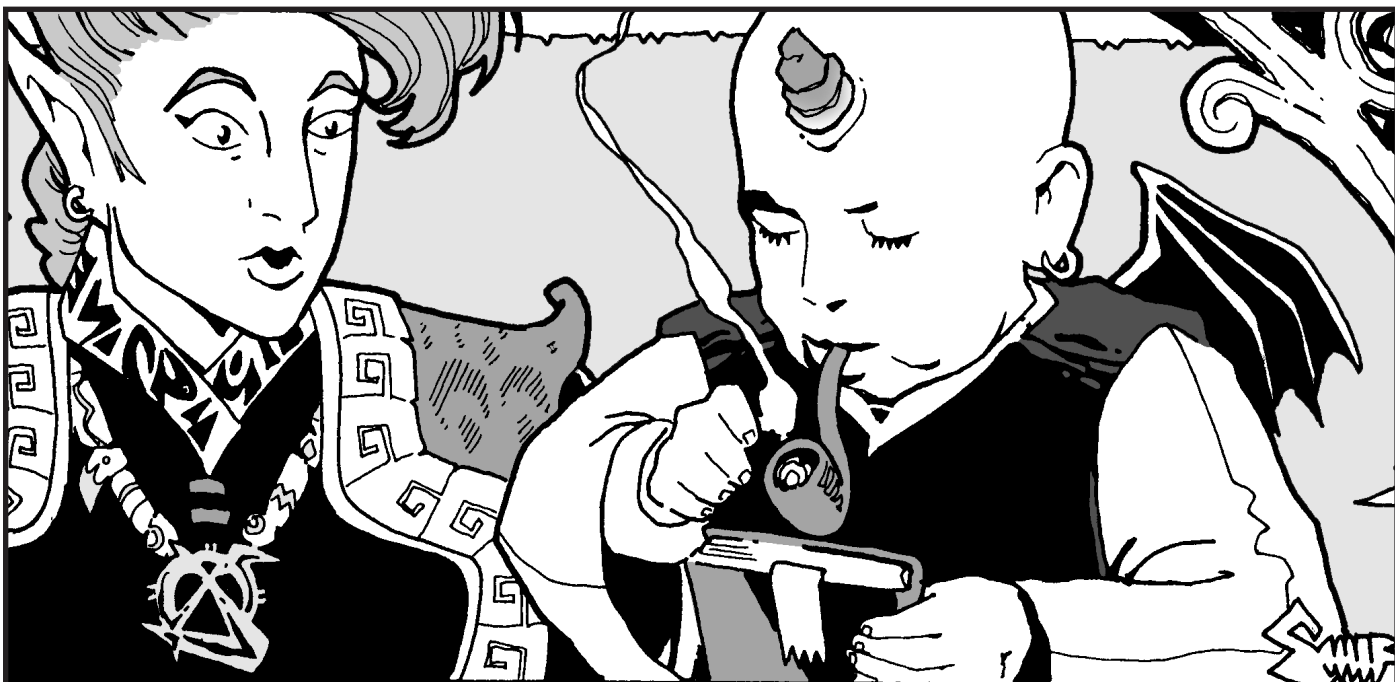
Enhanced Strength

Variable

More so than any other single trait, physical strength and bulk vary widely from species to species, even in the real world. On the other hand, *GURPS* attributes (as presented on p. B13) are essentially designed around a bell curve. While such a curve is capable of modeling most other traits, it clearly fails to reflect the realities of ST. Enhanced ST offers a more realistic way of representing the upper end of the ST spectrum.

Enhanced ST is priced differently from other attributes. It is expensive at low levels to discourage realistic PCs from having unusually high ST scores, but becomes cheaper at higher levels because increasing an already huge ST score reaches a point of diminishing returns – that is, each added point becomes less and less likely to make any real difference in game terms. Enhanced ST costs the usual amount for ST up to 15 (60 points). After that, it costs 10 per point of ST from 16-23, then 5 per point of ST from 24-30, and finally $\frac{1}{2}$ per point of ST from 31 on. *Example:* ST 20 would cost $60 + (5 \times 10) = 110$ points. ST 25 would cost $60 + (8 \times 10) + (2 \times 5) = 150$ points. ST 40 would cost $60 + (8 \times 10) + (7 \times 5) + (10 \times \frac{1}{2}) = 180$ points.

This advantage is used to determine the base ST of the race. Individual ST scores fall on a standard *GURPS* bell curve, but that bell curve is distributed around the race's base ST, not the human norm of ST 10. It costs an individual the same number of



points to raise or lower its ST with respect to the racial average as it costs a human to raise or lower its ST the same number of levels with respect to ST 10. Such adjustments are always bought on the usual attribute chart (p. B13), not according to the costs above. This also applies to improvements made to individual ST during play. Note that a negative individual ST adjustment of -3 or worse counts against the character's disadvantage limit.

Example: An individual ST adjustment of +1 to racial ST costs 10 points and a +4 costs 45 points, while a -1 costs -10 points and a -4 costs -30 points (and counts as a 30-point disadvantage). Enhanced ST is identical in every way to "normal" ST, and should be used to determine size and weight in the usual fashion. However, any kind of natural race with a huge frame and proportional body weight would need a high ST just to be able to move and breathe normally! For such races, the GM should determine how much ST the race has for determining Fatigue, jumping distance and ST-based skills and defaults. This ST is bought at full cost. Then, the GM should determine how much additional ST the race has available only for Contests of ST, ST-based resistance rolls, inflicting damage, shoving things, lifting things, calculating Encumbrance levels, figuring Minimum ST and throwing things. The difference in cost between this total ST and the lower amount of "true" ST that the race possesses is reduced by the following limitation:

Special Limitation: Natural. The race has a huge build to match its mighty ST. This is a combination of No Fatigue Bonus (-30%), No Jumping Bonus (-5%) and Doesn't Affect Skills (-5%). Individual ST adjustments still affect these things. -40%. Note: The GM may choose to mix and match these smaller limitations, or ignore them altogether for truly supernatural species. As well, if the No Fatigue Bonus limitation applies only to spellcasting Fatigue, then that limitation is worth -20%.

Enhanced ST bought with the Natural limitation should be listed as a "split ST," with the first number being the full Enhanced ST and the second, lower, number representing the ST bought without the limitation (i.e., the ST that affects Fatigue, jumping, and skills). Individual ST modifiers, bought on the attribute chart on p. B13, apply to both scores.

Example: The 15' tall Vicious Blob Men have racial Enhanced ST 40, of which only 20 ST affects Fatigue, jumping distance, and skills. Since the first ST 20 applies to everything, it is bought at full price (110). The next 20 levels of ST are bought with the Natural limitation. Enhanced ST 40 would cost 180 points, normally an additional 70 points, but the -40% for the Natural limitation reduces this cost to an extra 42 points. Thus, Blob Men pay $110 + 42 = 152$ points for their ST, which is written as ST 40/20. If an individual Blob Man then buys a personal ST adjustment of +3 on the attribute chart for 30 points, he lists his ST as 43/23. He uses ST 43 when figuring weapon damage or encumbrance, but only ST 23 to power spells, figure his jumping distance or calculate his Climbing default.

In general, Natural races with a racial average ST of 20 or more should also be assessed the Inconvenient Size disadvantage, and be required to pay at least twice as much for specially-made weapons that allow them to take full advantage of their high ST. Armor for such races should likewise be more expensive. Note that bestial races such as intelligent horses probably should get the full Fatigue and jumping benefits of their Enhanced ST, and do not qualify for the Natural limitation. On the other hand, they lack hands and cannot make full use of their great ST. For such races, apply the following limitation instead:

Special Limitation: The race has the No Fine Manipulators disadvantage (the race still gets the full point value for the disadvantage as well). -40%. A GM who wishes to allow physically

powerful, spellcasting beast races may also wish to balance such races by limiting the Fatigue that they have available for spells. This can be accomplished by applying the No Fatigue Bonus limitation to some fraction of the race's ST. ST for hybrid races that are part humanoid and part beast is treated under the Split ST for Hybrid Races rule, p. 11. Special encumbrance rules for four-footed races can be found on p. 14.

Extended Lifespan

5 points/level

An average life cycle is defined as 18 years childhood, 32 years active maturity, and then the onset of progressive aging. One level of Extended Lifespan doubles all these values . . . maturity at 36, onset of aging at 100, rolls begin at every two years, accelerate at 140 and 180. Two levels triples the base values, etc.

Extra Encumbrance

5 points

The race has a "load-bearing frame" and can carry more than a human of the same ST could. *Light* encumbrance is defined as $5 \times$ ST, *Medium* as $10 \times$ ST, *Heavy* as $20 \times$ ST, and *Extra-Heavy* as $30 \times$ ST.

Extra Fatigue

3 points/Fatigue Point

The race's Fatigue is greater than its strength. The race can run farther and fight longer than normal. Extra Fatigue goes into a separate pool that can be used to power extra effort, magical spells, or natural attacks. This pool recharges at the same rate as normal Fatigue, but will only begin to regain points if regular Fatigue (based on ST) has been completely regained first.

Optionally, the GM can allow races with both racial Magery and a racial penalty to ST (i.e., a racial average ST of 9 or less) to buy Extra Fatigue which applies to spellcasting *only*. This costs 2 points per Fatigue point, to a maximum racial average spellcasting Fatigue of 12. This allows small, highly-magical races to go head-to-head with human mages at a reasonable cost.

Extra Hit Points

5 points/Hit Point

The race can take more damage than is normal for its HT, giving it a split HT score (written HT/Hit Points). All rolls versus HT, Contests of HT, resistance with HT, unconsciousness, or survival rolls, and anything else involving HT would be based on the individual's first HT value. Only damage is subtracted from the second value (Hit Points).

Example: A race with a normal HT of 12 could buy its Hit Point total up to 15 for 15 points. This is written HT 12/15. Note that if an individual of this race bought his HT up to 14, his Hit Points would be 17 at no additional cost.

Fearlessness

2 points/level

The race is exceptionally brave or ferocious. Fearlessness is a special case of Strong Will (p. B23) that only applies to Fright Checks and attempts to intimidate. Individuals add their level of Fearlessness to Will when making a Fright Check or resisting the Intimidation skill (p. B246), and subtract it from any Intimidation rolls made against them. Fearlessness is cumulative with regular Strong Will, and also assists when resisting spells that rely upon fear, such as Fear, Panic, or Terror. A race with a high level of Fearlessness will quite often have a racial Reputation of some kind!

Flexibility

15 points

Members of this race can bend their bodies in absolutely any direction. This advantage is like Double-Jointed (p. B20), only more so; a race cannot possess both Flexibility and Double-Jointed. Individuals get a +5 on any Climbing, Escape,

or Mechanic roll. Individuals cannot stretch or squeeze themselves abnormally, but any part of their body may bend any way. This advantage is included in the normal cost of Stretching (p. 31).

Flight **40 points**

Members of the race can fly through the air. The “default” is full-fledged, self-powered flight without wings or gliding surfaces – perhaps using magic or natural jets. Various forms of gliding and winged flight are also possible (see below).

Flight speed is equal to twice normal Move, modified by any levels of the Enhanced Move (Flight) advantage possessed (see p. 23). Races capable of true flight (not Gliding or Winged Flight) may also “fly” at half speed underwater. This advantage does not confer the ability to do complex acrobatics and tight turns; for that, buy the Flight skill (see sidebar, p. 8). See p. B139 for detailed rules on flight. By default, flying beings may hover and may fly as high as they want (as long as they still have air to breathe).

Special Limitation: Winged Flight. The race flies using large, functional wings. Wingspan is typically at least twice height, more if the race is especially large or heavy (GM’s decision). In order to take off, land or maneuver, the individual must have an open area with a radius equal to its wingspan in all directions. If the wings of a winged flyer are bound, or if a wing is crippled (or more than 1/3 of its wings, for multi-winged creatures), it cannot fly. -25%.

Special Limitation: Winged Flight (Small Wings). As above, except the wings are very small, with a wingspan as small as 1/2 height. The race uses its wings only to help steer, not to lift. If the wings are seriously damaged in flight, the individual can land safely on a successful Flight roll. -10%.

Special Limitation: Gliding. This is a limited form of Winged Flight (above). Gliders cannot gain altitude while flying, and descend at 1 hex per turn. Enhanced Move does not affect speed, but each time it is bought, it halves the descent rate. -50%.

Special Limitation: Controlled Gliding. As above, except that controlled gliders *can* gain altitude, by riding updrafts or “thermals” (assuming such currents are present). A normal thermal will raise a glider at 1 hex per turn. If thermals are present, a member of a race with this advantage can locate them on a successful IQ roll (one attempt per minute). -45%.

Special Limitation: Cannot Hover. Not available for Gliding; a glider can’t hover anyway. Individuals must always move with at least half maximum speed when flying. -15%.

Special Limitation: Low Ceiling. The race cannot fly very high, likely for magical reasons. -10% for a 30-foot ceiling, -20% for a 10-foot ceiling, -25% for a 5-foot ceiling. This does not limit speed in any way, but the GM may require Flight rolls to dodge obstacles near the ground.

Full Coordination **50 points/attack**

This is the ability to make more than one physical attack per turn, using each limb only once. The “default” for *GURPS* combat is one attack per turn, regardless of how many limbs one possesses. Each level of Full Coordination allows one extra attack per turn. The maximum number of attacks possible is equal to the number of limbs which may attack.

For instance, a race with four arms could buy Full Coordination/1 and make two attacks per turn, FC/2 and make three attacks per turn, or FC/3 and make four attacks per turn, using each arm once. Physical attacks are limited to punches, kicks, or weapon attacks, not the natural attacks described on pp. 33-35. When an individual with Full Coordination makes an All-Out Attack, it may take one type of bonus for each weapon used,

but all bonuses must be the same. The individual could not, for instance, swing twice with one weapon while aiming carefully with another! If an individual chooses to increase its number of attacks, it gets 50% more attacks than normal, rounding down.

Example: A being with two arms and FC/1 who took an All-Out Attack could make three attacks: two normal attacks plus one bonus attack. A being with four arms and FC/3 could make two additional attacks with an All-Out Attack. To aim two or more weapons at once requires the Independently Focusable Eyes advantage (see p. 26).

Gills **10 points**

Members of the race have the ability to extract oxygen from the water. This allows them to remain submerged indefinitely in normal water. If there is no oxygen to extract, they will still suffocate. The race can still breathe normally out of the water. There is no cost (positive or negative) for a gill-breathing race which cannot breathe air.

Hard to Kill **5 points/level**

The race is incredibly difficult to kill. Each level of this advantage confers a +1 on all HT rolls made for survival. If an individual misses its normal HT roll, but makes it with the Hard to Kill bonus added in, the individual will *appear* dead (a successful Diagnosis roll will reveal signs of life), but will regain consciousness in the normal 1 hour per point of negative HT.

Healing **25 points**

The race has the ability to heal others. The individual must be in physical contact with the subject. On a successful IQ roll, up to 7 hits can be healed. The Fatigue cost of a successful healing is 1 for every 2 hits healed (round up). Failure costs the healer 1d of Fatigue; critical failure also causes the recipient 1d damage.

The healing roll is at -2 when the victim is unconscious, and -2 or worse to cure disease. It can’t restore a lost limb. Freshly broken limbs should be carefully set before healing is attempted, otherwise the healing will result in a crippled limb. Crippled limbs are restored at a -6, and each healer only gets one try at any one limb. Healing cannot bring back the dead.

Note: this works exactly like the Healing Power (p. PS15) – because they are the same thing! If you have the Healing advantage, you are a psi with a Healing Power of 7 and the Healing skill at IQ level. It is assumed that this power works on the user’s own race and on all “similar” races. In a fantasy campaign, all the warm-blooded humanoid races (Elves, Dwarves, Orcs, Halflings, etc.) would be “similar.”

Special Limitation: Works on user’s own race only. -20%. This isn’t available where there is only one intelligent race.

Special Enhancement: Xenohealing. The user can heal creatures quite dissimilar to himself. Examples, assuming the healer is human: “All Mammals” (+20%), “All Earthly Life” (+40%), “All Carbon-Based Life” (+60%), “Anything Alive” (+80%), “Anything Animate” (including the undead) (+100%).

Ice Skates **5 points**

The race can move normally on ice – no DX penalties are incurred for bad or slippery footing. Note that if the race moves normally on ice but *not* on land, the resulting Reduced Move disadvantage will probably more than cancel out the Ice Skates cost. Similar advantages can be invented for species which are uninhibited by snow (“Snow Shoes”) or other difficult terrain.

Immortality

140 points

Members of the race will never die of natural causes and are tough to kill unnaturally! This is simply a combination of Instant Regeneration (p. 30), Immunity to Disease (p. B20), Immunity to Poison (see below), and Unaging (p. 32).

Immunity to Poison

15 points

The race is immune to the effect of any toxins. This doesn't confer immunity to a corrosive substance such as acid – just to bona fide biological or chemical poisons. If there is a question, the GM's decision (as always) rules.

Increased Speed

25 points/level

The race's *Basic Speed* is increased by 1 for each level. This increases Move, Dodge, an individual's place in the combat sequence, and anything else that is based upon Basic Speed.

Independently Focusable Eyes

15 points

The race can focus in two separate directions, allowing an individual to aim two weapons at once, for instance, or to take full advantage of extra limbs.

Races with more than two eyes can buy this advantage again for each additional eye to be focused independently. Three Independently Focusable Eyes would cost 30 points, four would cost 45 points, and so on.

Infravision

15 points

The race's vision extends into the infrared portion of the spectrum, allowing the individual to see varying degrees of heat. Individuals can even see in absolute darkness if the temperature is above 70°. No matter what the temperature, the individual suffers only a -1 when fighting at night, due to the heat emissions of its opponent (assuming the opponent is of a race that emits heat!). Individuals are +2 to see any living beings during daylight if scanning an area visually.

This advantage also allows the race to follow a heat trail when tracking. Add +3 to any Tracking rolls if the trail is no more than an hour old. A sudden flash of heat, such as an Exploding Fireball, acts as a *Flash* (see p. 34) to anyone with Infravision.

Note: Infravision *can* be taken in conjunction with the Blindness disadvantage. Blind creatures with Infravision always operate as though at night. They can only track if the trail is less than one hour old.

Injury Tolerance

Variable

The race does not suffer certain effects of injury that are normally suffered by most living beings. The cost depends on the precise weaknesses eliminated:

• No Blood

5 points

The race does not rely upon a vital bodily fluid like blood for survival. Individuals never have to make Bleeding rolls (see sidebar, p. B130) and are unaffected by blood-borne poisons or drugs.

• No Brain

5 points

While the race may still have a head, its brain is distributed or is not the true seat of consciousness. The special damage effects of blows to the "Brain," "Head," and "Jaw" hit locations are ignored, and blows to the Brain (including thrusts to the eyes) do not score quadruple damage.

• No Cutting/Impaling Bonus

20/30 points

The race has a physiology that is resistant to the shock and bleeding normally caused by Cutting or Impaling weapons.

For 20 points, the race can treat either Cutting or Impaling injury as Crushing damage.

For 30 points, the race can treat both Cutting *and* Impaling attacks as Crushing damage.

• No Neck

5 points

The race has no appreciable neck. Individuals cannot be strangled or choked, and blows to the "Neck" or "Throat" hit locations have no special effects and score no bonus damage.

• No Vitals

5 points

The race has no particularly vital organs. The special effects for damage to the "Groin," "Kidneys," and "Vitals" hit locations are ignored and no bonus damage is scored.

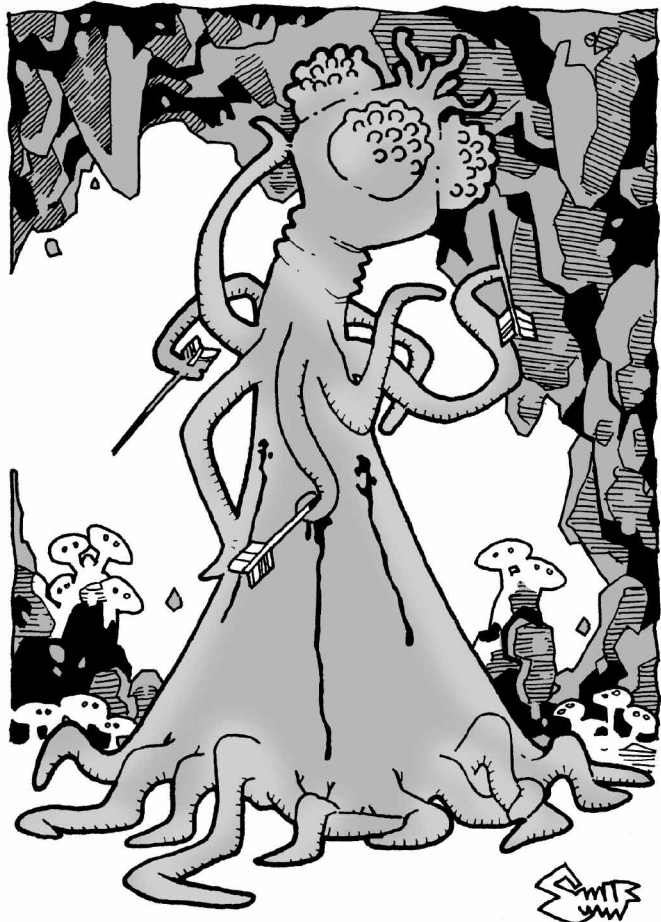
Note: These advantages are usually only appropriate for highly unnatural races.

Insubstantiality

80 points

Members of the race can become insubstantial; perhaps they phase into a different dimension or actually become a "spirit." Individuals can move at their normal rate, and pass through solid objects as though they weren't there. They cannot pick up normal objects or affect them in any way. The GM may rule that certain types of energy barriers or magic spells (e.g., a Pentagram) impede the Insubstantial individual's progress, however. They are unaffected by gravity, and can Move up or down at their normal move.

Physical and energy attacks cannot harm members of the race, but they're still vulnerable to psionic and non-material magical attacks. Physical and energy attacks from an insubstantial individual will only affect insubstantial members of the same race, or creatures under a similar sort of



insubstantiality (GM's determination). An insubstantial individual is at -3 on all spellcasting while in this form.

Although it can pass through solids, the individual must still breathe. When moving through a solid object, treat this as if the individual were swimming underwater for purposes of suffocation. Insubstantial creatures can not materialize inside a solid object.

Insubstantial races must take the Invisible advantage (below) if they are to be unseen when insubstantial.

Special Enhancement: Objects may be carried. They take on the changed form when they are picked up, and regain normal form when put down. This also applies to clothing or armor. Inanimate objects cannot be materialized inside of anything. +10% for No Encumbrance, +20% for Light, +50% for Medium or +100% for Heavy.

Special Enhancement: The race has abilities which can affect the substantial world even while the individual remains insubstantial. +100%.

Special Limitation: The race is always insubstantial and cannot become substantial. -50%. There is no penalty for spellcasting if the race is *always* insubstantial.

Invisibility **40 points**

The race is invisible to normal sight, Infravision and anything else that uses the electromagnetic spectrum. Invisible creatures still make noise, leave footprints and can be smelled, though. If carrying nothing, an invisible individual gets a +9 to Stealth in any situation where being seen would matter. The individual cannot be visually scried, but can be detected by magical devices. The individual doesn't cast a shadow and doesn't show up in mirrors.

Special Enhancement: The race is normally visible, but can become invisible at will. +10%.

Special Enhancement: Objects may be carried. They become invisible when they are picked up, and regain visibility when put down. This also applies to clothing or armor. +10% for No Encumbrance, +20% for Light, +50% for Medium or +100% for Heavy.

Special Limitation: The race can be seen in mirrors. -10%.

Special Limitation: The race casts a shadow! -10%.

Invulnerability **75/100/150 points**

The race is *completely* resistant to damage from some attack form. Knockback can still occur, however. The cost varies according to how common the attack form is, as follows:

Common Attack Type: 150 points

Occasional Attack Type: 100 points

Rare Attack Type: 75 points

Common Attack Types: Crushing (for a resilient blob), Impaling (for a being with no "vitals"), Non-Wooden Weapons (for a Vampire).

Occasional Attack Types: Cold/Ice or Fire/Heat (for races that dwell in extreme cold or heat), Magic (for certain powerful supernatural creatures), Projectiles (for a living whirlwind).

Rare Attack Types: Body Control Spells (for certain undead), Demons, and Undead (for a blessed race).

Note that this is a powerful advantage and should not be used unless ordinary Damage Resistance (p. 22) would truly not suffice. Also note that this is an *expensive* advantage and that many attack forms have cheaper specific defenses (e.g., Immunity to Poison vs. poison, Doesn't Breathe vs. gases, etc.).

Mana Enhancer **Variable**

The race is inherently magical, and individuals actually radiate mana. In some campaigns, this could force the race

underground to hide from unethical mages – one of the few times that a GM may wish to assign a racial Enemy!

For 25 points, the race can increase the local mana level by one step, but only for themselves and persons or things that they're actually touching or carrying.

For 25 more points, this effect extends to everything in the same hex.

Each additional 25 points extends the radius of the effect by one hex. The race can increase local mana by two steps by paying the base cost for their range again, and so on. They must also pay the base cost again for the ability to turn the power on and off.

No individual with the Mana Enhancer power can ever have Magic Resistance; moreover, mages get an IQ + Magery roll to notice a being who emits mana. This advantage does not confer any special ability to cast spells; for that, purchase Magery. Of course, a race which can raise the local mana to "high" or better can cast spells even without Magery.

Example: A race has Mana Enhancer in a 2-hex radius. This costs 25 + 25 = 50 points for the first hex, and 25 more points for another hex of range, for a total of 75. This is the race's base cost. The GM decides the race can turn their ability on and off at will, and pays the base cost again, for a total cost of a whopping 150 points. Contrast this advantage with the Mana Damper natural attack, p. 34. Note that this advantage can be *very* easily abused, and should be kept under strict control – perhaps even reserved for NPC races.

Manual Dexterity **3 points/level**

Each level of this advantage gives the race a +1 to DX, or IQ in some cases, but only on tasks requiring fine motor skills. This skill would help an individual repair a Swiss watch, for example, but not dodge thrown rocks.

Metabolism Control **5 points/level**

The race can control normally involuntary biological functions such as pulse, blood flow, digestion, and respiration. This allows the individual to enter a deathlike trance; a physician unfamiliar with the race's metabolism must win a Quick Contest of Skills (Physician-2 vs. HT) to realize that the individual isn't dead. While in this state the individual is completely unaware of its surroundings.

The individual may set a mental "alarm clock" that will awaken it after a certain amount of time has passed. The individual will automatically awaken if it takes any damage. Each level of Metabolism Control reduces by 10% the amount of oxygen the individual normally needs to stay alive. Each level doubles the amount of time it can safely go without food or water.

Microscopic Vision **4 points/level**

The race's eyes can magnify tiny details that might otherwise only be revealed by a magnifying glass or microscope. Each level doubles the race's magnification factor. **Example:** 4 points = 2x, 8 points = 4x, 24 points = 64x, and so on.

Mimicry **15 points**

The race can duplicate any familiar sound. A new sound becomes familiar if the individual spends five minutes listening to it and makes a successful roll versus IQ. This ability can also be used to imitate voices. To memorize someone's voice the individual must spend at least one hour listening to that person talk, either live or through magical means, and make a successful roll versus IQ.

Mindshare

A race's individuals may each "share" consciousness between several bodies. A personality may be shared by several telepathic bodies who seem like individuals, or each individual may be a central mind-unit controlling many "drones." In an extreme case, a whole species is, mentally, a single individual.

Cost for the race's mental characteristics is based on personality. Cost for physical characteristics is based on the cost for an average "drone" – the central body, if any, is disregarded. Several options are available when building a Mindshare race. First, the GM must decide what type of link the race has.

Type of Link

Hive Mind: 20 points

Racial Memory: 40 points

Global Consciousness: 60 points

A *hive mind* creature consists of a single central organism that controls the actions of many individual bodies. The central mind is usually large and well-protected; if the brain dies, the drones, and the character perish with it. The drones (see below) of a hive mind can never be intelligent – by definition all its bodies are controlled by the central brain.

PCs or NPCs that are members of a hive cannot *always* have the full attention of the central mind. Instead, the drone must purchase the hive mind as a Patron – roll each time a significant decision must be made by the drone.

A creature with a *racial memory* has access to the accumulated memories of every individual body. There must be some sort of physical act to transfer memories between bodies – direct contact, a pilgrimage to the character's home, an hour of meditation, or something else non-trivial. Otherwise the link is really a global consciousness.

A *global consciousness* link means that the bodies are sharing knowledge in real-time. Whenever something happens to one of a character's bodies, all other bodies are aware of it. All memories and experiences of one body are available to all. If there is a range factor involved (see below), any intelligent drone must make a Fright Check at +4 any time he moves out of contact range with the rest of his "self."

Type of Drone

Mindless: -10 points

Maintenance: 5 points

Defense: 15 points

Intelligent: 25 points

The first three types are only appropriate to a hive mind. A *mindless* drone is just that – if cut off from the controlling brain, it cannot do anything at all. It will quickly die, as it won't eat, drink, or defend itself.

A *maintenance* drone will only take the most rudimentary actions when out of touch with the brain – eating, drinking, seeking shelter, etc. It is not capable of any true thought or activity, and will not defend itself if attacked.

A *defense* drone will act as above, but will also protect itself if attacked. A group of defense drones that have been isolated from the central mind will act together to protect their existence. Other than self-preservation, however, the drones won't initiate any independent actions.

An *intelligent* drone is a bit of an oxymoron. It is fully cognitive, and can continue to function as a PC or NPC even when isolated from the brain. A race of intelligent drones might just be telepathic individuals sharing a mass mind, or perhaps there is a central figure that is the repository of the "memory banks" (see above).

Variable

Mindshare Distance

The range at which Mindshare is maintained varies from species to species.

Touch only: -15 points

1 mile: 0 points

100 miles: 10 points

1,000 miles: 20 points

Planet-wide: 30 points

Universal (a single plane only): 60 points

Multi-universal (any plane, any time): 75 points

Number of Drones

2-9: -10 points

10-99: 0 points

100-999: 10 points

1,000-9,999: 20 points

Cost increases by a further 10 points for each power of 10. If the number of drones is large enough, it is possible for the whole race to be a single individual. If the number of drones is small, the race will be made up of a large number of individuals, each of whom owns several bodies.

Modifiers

Several options are available to customize a particular mind-sharing race. Any species that Mindshares in a way that can be detected by non-telepathic means receives a -20% limitation on total cost. In a fantasy campaign, this will usually mean magic. If the communication can be blocked or jammed, this is an additional -10% limitation. If replacement drones are exceptionally easy or exceptionally hard to acquire, the GM may define an appropriate enhancement or limitation.

Morph

40 points

The race is able to assume the form of any creature. The creature being duplicated must be physically present (although magical scrying or an illusion may suffice at the GM's discretion) or memorized. A morph can memorize IQ number of forms. A memorized form can be "overwritten" with a new one.

Mass does not change, although the morph can still take the appearance of a much larger or smaller creature by increasing or decreasing its body density.

The morph gains the physical appearance of the target (including its voice), but not the knowledge, skills or memories. The morph retains all its own skills, and its attributes remain unchanged. It takes 1 full turn for morphing to finish, and the same amount of time to change back into its original form. Normal clothing can be mimicked (GM determination when clothing is "abnormal"), but cannot be removed because it's part of the morph's body.

When impersonating someone, there is a chance that the morph will be discovered by his associates, friends or family. Every time the morph encounters someone who is familiar with the person being imitated, that person gets an IQ roll to spot the difference modified as follows.

Casual acquaintance: -4

Daily acquaintance: -2

Friend: +2

Close friend: +4

Close family: +6

Empathy advantage: +3

If the morph has the Acting skill at 12+, viewers roll at -2; if it has Fast Talk at 12+, viewers roll at -1.



Nictating Membrane **10 points/level**

The races' eyes are covered by a transparent lens. This allows them to see normally under water, and will help protect the eyes from sand, gas, and so on. Any time an individual is hit in the eyes with a gaseous or liquid attack the lens provides the eyes, only, PD 2, DR 1 per level (maximum PD 6). The lens also adds +3 per level to all HT rolls concerned with eye damage, and can be opened and closed just like an eyelid.

Parabolic Hearing **4 points/level**

The race can "zoom in" on a particular sound, or eavesdrop on a specific area, and is capable of separating the background noise from the desired sounds.

Each level of Parabolic Hearing doubles the range at which a given sound can be heard at "conversational volume" (i.e., without a Hearing roll). For example, whispers or leaves rustling can normally be heard without a Hearing roll at ¼ yard, quiet conversation or a weapon being drawn stealthily at ½ yard, normal conversation or spellcasting at 1 yard, loud conversation at 4 yards, and combat between armored foes at 16 yards.

Passive Defense **25 points/level up to 6**

It is much harder to hit this race. This might be related to speed, a "sixth sense" that warns against upcoming attacks, or simply natural armor. Each level of Passive Defense adds 1 to PD, up to PD 6.

If external armor is worn, the individual's own PD will not add to the armor's PD; use only the PD of the outer layer. Note that this means that a race with natural PD can actually *lose* PD by donning armor. This *is* realistic! For example, chainmail worn over a hard carapace will tend to catch sword points that would slide off of the carapace alone, and heavy armor will tend to offset natural agility.

Penetrating Call **5 points**

The race can produce a loud and distinctive call like a lion's roar or a wolf's howl – or a banshee's wail. This call can be used to command attention or signal from a distance. A penetrating call can be heard for at least 1d miles on a quiet night.

In addition, if an individual sounds its call within 30 hexes of anyone who is unaware of the individual's presence, the listener must make a Fright Check. This is non-magical fright, and may have no effect whatsoever upon characters with little or no fear of wild animals or strange monsters (GM's option).

Modifiers to Fright Check: -1 at night, -1 if the area is very quiet (GM's option), -1 if the area is physically isolated (GM's option), -2 if the victim is (or believes himself to be) alone, -2 if the individual is within 10 hexes of the victim, or -5 if the individual is within one hex of the victim.

Perfect Balance **15 points**

The race has no problem keeping its footing, no matter how narrow the walking surface, under normal conditions. The individual can walk on tightropes, ledges, tree limbs or anything else without having to make a DX roll. If the surface is wet, slippery, or otherwise unstable the individual is at +6 on all rolls to keep its feet. In combat, the individual receives a +4 to DX on any rolls to keep its feet or to avoid being knocked down. This advantage adds +1 to the Acrobatics, Flight, and Piloting skills.

Polarized Eyes **5 points**

The race's eyes adjust instantaneously to changing light conditions. If the individual has Dark or Night Vision (p. B22), it can instantly adjust from bright light to darkness. If the individual is caught in a bright flash of light, its eyes will automatically adjust so that the maximum time it is blinded or stunned from the flash is 2 turns.

Pressure Support **Variable**

For 5 points, the race can survive at pressures up to 10 times the normal atmospheric pressure on its home world.

For 10 points, the race can withstand up to 100 times normal pressure.

For 15 points, the race is effectively *immune* to pressure; it can survive the crushing pressure of the ocean depths, or the core of a gas giant.

This advantage keeps the entire body at a constant internal pressure with respect to a *uniform* external pressure. This means that while it confers resistance to any damage that may result from attacks which employ extreme barometric pressure or which crush the entire body, it provides no defense against *localized* pressure changes such as a weapon blow or a vise applied to the head.

Racial Memory **15/40 points**

A member of this race can access the memories of its direct genetic ancestors.

For 15 points, the talent is vague and totally passive. The GM secretly makes an IQ roll in any situation that the individual's ancestors may have encountered. On a success, the character gets a vague sense of *deja vu* about the situation. It is up to the individual to interpret this.

For 40 points, if the individual wants to know something, the GM first determines whether the individual's ancestors knew the answer. Then the GM rolls vs. the individual's IQ (do not use the "rule of 12") to see if it accesses the information. If the ancestors didn't have the answer, the individual will know that if the roll succeeds. On a critical failure, the individual will believe his ancestors didn't know, even if they really did. This advantage requires one turn of absolute concentration (GM may require more elaborate preparations to recall very ancient memories.)

Radar Sense 50 points + 1 point/hex radius

The individual perceives a complete radar “picture” of everything going on around it. It can sense shapes and objects, but not colors. Normally, the denser an object is, the easier it is to see; the individual must make a Vision roll to make out details about less-dense objects. On the other hand, radar can look right through water, clouds, leaves, and so on. The GM should specify whether this is true radar or some more magical sense.

Special Enhancement: You can “see” *inside* any object within your radius. +40%.

Special Enhancement: You can see colors. +20%.

Recovery 10 points

The race recovers from unconsciousness very quickly. Instead of staying unconscious for *hours*, recovery time is measured in *minutes*. In any situation where unconsciousness is measured in *minutes*, recovery time is measured in *seconds*.

Reduced Sleep 10 points

The race operates efficiently without much sleep. All Fatigue losses due to missed sleep (see sidebar, p. B134) accumulate weekly rather than daily.

Regeneration 10/25/50/100 points

The race recovers from damage much faster than normal. This does *not* allow individuals to regrow lost limbs (but see *Regrowth*, below). The individual automatically has the Rapid Healing advantage (p. B22) at no extra cost. Cost of this advantage depends on the speed of the regeneration.

Slow Regeneration: the individual recovers 1 HT (or Hit Point) every 12 hours, in addition to normal healing. 10 points.

Regular Regeneration: the individual recovers 1 HT per hour. 25 points.

Fast Regeneration: the individual recovers 1 HT per minute. 50 points.

Instant Regeneration: the individual recovers 1 HT per turn. 100 points.

Regrowth 40 points

The race regrows lost limbs! A lost ear, finger, or toe (claw, pseudopod, etc.) will regrow in 1d weeks, a lost hand or foot in 1d+1 months, and a lost eye, arm, or leg in 2d+2 months.

Special Limitation: The race cannot regrow hands, feet or limbs, only small extremities. -50%.

Secret Communication 20 points

The race has a method of communication that cannot be perceived by other races – telepathy on a weird band, speech beyond anyone else’s range of hearing or just race-specific empathy. The only telepathic race in a non-telepathic universe would have this advantage, for instance. Note that the shared consciousness of a race with Mindshare is *already* secret – do not buy this advantage for such a race. The GM may allow an individual to buy the ability to comprehend another race’s private communication as an advantage. Cost would depend on the importance of that advantage to the campaign.

Special Enhancement: Other races cannot perceive when communication is taking place. +40%.

Special Limitation: Only general concepts and emotions can be sent. -50%.

See Invisible 15 points

The race can see objects or individuals that are normally invisible.

Sensitive Touch 10 points

The race’s fingertips (or equivalent organs) are extremely sensitive. For instance, an individual can use touch to sense residual heat in a chair, faint vibrations in the floor as someone approaches, similarities or differences between two pieces of fabric, etc. The individual must roll vs. IQ to use this advantage successfully (note that the “Rule of 12” does *not* apply when using this advantage). Note that if this much sensitivity is *normal* to the race, then a highly trained individual, buying “extra” Acute Touch as per normal human Acute Hearing, would seem miraculous indeed.

Silence 5 points/level

The race can move and breathe noiselessly. Individuals get an additional +2 per level to their Stealth skill if perfectly motionless, or +1 if moving (even in armor, etc.). These bonuses help only in the dark, or against Sound spells, listening devices, blind creatures, etc.

Sonar Vision 0/25 points

The race can “see” by emitting sound waves which bounce off the surroundings. No light is required. Sonar can only be “jammed” or fooled by *very* loud noise (e.g., the Thunderclap spell). Note that Sonar Vision will not function if the individual is somehow deafened. Sonar Vision cannot perceive colors, but can “see” the *interiors* of living things and other objects of equivalent density. Effective range is typically a few hundred yards.

Unlike the more effective Radar Sense (above), perception is limited to a 120° arc in front of the individual. As well, Sonar Vision can be fooled by someone moving *very* slowly if they can win a Quick Contest of their Stealth-4 roll vs. the individual’s Hearing.

As a race’s sole form of vision, this is worth no points. As an adjunct to another form of vision, it is worth 25 points.

Speak with Animals 15 points

The race can converse with land animals (including birds, reptiles, and insects). How much information is gained depends on the animal’s IQ and reaction roll, and the GM. Add +2 to the reaction roll if food is being offered. In general, insects and other small creatures won’t be able to do much more than convey emotions such as hunger and fear, while animals such as chimpanzees or cats could have a reasonably intelligent discussion.

It takes one minute to ask one question and get the answer – assuming the animal decides to speak at all. The GM may require a reaction roll. The GM may rule that certain mythical beasts or creatures of fantasy do not count as “animals” for the purpose of this advantage.

Special Limitation: the race can only communicate with animals that are biologically similar to itself. -20% for an entire phylum (e.g., all mammals, all birds), -30% for one family (e.g., all felines, all parrots) or -50% for one species (e.g., house cats only, macaws only).

Speak with Fish 10 points

Works just like Speak with Animals (above), but only on aquatic creatures. This includes not just fish, but also whales, dolphins, squid, frogs, lobsters, and other creatures that live in the water.

Spectrum Vision 40 points

The race can “tune” its vision to any portion of the spectrum. Individuals can see radio emissions, gamma rays, UV radiation or any other portion of the spectrum they desire.

Stretching

**30 points for the first level
+ 15 per added level**

Each level of stretching allows a member of the race to stretch a limb (or its entire body) up to twice its normal size. Human-sized creatures normally cover 1 hex, so a creature of that size with three levels of Stretching can cover $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 1 = 8$ hexes, or stretch a limb up to 8 hexes away. The entire body or limb can be targeted from any hex adjacent to its stretching path.

The individual stretches at a speed equal to its Move. For example, even if a creature can stretch 16 hexes, if its Move is 7, that creature can only stretch 7 hexes in one turn. This also includes the advantage of Flexibility (p. 24).

Subsonic Hearing

0/5 points

The race can hear very low frequency sounds (under 40 Hz). Individuals can hear the rumble of distant storms, vibrations from incipient earthquakes and the approach of stampeding herd beasts, mounted troops, or dragons. This gives a +1 to Tracking skill rolls.

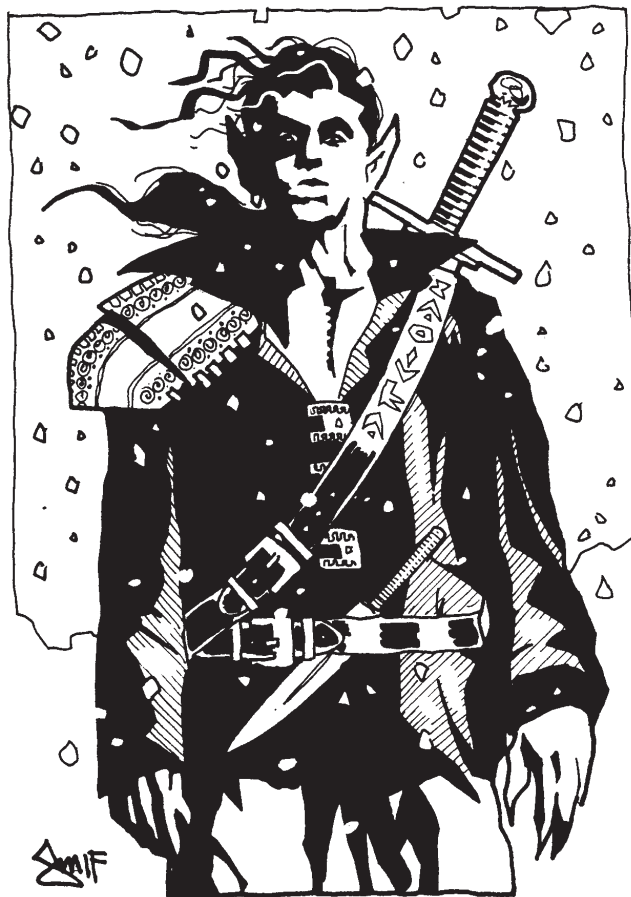
As a race's sole form of hearing, this is worth no points. As an adjunct to normal hearing, it is worth 5 points.

Subsonic Speech

0/20 points

The race can converse using extremely low-frequency sounds. This advantage is essentially just a combination of the Secret Communication and Subsonic Hearing advantages. It is slightly cheaper because subsonic speech is very slow (half speed), and even if the frequency is increased into the normal range, subsonic speakers are at -2 when using Fast-Talk and other skills where versatile speaking is important. However, subsonic speech does carry a *long* way (twice as far).

There is no cost if Subsonic Speech is the race's only form of communication.



Super Jump

10 points/level

Each level of Super Jump doubles the distance that the race can leap. Additionally, if an individual falls a distance less than or equal to its maximum high jump (p. B88), it takes no damage. This can be increased by 5 yards with a successful Acrobatics roll (p. B131).

An individual's Move during a super jump is equal to 20% of its maximum normal long jump (p. B88), with a minimum of 10 yards. Thus, a maximum normal jump never takes more than 5 turns; and if maximum jump is 100 yards, Move is 20 in any jump. An individual can jump at a foe in order to Slam him; figure the Slam at maximum jump speed! A separate roll is not required to jump accurately.

Telescopic Vision

6 points/level

The race can "zoom in" with its eyes, allowing individuals to outperform even the best binoculars. Power is figured as for Microscopic Vision. The normal horizon (on flat ground) for a round, Earth-sized planet is three miles. Beyond the horizon, the curvature of the world will block Telescopic Vision.

Temperature Tolerance

10 points/level

The race can function normally at a wider range of temperatures than most races can. For game purposes, a temperature "comfort zone" of about 55° is considered normal. Each level of this advantage allows the race to add $HT \times 10^\circ$ to the size of its comfort zone. The GM determines exactly where this comfort zone is centered for each race. A race never suffers any ill effects (such as the loss of Fatigue or HT) from temperatures which fall within its comfort zone.

This advantage confers no special resistance to attacks by fire or ice unless the only damage is a result of a rise or fall in the ambient temperature. In particular, this will not help an individual if its *body temperature* is being manipulated.

If the GM wishes, partial levels of Temperature Tolerance can be used to "fine tune" an individual race's comfort zone. These would cost proportionately less (e.g., 5 points to add $HT \times 5^\circ$, 15 points for $HT \times 15^\circ$).

3D Spatial Sense

10 points

The race thinks well in three dimensions. An individual will never lose its way – even in a complex labyrinth with sliding passageways and moving floors.

This advantage includes the Absolute Direction advantage (p. B19), with all of its benefits, and in addition confers a +2 to the Flight skill.

360-Degree Vision

25 points

The race has a complete 360° field of vision. If the individual knows the Karate skill, it can attack foes behind it at no penalty. Otherwise, treat "off hand" hexes (typically left) and back hexes as -2 to hit (because of the clumsiness of the attack, not because it can't see the target). Every race with bilateral symmetry is assumed to have an "off" side and "on" side unless the Ambidexterity advantage is bought; however, the GM can rule that certain tentacled or multi-limbed races do not have off hand hexes.

Individuals suffer no penalties when defending against attacks from the side or rear, and opponents gain no bonuses when attacking from behind.

Extra eyes are merely a special effect of this advantage – a race can possess it and have none, one or a hundred eyes and the point cost remains the same.

Special Limitation: Eyestalks. The race's expanded field of vision is due to flexible eyestalks. Normally, these cannot be armored and can be targeted by any swung cutting weapon at -6. Damage over HT/3 cripples the eyestalk; on a failed HT roll, the eyestalk is severed! -20%. This limitation can also be applied to racial Peripheral Vision.

Tunnel

**40 points + 10 points/hex
of Tunneling speed**

The race can dig through the ground like a worm, spewing earth and stone behind. This ability lets the individual dig a passage, sized for its race, through earth or stone. Movement through rock or stone is half normal tunneling speed.

The GM may wish to assess a chance that the tunnel collapses behind the tunneler. The individual must roll each minute vs. the higher of IQ, Engineer (Mining), or Prospecting to dig a stable tunnel. This can be modified upward for hard rock and downward for soft rock or loose earth. Each halving of tunnel speed gives the individual a +1 on this roll.

Ultrahearing

0/5 points

The race can hear sounds in the frequencies above the normal range of human hearing (20 kHz).

As a race's sole form of hearing, this is worth no points. As an adjunct to normal hearing, it is worth 5 points.

Ultrasonic Speech

0/25 points

This advantage is essentially just a combination of the Secret Communication and Ultrahearing advantages. The race can converse in the ultrasonic range. Note that many species of terrestrial animals find it intensely annoying, or even painful, to be within earshot of sustained ultrasonic pitches.

There is no cost if Ultrasonic Speech is the race's only form of communication.

Unaging

15 points

Individuals of this race never grow old and cannot be aged using magic. Age is fixed at maturity and will never change. Individuals never have to make aging rolls. Members of this race cannot get any points by taking the Age disadvantage!

If the player wishes to play a very old member of an Unaging race, with a wealth of useful memories and experiences, the GM may charge an appropriate Unusual Background and waive the usual 2 × Age limit on points spent on skills.

Unfazeable

15 points

The race lacks the neurochemical make-up necessary to feel surprise, fear or other violent emotions. Individuals are exempt from Fright Checks and are not affected by most personal reaction modifiers (positive or negative). Individuals treat members of all races – however strange – with distant courtesy, and will remain civil even if forced to violence. Individuals still react normally to rude or dangerous behavior on the part of others, however. The race may not have any racial Phobias, and extreme mental disadvantages such as Berserk are probably not appropriate either, in most cases. Note that individuals are not *emotionless* – they are merely not prone to strong *displays* of emotion.

Universal Digestion

15 points

The race possesses remarkably adaptable intestinal processes which allow it to derive nutrition from any non-toxic animal or vegetable protein, no matter how alien (or fantastic) the biochemistry. This allows the race to derive nutrition from

things that would normally be harmless but utterly unnutritious. It does not confer any advantage against normal poisons – a poisonous alien plant or animal would still be inedible. Compare with Cast Iron Stomach, p. 22.

Vacuum Support

40 points

The race can survive in the hostile environment of space. This advantage maintains the individual's internal pressure and temperature, and allows it to "breathe vacuum". This advantage does not confer protection from attacks or damage of any kind unless the attack makes use of a vacuum (e.g., the Destroy Air spell). The individual can also survive underwater, or anyplace else that there is no normal air to breathe. This includes the Doesn't Breathe (p. 23) advantage and the 15-point version of the Pressure Support (p. 29) advantage.

Venom

15 points/level

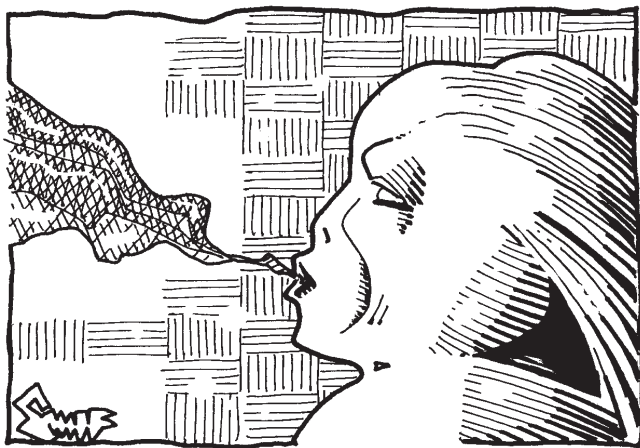
The race secretes a venom, either corrosive or poisonous, which can be delivered by various means.

Corrosive venoms, such as acids and digestive enzymes, do damage quickly. A corrosive venom does 1d of damage per level when it is delivered, and may continue to burn for several turns. At the end of every subsequent turn the venom does 1d less damage than on the turn before, until the number of dice reaches 0. It is possible to wash off a corrosive venom, preventing damage on subsequent turns. This requires at least a gallon of water and a full turn. Armor, toughness, and damage resistance will protect against corrosive venom at full DR on the first turn, DR-1 on the second turn, DR-2 on the third turn and so on. Objects – including the armor! – are similarly affected! There is no HT roll to resist a corrosive venom.

Poisonous venoms work more slowly, and may continue to affect the victim for several hours. When the venom is first delivered, and then again every hour thereafter, the victim makes a roll against HT minus the number of levels of the venom. If the victim fails this roll, he takes 1d damage per level of the venom; if he succeeds, he takes no further damage from the venom and does not need to roll again. Armor may protect against the means of delivery of the venom, but has no effect once the venom is in the bloodstream.

Irritant venoms, usually sprays, are designed to disgust, nauseate, or stun. Victims who get even a whiff of an irritant must make a Will roll, at a penalty equal to the level of the venom, to avoid running away (turn and run directly away from the stench for 1 turn at full Move). Those who breathe it or get it in their eyes must roll against HT minus the level of the venom to avoid taking 1d-4 damage and becoming incapacitated for 1 turn per level of the venom. (Incapacitated characters are retching and rubbing their eyes.) On each turn of incapacitation, the victim may make a Will roll, again at a penalty equal to the level of the venom, to recover.

Venoms may be delivered in a number of ways. Corrosive venoms could be defined as saliva, delivered with a bite, or as a skin secretion, delivered with a bare-handed punch or touch. A character must make a successful close-combat attack based on DX or Brawling in order to deliver a corrosive venom. A poisonous venom must enter the blood to harm the victim. Usually, this is done by making a successful bite attack on the victim. A Spear (see p. 10) could also be bought as a stinger for this purpose. Any successful hit which penetrates the victim's armor, whether it does damage or not, delivers the venom. Fangs, or similar organs to deliver the venom, are included in the cost of this advantage. Note that this does not increase the normal damage of the bite (read from the *Biting Damage* chart on



p. B140, using *half* the individual's ST and treated as Crushing damage). An irritant venom is normally sprayed – see below.

Special Enhancement: A poisonous venom may be defined as a contact agent which enters the bloodstream through the skin. A contact agent cannot be washed off. +70%.

Special Enhancement: A venom may be delivered at range – spit or squirted. This is a ranged attack, based on DX, with a SS 12, Acc 12, ½D n/a, and Max 5. Poisonous venoms must strike open wounds or mucous membranes (eyes, open mouth) to be effective, unless also bought as a contact agent. +35%.

Special Enhancement: A venom may be sprayed as a cloud or mist. This cloud covers 3 hexes and lasts 1d turns. The hexes must be adjacent to each other and one hex must be adjacent to the spraying individual. +100%.

Special Limitation: The individual sweats its venom. It cannot be delivered actively. The venom is delivered only if the individual is bitten or handled excessively. -70%.

Other enhancements and limitations: For more ideas about special effects for venoms, see the *GURPS Fantasy Bestiary*.

Natural Attacks

The advantages below are natural ranged or area attacks which a race may have evolved. In the interest of preventing PC races that are biological artillery pieces, it is suggested that it be made quite expensive to improve these abilities beyond the minimal levels given below. For PC races, it is suggested that the following strategy be used:

“Expensive” Improvement Scheme – in order to increase the effectiveness of the attack, the race must pay the entire cost of the ability again. Each time this is done, the race can either increase *one* of range, area affected, duration or damage by one “increment” (an “increment” is defined as the base value of the attack in that category), *or* get a +1 to the attack roll.

If any enhancements or limitations are being applied to the power, apply the percentage to the *final* cost of the attack.

Example: A PC race has the Breathe Fire attack, as described below. The basic form of the attack costs 20 points. The creator of the race decides that the attack does 3d damage (two extra damage increments, at 20 points each), at a range three times that described (two extra range increments, at another 20 points each). Total cost of the attack: 100 points.

If the GM desires a race with truly devastating natural attacks, *GURPS Supers* contains many powerful abilities that could prove useful. However, the relatively cheap powers described there will *not* be balanced against natural attacks bought using the “expensive” improvement scheme for PC races described above. The following strategy can be used for such races:

Walk on Liquid

15 points

The race can walk on the surface of any liquid as if it were solid ground. This does not protect individuals from any damage they would normally take from coming in contact with the stuff, however (so it can't walk across volcanic lava or boiling acid without taking damage). Move is normal. The GM can rule that this advantage doesn't work while carrying more than light encumbrance.

Webbing

20 points + 2 points/ST Point

The race can produce sticky webbing, just like a spider. This is chiefly useful for weaving webs and for binding up helpless victims. For 20 points, the webbing has a ST equal to that of the individual who placed it – larger specimens can weave thicker webs. Additional ST can be purchased at +1 ST per 2 points. Webbing has DR 3 and can take ST/2 Hit Points before it weakens enough to let its victims go free.

Weaving a Web: A web is essentially circular, with a radius equal to the individual's height. A human-sized creature could span a 3 or 4 hex opening with webbing, for example. The web ensnares anyone who walks into it, pinning him in place (see below). A Vision roll is required to notice a web.

Binding a Foe: The foe must already be Grappled, Pinned or otherwise helpless. It takes a number of seconds equal to a foe's ST/2 to bind him up properly. Once bound, the victim can do nothing but try to break free once every 10 seconds.

In either case, breaking free of a web requires the victim to win a Quick Contest of ST against the ST of the webbing. People who have simply walked into a web use their full ST; bound victims use ST-5! A failure costs the victim 1 Fatigue – which reduces ST for the next attempt. A critical failure leaves the victim so entangled that he cannot escape at all without outside help.

“Cheap” Improvement Scheme – if it is desired that the damaging attacks of a race be increased cheaply in a manner that is consistent with *GURPS Supers*, simply charge 6 points for each additional die of damage. This automatically increases the range by one increment per extra die. Extra skill with the attack can be purchased at a rate of 4 points per +1.

Any enhancements or limitations that are being applied to the power are applied to the final cost of the attack, but not to the extra skill, if any.

Example: An NPC race has the same Breathe Fire power as the PC race described above. The basic form of the power still costs 20 points, but 3d damage is now treated as two extra 6 point damage increments – which incidentally add two range increments (range 9) – for a total of only 32 points.

To use an ability, roll against IQ or DX, as noted. Creatures with low IQ and DX roll against 12, but in order to buy up their roll beyond that they must first buy it up from their actual IQ or DX! If the heading mentions neither IQ nor DX, no roll is required. For an explanation of the terminology used to describe these powers (e.g. Ranged, Area, etc.), see p. B149-150. As this implies, these natural attacks are played in some ways like spells.

Breathe Fire

Jet, DX, 20 points

The race can breathe fire like a Dragon, scorching its foes. As well as doing damage, this can ignite hair, clothing,

and other flammables. This is treated as a *Jet* attack that hits on a DX roll, not as a Missile attack.

Damage: 1d. *Range:* 3 hexes.

Constriction Attack

see p. 8

Cool

Area, 15 points

The race can automatically lower the temperature of an area by up to 10°. This cannot be done repeatedly in the same area by the same individual. Multiple individuals can lower the temperature 1° for each individual past the first. The temperature will drop at a rate of 10° per turn. An individual with Cool can become invisible to Infravision on a successful IQ roll (low IQs do not roll at 12).

Special Enhancement: the race can turn Cool on and off at will +10%.

Area affected: 3-hex radius.

Deafen

Ranged, DX, 15 points

The race can project a short, focused blast of sound that deafens the victim for the duration. This attack is resisted by HT. A critical success with this attack results in a duration of hours rather than minutes.

Area affected: 3-hex radius. *Duration:* 3 minutes.

Flash

Area, 15 points

The race can create a flash of light that can blind and confuse those seeing it. Anyone within the area of effect is automatically blinded for 3 seconds and is at -3 DX for another full minute (including members of the same race, unless they have the Polarized Eyes advantage). Anyone within 10 hexes of the area affected *may* be affected if they were facing the flash and had their eyes open at the time. The GM will rule if someone is affected or not. Those outside the area get a roll versus HT to avoid some of the flash. A successful HT roll results in a minute at -3 DX (but no blindness).

Area affected: 2-hex radius.

Image

Ranged, IQ, 20 points

The race can create realistic-appearing images to conceal and misdirect. The images are up to ¼ hex in size. Images cannot move, nor can they do damage. Any creature with vision



can see them, and cameras will photograph them. Physical objects pass through the illusion harmlessly, and anyone inside the image can see out normally.

If an individual is creating an image of something it's never seen, everyone who sees it gets an IQ roll on first sight (+3 if the target creature is personally familiar with the object being displayed). If they make this roll, they notice something "wrong" with the image (not necessarily that it is an image, just that there is something strange about it).

The image is non-magical in nature – if the race can cast one of the *Illusion* spells, it should purchase it using the Racial Magic rules (p. 12). The image is strictly visual. It has no smell, taste, feel or sound. It cannot be "disbelieved," (but it *can* be ignored!) and Dispel Illusion has no effect upon it.

Range: 3 hexes. *Duration:* while concentrating.

Lightning Missile

Ranged, DX, 20 points

The race can shoot bolts of lightning through the air, frying those who threaten it. A lightning bolt cannot be fired through a metal grid (bars, a chain-link fence, etc.) as it will ground out and disappear, and metal armor doesn't help much as protection – treat it as PD 0, DR 1.

Damage: 1d. *Range:* 6 hexes.

Mana Damper

Area, Special

This specialized form of Magic Resistance is actually more of a natural defense than a natural attack. Cost is computed differently from most natural attacks.

For 5 points, the race can effectively reduce the local mana level by one step, but only for itself and persons or things that it's actually touching.

For 5 points more, this effect extends to everything in the same hex.

Each additional 5 points extends the radius of the effect by one hex. The race can reduce local mana by two steps by paying the base cost for their range again, and by three steps by paying it yet again. It must also pay the base cost again for the ability to turn the power on and off. No individual with the Mana Dampening power can ever have Magical Aptitude or learn spells.

Example: A race has Mana Damper in a 3-hex radius. This costs 10 points for the first hex, and 10 more points for two more hexes of range, for a total of 20. This is the race's base cost. The GM wants the race to prevent all spellcasting within its radius. Since the campaign world has normal mana, the race needs to pay the base cost again to bring the local level down to no mana, bringing the total to 40 points. The GM decides the race can turn its ability on and off at will, and pays the base cost again, for a total cost of 60 points.

Contrast this advantage with the Mana Enhancer advantage, p. 27.

Smoke

Area, 15 points

The race can cause an area to fill with thick smoke (the racial creator chooses the color). For line-of-sight and vision purposes treat this as 3 hexes of the Darkness spell (see p. B163).

Anyone inside this cloud must roll against HT or be temporarily blinded for 1d-3 turns after leaving the smoke. Individuals with the Nictating Membrane advantage are immune to the blinding effects of the smoke cloud. The smoke disperses normally outside.

Special Enhancement: the race can see through its own smoke and is unharmed by it. +20%.

Area affected: 3 hexes, all of which must be adjacent to each other and one of which must be adjacent to the individual.

Sonic Blast

Ranged, DX, 20 points

The race can emit a burst of focused, high-frequency sound that can pummel flesh and shatter brittle objects. Crystalline objects (and most metals are crystalline unless specifically alloyed to be amorphous) are vulnerable to a Sonic Blast; treat it as an armor-piercing attack which bypasses ¼ of the target's DR.

Damage: 1d. *Range:* 6 hexes.

Teeth, Claws and Strikers

see p. 10

Venom

see p. 32

Warm

Area, 15 points

The race automatically raises the temperature of an area by up to 10°. This cannot be done repeatedly in the same area

by the same individual. Multiple individuals can raise the temperature 1° for each individual past the first. The temperature will rise at a rate of 10° per turn.

Special Enhancement: the race can turn Warm on and off at will for +10%.

Area affected: 3-hex radius.

Webbing

see p. 33



New Racial Disadvantages

Bad/Poor Grip

-5 or -10 points

The race has a penalty when using skills that require a firm grip on an object. This includes (but is not limited to) Acrobatics, catching things, Climbing, and most forms of melee weapon use. *Note:* a race with No Fine Manipulators (p. 36) cannot take this disadvantage.

Poor Grip gives a -2 penalty. -5 points.

Bad Grip gives a -4 penalty. -10 points.

Bestial

-10 or -15 points

The race thinks and reacts like a wild animal. Members of the race have no concept of “civilized” standards of morality or propriety, and individuals have no concept of property. An individual will fight or flee from those who frighten or threaten it. Members of Bestial races cannot take any of the Artistic or Social skills from the *Basic Set* (except Area Knowledge), even at default!

A Bestial character is not necessarily out of control; it simply reacts in a non-human manner. Members of Bestial races will usually ignore those who leave them alone (unless they're food!), and might even come to display affection for anyone who treats them with special kindness. While they cannot understand property in the human sense, Bestial characters might (depending on the type of beast) understand territory, and avoid doing damage to objects on another's territory. Whether humans are regarded as individuals with territory rights is an open question! A Bestial character might also understand dominance, and respect or even obey a human who proved himself stronger than he.

This disadvantage is not necessarily tied to a low IQ – but a race that is both Bestial and remarkably intelligent would be a roleplaying challenge, requiring a good deal of thought and effort. The GM may therefore choose to restrict this disadvantage to races with an average IQ of 9 or lower.

A Bestial race cannot normally take an Odious Racial Habit for beast-like behavior – that's included in the cost of Bestial. However, if the Bestial behavior is extremely repugnant to humans – the equivalent of a -15 point Odious Racial habit – the GM can allow this disadvantage to be worth -15 points instead of the usual -10. ORHs unrelated to beast-like behavior (including “eats humans”) can be bought normally.

Cold-Blooded

-5 or -10 points

Cold-blooded races require about ½ the food that warm-blooded races do. While they are less subject to actual damage

from high and low body temperatures, (+2 on rolls to avoid hypothermia or dehydration), they tend to “stiffen up” in cold weather. After a half-hour (one full hour if the race has fur or feathers) spent in cold conditions, Speed and DX drop by one point each for each 10° below the race's “minimum tolerance” temperature.

At temperatures below 32°, they must roll vs. HT or take 1 hit of damage. Warm clothing allows a +2 bonus to the roll. Lost Speed and DX are regained at a rate of one point each per hour once the individual returns to a warm climate; this rate is doubled in an exceptionally warm environment. The exact value of the disadvantage depends on the race's “minimum tolerance” temperature.

For races that “stiffen up” below 50°, this disadvantage is worth -5 points.

For races that “stiffen up” below 65°, this disadvantage is worth -10 points.

Dependency

Variable

The race requires some special substance. Without it, it weakens and dies. The value of a dependency depends on how common the item is.

Rare (cannot be bought at all; must be found or made): -30 points.

Infrequent (very expensive and hard to find): -20 points.

Occasional (expensive, somewhat hard to find): -10 points.

Common (available almost anywhere): -5 points

This value is modified by the frequency with which the race must receive the item:

Constantly: Five times listed value. The race must carry and use the substance at all times – for example, an exotic atmosphere. Lose 1 HT per minute without the item.

Hourly: Four times listed value. Lose 1 HT per ten minutes after missing an hourly dose.

Daily: Three times listed value. Lose 1 HT per hour after missing a daily dose.

Weekly: Twice listed value. Lose 1 HT per six hours after missing a weekly dose.

Monthly: Listed value. Lose 1 HT per six hours after missing a monthly dose.

Dread

Variable

The race is unable to come within a certain range of a given substance due to magic or a psychosomatic aversion. Individuals take no actual damage from the substance, but are nonetheless

completely incapable of coming within the indicated distance of it on their own volition. An individual can be brought into the presence of the substance, or vice versa, by outside forces – but if the individual and the substance are moved to within the forbidden radius of one-another, the individual must move to get as far away from the substance as it can, by the most direct route possible. It may take no other action except trying to escape until it is out of the forbidden radius.

Note that this means that, if trapped within the forbidden radius, the individual will be completely helpless. The base cost for this disadvantage is -10 points, for which the individual cannot be in the same hex with the forbidden substance. The range of the forbidden zone can be extended at -1 point per additional hex radius. This value is modified by the rarity of the substance, according to the table found under *Weakness*, (p. 38). The individual will instantly sense the presence of the dreaded object as soon as it enters the forbidden radius. It will not know exactly where the dreaded object is, but will know what direction it lies in, and be compelled to go exactly the other way.

Special Enhancement: The individual cannot enter the forbidden zone of its own volition, but if carried there by an outside force, the spell is broken. The individual can act normally in the forbidden zone until it leaves, at which time the prohibition reactivates. This halves the cost of the disadvantage.

Dying Race **-10 points**

For whatever reason, the race's death rate has exceeded its birth rate. If this trend isn't reversed, the race will be extinct in a few generations. It is unlikely that the individual will have any progeny that live. Discovering the reason for this disadvantage and eliminating it can be an excellent adventure or campaign seed. PC members of a race with this disadvantage will probably be pointedly discouraged by their brethren from frivolously accepting dangerous missions.

Fragile **-20 points**

The race has an extremely brittle and fragile physical structure. The race takes double damage from crushing attacks. Creatures with this disadvantage might include crystalline races, or avian races with hollow bones.

Horizontal **-10 points**

The race has a horizontal posture, like a dog or a cat. Individuals can stand on their hind legs for short periods, but this is very uncomfortable for them. They can use one hand (if any) while standing on the other three limbs, or two hands while sitting on their haunches. They can carry (but not use) an object in one hand if moving at half their Move. Human-sized or larger horizontal races will take up two hexes.

Incompetence **-1 point**

The race is incapable of learning or using a skill that would generally be regarded as necessary for survival in the campaign world. Individuals cannot learn this skill, and any attempt at default use is at an extra -4. The GM should define whether this disadvantage is psychological or physiological in origin. Individuals may only buy off purely psychological Incompetencies. Note that most racial skill penalties are just "special effects" and are worth no points (see *Taboo Traits*, p. 11).

In order to qualify as an Incompetence, the skill penalty has to be *particularly* crippling. For example, the Swimming skill in an aquatic campaign or the Flight skill for a winged race.

Inconvenient Size **-10/-15 points**

The race is of a size radically different from the campaign norm. The race is unable to effectively use most tools and implements basic to day-to-day life unless they are specially made. This disadvantage assumes that the race's ability to function is *seriously impaired* whenever they're away from their own communities. As a rule of thumb, a race must be over 8 feet (-10 points), or under 2 feet tall (-15 points), on the average, to qualify for this disadvantage. The GM might also allow this disadvantage for an extremely heavy race (more than 1,000 pounds) or a race with an exceptionally large and awkward form (e.g., Centaurs). *Individuals* of a race with this disadvantage can still take Dwarfism or Gigantism – in relation to *their* race!

Invertebrate **-20 points**

The race has no spine, exoskeleton or other natural body support. An individual can use ST normally to push and strike, but (unless it is aquatic) the amount that it can lift, carry or pull is only ¼ normal. On the up side, the race will be much more flexible than races with shells or bones. In particular, it can squeeze through much smaller openings than its size might suggest. Note that this disadvantage is somewhat different from the scientific definition of "invertebrate."

No Depth Perception **-10 points**

The race lacks effective binocular vision and cannot visually judge distances – perhaps because it has only a single, cyclopean eye. This is the same as the One Eye disadvantage (p. B29) but without the reaction penalty.

No Fine Manipulators **-30 points**

The race has nothing more agile than paws or hooves at the end of its limbs. The race has nothing that approaches the human hand in terms of manual dexterity. The race cannot use its paw/hooves to make repairs, tie knots, or even grasp firmly. *Note:* this disadvantage qualifies the race to buy the Enhanced ST advantage (p. 23) with the -40% limitation of the same name.

No Manipulators **-50 points**

The race has no limbs. The only way for the race to manipulate objects is to push them around with its bodies or "heads."



Non-Iconographic -10 points

The race is incapable of processing abstract images or symbols. Maps, heraldic symbols, and even magical runes are completely meaningless to members of such a race. Individuals may not learn Cartography, Heraldry, Rune-Lore, or any other skill that involves the interpretation of patterns or symbols; moreover, since the race cannot comprehend magical symbols, individuals cannot normally learn magic, either. This is *not* the same as Illiteracy: ordinary *linear* text can be read normally by Literate individuals. *Note:* This is a structural shortcoming of the race's *brain*, and cannot normally be bought off by an individual.

One Fine Manipulator -15 points

Most races have two or more hands/fine manipulators that they can use in concert. A race with this disadvantage has only one. It cannot, for instance, repair a device while holding it. An elephant is an example of a creature with this disadvantage.

Parasite -15 or -30 points

The race depends on another host race for survival. The host race can survive without the parasite, but not vice versa.

For 15 points the host race can fall within certain very broad biological categories, like "any warm-blooded vertebrate" or "any fish."

The 30-point disadvantage is absolutely race specific – the parasite can survive on one and only one host race. Thus the individual must bring a member of his host race with him wherever he goes.

Reduced Hit Points -5/Hit Point

The race has fewer Hit Points than its HT. This is written HT 10/7, for example. Very small races often have this disadvantage.

Reduced Manual Dexterity -3/level

Each level of this disadvantage gives the race a -1 to DX, or IQ in some cases, but only on tasks requiring fine motor skills. This skill would hinder an attempt to repair a watch, for example, but not Combat/Weapon skills or Dodge.

Reduced Move -5/point of Move

The race moves more slowly than its characteristics would normally entitle it to. The race cannot take more points of this disadvantage than it would take to reduce its *racial average* Move below 1.

Semi-Upright -5 points

The race has a semi-upright posture, like a chimp or perhaps a bear. Individuals can stand up more or less comfortably, allowing them to use their forelimbs to bash enemies, hold babies or even manipulate objects. Semi-upright beings can manage a clumsy gait while upright (-2 to Move). They must use all of their limbs to trot or run. Races with a high racial average DX (12 or more) and manipulators can carry a small object or two when walking.

Sessile -50 points

The race can't move. They can be moved (although this might require major excavations), and they can have manipulators, but their bases are anchored where they sit.

Short Attention Span -10 points

Individuals of this race have a problem concentrating on any one object or task for more than a few minutes. Roll vs. IQ to maintain interest in something for an extended period, or whenever a distraction is offered; failure means automatic failure at that phase of any long task.

Short Lifespan -10 /level

The race's lifespan is *significantly* shorter than average. Each level decreases the race's current lifespan by ¼, round down, and multiple levels are applied successively, rounding down at each stage. This affects the age at which the race reaches maturity, the age at which aging rolls begin, the ages at which aging rolls increase in frequency and the interval between aging rolls. The following table summarizes the effects of the first 7 levels:

Level	Maturity	Age (Frequency of Aging Rolls)			
1	13 y	37 y (9 m)	52 y (4 m)	67 y (2 m)	
2	9 y	27 y (6 m)	39 y (3 m)	50 y (1 m)	
3	6 y	20 y (4 m)	29 y (2 m)	37 y (22 d)	
4	4 y	15 y (3 m)	21 y (1 m)	27 y (16 d)	
5	3 y	11 y (2 m)	15 y (22 d)	20 y (12 d)	
6	2 y	8 y (1 m)	11 y (16 d)	15 y (9 d)	
7	1 y	6 y (22 d)	8 y (12 d)	11 y (6 d)	

Slave Mentality -40 points

The race has no initiative of its own. Individuals become confused and ineffectual without a "master" to give them orders. This does not necessarily imply a low IQ. A race might be quite intelligent enough to obey the command "mix the elixir, then summon the spirit," but if the same individual was starving and found \$10 it would be hard pressed to decide to pick up the money and go buy food – unless somebody told it to.

A member of a race with Slave Mentality must make a roll vs. IQ-7 before taking any action that's not either obeying a direct order, or part of an established daily routine.

As a rule, such a character will *always* fail Will rolls. In a case where the GM thinks that success might be possible, the roll should be made at -5.

Sleepy Variable

The race needs more sleep than average (humanity, taken here as average, sleeps 33% of the day). The more time it must spend asleep, the greater the value of the disadvantage:

50% of the time: -10 points

66% of the time: -20 points

75% of the time: -25 points

90% of the time: -35 points

Note that the race's precise schedule is a "special effect." A species, for instance, might be awake and active for 3 days and then sleep for 9 days. This could also be used to represent *hibernation*. For instance, if a race is awake and active on a basically human schedule for 6 months, and then hibernates for 2 months straight, then *on the average* it is asleep half the time.

Slow Healing -10/level

The race heals naturally slower than normal. With 1 level, the race gets a HT roll to regain lost HT every two days. Each additional level increases the time between rolls by 1 day. When under the care of a competent physician (see p. B128), each level also increases the time allowed between the healer's Physician rolls by one base increment (the base increment is one week for a TL 3 campaign, less for higher TLs).

Slow Metabolism -10/level

A disadvantageous form of Extended Lifespan. Each level increases lifespan by a factor of 10, but reaction time and cognition times are slowed down by the same factor. It is difficult and frustrating to communicate with a member of a race with one level of this disadvantage. Some magical or psionic enhancement would be necessary to communicate with a race

with two levels. Any race with three levels or more would probably not perceive normal creatures at all, and normal creatures could only tell the race was alive if a team of experts made a concerted effort to find signs of life.

Subjugation **-20 points**

The race has been subjugated by a more powerful race. The race has no rights and only those privileges which the overlords choose to extend. It is possible for an individual member of the race to escape to freedom, but that individual will be wanted in the overlord race's territories. If caught in overlord territories, the individual is subject to re-enslavement or sterner penalties. Any member of the overlord race is considered an enemy, even outside of overlord territories (the individual can also take the Enemy disadvantage for the overlord race – this indicates that the overlords are actively seeking that individual). *Note:* A race with Slave Mentality cannot also take the Subjugated disadvantage – races with Slave Mentalities serve willingly.

Uneducated **-5 points**

The race lacks a cultural repository of wisdom, eschews formal schooling and takes a dim view of activities that do not relate directly to survival or procreation. Individuals receive a -1 reaction from members of more “civilized” races (treat as a Social Stigma) in any situation where knowledge is important, and may not begin their careers with any Mental/Hard or Mental/Very Hard skills except those that apply to combat, survival, or thieving. Naturally, Uneducated characters cannot start out with magical spells (though they may possess Magery). Individual PCs should be allowed to buy off this disadvantage if they have lived in “civilized” parts.

Unhealing **-20 or -30 points**

The race does not normally regenerate injury at all, and gets no daily HT roll to recover lost HT – even when under the care of a physician. First Aid still works normally to treat the shock of a wound or bleeding, and magical or psionic healing will function normally.

If the race can regenerate lost HT normally when certain conditions are met (e.g., when immersed in blood, bathed in lava, etc.), this disadvantage is worth -20 points.

If the race *never* heals naturally, it is worth -30 points.

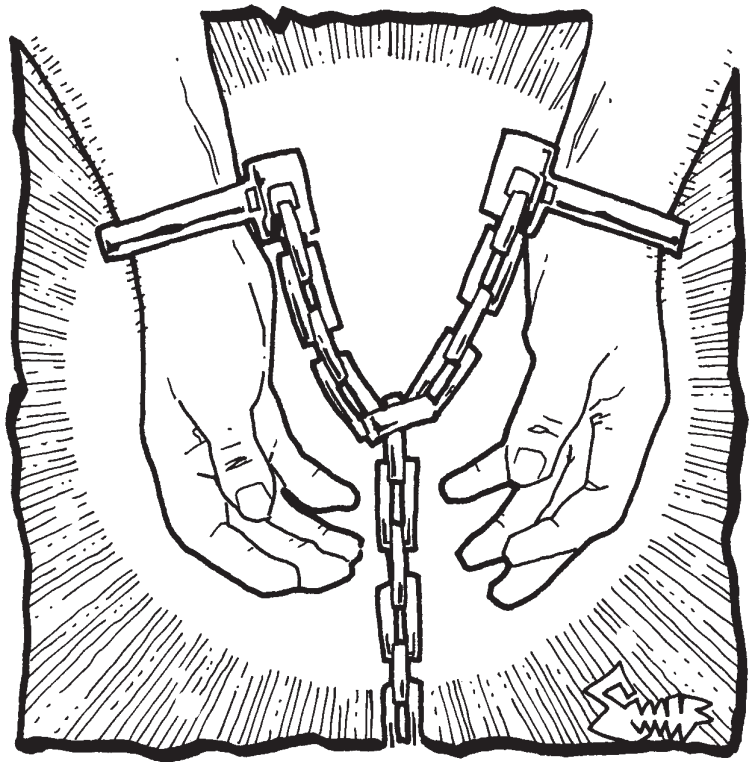
Note: This disadvantage is normally only appropriate for unnatural races such as the undead.

Unliving **-50 points**

The race is not truly alive. Instead, individuals animate their bodies through some supernatural means – usually magic. When a member of such a race is wounded to exactly 0 HT and then fails a consciousness roll, its body collapses in a semblance of death, unbreathing and without a heartbeat. The GM should determine the conditions under which the race can be revived from this state. However, at -1 HT the ties that link the individual's spirit with its body are actually *severed* and the individual dies. *Note:* This disadvantage is normally only appropriate for demons, golems, undead, and the like.

Vulnerability **Variable**

Members of the race take extra damage from certain forms of attack, or are weakened and hurt every time they



merely come within a certain distance of a substance. For each level of Vulnerability purchased, individuals take an extra 1d damage (for attacks doing less than 1d damage, multiply the damage by the level of vulnerability). This extra damage is added to the usual damage of the attack, *before* any DR is subtracted. The value per level depends on how common the substance is:

Very Rare: -3 points per level.

Rare: -5 points per level.

Occasional: -10 points per level.

Common: -15 points per level.

See *Damage Resistance*, p. 22, for examples of attack forms; the GM decides upon the rarity of the substance.

If the individual is affected by merely being near the substance, add 10% per hex of range to the cost per level. DR does not help against this damage. If damage comes off of Fatigue rather than hit points, the total value is halved.

Example: Water Wyrms take 4d damage whenever they're within 5 hexes of a certain glowing green rock. The green rock is “very rare,” making the cost -3 points per level; however, 5 hexes add 50% to that cost, making the cost per level -4½. The Wyrms have 4 levels of Vulnerability, so the total value comes to -18.

Weakness **Variable**

This is like a Vulnerability, but less severe. A Weakness is a sensitivity, not to any kind of attack as such, but to the presence of a common substance or condition. It cannot be a food item or something equally easy to avoid. The more quickly the individual takes damage, the more the Weakness is worth: 1d per minute: -20 points; 1d per 5 minutes: -10 points; 1d per 30 minutes: -5 points. Halve the value if the damage done is only Fatigue. The rarity of the weakening condition also affects the value of the Weakness:

Rare (exotic radiation or minerals): half value.

Occasional (intense normal cold, pollen): listed value.

Common (smoke, nearby magic): double value.

Very common (sunlight, living plants): triple value.

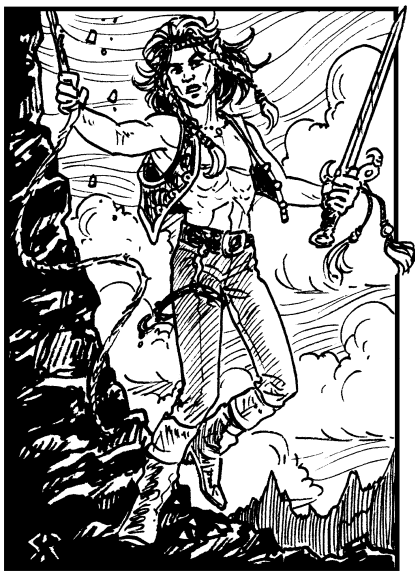
RACE INTRODUCTION



The World of Yrth

The world of Yrth is the milieu of *GURPS Fantasy*, one of the current “official” *GURPS* fantasy universes. In order to make *Fantasy Folk* easily compatible with any fantasy universe, this book does not specifically follow the rather unusual culture or history of Yrth. For GMs already playing in Yrth, some of the details about the following races’ culture or development will have to be adjusted to fit into the Yrth milieu.

In *GURPS Fantasy*, the native races of Yrth are the Elves, Dwarves, and Orcs. A mishap triggers the transdimensional “Banestorm,” which brings in monsters, persons, and even whole communities from other worlds. Races brought by the Banestorm include mankind, Halflings, Goblins, Hobgoblins, Reptile Men, Kobolds, Minotaurs, Centaurs, Ogres, and Giants. These are the “official” races found in *GURPS Fantasy*, but if a GM wishes to place other races on the world of Yrth, he can do so. The Banestorm could easily have brought small groups to a remote location, where they would have had little or no previous contact with the other races of Yrth.



The Sylvan Races

The descriptions of the various races will occasionally mention the “sylvan,” or woodland, races. This refers to a loose confederation, led by the Elves, of races living in or near the forest. The sylvan races include the Wood Elves, Centaurs, Elyllon, Fauns, Leprechauns, Wildmen, and Sasquatch.

The sylvan races are all lovers of nature, and rarely if ever war among themselves. If one sylvan race is attacked by outside forces, it will receive sympathy, if not outright aid, from the others.

Thirteen of the following races (Elves, Dwarves, Halflings, Goblins, Orcs, Reptile Men, Ghouls, Kobolds, and Minotaurs, and the subraces Gnomes, Half-Elves, Half-Orcs, and Hobgoblins) have been part of *GURPS* since the publication of the first edition of *GURPS Fantasy*. All 24 of these races appeared in the first edition of *GURPS Fantasy Folk* as well. Several racial descriptions have been updated to take full advantage of the revised racial generation rules. At the same time, care has been taken to keep the point total and essential conception of each race as close as possible to earlier versions, to ease the translation for those who are using these races in an earlier form. Nevertheless, there are a few cases where significant changes in point cost could not be avoided. In describing the culture of these races, it was necessary to give them a cultural context, so occasionally the text will assume a world in which all these races co-exist, and are generally aware of one another. Humanity dominates, but does not rule, this hypothetical multi-racial culture. In addition to all the races in this book, this culture involves a few other intelligent creatures, including Trolls, Vampires, Dragons, Unicorns, and the faerie races (see sidebar, next page). Many of these creatures are described in existing *GURPS* books. Hopefully they can all receive a fuller treatment in future releases.

This hypothetical culture exists only as a convenient abstraction to make it easier to describe a given culture’s disposition and interactions with other peoples. The GM should feel free to make whatever alterations he feels are necessary to bring these races into line with his own world, and to use or discard as many of these races as he likes.

To this end, elements of the racial make-up, such as racial Intolerance disadvantages and race-specific Reputations, can be replaced or simply dropped if the GM so desires. Note that such things *are* figured into the “default” racial cost listed for each race, so be sure to update these costs to reflect any changes.

Naturally, since *GURPS Fantasy Folk* is a GM system, the GM is completely free to make any changes that he desires in any of the racial templates presented in the following section. Of course, if such modifications are made, we can no longer ensure that the modified races will be balanced or will remain compatible with future *GURPS* adventures or sourcebooks.

Multi-Racial Campaigns

The 24 races in this book are designed to fit together into the same campaign. However, many GMs might find such a plethora of character races unbelievable, unwieldy, or simply unnecessary. Many “subsets” of the races presented here can create interesting worlds. And if the GM uses the racial generation rules to create his own civilizations, literally anything is possible. Some examples:

Lizards, Bugs, and Fish Humanity

Humanity is the only intelligent mammalian life form, but he shares his world with Fishmen, Insect Men, and Reptile Men. The various races find it very hard to communicate, and have almost no understanding of each other’s minds or way of life. In such a milieu, the GM would probably want to give the nonhumans more advanced cultures than this book portrays. There might be a bloody, unending three-way war between mankind, fish and reptiles, with the insects as (unstable) neutrals. Alternatively, the humans could be oppressed or enslaved by the other races, struggling for their lives and freedom against impossible odds.



In the Deep Wood

The world is dominated by the sylvan races, led by the Elves. The Dark Elves are the “evil empire” of the campaign. The GM could also include Ogres or Minotaurs as more savage menaces. Such a world wouldn’t necessarily need humanity – the Elves could be the dominant race. On the other hand, perhaps mankind could exist – as the *villains* of the campaign. Expansionist human civilizations are threatening the woodlands, and the sylvan folk must fight to protect their way of life. A milieu very similar to this can be found in Wendy and Richard Pini’s long-running comic book *Elfquest*.

Body Shop

Humanity was the only race to evolve naturally, but mighty wizards (perhaps in the remote past, perhaps not) have *created* a number of other races, by tampering with humanity or by engineering human traits into various beasts. Almost any race – even Dwarves, Bales, or Ghouls – can be made to fit into such a world, but especially likely candidates include the enhanced beasts, Centaurs, Fauns, Giants, and Merfolk.

Time Slip

Another possible variation is to take the world outlined in this book, and move it forward or backwards along the time stream. Perhaps the campaign could be set in the future – the Elves are gone and many of the older races (Reptile Men, perhaps Dwarves) are extinct or nearly so. Orcs have been exterminated or enslaved. Humanity is starting to mix magic and technology, like gunpowder and steam engines. The remaining nonhuman races are scarce, downtrodden, and struggling to carve out their own niches in the ever-more intrusive human society.

Or perhaps time could be taken backwards, to the heyday of the Elves and the Dwarves, while the first primitive humans were discovering these already ancient cultures. Or even further back, to the decline of the Reptile and Fishmen empires, and the awakening of the Elves. Perhaps a few of the great lizards still stalked the earth, and humanity, if it existed at all, would be a hairy primate cowering in trees and caves.

The Faerie Folk

The beings of Faerie are often referred to in this volume, but they are nowhere discussed in detail. This is intentional; this book does not deal with any races more supernatural than the Bales.

The folk of Faerie are supernatural beings, known mostly from Celtic folklore. They inhabit a land of their own, which occasionally enters or penetrates our own mundane world . . . usually to the sorrow of humanity. Many are tiny – thus the common name “the Little People” – but some are human-sized or larger. They take an incredible variety of forms, from the beautiful to the monstrous. In general, they are morally neutral, though there are many good and evil *individuals* among them. All are extremely magical, and all are secretive, especially where mankind is concerned. All are immortal, but none can stand the touch of cold iron, and some are vulnerable in other ways.

The many races of Faerie are traditionally ruled by the creatures called the Sidhe. Think of them as super-Elves, *incredibly* beautiful, magical, magnetic . . . and totally amoral. The Sidhe war among themselves, using the other races as cannon-fodder. The “Unseelie Court” is often identified with evil, and the “Seelie Court” with good, but even the “seeliest” of the Faerie lords care little for mortal men. And the Seelie Court is even more likely than the Unseelie to kidnap a baby, or a particularly beautiful young maiden or man, to vanish “under the hill” forever.

Mortal men, fortunately, can usually steer clear of these fey immortals. Try not to discuss them at all (they’re listening). If you *must* speak of them, use a euphemism like the Good Folk or the Wise Ones; *never* call them “fairies.” Avoid dancing lights in the wilderness, and stay safe at home on Midsummer Night and All Hallow’s Eve!

A *GURPS* worldbook on the Faerie Folk is planned. For those who want to use the Little People right now, the Leprechauns and Ellyllon can be made much more magical with relatively slight changes.



Bales in the Campaign

Bales are the only purely evil “bad-guy” race in this book. They are powerful, sadistic madmen who love suffering for its own sake. They are designed to have literally *no* redeeming features.

They *do* bear a superficial resemblance to Vampires. The GM can introduce them as a substitute for Vampires (befuddling PCs who are so steeped in vampiric lore that they no longer fear the undead), or as a completely separate race, possibly in competition with the Vampires (see sidebar, p. 17).

Bales are not a common race, and there is no reason why the PCs should know that they exist – initially. All creatures familiar with the Bales’ true nature react to them at -4.

Bales must partake of at least a quart of blood from a sentient humanoid every 30 days, or begin to weaken. Each day past the 30th, the Bale must roll vs his *current* HT or lose one point of HT. This lost HT will be regained completely upon ingestion of quart of blood (partial doses don’t help – they just increase the Bale’s cravings!). A critical failure on this roll results in a *permanent* loss of 1 point of HT. In addition, each point of HT lost lowers the Bale’s appearance by 1 level (Very Handsome becomes Handsome, Average become Unattractive, etc.). When the Bale finally sups, he should make a final HT roll against his *unmodified* HT. A critical failure indicates that the appearance change is *permanent* – otherwise the blood restores the Bale’s looks back to normal.

NPC Bales should be built on 200 points or more. Many older Bales are *far* beyond this level . . .

Bale PCs

The Bales are best reserved for NPC or adversary use only. Unless the party is psychopathically evil, a Bale PC will have to buy off 60 or 70 points worth of disadvantages before he can fit in among characters of other races.

If the GM (and the players) are predisposed to tolerate Bale PCs, they should not be used in campaigns designed for characters of less than 200 points.

Bale Adventure Seeds

Good Evening

People have been disappearing from the city, some of them important. The local government has offered a reward for anybody who can get to the bottom of the disappearances.

Continued on next page . . .

BALES

Outwardly, there is very little to distinguish the Bales from any other humanoid race. They are normally a beautiful people with glossy black hair, narrow faces, and arched brows, and swarthy complexions. They are taller than humans, but very slender (determine height and weight normally for ST, then add 6” to height).

Bales have two visible nonhuman traits – their pupils are slitted vertically, like a cat’s, and their hands each have six long fingers, each with an extra joint.

Bales prefer rich but somber clothing after the human fashion. They do not bear arms unless preparing for battle or while on a dangerous journey.

Bale Racial Package

100 points

Attributes: IQ +3 [30]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: DR 3 [9]; Doesn’t Eat or Drink [10]; Hard to Kill +2 [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood) [5]; Magical Aptitude [15]; Metabolism Control × 5 [25]; Regular Regeneration [25]; Temperature Tolerance × 1 [10]; Unaging [15].

Racial Disadvantages: Bloodlust [-10]; Dependency (Sentient humanoid blood, infrequent, monthly) [-20]; Fanaticism [-15]; Intolerance [-10]; Megalomania [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Blood-drinkers) [-15]; Paranoia [-10]; Sadism [-15].

Racial Skills: Bales have a +1 bonus to any IQ-based skill that pertain directly to the occult or magical arts [6]. This includes the Alchemy, Occultism, Rune-Lore, and Thaumatology skills, but not spells.

Psychology

The Bales are an utterly depraved race of living vampires. Uncounted generations of the foulest debauchery have left them utterly insane.

Bales are blood-drinkers – if provided with an unlimited supply of blood they can live forever. When deprived of their regular dosage, however, the



Bales weaken, and eventually die. In addition, blood has an intoxicating effect on Bales, which often leads to psychological dependency as well.

There is no such thing as a sane Bale. Most are simultaneously paranoid, megalomaniac, and sadistic. A few individuals are slightly less insane than the racial average, but they will still be dangerously unstable by human standards. Despite this, they have managed to evolve a curiously stable society, based on individual isolation and the systematic oppression of other races.

Of course, most Bales die, many through intra-racial assassination, but many manage to live 400-500 years, and some are *much* older.

All Bales are mighty mages. A Bale necromancer can make even the most debased of human re-animators look wholesome in comparison. The necromantic arts form the core of the Bales' racial defense policy, and they have been known to field veritable armies of zombies, skeletons, and skull spirits. After a victim of the Bale's thirst has been drained of all use, the remains are customarily reanimated. Those Bales who favor the drier climes excel in the production of mummies. Though the corpse must bake for at least 300 years before it is ideal for reanimation, to the immortal Bales this is, at worst, a medium-range project. Mummies often serve the Bales as attendants, household guards, and commanders of their undead armies.

The "elite" in Baleish society are those wizards who command meta-spells. These sorcerers are the closest thing they have to rulers, as lesser wizards tend to gather around these archmages for protection from magical attacks. Though other colleges are freely available, the meta-spells are fanatically restricted to the oldest, vilest, and most powerful members of the race (who jealously guard their knowledge).

Although broadsword, shield, and crossbow training is almost universal, most Bales are cowards, preferring to let their unliving servants fight for them. However, some glory in the carnage and cruelty of war. Such Bales seek out battle with an obsessive fascination, and fight with demonic intensity.

Bales are superb armorers, and make and use everything from exotic and exquisitely crafted plate to shirts of strong chain mail little heavier or bulkier than a linen shirt.

In fact, the Bales excel at all crafts. Their curious intellects demand stimulation, but their paranoid natures keep them away from others. Consequently, many turn to a craft for diversion, and over his centuries-long lifespan, a Bale can become a master of many such hobbies.

They are also clever inventors – their implements of torture have no equal anywhere. All of their works are customarily decorated with painting and carving of the most debased, violently pornographic nature imaginable.

Most Bales are literate, and write both prose and poetry. It is here that their racial insanity is perhaps most evident, for a Bale's writings are either low pornography or utter gibberish – often both. Of course, the Bale author will become murderously enraged if anyone dares to suggest his work is less than epic.

Bales have their own native language, which bears a distinct family resemblance to several archaic human tongues as well as classical Elvish. Many Bales rely on human vernacular for everyday communication.

Bales have two names, a personal name and a family name, passed on through the maternal line. Most Baleish names are two to four syllables long.

The race has no religion – a Bale's only god is himself. They do, however, commune with and manipulate the higher spiritual powers to their own ends, to a degree that seems suicidal. The Bales continually cajole, bully, and beg from the mightiest spirits with panache and fearlessness. There have been several cases of dramatic demonic retribution against the race . . .



Bale Adventure Seeds (Continued)

One night, a mysterious stranger approaches the adventurers and says he knows where the victims are going, but needs help to stop the abductions. If the PCs agree to investigate, he'll return the next day at dusk. He leads the party to an unsavory part of town, then through a secret doorway that turns out to be a magic portal to the underground stronghold of a Bale archmage.

The party's mysterious leader is a Vampire named Kurtos, selected by the local Vampiric community to bring a halt to the Bale kidnapping ring before it jeopardizes the Vampires' way of unlife. He is committed to helping destroy the Bales, but the welfare of the PCs is *not* one of his priorities.

Kurtos is from the same area as the underground stronghold, so he won't suffer from being separated from his coffin. He will, however, become lethargic during the day, leaving the party to fend for itself. And if the adventure drags on too long, he'll become uncontrollably hungry. He'll try to find the Bale's (few) living slaves, but failing that he'll turn on the party (Bales, of course, have no blood for him to consume).

Kurtos neglects to mention to the PCs (until it's too late) that the door was a one-way trip without a key possessed by the archmage . . .

The Baleish stronghold contains seven or eight Bales of varying power levels, led by the 500-point archmage, a handful of Orc or Kobold slaves, and a small army of skeletons, zombies, and mummies.

Bale Adventure Seeds (Continued)

Snow White Revisited

As the party travels through the wilderness, they come across a well-hidden cave containing the perfectly preserved, dust-covered body of a beautiful young woman. Her two most remarkable features are her long, thin hands and exotic violet eyes. Upon close examination, it is obvious that she is still alive. She can be roused with an Awaken spell, or in any way that the GM deems sufficiently imaginative. She will ask for food and water, while thanking the party profusely.

Her name is Nerola, and she explains that she was stranded in the wilderness with her father, a powerful wizard. When rations ran short, he put her in a state of suspended animation and continued on for help.

Her story is almost true. She and her brother were fleeing human adventurers who had destroyed their home, and became lost in the wilderness with a short supply of blood. Nerola took one last drink, then put herself under to await her brother's return.

She's very hungry after her long sleep, and a few days after joining the party she'll make her move. She'll try to lure the most attractive PC away from camp for a tryst, then jump him and feed. She's at least a 200-point character, with several Mind Control spells.

If she succeeds in killing the PC, she'll clean herself up thoroughly, and return the drained corpse to camp, with stories of dim, bat-like figures.

If the party eventually figures out what's going on and disposes of Nerola, her brother might appear (having tracked the party from the cave). He will be a dedicated Enemy who can be used to harass the PCs for months.



Ecology

Most of the wise believe that the Bales were once human. Some have said that their forefathers were the very first human civilization. The cradle of Bale civilization has been placed variably by different scholars, usually in the middle of what is now a great wasteland, or far out to sea on some lost island or continent.

Where all agree is that this ancient civilization began to toy with forbidden magics and Things That Man Was Not Meant To Know. As their power and their knowledge grew, the Bales were altered, becoming something both more and less than human. Whatever happened, they can no longer breed with humanity.

Bales derive all their essential nutrition from the mystic energy they absorb through drinking blood. They require other food only to provide their body with raw mass. A Bale with a regular supply of blood, but no solid food, would soon become skeletally thin, but would not lose his physical strength or stamina.

Bales are susceptible to dehydration. Lack of water won't kill them, but a week or so without liquid nourishment (certainly blood is preferred) will send a Bale into a coma from which he will not revive until his body is immersed under water, or a large quantity of liquid is forced down his throat. It will take several days to several weeks, depending on how long the individual has been catatonic, for a dehydrated Bale to fully recover.

Bales have a highly cultivated palate, despite their indiscriminating digestive process. Most Bale recipes would violently nauseate a human who tried them, but the precision and care with which they're prepared is undeniable.

They are almost impossible to kill. The only things that can end a Bale's life are catastrophic violence, suffocation (see below), or blood deprivation. It takes about one quart a month of fresh blood to nourish a Bale. Blood deprivation has one other particularly unwholesome side effect – as the Bale weakens from blood deprivation, he ages outwardly. His frame shrivels and shrinks and his countenance becomes ever more horrible. In some particularly severe cases, the physical alterations become permanent, leaving the individual a twisted parody of his former self, outwardly, even though he's returned to full strength and vigor.

Even if there is a particularly acute shortage of blood, however, the race still has a last-ditch survival mechanism. Every adult Bale has the ability to put himself into a deathlike trance, in which the maximum interval between the Bale's "meals" goes from one month to nearly three years (see *Metabolism Control*, p. 27). This trance state also allows the race to survive on only a fraction of the air they normally require, making them hard to suffocate.

Curiously, a Bale corpse cannot be re-animated after death, nor can a Bale spirit be contacted. A Bale's death seems to be even more permanent than a human's.

Bale women usually bear children every 30 or 40 years. Given their long lifespans, a woman can easily have many pregnancies in her lifespan. Bale women mate as they will, seldom twice with the same man.

Most Bale births (about 70%) are twins, usually one male and one female. Same-sex twins are generally regarded as more dangerous and mentally unstable than cross-sex twins. Single children are more insane – most of the race's truly great mages and geniuses are singletons. A Bale is regarded as adult at age 25.

Culture

Most Bales live in solitary splendor, their every need tended to by an army of undead servants. Their halls are always hidden, often underground or by magic. They live far away from other races, in deserts, mountains, jungles, swamps, and even in flying strongholds. They meet their need for nourishment through abducting locals, purchases from unscrupulous slavers, or by magical

or military raids on nearby kingdoms. Some also keep breeding pens of humanoid slaves (a grown human has just over five quarts of blood, enough to keep five Bales going for a month). These “living meat lockers” are horrible places of despair and oppression.

The most powerful wizards can amass a great deal of power by brokering magical protection in exchange for service and loyalty. Likewise, necromancers can usually acquire an important position in the widespread Baleish community by providing their less magically-endowed relations and acquaintances (Bales don’t have friends) with undead attendants.

Also important in the community are enchanters, craftsmen, artists, and warriors. Since Bales like at least several miles between them and their nearest neighbor, a “community” can actually encompass all the Bales within several thousand square miles, with communication maintained through spells and magical devices. The exception to this is the archmages, who often have several other students, flunkies, and sycophants sharing their roof.

Bales hate one another as passionately as they hate everyone else, and are constantly plotting against each other. Assassin is an entirely respectable Bale profession, second only to magus and torturer in terms of community status.

All Bales love torture, but fear its application greatly. Although immortal, they aren’t immune to pain. Bales who have fallen into the hands of an enemy have been known to survive in continuous agony for centuries.

As humanity and the other young races become ever more magically and technologically sophisticated, the Bales are being forced farther and farther into the wilderlands, and finding it harder and harder to acquire the blood they need to survive. More and more Bales are permanently taking on the outward signs of age, indicating extended periods of time without nourishment. Consequently, they have been forced to develop ever more elaborate schemes to procure their nourishment without exposing their locations. More and more frequently, these schemes require the cooperation of several powerful Bales. Such alliances, necessary as they seem to be, seldom last more than a few short years before one member tries to eliminate another and the whole thing falls apart.

Politics

The Bales have no racial allies, though they sometimes bargain with such evil folk as the Dark Elves and the Fishmen. Everyone else is regarded simply as food. Humans are the staple of their diet. Dwarf blood they find unpleasant, but nourishing. All the sylvan races are considered particular treats. Leprechauns and Ellyllon are especially rare delicacies, which the Bales savor even if they cannot possibly get enough to nourish them.

Almost the only intelligent race the Bales can’t get nourishment from is the Ghouls, whose blood is unspeakably foul. Renegade bands of Ghouls have sometimes served Bales, but this is rather rare, as the Bales would rather reanimate a drained corpse than donate to the support of their Ghoulish allies.

Bales have also been known to enslave such degenerate races as the Orcs, Ogres, Kobolds, Gargoyles, and particularly desperate Reptile Men. The Bales can get nourishment from such folk, but find it unpleasant and inferior in quality, so they prefer to keep them as troops, laborers, and emergency rations.

Bales do not get along at all well with undead Vampires. A true Vampire is the consummate predator, carefully stalking his prey in its very lair. The extravagant and irresponsible antics of the Bales annoy the Vampire, and also worry him (when six virgins are missing, the graveyard and the cellars are always the *first* place they check). For their part, the Bales simply regard the Vampire as a competitor for a necessary – and finite – resource.

Bale Character Example

Alando **300 points**
6’3”; 155 lbs.; shaved head, dresses in bright clothing.

ST 10 [-]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 15 [20]; **HT** 12 [-]
Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 6.

Advantages: Bale Racial Package [100]; Literacy [10]; Magery 3* [20]; Wealthy [20].

Disadvantages: Addiction [-40]; Stubbornness [-5].

Quirks: Shaves head; Wears bright colors. [-2]

Skills: Alchemy-14* [2]; Calligraphy-12 [2]; Detect Lies-15 [4]; Diagnosis-14 [2]; Hypnotism-16 [6]; Interrogation-16 [4]; Knife-15 [8]; Occultism-18* [6]; Physician-16 [6]; Poisons-18 [10]; Strategy-15 [4]; Surgery-20 [28]; Tactics-13 [2]; Theology-14 [2]; Traps-15 [2]; Whip-12 [2].

Spells: Age (VH)-15; Animation (VH)-15; Apportation-16; Banish-20; Control Zombie-20; Death Vision-16; Decay-16; Fatigue-16; Foolishness-16; Halt Aging (VH)-15; Lend Health-16; Lend Strength-16; Magelock-16; Major Healing (VH)-15; Minor Healing-16; Pestilence-16; Planar Summons-20; Recover ST-16; Restoration (VH)-15; Sense Foes-16; Sense Spirit-16; Skull Spirit-20; Soul Jar (VH)-15; Steal Health-16; Steal Strength-16; Steal Youth (VH)-15; Summon Demon-20; Summon Shade (VH)-15; Summon Spirit-16; Test Food-16; Turn Zombie-16; Ward-16; Youth (VH)-15. [67]

* Includes adjustments for racial package.

Alando is the complete necromancer, and second-in-command to a powerful Bale archmage. His master keeps promising to teach Alando meta-spells one of these years. As far as the archmage is concerned, Alando is an excellent lieutenant. Not only is he a powerful sorcerer, but he’s also completely addicted to an exotic hallucinogen. This doesn’t interfere with his necromantic duties, but does give his master a good handle with which to keep Alando under control.

Like many necromancers, Alando shaves his head (it prevents unwholesome smells or objects from clinging to his hair). He prefers bright clothing, in contrast to the usual drab Baleish style. Alando loves his work, and is also an enthusiastic vivisectionist.

Alando is suitable for use as an Enemy or NPC encounter.

Centaurs in the Campaign

The contrast between the common Centaurs and the Centaur sages originates in Greek mythology. There the mainstream of the race was portrayed as violent, barbaric nomads with a few remarkable individuals (most notably Chiron, the tutor of Achilles) who occupied the very pinnacle of higher learning.

In spite of this dichotomy, the Centaurs remain a very straightforward race. The common folk make good brawlers, the sages make good . . . well, sages. There are several variations the GM can take on these themes, however. A gifted Centaur might forsake the path of scholarship to become a leader of his people. Such an individual would certainly make a great hero and general, and might be able to organize the race into a military and political force far beyond anything previously known. A gifted Centaur would also make an excellent Bard.

As another possible variation, a group of Centaurs might give up their nomadic ways and settle among humans as farmers and tradesmen. Such an arrangement would offer fascinating possibilities for roleplaying as the Centaurs and humans struggle to come to grips with the new order. Conflicts and misunderstandings would be inevitable, giving the PCs an opportunity to act as neutral peacekeepers.

Centaurs react to Elves and all of the sylvan races at +1, and to Exalted Horses and Unicorns at +2. They react normally to other races.

Ordinary Centaurs make good guards, mercenaries, thugs, bravos, and sidekicks. They are also good enemies if the campaign is localized in the sort of country Centaurs are comfortable in. Centaurs should be built on a minimum of 100 points, rising up to 200 points for leaders and heroes.

Centaur Sages must have an IQ of at least 14. The advantages Magical Aptitude and Eidetic Memory will be extremely common. They will have several scholarly and scientific skills – at least a couple at 20+. A Centaur teacher will have at least 300 points, but a young sage, just beginning his journeys, might have as few as 150.

As well as being useful sources of information, Centaur sages are excellent Patrons. They will often send the party across the sea, under the ground, atop a mountain, over the rainbow or some other place where an elderly Centaur would not be comfortable, in order to fetch some tidbit of knowledge.

CENTAURS

Centaurs have the head and arms of a human, and the body, legs, and tail of a horse. Their upper bodies are somewhat larger than a normal human's (height is 8" more than normal, weight is 8 times normal; Onocentaurs are only 6" taller than usual, but are still 8 times as heavy as their height suggests). They have very little hair on their upper bodies, though their females often have long, silky tresses. Their lower bodies can be black, brown, gray, dappled, strawberry, or even palomino. Centaurs have no nudity taboo, but often wear clothing on their vulnerable human half for protection, warmth, or decoration. For some reason they seldom wear hats. They never wear anything on their lower bodies (except, perhaps, a blanket when it's *very* cold). The thought of wearing a saddle, harness, or yoke is particularly odious to a Centaur. Centaur sages (see p. 47 and the sidebar on this page) customarily shave their heads.

Centaur Racial Package

65 points

Attributes: ST +3/16 [61]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Alertness +1 [5]; DR +1 [3]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 1 [10]; 4 Legs [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Inconvenient Size [-10]; Overconfidence [-10]; Phobia (Claustrophobia, mild) [-15]; Stubbornness [-5].

Racial Skills: Animal Handling (M/H) IQ [4]; Jumping (P/E) DX [1]; Running (P/H) HT [4]; Survival (Plains) (M/A) IQ [2].

Notes: Centaurs use the *Split ST for Hybrid Races* rule (p. 11). Their humanoid upper bodies have +3 ST with the No Jumping Bonus limitation, while their equine lower bodies have Enhanced ST 26 with the No Fine Manipulators limitation. A Centaur's upper-body ST (racial average 13) is used when casting spells, grappling, swinging weapons or throwing things. Its lower-body ST (racial average 26) can be used as Fatigue for normal fighting, traveling, carrying, and other mundane activities – Centaurs are almost tireless. Kicking damage is calculated from lower-body ST, using the table for beasts on p. B140 (average is CR 1d+2).

Onocentaur Racial Package

60 points

The Onocentaur is a Centaur with the lower body of a donkey. Their upper bodies are very hairy and they have a donkey's long, shaggy ears.

Attributes: ST +1/12 [44]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Alertness +1 [5]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 1 [10]; 4 Legs [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Phobia (Claustrophobia, mild) [-15]; Social Stigma (Part jackass) [-5]; Stubbornness [-5]; Unattractive Appearance [-5].

Racial Skills: Teamster (M/A) IQ [2].

Psychology

Centaurs are nomadic plains hunters. They are a hardy race, with little use for civilization or its amenities. Centaurs are wild and free – they will not tolerate any attempt at restraint or control. Nonetheless, they are a good people. They take care of one another, and are kind and hospitable to strangers in need.



Ordinary Centaurs live rather primitively, hunting and fishing to feed their human bellies, and gathering wild grass for their horse-halves. Most Centaurs can carry all their personal possessions in a single pack, or even a pouch.

There is a curious exception to this primitivism, however. Centaurs have produced some of the most notable sages and scholars among the mortal races. Roughly 1 in 1,000 Centaur colts will be born with a keen intellect far above that of his peers. These scholars particularly excel at naturalism and philosophy, but Centaurs have produced notable experts in healing, theology, occultism, art, architecture, and the military sciences, as well as great seers and prophets.

A Centaur Sage can be easily recognized by his (or her, though female scholars are even rarer) shaven head and white tunic. Students' tunics are pure white, while full Sages wear a blue fringe. The scholars are the only spellcasters in Centaur society, and their magic is less a determined study of the arcane arts than a mystical byproduct of their more mundane researches. It is almost unknown for a Centaur to dedicate himself exclusively to the study of the magical arts.

Centaur warriors are lightly armored, wearing, at most, hardened leather. Their weapons of choice are spear and lance, and the shortbow. They often carry heavy wooden shields. Scholars are more likely to carry shortswords or staves for protection against the dangers of the road when they're journeying. Most adult Centaurs have at least a grasp of basic martial skills.

The Centaurs have little time for art. Even the great artists among the sages take their style and media from the traditions of other races. The songs of the Centaurs, while stirring and memorable, are primitive and rhythmic in nature. The Centaurs originally learned to speak from the Elves, and their language is

Centaur PCs

Common Centaurs are very straightforward – brawlers with a strong core of decency and sometimes even nobility.

The main drawback to playing a Centaur is its size and shape. A party that relies on stealth will not want a Centaur companion. Likewise, Centaurs will be a liability in groups that spend a great deal of time on the sea, underground, in the desert, in very deep jungles or forests, climbing mountains or even on the upper floors of buildings. Players should consider these limitations seriously before designing a Centaur PC.

In higher point value campaigns, a young Centaur scholar (see p. 49) makes an attractive and versatile choice. Centaur healers and bards are also possibilities in a cinematic campaign.

Centaur Adventure Seeds

Bronc Bustin'

In a remote village, a visiting Centaur has a few too many and begins to mock the other drinkers. "You two-leggers think you're something, don't you? Think you're something 'cause you ride horses? Any of you think you could ride me? Huh? Think again, you two-legged twerps."

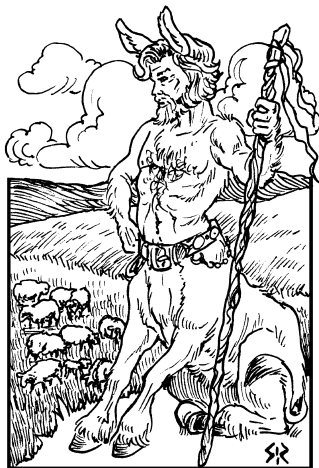
Eventually the Centaur, known as Forelock, will offer a bet. If anybody in the bar can stay mounted on his back for a full minute he'll be his steed for a full month. One of the local boys will take him up on this offer, offering a lamb as his stake. The boy doesn't last a second.

If any of the PCs are inclined to try their hand, Forelock will accept a wager of \$50 or more, or any weapon larger than a knife in good condition. The rider will be allowed one strap to hold on to, cinched around the Centaur's chest. The contest should be resolved by adding the Centaur's lower-body ST of 32 and DX of 11 (-1 for each contest he's won that evening), against the sum of the adventurer's ST, DX, and Riding Skill, then resolve the bet as a Quick Contest of Skill. A tie goes to the rider.

If Forelock wins he'll take on any other party members who might want to try. He'll browbeat the losers unmercifully in a friendly, drunken manner. If he loses he'll insist on carrying out the terms of the bet. He will accompany the party for one month and insist that the character not ride on any normal steed.

If the character is humane and avoids humiliating Forelock (not riding in front of other Centaurs, not forcing him to wear a saddle or bridle) he'll become a friend for life (though he won't ever allow himself to be ridden again!). If the character is callous, or teases him, the Centaur will carry out the terms of his bet, then ride off in a huff.

Of course, any actual cruelty or insult will result in the Centaur making his escape, violently if need be, and perhaps returning with friends for vengeance.



an abbreviated dialect of the Elvish. Centaurs have but one, short name.

Their religion is a simplified form of the Elven faith (see p. 59). The scholars, of course, are more able to catch the subtleties of Elven theology. Some bands have been converted to human faiths, but the Elven influence lingers on, most notably in the high degree of religious tolerance found among the race.

Ecology

Centaurs are plains dwellers, although bands can also be found near woods where Fauns and Wood Elves live.

When they were discovered by the Elves, the Centaurs lived like beasts. The Elves taught them craft skills, a language, and philosophy. It is because of these close and ancient ties between the Centaurs and the Elves that Centaurs are counted among the sylvan races.

Centaurs fish, and hunt for small game on a daily basis. At regular intervals they send out hunting parties to search for larger game – plains deer, wild oxen, and wild boar. These parties also keep the band safe from lions and similar large predators. Every day, the Centaur must gather and eat large quantities of grass to feed his horse-half. This way of life requires constant access to a good supply of grazing and game. The race tends to mild climes, as a really severe winter can be disastrous to a band.

Centaurs are polygamous – the most important stallions have several mares, while younger or less aggressive males have none. Females have a two-year gestation period, and births are usually single. The dangers of the wild reduce the number of Centaur young still further. Because of this, a mare is expected to bear as many children as possible during her lifetime.

Centaur bands frequently trade children through a "fostering" program. This keeps the race genetically healthy and interdependent. A child is first fostered out shortly after it's weaned, and will spend time with several bands before it reaches majority. Centaurs are considered adults at 15, and begin to age normally at 50.

Onocentaurs are quite rare. They're more intelligent than their cousins (though they do not produce Sages), but lack the Centaurs' natural gift for survival in the wild. Consequently, they usually live among men, taking jobs as drovers and laborers. Because of their lowly station in life, as well as their homely appearance, both Centaurs and humans tend to look down upon the Onocentaurs. The race certainly does not deserve such scorn – they are a proud and private people, and bear their lot with dignity.

Crosses between Centaurs and Onocentaurs are known, but very rare. Such individuals combine the best features of both races, but as might be expected from mule-Centaurs, they are sterile.

Culture

Centaur culture is nomadic and decentralized. The race builds no permanent structures, choosing instead to brave even the most severe weather. Most bands wander in a given pattern. Some of these treks are more than 1,000 miles in length and can take more than 5 years to complete. Once every 12 years all the Centaur bands gather at one of several traditional meeting places. Much trading, fostering, and marrying goes on, and there is great celebration. Merchants and entertainers of many races come to hawk their wares. The festival lasts about 6 weeks.

A typical Centaur band consists of 20 to 200 individuals. The traditional leader of the band is the blacksmith. Every Centaur blacksmith keeps a small forge and anvil which is pulled about in a travois or small cart as the band

moves. The puller is usually either the smith's young apprentice, or a minor troublemaker undergoing penance. The smith's importance is easy to see – good shoes and hunting weapons are essential to the Centaur way of life! The smith is also the keeper of the community purse, and it's his duty to barter with other races for iron and steel – the community's only major external need.

The smith settles disputes, officiates at community ceremonies, and usually appoints a war-chief and a chief hunter from among the stallions. In the smallest bands all three offices might fall to the same person; in larger tribes there will also be several subchiefs of both sorts.

There are no Centaur kings. In theory all smiths are peers, though in practice the leaders of the largest bands carry the most authority.

A young stallion has no standing in the community. To gain status, the youth must prove himself in battle and the hunt over a number of years. He can hasten this process somewhat by challenging an older male. Such combat is unarmed – the two wrestle until one is forced to at least one knee. The combat is seldom fatal or seriously damaging – the greatest danger is a broken leg. A Centaur with a broken leg is left near water and abandoned by the band. Many choose to take their own life.

Sometimes young stallions will leave the bands entirely to seek their fortunes as mercenaries. These individuals occasionally combine with a unit of humans or even Dwarves. The Centaurs will allow the two-leggers to ride when speed is imperative, but they will not fight as cavalry – when the battle site is reached, the riders dismount and fight separately.

Centaur Schools

Sages are identified at an early age and sent to a Centaur school. Just as normal youngsters are fostered among many bands, the young scholar will study with several masters. Upon turning 20, he will strike out on his own, wandering in search of knowledge and experience. Anywhere from 10 to 40 years later, the wandering scholar will become a sage, and set up his own school. These schools usually have but one master, and never more than two or three. They seldom have more than a half-dozen students at a time. In addition to young Centaur scholars, pupils might include a young Elf or a human noble – these races value the Centaur schools not only for the erudition of the masters, but also for the open-air environment that teaches the children endurance and the ways of nature. Centaur schools are completely mobile, and move two or three times a year. There's usually no more than a light tent or pavilion to protect the non-Centaur pupils from the elements (though occasionally a school will winter in a cave or similar natural protection).

Politics

Many Centaurs live in sparsely-settled areas of human kingdoms. They are valued as excellent wilderness scouts. Increasingly, there is trouble with human farmers and settlers encroaching on Centaur lands.

Centaurs revere Elves above all other races. They get along well with Fauns, Dryads, Ellyllon, and the other traditional allies of the Elven race. As might be expected, they get along well with the other intelligent equine races, Exalted Horses and Unicorns.

They do a great deal of business with the Dwarves, but usually through intermediaries, as the four-footed race is little suited for the Dwarvish caverns. Centaurs have no particular racial enemies, except of course for the Orcish nations – particularly the nomadic plains Orcs who often war with the Centaurs over territory.



Centaur Character Example

***Deena* 100 points**

Age 20; 6'6"; 1320 lbs.; strawberry-blonde coat and hair. Her human half is tan, and she has freckles on her face.

ST 13/26 [-]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 10 [10]; **HT** 13 [10]
Speed 6.25; Move 13 (6 for Dodge).

Dodge 7; Parry 7.

Advantages: Attractive [5]; Centaur Racial Package [65]; Combat Reflexes [15].

Disadvantages: Absent-Mindedness [-15]; Bad Temper [-10]; Gullibility [-10]; Truthfulness [-5].

Quirks: Loves music [-1].

Skills: Animal Handling-10* [-]; Bow-12 [4]; Carousing-13 [2]; Cooking-10 [1]; First Aid-10 [1]; Fishing-13 [6]; Jumping-12* [-]; Running-13* [-]; Spear-12 [2]; Survival (Plains)-10* [-].

* Includes adjustments for racial package.

Deena is a simple Centaur girl of an extremely romantic and independent nature. By trade she's her band's fisher, and she also accompanies hunting parties. She's well past marriageable age, and is very healthy and attractive. Many young stallions are vying for her attention, and the blacksmith and other elders are pressuring her to settle down and have colts. She's recently decided she doesn't want to be a brood mare, and has resolved to run away from home.

She's extremely straightforward and naive, and her mind tends to wander. She will not tolerate rude behavior or threats. Although she has absolutely no musical talent, she loves singing and other music.

Deena is a 100-point character ready to begin adventuring.

DWARVES *and* GNOMES

Dwarves in the Campaign

Dwarves carry grudges. This is best illustrated by their attitude towards Elves – they're not sure what the Elves did, exactly, all those millennia ago . . . but they know the Dwarves were wronged, and they're not about to let it drop just because it happened a few measly thousand years ago!

The Dwarfven racial template is fraught with old grudges – the Intolerance for Orcs, and the quirk about Elves and Goblins. This leads to the question of exactly how Dwarves react to these other races. More succinctly, can a Dwarf serve in the same party as an Orc, or are they obligated to kill each other?

The GM, of course, does not have to allow Dwarfs and Orcs to work together if he doesn't want them to. As written, however, cooperation between an individual Dwarf and an individual Orc will not be impossible.

Intolerance *will* affect one character's attitude towards another, but Intolerance does not necessarily mean that the character will "go psycho" at the sight of a member of the target race. If an Orc entered an adventuring party, particularly under the protection of an accepted member of the group, the Dwarf would be suspicious and annoyed; he would certainly argue against the Orc's admission. He would not, however, necessarily quit the party or attack the Orc. Over time, he might even modify his attitudes *about that individual only*. "Oh, Grishark, I have to admit he's good in a fight, and he usually knows his place. But he's still an Orc, and I won't eat with him. And the rest of his filthy folk better watch out for axes when I'm around."

Of course, since the Intolerance is racial, it would be perfectly reasonable for the GM to levy a serious Social Stigma amongst his own people on a Dwarf who openly consorts with even a single Orc.

Dwarves react to Goblins at -1, Elves at -2, and Orcs at -3, but to Gnomes at +1. No reaction better than "poor" is possible when a Dwarf meets a Dragon. Gnomes react to Elves and Dwarves at +1, and to Orcs at -3, though individual Gnomes are much less dedicated in their hatred of Orcs than the Dwarves.

Most Dwarves and Gnomes should be built on at least 100 points. Dwarfven heroes could reach 300 to 500 points.

Dwarves are short, sturdy, and brawny. They average 1½ feet shorter than a human of equivalent ST, but weigh 100 pounds *more* than that same human. Gnomes are two feet shorter, and 50 pounds heavier than a human of their ST. Dwarfish features are broad and coarse, and their bodies are thickly muscled. Their legs are short, but their heads and torsos are nearly the size of a human's. Their hair is thick and can be any color found in humanity, though it usually turns gray or silver in midlife (baldness is also common). All male Dwarves wear thick, full beards which they like to grow down below their waists. They wear practical, sturdy clothing, and are often in armor when above ground.

Dwarf Racial Package

40 or 36 points

Attributes: ST +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: DR 1 [3]; Extended Lifespan [5]; Extra Encumbrance [5]; Fatigue +2 [6]; Hard to Kill +1 [5]; Longevity [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Greed [-15]; Intolerance (Orcs) [-1 or -5]; Miserliness [-10]; Reduced Move -1 [-5].

Racial Quirks: Suspicious of Elves and Goblins; Never shave beards. [-2]

Racial Skills: Axe/Mace (P/A) DX+1 [4]; Merchant (M/A) IQ [2]; and an overall +3 bonus to all Craft Skills [18].

Note: Dwarves have a -2 with all missile weapons, but there is no point value for this (see *Taboo Traits*, p. 11). Also, all Dwarves have an Intolerance for Orcs at at least the quirk level [-1]. In campaign worlds where Orcs are especially common, this can be a 5-point disadvantage. It costs 40 points to play a Dwarf (36 points in a world where Orcs are common).

Gnome Racial Package

25 points

These close kin of the true Dwarves are somewhat shorter and slighter than their cousins, and keep their beards trimmed close (whether this is an aesthetic decision or just a desire to be different from their racial kin is a matter of some debate).



Racial Advantages: DR 1 [3]; Extra Encumbrance [5]; Fatigue +1 [3], Hard to Kill +1 [5]; Longevity [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Reduced Move -1 [-5].

Racial Quirks: Do not like to live underground; Never forget a favor or an Injury; Trim beards close. [3]

Racial Skills: They have an overall skill bonus of +4 with any craft skills not involving metalworking or engineering [12].

Psychology

Dwarves are most at home underground in deep mines and magnificent caverns hewn from living rock. They are a private and moody race, not given to display around strangers. Dwarves glory in work, and will labor for days without rest at opening a new shaft, crafting a new artifact or decorating a new hall.

Although regarded by other races as dour and cheerless, the Dwarves can be merry – frequently their halls ring with song and laughter. They are reserved among outsiders, however, and the outgoing side of their personality is seldom seen by others.

Dwarves are the preeminent craftsmen of the world – only the Elves can match their quality, and Elves are not nearly so prolific. Although best known as smiths, jewelers, and masons, the Dwarves are masters of many crafts. They are superb merchants and tough bargainers. Dwarven quality costs dearly, but the buyer knows he'll get what he paid for, and that his contract will be carried out to the letter.

Though Dwarves are, as a race, both greedy and miserly, individuals (especially PCs) may lack these faults. Even those who possess them in full measure will still abide by the stern morals of the race. Rarely will a Dwarf resort to outright theft or swindling.

The Dwarves regard their homes and families as sacred, and shield them from the sight of others. Few Dwarven women are ever seen above the ground. Contrary to human myth, the Dwarven women are not bearded, but when forced to travel aboveground they wear disguises, including remarkably realistic false beards, and cannot easily be told from the men. Should someone harm a Dwarf's family, he will immediately have an enemy that will devote every waking moment of his life to tracking the offender down.

Although most Dwarves are hardworking homebodies, there are always a few born with the wanderlust and who become mercenaries or adventurers. These wanderers serve a useful purpose in Dwarven society, bringing news of the upper world and other clans to the insular Dwarven communities. A Dwarven wanderer is always welcome at any Dwarvish hearth (though they are not encouraged to bring along any strange, non-Dwarven companions they may have accumulated, except in emergencies . . .).

The Dwarven race has produced many great heroes and mighty wizards, but the two seldom combine in a single individual. Most Dwarven mages specialize in the Enchantment and Making and Breaking colleges. The race guards its wizards almost as zealously as it guards its women.

Dwarven warriors (a designation that includes almost all adult males) prefer to fight with an axe or hammer – martial versions of the tools they spend their life mastering. This correspondence between martial and mundane skills has much to do with the Dwarves' traditional success in battle. The Dwarven battle-axe is also universally feared among the race's enemies. Dwarves wear heavy armor – usually scale or plate. However, they seldom armor their lower bodies, which offer a tiny target to enemies (-5 to hit the legs, -7 to hit the feet). Dwarves usually carry shields.

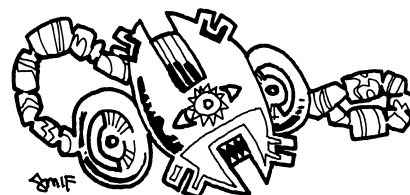


Dwarven PCs

Dwarves are the opposite of Elves. Where Elves are moderate, Dwarves are extremist. Dwarves do nothing by halves. The easiest way to get a grip on a Dwarf character is to pick a single word and apply it to everything. The dour Dwarf is the most clichéd sort, but jolly Dwarves, pensive Dwarves, sentimental Dwarves, vicious Dwarves, and many other sorts are also possible.

However, if the player wants to play against type and make his Dwarf subtle and versatile, the GM should encourage him. Such a Dwarf might well adopt an innocuous "cover" personality, in contrast to his real attitudes, to keep others guessing.

Also in contrast to Elves, Dwarves tend to pick one thing and do it well. Dwarves can be doughty fighters, subtle mages, skilled craftsmen or tricky thieves, but seldom will there be a Dwarf who is known for both his fighting prowess and his wizardly power, for instance. They will master a single career rather than dabble in many fields.



Dwarf Adventure Seeds

The Old Dwarf of the Mountain

This adventure can be used whenever the party needs to get somewhere far away as fast as possible.

The pass over the mountains is closed, but there's another pass – a secret, underground tunnel hewn by the Dwarves in bygone centuries. The PCs somehow obtain a map through the mountain. There will be the usual low-key subterranean vermin (beasts and monsters, wild Kobolds, a few Orcs, maybe a single Ogre or Minotaur) but the PCs will find that the greatest danger comes from the mad old Dwarf who lives in the tunnels. This ancient (a former master mason) is a bit paranoid and has riddled the path with traps – some deadly, others just annoying.

If the party can contact the old Dwarf and reason with him, they might be able to secure his cooperation in guiding them through the deep. They should set off several traps and pitfalls, however, before they even catch a glimpse of their tormenter.

Accounts Payable

A mixed force of Dwarf and human mercenaries recently completed an assignment for a local noble. They were paid as agreed, but somewhere along the line the humans offended the Dwarves, and the Dwarves took this as justification to run off with the entire payment. The humans want to go after the Dwarves (very badly), but an urgent (and even more lucrative) assignment is waiting. So the PCs are hired (or dispatched, if they're already mercenaries) to go retrieve the humans' portion of the money.

The party will have to decide whether to begin with force or reason. If they attack, they're in for a major battle against tough, experienced, well-armed foes. If they try reason they'll tip their hand, but they might avoid unnecessary bloodshed (GMs' option as to how reasonable the Dwarves are, and whether their beef with the humans is legitimate or just a Dwarven huff). Counter-theft might be the best course, but one thing Dwarves are very good at is guarding their treasure. Of course, if the Dwarves ever discover the identity of the thieves, they'll eventually come looking for revenge and recompense!

Dwarvish is a secret language, with a runic alphabet unrelated to Elven or human tongues. They use it to keep minutely-detailed chronicles in ancient, hidden tomes. Only a handful of non-Dwarves have ever learned this language. Many of the common workers only know a few words of it. Every Dwarf has a secret name in this tongue which is known only to himself, his parents, his mate, and perhaps one or two companions. It is a great honor to know a Dwarf's true name, and for anyone to betray a Dwarf with whose name he's been entrusted is a sure path to a blood feud. Though the name is secret during a Dwarf's lifetime, it is very important to the Dwarf that he be survived by someone who knows his true name so it can be correctly inscribed in the chronicles and on his tomb.

Dwarvish art is mostly decorative in nature. Other races regard it as grim but majestic. They are great singers – their music ranges from plain, dirge-like songs to bawdy ribaldry. Especially memorable are the rhythmic work songs, which are sung by laborers of many races.

Their religion, like so much else, is secret. It is known, however, to be polytheistic. The Dwarven pantheon includes gods of the Forge, the Mountains, War, Prosperity, Fertility, Magic, and many more. Dwarvish priests are also the keepers of the sacred chronicles and records of names. Many a departing adventurer will whisper his true name to a priest at his departure, hedging against the possibility that he won't return. The Dwarves do not make images of their gods.

Ecology

The Dwarven race is nearly as ancient as the Elves, and the two peoples unknowingly coexisted for several thousand years. The secret Dwarven language and religion date from this remote era. The first meeting between the Dwarves and the Elves was not harmonious – most believe that a great war was fought, though neither race speaks openly of this time. Scars linger to the present day (see *Elves*, pp. 58-61 for more information).

Gnomes are descended from Dwarves who lived near the surface and tended crops and herds to feed the miners and craftsmen below – some still live this way. Over the millennia the races have diverged (they are probably still close enough to interbreed, but such practices are abhorrent to the Dwarves). The Gnomes are a dynamic and resourceful race, excelling at the softer crafts – woodworking, leatherworking, weaving, and so on. Their magic is less powerful, but more versatile, than the Dwarves'.

Dwarves marry only once, and for life. The woman chooses her mate – if her chosen one won't or can't have her, she will not take another. Dwarvish unions produce one to four children. Multiple births are very rare.

At age six the Dwarven child enters a stern apprenticeship that will last more than 30 years. Every Dwarf spends time in the mines, tending the forges and contributing to the defense of the community. At age 40, the Dwarf is finally considered an adult and is given the rank of journeyman.

Dwarves begin to age (very slowly) at about 100 years, but they remain vigorous for several centuries. Lifespans of 500 years are not unknown.

Dwarves are fond of simple, hearty fare – mostly red meat and fowl. They grow few vegetables. Their fields (once tended by Gnomes, now mostly manned by human tenants) grow grain for bread and beer (which they are immensely fond of), and tobacco (another common passion). The Dwarven brewers are universally regarded as the finest in the world.

Culture

Dwarves are usually ruled by hereditary kings. An individual is born into a certain social status and is expected to live up to the station of his ancestors. Since most Dwarves can trace their roots back to their very first ancestor, it is

usually easy (though time-consuming) for a group of Dwarves to determine who has hereditary precedence in any situation.

In spite of this, Dwarven society is remarkably egalitarian. The Dwarvish lord who wants to keep the respect of his subjects will dirty his hands in the shafts or forges whenever possible – and most high-born Dwarves welcome such interludes of hard work as a break from the pressures of statecraft.

Hereditary Status is important to the Dwarves, but less so than competence. Particularly brave or talented individuals can rise far – such earned status is also passed on to their descendants.

In spite of their cloistered existence, Dwarven women hold great power over their men. The women of each community convene as a formal council that no man may enter. The decisions of such councils are always phrased as humble suggestions, but no sane king or guildmaster will ignore them.

Dwarves love wealth, and many are outright misers. They do not give to beggars (though they see to the necessities of their own needy – widows, wounded veterans, and the ill). They make loans rarely – usually only to folk who can benefit the Dwarves. They expect prompt payment in full, but scorn the practice of usury (charging interest). However, a Dwarf will share freely with a true friend, even to the point of self-deprivation.

In wartime the Dwarves rely on their heavy infantry – it is effective even against longbowmen (Dwarven shield walls are almost impenetrable) and cavalry (the Dwarves make a small target for a horseman, and they can kill or cripple opponents' steeds easily). They are efficiently ruthless against an enemy, and are masters of the merciless commando tactics required for tunnel fighting.

There are always a few units of Dwarven mercenaries available. Such troops are extremely expensive and very particular about who they serve. These units are usually hardened veterans, and are valued as siege breakers, as their skill at mining and sapping is unequaled.

Politics

The ancient feud between the Elves and the Dwarves is well known. The Dwarves bear most of the responsibility for keeping the grudge alive, but the Elves' irritation and disgust whenever it's mentioned doesn't help the situation. Still, it has been many centuries since Elves and Dwarves came to blows, and the two great nations now cooperate occasionally.

The relationship between humans and Dwarves is more uncertain. The humans are too diverse and undependable to be trusted, but too strong to be provoked. The Dwarves mistrust them and fear their vitality (though few would ever admit it), but have become dependent on human trade and alliances.

Relations with the Goblins are even more peculiar. The Dwarves aren't overly fond of them, but do extensive business with Goblin traders. Because of the Goblins' tendency to abscond with any magical items that aren't nailed down, a Dwarf will be very watchful of any Goblins that might be visiting a Dwarvish hall . . .

The war between the Orcs and the Dwarves has raged on and off for millennia. The Orcs (and their allies, the Ogres and Trolls) covet Dwarvish wealth and holdings. In battle, dozens of Orcs die for each Dwarf slain, but the Orcs reproduce so quickly, and Dwarves so slowly, that the conflict has been a stalemate for generations. Dwarves also hate Minotaurs, who occasionally creep into Dwarvish caverns and wreak havoc.

Dwarves dislike water, and they seldom meet any sea-folk. Sylvan races consider the Dwarves dour and boring, while the Dwarves, in turn, consider the sylvans rude and flighty. The Winged Folk and the Great Eagles are often strong allies of the Dwarves. Kobolds are sometimes brought in as servants, and other times exterminated as pests.

Dwarf Character Example

Mangonel 150 points

Age 120; 4'5"; 340 lbs.; pot-bellied with a salt-and-pepper beard.

ST 13/15 [-]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 12 [20]
Speed 6; Move 2.

Dodge 2; Parry 6; Block 6.

Advantages: Dwarf Racial Package [40]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Longevity [5].

Disadvantages: Alcoholism [-15]; Code of Honor (Mercenaries') [-5]; Lane (Crippled Leg) [-15]; Overweight [-5].

Quirks: Likes enclosed places; Prefers wine to beer; Very pious. [-3]

Skills: Architecture-12 [2]; Armoury-15 [8]; Axe/Mace-12* [8]; Blacksmith-15 [8]; Brawling-12 [8]; Carousing-12 [2]; Carpentry-16 [8]; Crossbow-13* [8]; Engineer (Primitive Machinery)-14 [8]; Gunner (Catapult)-12 [4]; Mechanic (Large Weapons)-16 [10]; Merchant-12* [-]; Savoir-Faire (Military)-12 [1]; Shield-12 [1]; Streetwise-12 [2].

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

Mangonel is a grizzled and hardened professional mercenary. He's a specialist – an artilleryman and a builder of siege-engines. He's served in both Dwarven and human units. Mangonel (a nickname he's carried since his youth) is a bit lame from an old wound. This would force a line soldier to retire, but a specialist like Mangonel can adjust. He's overly fond of the wine bottle, but that's usually overlooked by his commanders. He's basically honest, but can be tempted from the straight and narrow by the opportunity for great profit. He makes a great outward show of piety, calling frequently on the gods for help and always carrying a holy object or relic or two.

Mangonel is a seasoned character who could be used as a friend or Ally for a PC with a military background.



ELLYLLON

Ellyllon in the Campaign

Ellyllon can be used whenever the GM wants to inject "little folk" into the campaign.

An Ellyl with the Poisons skill will have access to a number of weapon venoms, including: *poisons* that duplicate levels 1, 2, and 3 of the Venom advantage (see p. 32); an *anesthetic* – roll vs. HT for each hit taken. On a failure, the victim falls into a deep sleep in 1d turns; and a *paralytic* – roll vs. HT on five consecutive rounds. Lose 1d DX for each roll failed. If DX reaches 0, the victim is completely paralyzed. DX will be regained at the rate of one point per hour. If the character is reduced by twice his original DX his heart and lungs will be paralyzed and he will die.

In a duel against a larger opponent, the favored Ellyllon weapon is a spear thrower and a quiver of at least six envenomed spears. As a matter of honor, the Ellyl will not fly higher than his opponent can reach.

Ellyllon make powerful allies or opponents. They take offense very easily, but they are extremely loyal to their friends. Their size and speed allow them to strike quickly from concealment, making them good guerrillas. They are also excellent spies and assassins. An Ellyllon Duke or Prince would make a good Patron or Enemy.

Ellyllon react at +2 to Elves, and a +1 to the other sylvan races and the Faerie folk.

Most Ellyllon should be built on 50 to 100 points. Rulers should have at least 200 points.

Ellyllon PCs

Ellyllon can fit into almost any kind of party in almost any role. A fighter with a few points of the Poisons skill can become one of the deadliest members of the party. In fact, the GM will want to watch such characters carefully, to make sure that they don't unbalance combat. The Ellyllon facility at thievery, spying, and scouting is obvious from their high DX, racial abilities, and small size.

Continued on next page . . .

The Ellyllon (singular: Ellyl) are tiny, winged humanoids standing between 5 and 7 inches tall (figure height normally for the character's strength *before* the racial ST modifier is applied, then read inches for feet). Weight is negligible – 1 or 2 pounds. Their wings are translucent and colorful, configured like those of butterflies. Otherwise they appear exactly like slender, beautiful humans. Their complexions are usually fair, as are their hair colors. They wear beautiful, minutely detailed costumes.

Ellyl Racial Package

20 or 30 points

Attributes: ST -5 [-40]; DX +3 [30]; Hit Points -4 [-20].

Racial Advantages: Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Acute Vision +3 [6]; Handsome [15]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Night Vision [10]; Passive Defense +1 [25]; Ultrahearing [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Courtliness) [-5]; Fragile [-20]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-15].

Racial Skills: Flight (Winged) (P/E) DX+1 [2]; Savoir-Faire (M/A) IQ [1]; Stealth (P/E) DX [2].

Notes: Members of the royal family are treated as a sub-race with the Extended Lifespan [5] and Early Maturation [5] advantages. The cost to play a common Ellyl is 20 points; royalty costs 30 points.

Due to their small size, Ellyllon combat is unique in several ways. Ellyllon lances do damage as large knives, spears as small knives (held or thrown), swords as daggers, and arrows as blowpipe darts. Their armor is remarkably strong and well-made, but is still -1 to DR due to its light construction (the race knows certain secrets of Armoury which don't apply at larger scales; these prevent the penalty from being greater). In order to compensate for these



disadvantages all Ellyllon get a +2 to any attempt to hide, and +3 to any Stealth roll. These special conditions are considered to be “special effects” of the race’s size. Though significant, they are considered to roughly balance each other, and therefore carry no specific point costs.

Psychology

Though they look like fairies, the Ellyllon are mortal, material creatures. Ignorant humans have taken to referring to them as “Pixies.” It is a great insult to refer to an Ellyl as a Pixie to his face – the name properly belongs to a particularly ugly and obnoxious sort of supernatural creature.

Ellyllon are proud, beautiful and mercurial. Contrary to popular belief, they are neither flighty nor mischievous. Humans tend to trivialize the Ellyllon because of their size and their resemblance to Faerie-folk – a sometimes deadly mistake.

The most notable and universal facet of the Ellyllon personality is courtliness. They try to do everything with style and grace. Courtesy, formality, and ostentation are all dear to the Ellyllon heart. Humans often find their exaggerated formality charming and amusing (though the wise keep their amusement to themselves).

Their moods shift rapidly. They can go from a pall of tragic gloom to a paroxysm of mirth in a moment. One thing all Ellyllon have in common is that they take themselves very seriously. A six-inch Ellyl will unhesitatingly challenge a Giant if he feels his honor is being questioned. Though always respectful to their hereditary leaders, they are fiercely independent and do not take orders well.

This behavior will occasionally put a human in an awkward position, especially a reputable fighter or chivalric knight. On the one hand, the knight’s honor and courage are on the line – surely he can’t back down from a 6” tall opponent! On the other side, he has to wonder how his reputation will suffer if it becomes known that he “picked on” a foe scarcely bigger than his hand! Anyone with any knowledge of Savoir-Faire or Fast-Talk will usually be able to apologize his way out of the duel without losing too much face!

Ellyllon are great tricksters, but their tricks tend to be more bloody than mischievous. The height of Ellyllon humor might be to arrange for a human to sit down on a cushion filled with Ellyllon spears. A larger individual should count himself lucky if he can walk away unscathed from an Ellyllon prank.

Ellyllon are not as magical as the Goblins, but are more skillful than humans. Ellyllon mages generally develop a few key spells to the point of mastery, then move on to a few more. This is because the tiny Ellyllon body cannot long sustain the strain of casting powerful spells unless the enchantments are known at a sufficient skill level to reduce the Fatigue cost considerably. Ellyllon favor Air, Illusion, and Mind Control Spells.

Their arms of choice are thin, needle-like swords, spears, spear-throwers, and bows. They are masters at envenoming their weapons with poisons designed to bring down larger foes and prey. Although remarkably tough and highly crafted, Ellyllon armor is so thin and light that it’s slightly less effective than normal armor.

Ellyllon are exquisite craftsmen. Their greatest masterpieces are their clothes, which are brightly colored, fancifully detailed and extremely flattering. They are also great painters and carvers, though normal-sized folk often need magical or artificial vision aids to fully appreciate their art.

The Ellyllon’s first language was Elvish, and some still speak that tongue. Most have adopted human speech. They tend to favor sonorous, “noble” sounding names of several syllables. Some Ellyllon use family names, particularly the gentry.

Ellyllon PCs (Continued)

The race’s low Fatigue (a consequence of the race’s low ST) handicaps Ellyllon spellcasters, but this can be overcome. The Recover ST spell is essential to Ellyllon mages! The Ellyllon mage should choose a few key spells and buy his skill level up until the Fatigue cost becomes manageable. The problem of low Fatigue can also be minimized through judicious use of the race’s other advantages. For instance, suppose an Ellyl mage knows Fireball at 17 – high enough to reduce his Fatigue cost by one point per casting. Assuming our Ellyl has racial average ST, in combat he could cast an infinite number of 1d fireballs (which cost him no Fatigue), up to five 2d fireballs (costing 1 Fatigue point each), and no more than two 3d fireballs (2 points each). In combat he can use his wings and size to find a protected vantage point from which he can hurl fireballs at the enemy, picking his shots so that his low-power fireballs do the most good. Ellyllon are advised to avoid high-powered spells entirely.

Ellyllon weapon venom is made from common natural materials. These materials can be found in any temperate forest with one day’s search and a successful IQ or Naturalist roll. They can also be purchased from any reasonably well-stocked herbalist. There are certain minimum skill levels for the more powerful types of poison (see sidebar, previous page, for venom descriptions). The raw materials for Level 1 venom cost \$20 and can be brewed by any Ellyl with the Poisons Skill. Anesthetic venom costs \$30 and also requires no minimum skill level. Level 2 venom costs \$50 and requires Poisons-12. Paralytic venom costs \$75, and requires Poisons-13. Level 3 venom costs \$100 and requires Poisons-15. One day’s ingredients will make 1d doses of any *one* venom. An envenomed sword or spear will retain its potency for 1-3 successful hits.





Ellyl Adventure Seeds

Small Wonder

In a remote outpost of civilization, the party happens upon a traveling menagerie and sideshow. Among several exotic and dangerous beasts is a young Ellyl kept in a large bird cage. Recognizing the party as somewhat more competent than the rustics who usually frequent the show, she will try to catch their attention. If the PCs can arrange to speak with her alone she will tell them she is being held against her will and beg for release. However, the owner of the exhibition is a renegade wizard, and the cage is magically protected with alarms and traps. As soon as the cage is opened or removed the show will begin to mobilize against the party. Most of the beasts and monsters are magically controlled, though some of the more intelligent ones serve the wizard willingly. Either way, a whole pack of monsters will soon be after the party.

If the Ellyl is released and left to her own devices she will thank the party profusely and make a beeline for home. If the adventurers escort her all the way home they'll receive a small reward (she's no one particularly important) and make some potentially useful friends in her local "duke" and his people.

A Duel

One of the PCs manages to insult an Ellyl, or alternatively one of the party fighters is engaged to fight for a fat or elderly local merchant who knows better than to tangle with an Ellyl warrior. The Ellyl will fight without armor, using a spear-thrower and paralytic venom. The PC is given his choice of weapons – creativity will come in handy (plate armor and a battleaxe, for instance, might have less luck than a large shield and a butterfly net). The Ellyl will also agree to confine the duel to an area of limited radius (not less than 15 hexes), but only if his opponent requests this. Magic of any type is strictly forbidden. The duel ends when either contestant yields or can no longer attack. If the Ellyl is killed, the GM may give him several vengeance-hungry relatives.

Curiously, although they speak in tones normal for larger races, their song is pipingly high and frequently shrill to human ears. Ellyllon love to dance – everything from manic flying reels to stately miniature minuets.

Ellyllon embrace a large number of religions, mostly drawn from the humans and the Elves. A few are agnostic.

Ecology

Ellyllon legends say they were the first other race to encounter the Elves and benefit from their wisdom. Scholars are dubious about this claim. Independent research tends toward dating the first Elf/Ellyl contact at some 500 years after the Dwarves and Elves first met.

Ellyllon strength and stamina is much greater than their size might suggest. Sages have no explanation for this, except to shrug and point out they are obviously a magical people.

Ellyllon are omnivorous. Like most of the sylvan races they are hunter-gatherers, but their small size allows them to form larger groups without jeopardizing the food supply. They hunt in groups of 3 to 12 individuals, concentrating mostly on rodents and small birds – occasionally bagging a fox or a badger. Of course, an Ellyl warrior with a few strongly-envenomed spears would be an easy match for a wild boar or even a bear or lion, but they can use no poison stronger than a mild tranquilizer on potential food for fear of poisoning their own people.

Food could be dispatched easily from a distance by the flying hunters, but an Ellyllon hunt is considered a chance for young warriors to display their martial prowess. After a few volleys of tranquilizing spears and darts slow the prey down, the huntsmen will begin to dart in with short-spears, each one attempting to administer the killing blow. It is considered dishonorable to hunt with magic. Brave as they are, these customs have caused the death of many a sturdy young Ellyl.

They profess monogamy, but they are no better at practicing it than the average human. Ellyllon women bear children only once or twice in their lives, but multiple births are common. Twins and triplets are frequent occurrences; still larger litters are not uncommon.

An Ellyl reaches maturity about age 20, and begins to age at 55.

Culture

The Ellyllon culture is highly structured, if not highly organized. Ellyllon gather into settlements of 100 to 500 individuals, usually in a sylvan glade or even in a single ancient tree. They have also been known to make use of cloud islands and small mounds or caverns. Each settlement is ruled by a duke or duchess (in some older and larger communities the title is prince or princess).

All Ellyllon owe allegiance to a single queen who rules from a secret forest and is protected by many subtle magics.

The queen rules directly over a city of several thousand Ellyllon. Her palace appears to be an ancient, hollow oak tree, but within are many rooms and great halls – many times more space than the oak tree could hold. It is said that the palace has the magical power to reduce visiting big folk to the size of an Ellyl.

Over half the Ellyllon race is titled. Even the “common” folk are addressed as “damosel” or “chevalier.” However, only the actual rulers – the dukes, princes, and queen – have any real political power.

One’s status is based on how one is favored at court. A common chevalier who’s a trusted confidant of the queen holds more status than a hereditary earl who lives at a provincial court and is avoided by his duke.

There is very little civil unrest among the Ellyllon. The rulers, in general, are remarkably effective. The queen, like most of the dukes and princes, is a very powerful mage, and the royal family is long-lived. (The current queen is Her Petite Majesty Queen Ambrosia XXXIV.) Her Majesty is currently in her early 90s – just entering middle years. She has eight children, most of whom already have families of their own.

Few Ellyllon ever venture out into the larger world. Those who do seldom return. Ellyllon adventurers are greatly prized as spies, scouts, and thieves. They are also great favorites among human nobility, mostly as curiosities. In addition, Ellyllon wings are a highly sought-after material component for some of the viler necromantic spells – a single pair of wings will fetch upwards of \$5,000. Tearing the wings off of an Ellyllon does 1d-1 damage per wing. If the Ellyllon survives the experience, he will quickly pine away (make a HT roll each day at a cumulative -1; a failure results in death) in mourning. Only an Instant Regeneration spell can restore the appendages quickly enough to prevent tragedy. If using the hit location rules, Ellyllon wings are targeted at -8.

Many Ellyllon adventurers are exiled from their bands. Serious criminals are extremely rare among the race, and are usually put to death. Exiles are mostly unfortunate individuals who had the bad luck to offend the ruler or one of his favorites, get caught on the wrong side of some minor palace intrigue, or simply overhear the wrong secret. Others simply rebel against the timeless formality of the Ellyllon courts – these would certainly become exiles in time if they didn’t leave of their own volition. Finally, a few are dilettantes or curiosity seekers. Such individuals usually make their stay among the larger folk as brief as possible.

Politics

The vast size difference between the Ellyllon and other races serves as a natural barrier to extensive diplomatic or economic ties. They get along well with Elves and other sylvan folk. They sometimes trade with Goblins. Ellyllon tend to hide from humans and Dwarves. They have less trouble than most races with the Orcs – Orcs have a tremendous fear of Faerie and all its manifestations. Under the circumstances, the Ellyllon are disinclined to clear up any confusion the Orcs might have as to their true nature!

The Ellyllon do sometimes deal with the Faerie court, though there are ancient enmities between the race and certain of the more unseemly varieties of fairy. The closest race to the Ellyllon are the Leprechauns. The formal and courtly Ellyllon find little attractive in the blunt and hard-working Leprechauns, but the common traits of a tiny size and a magical nature (as well as a preference for similar habitats) ensure a great deal of contact and trade between the two races.

Ellyl Character Example

Auriana

100 points

Age 20; 6”; 1 lb.; platinum blonde hair, always dressed in blue.

ST 5 [-]; **DX** 14 [10]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 10/6 [-]
Speed 6; Move 6 (Flying 12).
Dodge 8; Parry 7.

Advantages: Charisma +1 [5]; Ellyllon Racial Package [20]; Empathy [15]; Magery 1 [15].

Disadvantages: Honesty [-10]; Jealousy [-10]; Pacifism (Self-Defense Only) [-15].

Quirks: Always wears blue; Frightened of Goblins. [-2]

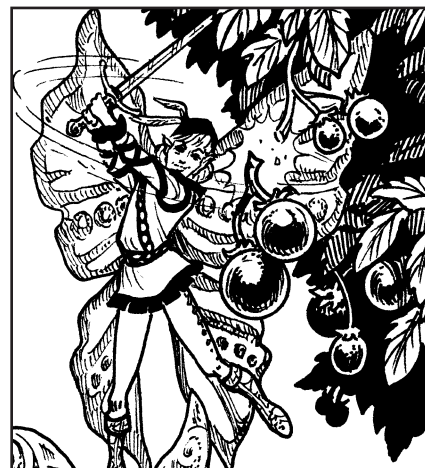
Skills: Dancing-14 [2]; Flight (Winged)-15* [-]; Hypnotism-12 [2]; Poisons-13 [4]; Savoir-Faire-13* [-]; Spear-14 [2]; Spear Thrower-14 [2]; Stealth-17* [14].

Spells: Body of Air-15; Create Air-12; Create Fire-12; Explosive Fireball-13; Fireball-15; Ignite Fire-12; Lend HT-12; Lend ST-12; Minor Healing-13; Purify Air-12; Recover ST-12; Shape Air-12; Shape Fire-12; Simple Illusion-12. [16]

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

The damosel Auriana is a young Ellyl mage of ordinary birth. She’s possessed of an insatiable curiosity about the outside world, and has resolved to leave home and become a wanderer. She’s rather thoughtful and serious for an Ellyl. She does not like to hurt or kill others, and usually fights with paralytic venom which she can make herself. She’s extremely honest and reliable, but she tends to become annoyed with anyone who’s cleverer or more magically skilled than herself. For reasons that aren’t even clear to her she’s always been profoundly uneasy in the presence of Goblins.

Auriana is a balanced character ready to begin adventuring.



ELVES

Elves in the Campaign

Next to humanity, Elves, and Elf-like folk are the most popular race in contemporary fantasy gaming. The GMs challenge is to make the Elven race something more than just tall, skinny, pointy-eared humans.

It's much easier to play the Dark Elves. They're evil, but with a real sense of style. Their cunning, cruelty, and understated malice give the GM plenty of fascinating character hooks to work with.

"Ordinary" Elves are more of a challenge. There's very little of the flamboyant about them – their important qualities include wisdom, poetry, beauty, and mirth. To bring these out in a game requires the GMs' subtlest storytelling abilities. In a properly played encounter with Elves, the party should feel safe and welcome, but also overwhelmed by the air of ancient beauty that surrounds them (assuming, of course, the party is virtuous – evil-doers should wish they had stayed home).

It is very important to individualize Elven characters, and not to merely adopt one standard Elven personality. Some Elves will be friendly, but some will be haughty, or patronizing to mortals. Some Elves will be soft-hearted, but others will be efficiently merciless warriors. There are always a few Elven rogues, and even some whose outward beauty conceals an evil heart. It is recommended that the GM resist the temptation to make the Elves sims or buffoons. There are many other races better suited to providing comic relief (unless the entire campaign is designed to be silly).

Elves are extremely versatile, and can fill any slot in the campaign – PC, NPC encounter, Patron, or Enemy.

Elves react to the sylvan races at +2, and to Gnomes, Merfolk, Great Eagles, and Exalted Horses at +1. They react to Dwarves at -1 and to Orcs at -2.

All Elves should be built on at least 100 points. Some Elves acquire a lot of experience over the centuries; 300-point and even 500-point characters should not be uncommon, and there might even be a few 750- to 1,000-point racial heroes still active, somewhere.

Elves are tall, slender humanoids (determine height normally and add 3"; weight is 10 pounds less than normal; Half-Elves are normal height, but still weigh 10 pounds less than normal). They have large eyes and angular but beautiful features. Males have little body hair, and very seldom sport facial hair. Their hair can be any color found in humanity, with golden and silver predominating, usually worn long. The tresses of Elven women often reach the ground. Elvish eyes are normally gold or blue, and their complexions are pale. Their clothing is flattering and finely made (usually from soft leather or strong silk), and very durable.

Elf Racial Package

40 points

Attributes: ST -1 [-10]; DX +1 [10]; IQ +1 [10].

Racial Advantages: Attractive [5]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Magical Aptitude [15]; Musical Ability +2 [2]; Unaging [15].

Racial Disadvantages: Code of Honor (To live elegant lives) [-10]; Sense of Duty (Nature) [-15].

Racial Skills: Racial skill bonuses Bard +2 [2]; Savoir-Faire +2 [1].

Half-Elf Racial Package

30 points

Half-Elves are the offspring of Elves and humans. They are more muscular than Elves and the males are slightly hairier. Half-Elves can pass for human, but are usually easily distinguishable from Elves. When a Half-Elf breeds with a human or another Half-Elf, the offspring are human, though often quite graceful and attractive; when he breeds with an Elf the offspring are Half-Elven. Half-Elves are usually welcome among both races. Half-Elves are rare, and many of them – not feeling at home in either culture – turn to a life of wandering and adventure.

Attributes: IQ +1 [10].

Racial Advantages: Extended Lifespan [5]; Magical Aptitude [15].

Dark Elves

Dark Elves are one of several Elven tribes (see *Culture*, p. 60). Dark Elves aren't a separate race – just an Elvish subculture. The Dark Elves covet mortal lands and holdings. They are radical separatists, who believe that the world should be purged of all non-Elven races. Dark Elves have the same racial advantages and disadvantages as other Elves, except that most members of the subculture also have the Intolerance disadvantage [-10] against all other races.

Cost to play a Dark Elf is 30 points.

Those few, radical individuals who reject their racial Intolerance have a -15 point Social Stigma among whatever culture they're in – Dark Elves hate them for betraying the race, others mistrust them because they're Dark Elves.

Cost to play a radical Dark Elf is 25 points.

Psychology

On almost every world where they are found, the Elves are the oldest humanoid race, and the first to develop culture, language, art, and philosophy. They are the teachers and models of many other, younger races.

Although many mighty heroes are of Elven stock, they are generally a peaceful, reclusive folk. They love beauty and nature, song and dance.

Their immortality gives them patience, and Elven craftsmen are unsurpassed. Everything they create, from mundane household utensils to the most powerful magical artifact, is remarkably beautiful and durable.

It is a point of honor among the Elves to always behave with elegance and style. Even the most depraved Dark Elf will comport himself in an elegant fashion as he goes about his cruelties.

Elves have a great love of nature, and will not allow any needless harm to befall animals or wild places. Elves will also protect innocent people from harm (though the Dark Elves, of course, do not consider non-Elves to be “people”).

Many ignorant humans make the mistake of taking Elvish beauty and serenity as a sign of weakness – a dangerous misconception. The Elves are a hardy folk who prefer life in the wild to safer castles and cities. When the need arises, Elves are mighty warriors. Occasionally a more numerous race will slaughter or displace a tribe of Elves –always at great cost to the invaders – but Elves can never be conquered or enslaved.

Elves are an extremely magical race – almost every Elf will know at least a bit of magic. They are particularly fond of spells concerning nature. Common Elves rarely study Necromantic or Mind Control spells (though the Dark Elves enjoy such magic).

Elvish was the first language, and most others are descended from it. Elvish is a soft, leisurely, polysyllabic tongue, as befits an immortal race. Elven names are lovely and musical, with at least three syllables each.

Elvish art and music easily surpasses that of all other known races. Their tradition is largely oral, and only scholars and nobles bother with literacy. Legends speak of Elven songs that are never sung in the presence of non-Elves, lest their sheer beauty kill a mortal outright. Their religion is abstract and complex, and few mortals can comprehend it. It is known that the Elven faith is something like a human polytheism, and that the Elvish nobility also serves as their priesthood.

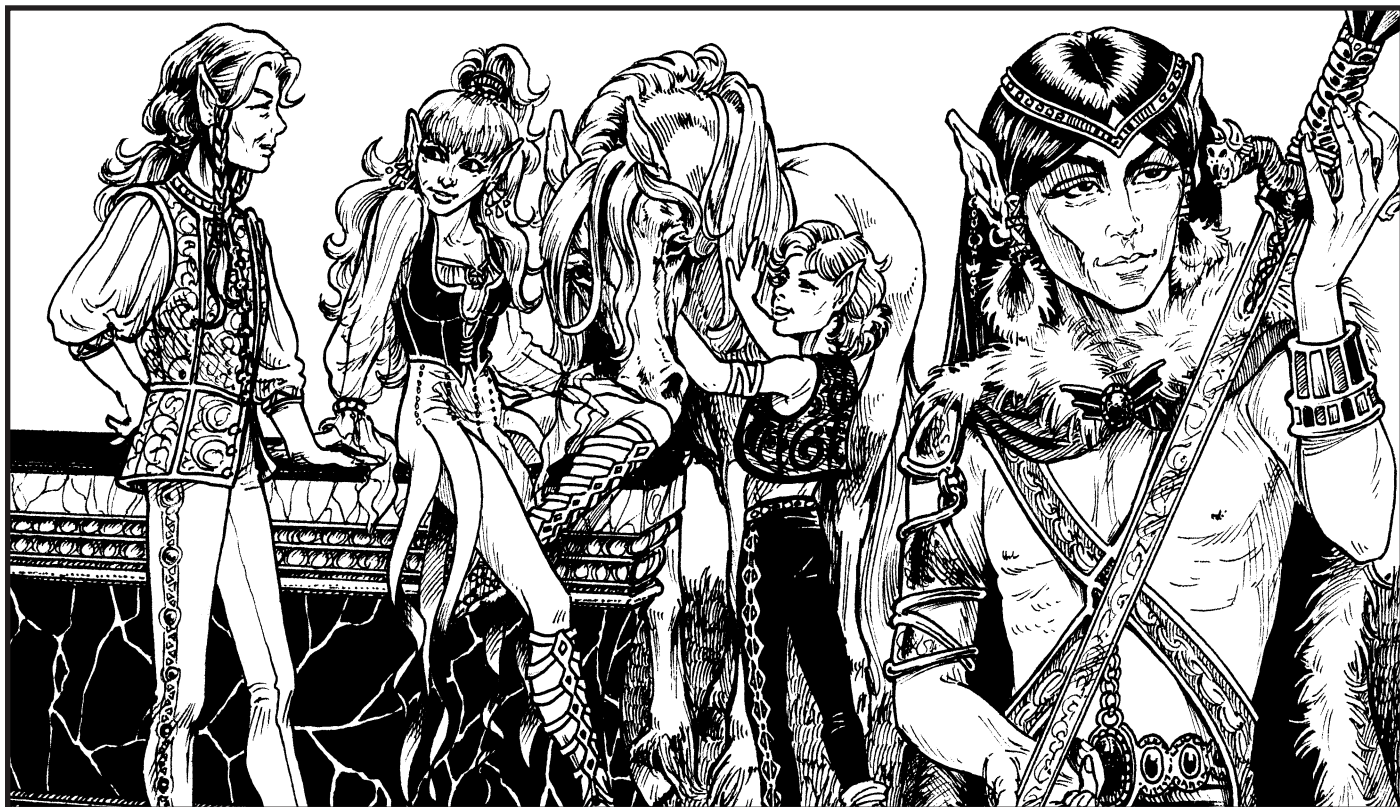
Elven PCs

Playing an Elf is an exercise in moderation. Elves know a little bit of magic, a little bit of swordplay and a little bit of stealth. Likewise, their personalities are neither bloodthirsty nor squeamish, suspicious nor gullible, abrasive nor fawning. It is the player’s challenge to blend all these generalizations into a character that is neither weak nor bland. One of the most important qualities to instill in almost any Elf is a sense of style. Elves do everything with grace and panache, and individual PCs should reflect this.

Half-Elves, by contrast, are one of the easiest non-human races to play. Their personality can be as human or as Elven as the player might wish. Even the most inexperienced roleplayer can do an adequate job with this race. A skilled roleplayer, on the other hand, can use the Half-Elf’s mixed heritage to create a fascinating and complex character.

As they’re written, there’s no reason a Dark Elf can’t be used as a PC. Whether or not they’re actually available is up to the GM, based on the political situation in his individual campaign.

Players interested in playing an Elf should see also the notes on racial intolerance in the *Dwarves in the Campaign* sidebar, p. 50.





Elf Adventure Seeds

To Die by the Sea

In rough and uninhabited terrain, the party comes upon sign of a recent battle. Successful Tracking and Tactics rolls will reveal that a small force held off a much larger force for a long time, inflicting great losses, before they were finally overrun. It will be obvious that the larger force was Orcs and Ogres.

If the party carefully searches the area, they will discover a single Elf, wounded beyond belief but still alive. This Elf, one Lord Marinan, was leading a party to a secret port of the Sea Elves, when they were ambushed by an Orcish horde. Marinan is the only survivor, and his last wish is to die among his own people. Once a great warrior and wizard (500+ points), Marinan is currently keeping himself alive through willpower alone, and will be completely helpless on the journey for anything except to tell the party which path to take.

The Elven port is five days away, with the invalid slowing the party down. In addition to the normal hazards of the wilderness, the remnant of the Orc horde is still out there somewhere. And just how did the Orcs know Marinan's band was coming, anyway? Perhaps the Dark Elves, or some other powerful evil, are involved.

If the party gets Marinan to the coast alive, they will be richly rewarded, and gain a useful ally. If all they can do is deliver his body home, they will still be rewarded, though less extravagantly. Most importantly, they will know the secret paths to the sea-haven of the Elves, and be welcomed there. This can provide a perfect refuge and hiding place, but they'll need the help of the gods if they ever betray this trust.

Ecology

Elves are the firstborn, and have watched the development of the other races, helping those which they could, and opposing those which would enslave or destroy others. The Elves know that they are destined to someday abandon the mortal world to newer, shorter-lived races, and they are content with their lot.

The earliest remembered events in Elvish history are the race's two great tragedies: first, the sin of the Dark Elves, where Elf was tempted to slay Elf while under the sway of some dark and eldritch god. The aggressors in this conflict were forever cast out of Elven society. These exiles brought up their children in their hateful, bigoted ideals, and added to them a festering dose of resentment against the kin who cast them out. A few descendants of the Dark Elves repented, and were eventually welcomed back into the mother culture (after an understandable period of suspicion), but there were also a few bitter young Elves who embraced the Dark Elven philosophy and joined them voluntarily.

The second event was a great war with the Dwarves, which opened wounds that have not completely closed to this day. This event has been romanticized out of all bounds of history, but it is known that both races had come into conflict with the Orcs before meeting one another. Perhaps at that first meeting of Elves and Dwarves, both sides shot first and asked questions later, assuming they were encountering a new kind of Orc. Subsequently natural suspicion and unreasoning pride combined to escalate misfortune into tragedy.

Although Elves never grow old, individuals over age 700 or so are seldom encountered. Some become hermits, others seek out adventure after adventure until they perish. Others simply seem to vanish – perhaps they translate their bodies to another spiritual plane, or perhaps they disincorporate, becoming “one with nature.” This is a great secret of the Elvish race. A few Elves, especially powerful wizards, remain active for thousands of years, and go to great lengths to protect their long lives.

Elves mate for life, and almost never remarry if a mate dies. The exceptions usually involve a noble survivor who needs to produce an heir.

Most Half-Elves are the product of an Elf father and a human mother. The Elf will care for his human mate throughout her life, but will often take an Elven wife later. It is very rare for an Elven maid to give herself to a human man. When this does happen the Elf-wife usually vanishes from mortal ken immediately upon her husband's death. The children of such unions are often great heroes.

Elven women rarely produce more than one or two children, and Elves hold their children to be their most precious treasure. To harm an Elf child in any way is to buy a swift and certain death. Elves mature as rapidly as humans until they reach adulthood, then they cease aging forever.

Elves are omnivorous (though some will choose not to eat meat). They seldom cultivate crops or herds, choosing instead to hunt and gather their meals in the wild. This way of living means that a great expanse of wilderness is required to support a small band of Elves – one very important reason that they resent the encroachment of other races.

Culture

There are several Elvish cultures, or “tribes.” They include:

Wood Elves – a merry and carefree folk. They are the most numerous Elves and the friendliest to man. Often Wood Elves will settle a forest within a human kingdom. They are great trackers and woodsmen.

Sea Elves – a shy people that inhabit remote coasts and islands. They tend to be younger (few choose to live longer than 500 years) and less numerous than other Elven tribes. Nonetheless, they produce great wizards, and have been known to build beautiful and delicate cities beneath the waves. Though Sea Elves are not naturally amphibious, the waters surrounding their cities are magically breathable to Elves and men.

Mountain Elves – few men have met this wise and ancient folk who make their homes atop the highest mountains. They tend to remain active longer than other Elves, and their martial skill surpasses that of all the other tribes. Their craft skills are respected even by the Dwarves.

Deep Elves – an offshoot of the Mountain Elves that took to living beneath the mountains. They have even better relations with Dwarves, and are great smiths and enchanter. They seldom deal with humans.

Dark Elves (see previous page) – live far underground, or in the darkest, most ancient forests. All Dark Elves will deal ruthlessly with mortal intruders into their realm, and many are utterly evil.

Other tribes – Swamp Elves, Desert Elves, Jungle Elves – are possible, but very rare at best. Most Elven communities consist of 20 to 100 individuals.

Status among the Elves is primarily determined by birth; bards, craftsmen, heroes, and wizards are honored, as are the very ancient. There is no sexual discrimination among the Elves. Elven lands are usually ruled by a king or queen.

Elves are not great builders. They favor tree houses, caverns, or low, sprawling mansions for their abode. They seldom build defensive walls, relying on stealthy foresters and magical wards to protect their homes. Humans find Elven homes cleaner and more comfortable than those of other races (including humans).

In wartime the Elves rely on their archers and rangers, who make heavy use of “hit and run” guerrilla tactics. If forced into open battle, they still depend on their archers, defending them with a vanguard of heavy infantry. Elves seldom use cavalry, but when they do ride they scorn mundane horses, preferring to make compacts with Exalted Horses, Centaurs, or even Unicorns, or to tame exotic flying beasts as steeds.

Politics

Though powerful, the Elven race is neither as numerous nor as vigorous as it once was, and the Elves seek seclusion from most other races. They are fond of humans, considering them their rightful successors. However, the Elves are frustrated by human greed and prejudice, and do not often intermingle with their heirs apparent.

The ancient conflict between Elves and Dwarves is still a rift between the two peoples. The Elves consider this a closed chapter to be left to the ancient songs, but many Dwarves still harbor bitterness in their hearts. The Elves, in turn, are frustrated at the Dwarvish tendency to gnaw ancient, bitter bones.

The two races have been at peace for millennia – even allies against Orcs and imperialistic humans – but they aren’t friends. Only the Deep Elves are fully at ease among Dwarves. Elves and Gnomes, however, get along well.

The Orcs hate all Elves with a genocidal passion, and often commit suicidal raids on Elvish lands, sacrificing thousands for the chance to kill a handful of Elves. The Elves will ruthlessly slay any Orc who trespasses into their territory, but do not otherwise take an aggressive course against their enemies.

The sylvan races have an almost reverential attitude towards the Elves, and often live near them in unbreakable alliances

Elf Character Example

Aguardiel

100 points

Age 67; 6’; 145 lbs.; long golden hair, silver eyes, sparse beard.

ST 10 [10]; DX 13 [20]; IQ 12 [10]; HT 10 [-]

Speed 5.75; Move 5

Dodge 6; Parry 8; Block 8.

Advantages: Absolute Direction [5]; Acute Hearing +1[2]; Acute Vision +2 [4]; Elf Racial Package [40]; Strong Will +1 [4].

Disadvantages: Fanatic (Orc killer) [-15]; Honesty [-10]; Truthfulness [-5]; Vow (Slay 1,000 Orcs) [-15].

Quirks: Vegetarian; Prefers to sleep in trees; Likes Goblins; Won’t dance. [-4]

Skills: Bard-13* [1]; Bow-14 [8]; Buckler-14 [2]; Camouflage-12 [1]; Cooking-11 [½]; Climbing-12 [1]; First Aid-12 [1]; Knife-14 [2]; Leatherworking-12 [1]; Naturalist-12 [4]; Riding-12 [1]; Savoir-Faire-14* [½]; Shortsword-14 [4]; Singing-13 [2]; Stealth-13 [2]; Survival (Woodlands)-12 [2]; Swimming-13 [1]; Tracking-14 [6]; Traps-12 [2].

Spells: Extinguish Fire-12; Ignite Fire-12; Light-12; Purify Water-12; Seek Water-12; Sense Foes-12. [12]

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

Aguardiel is an Elf with a mission. Several years ago his home was destroyed by Orcs, and all his friends and relations were killed. Aguardiel swore that he would not rest until he had slain a thousand Orcs. For a while he haunted his old home, waiting for any unfortunate Orc that happened by. He got a few dozen that way, but he recently decided to take more direct action. He’s become a wandering adventurer, available for any mission that will take him into Orc territory. Originally a huntsman, recent years have hardened him into a formidable fighter. He knows a few, convenient spells. He wears leather armor and carries longbow, shortsword, and dagger at all times.

Aguardiel wears a sparse beard, unusual among his people. After the slaughter of his kin, he was rescued by Goblin traders, and will willingly aid a needy member of that race. He won’t dance or eat meat until his vow is fulfilled – he says he will hunt no living creature except Orcs. During his years in the wild he cultivated the habit of sleeping in high branches, and has come to prefer it.

Aguardiel is a balanced character ready to begin adventuring.

EXALTED HORSES

Exalted Horses in the Campaign

Exalted Horses make good adventure objects (horses in trouble) or opponents (for parties of a callous or destructive bent), but they are most interesting as NPC party members. Of course, an Exalted Horse will never serve a character who's less than noble and heroic. Among many benefits, the party will never again have to worry about who will watch the horses!

Exalted Horses react to Centaurs and Unicorns at +2, and to Great Eagles, Elves and the other sylvan races at +1. They react at -1 to Gargoyles and Kobolds, and at -3 to Orcs. In the wild, they react to humans at -2, but usually lose this prejudice if they leave the herd.

Most Horses are built on 100 points; 200-point leaders are not uncommon.

Exalted Horse PCs

The only thing more entertaining to a horse-loving player than finding a superior mount for his character is actually playing a Horse. The Horses' inability to use weapons is more than made up for by their prodigious strength and natural weaponry.

Anyone who wishes to play a Horse should refer to the notes on playing a member of a Mute race under *Insect Men*. However, if a player wishes to spend the 25 points for a talking Horse, the GM should allow it – other Horses will regard the character as freakish, but this simply provides a good reason to leave the herd to live among humans.

For a Horse mage, it is recommended that the GM assess a 35- to 40-point Unusual Background cost. The race is, after all, both Mute and Uneducated, and this will also help to balance the huge amount of Fatigue that the character has for casting spells. Such an unusual background will severely limit Horse-mages in a 100-point campaign, but such exotic characters are better suited to cinematic and higher point-value campaigns anyway.

An Exalted Horse can take Riding skill. In this case this means a skill at *being ridden*. If the Horse's Riding skill is higher than the rider's, the two skills are averaged (round up) to give the skill level actually used when a Riding roll is required. A Horse with at least ½ point in Riding adds a *minimum* of 1 point to its rider's effective skill.

The Exalted Horses are beautiful horses with the intelligence of human beings. They are medium-sized, about the size of a quarter horse or a little larger (their weight is 7 times the figure shown for their ST *before* the Enhanced ST advantage is figured in). Height is 15 to 17 hands (a hand is 4") at the withers (just above the shoulders). Their coats come in a remarkable range of colors and patterns; brown and black predominate, but strawberry, dapple, chestnut, gray, and many variations are known.

There is nothing to outwardly distinguish the Exalted Horses from their common kinsfolk, except, perhaps their meticulous grooming, surpassing that of the most pampered show horses.

Exalted Horse Racial Package

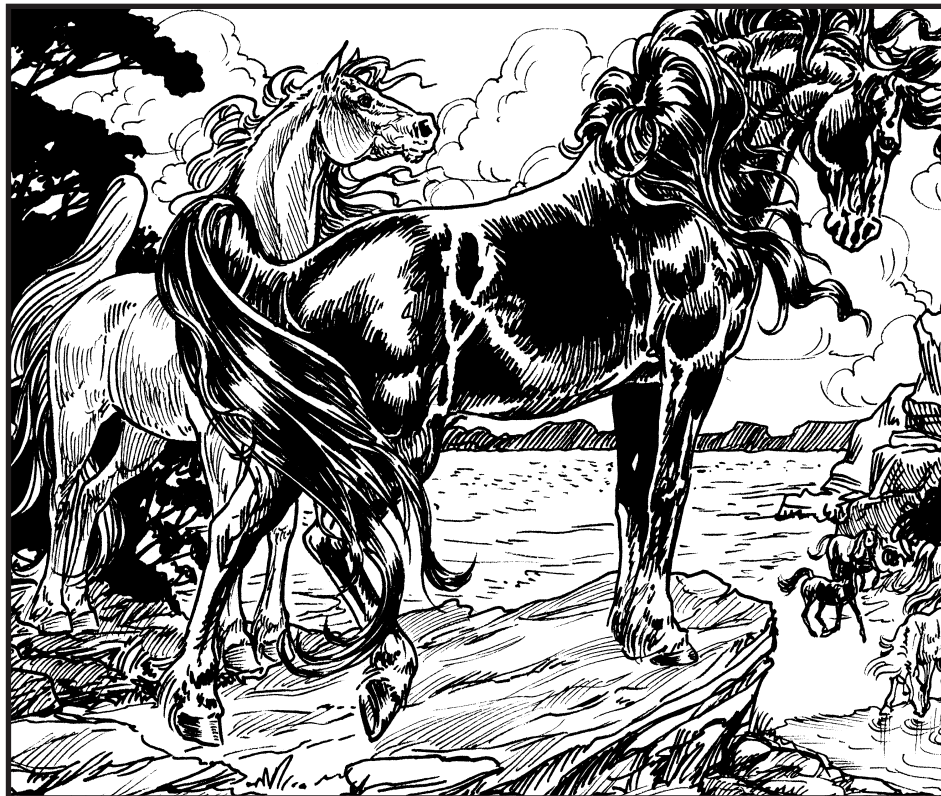
25 points

Attributes: Enhanced ST +18 (No Fine Manipulators -40%) [99]; HT +3 [30].

Racial Advantages: Acute Hearing +3 [6]; Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; Attractive [5]; Blunt Teeth [-]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 1 [10]; 4 Legs [5]; Peripheral Vision [15].

Racial Disadvantages: Bad Sight [-25]; Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Poverty (Dead broke) [-25]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Social Stigma (Viewed as "clever animals") [-10]; Uneducated [-5].

Racial Skills: Brawling (P/E) DX [1]; Gesture (M/E) IQ [1]; Running (P/H) HT-1 [2].



Psychology

When an ancient sage was asked, “What is the wisest of the beasts?” He replied, “That which man has never seen.” It is not surprising, then, that few have ever seen the reclusive Exalted Horses.

They make their homes on the high plains, far from the haunts of men. Roaming at will in vast herds of as many as 1,000 individuals, the Horses live lives of freedom and beauty.

Exalted Horses are at least equal in intelligence to humanity, and live as long, but they cannot build or make tools, and cannot speak. In spite of their muteness they make themselves understood to each other, and even have a gift for communicating their feelings and desires to humans through movement, gesture, and expression.

The fears that humans usually associate with horses – fear of fire, snakes, loud noises, and the like – are common among the Exalted Horses, but by no means universal. An intelligent and determined individual can overcome his fears and carry on despite them.

They have no need for weapons and armor. Their broad, hard teeth and crushing hooves, together with their strength – nearly three times that of a man – ensures that there are few creatures that would care to stand against a determined group; and those creatures that the Horses can’t outfight they can usually outrun. They never stampede spontaneously, but they have been known to stampede intentionally – an effective defense against Orcs, wolves, or other massed foes.

An Exalted Horse in full combat is a terrifying sight, as these creatures have none of the instinctive fear or skittishness that characterizes unintelligent horses. They will rear, trample, kick, and rend with their teeth, a veritable whirlwind of destruction. The Horses teach their offspring how to fight at an early age – and even the mildest Exalted Horse can use destructive maneuvers that would take the most gifted mundane horse years to learn.

An Exalted Horse will sometimes come to live among other races, and may even allow itself to be ridden by a worthy person (usually an Elf), but they have no patience whatsoever with the multitude of minor indignities humans customarily inflict on mundane horses. Any attempt to bob an Exalted Horse’s tail will certainly end in a painful experience for the barber, and to raise a whip against an Exalted Horse is to look death in the eye. The story is told of a young stallion who was captured by men who did not guess his heritage, taken to a corral and gelded. He killed six would-be trainers before bursting out of the paddock one night and hurling himself over a cliff.

Some few Exalted Horses seem to be born with an instinctive gift for magic. There is some debate among the wise as to how a race with no speech and no hands can manipulate magical energies, but there is no doubt that there are Horses who can learn and cast spells. Apparently they control the mana with small movements of their hooves, faces and even tails, and through small whuffling or nickering sounds.

There are legends of horses who could talk, but it is unclear whether these were mundane horses magically augmented, magically gifted Exalted Horses using their abilities to mimic human speech, or whether exceedingly rare Exalted Horses are born with the potential to speak human tongues.

Exalted Horses can understand human speech perfectly well, if they take the trouble to learn it. Though capable of reading, their vision is ill suited to the practice, and few Horses have ever learned any letters in human speech. They have no written language of their own, but do have an extensive code of symbols that can be easily formed by scratching in the dirt with a hoof, or arranging twigs in a pattern. These symbols are usually of a cautionary nature – “Snakes are here,” “Orcs are here,” “Bad water” – or directive in nature – “The herd went this way,” “Good water over there.”



Exalted Horse Adventure Seeds

Horse Play

While traveling through the great plains, the party has its horses stolen one night by three Exalted Horses. The three young stallions creep into camp late at night, pull up or gnaw through any ropes or pickets, and gallop off with the party’s animals gleefully in tow.

For the next several days they’ll tease the party, showing themselves (and the adventurers’ mounts) at extreme range or beyond some unbreachable geographic obstacle – over the river, atop the hill, or beyond the ravine.

If the party manages to make contact with the local herd and the chief stallion (no easy task for unmounted humans), their horses will be returned immediately and the troublemakers chastised.

If any of the young stallions is captured, seriously wounded or killed by the party, the chief stallion will return their mounts immediately and make it clear that the adventurers are never to return to his territory.

When the horses are returned, the party will find that they’ve benefitted from their stay with their intelligent kinsfolk. Each horse will have his IQ raised by one point, and riders will get a +1 to their effective Riding skill while on that horse.

The Impossible Ride

Word is out that a nearby noble or merchant has acquired an unridable horse. The kingdom’s best horsemen have already tried – and failed – to tame what seems to be a healthy mare. The owner is offering a purse of 100 gold pieces to anyone who can break her.

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Exalted Horse Adventure Seeds (Continued)

The horse is, of course, an Exalted Horse who simply wants her freedom. She has a ST of 28, a DX of 13, and a Riding skill of 12. If a PC tries to ride her, pit the sum of their ST, DX and Riding skill against the sum of the same characteristics for the Horse (53) in a Quick Contest. If the PC wins, the Horse will eventually exhaust herself, but she won't break.

On the other hand, if the adventurers have reason to suspect her true nature, they will be able to make a deal. If they quietly offer to help her regain her freedom as they approach, she'll suddenly become gentle as a lamb.

Of course, the noble is not going to be wont to give up his prize mare, so complications will arise there. If the PCs free the Horse, she will introduce them to her herd. The GM should make one reaction roll for the herd to the party – on a result of “good” or better, a group of young stallions will decide to accompany the adventurers, and become loyal members of the party (as long as *they're* treated fairly).



Exalted Horses have whinnied names they use among themselves, but these are usually unpronounceable by humans. Horses among humans will usually let their hosts pick a convenient use name, but will make their displeasure known at a rude or undignified choice. Horses prefer flashy, dramatic names – Sunshadow, Silvercloud – and almost any Elvish name will meet with their approval.

They have no art, but they get their fill of beauty from the dramatic sunsets and cloudscapes that they see every day. Horses have no formal religion, but have been observed to show respect for holy men and sacred objects of other races. Horses are most deferential to those religions which emphasize respect for nature and for others.

Ecology

Nobody knows what enhanced the Exalted Horses, but it seems likely that they share a common origin with the Great Eagles. The Exalted Horses are not only more than twice as intelligent as mundane horses, but they are also noticeably more agile and energetic than an ordinary horse of their size.

They eat what any horse eats – a strictly vegetarian diet with a preference for grains and fruit. Their mating patterns are similar to those of mundane wild horses. The older and stronger stallions mate with most of the herd's mares. The younger stallions must defeat their elders in ritual combat before they earn their right to the mares.

An Exalted Horse will under no circumstances mate with a mundane beast. No ordinary horse has the strength of will to oppose a determined Exalted Horse, and a small Exalted mare has been observed to face down a warhorse in full mating frenzy, leaving the poor stallion a quivering heap in the corner of the paddock.

Exalted Horses mature much more slowly than their mundane counterparts, and live much longer. An Exalted Horse will gestate for almost two years. A colt reaches full growth at about age 10 and is not counted as an adult until 12. Exalted Horses begin to age at 45.

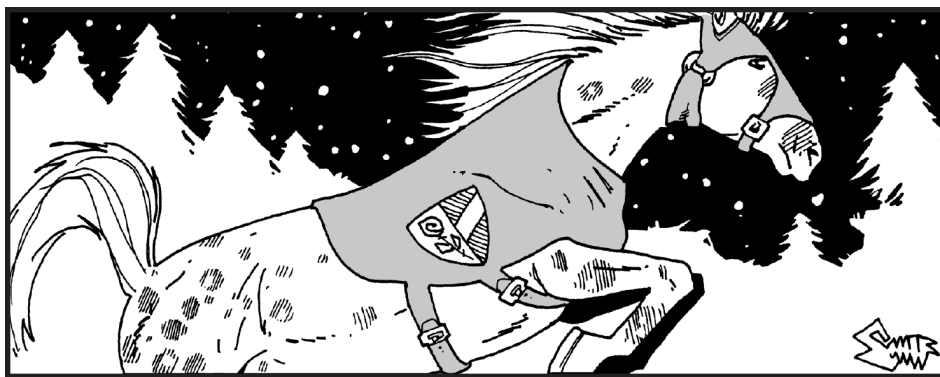
Culture

Like other wild horse herds, the Exalted Horses are ruled by the strongest and most experienced stallions. Unlike the wild beasts, however, the losers of such combats are not cast out of the herd but instead remain as counselors to the new chief.

Likewise the elderly mares past breeding age hold an important place in the hierarchy of the herd. These granddams have a council of their own which advises the chief. He ignores the “advice” of this group at his own peril, as the grandmares have been known to induce all the younger mares to run away and hide from the stallions during mating season. Such a strike invariably means an end to the reign (and sometimes the life) of the current leader. Such female retreats are extremely rare among the Horses (the mares find them even more distasteful than the stallions), but their very possibility is enough to ensure that the will of the grandmares will always be heard with due respect.

This puts the putative leader of the herd in an unenviable position – he has to balance the will of the grandmares and the older stallions, while fighting off challengers and keeping the colts and pregnant mares safe from Orcs, humans, and wild beasts – all the while ensuring that the herd has adequate pasturage. Almost the only “perk” to the job is that he gets first pick of the mares. For most young stallions, this is inducement enough.

The herds are well able to defend themselves. They use a sophisticated system of pickets and a regular roster of roving sentries that make it difficult for



Exalted Horse Character Example

Mist 100 points

Age 11; 16 hands (64"); 1,050 lbs.; reddish-brown pelt, occasionally wears leather barding.

ST 30 [12]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 11 [10]; HT 14 [10]
Speed 6.5; Move 13 (6 for Dodge).
Dodge 6.

Advantages: Animal Empathy [5]; Danger Sense [15]; Exalted Horse Racial Package [25]; Reputation (Best mount in the kingdom) +1 [2].

Disadvantages: Impulsiveness [-10]; Phobia (Fear of fire, mild) [-5]; Sense of Duty (To master) [-5]; Stubbornness [-5].

Quirks: Dislikes apples and sugar [-1].

Skills: Acting-12 [4]; Animal Handling-15** [4]; Brawling-14* [3]; Gesture-13* [3]; Heraldry-11 [2]; Performance-11 [1]; Riding-15** [1]; Running-13* [-]; Savoir-Faire-12 [2]; Stealth-12 [2]; Survival (Plains)-11 [2]; Swimming-12 [1]; Tactics-10 [2].

* Includes adjustments for racial package.

** Includes +4 for Animal Empathy.

Mist is a young mare who left the herd in disgust at the arrogance of the stallions and the bullying of the grandmares. She traveled alone to a human kingdom where she became the chief mount of an heroic knight. She has borne her master on quests and to war and saved his life several times. Mist's favorite times, however, are at her master's manor house, riding out to care for his sheep and cattle.

She's very willful, impulsive, and stubborn, and won't follow orders from anyone other than her master – she is completely loyal to him, and will gladly lay down her life for his.

Mist is an incorrigible ham who loves to show off. She's extremely good with animals, and has no fear of dogs or snakes. She is, however, very uncomfortable around open fires. She's shocked many a well-meaning human with her refusal to accept gifts of sugar or apples, which she detests.

She's a well-formed bay of ideal size. She sometimes wears leather barding, but dislikes chain. Mist has made a particular study of human etiquette and heraldry, and delights her master's noble friends by greeting them in a manner appropriate to their individual stations (using various degrees of bows).

Mist is a balanced character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.

even a field mouse to come among the herd unseen. If attacked, they show impressive tactical skill – a popular strategy is to have the stallions harass the invaders from flanks and front while the mares and colts retreat under guard. Then the stallions gallop away at full speed. The only way to capture or destroy a herd is to box them in or completely surround them – difficult strategies to execute on the open plains.

At times two herds have gone to war over particularly good pasturage, but such conflicts are rare. Mostly the Exalted Horses' battles are against invaders of other races.

Those rare individuals with magical ability are not welcome in the herds, though the reason for this ancient taboo is unclear. Many such become companions and associates of human or Elven mages, or Centaur sages. Others, particularly those with healing or divinatory powers, remain near the herd, offering counsel and help to those who seek them out.

Some Exalted Horses get an urge to see the wide world. This desire is particularly common among smaller stallions and independent-minded mares. Exalted Horses have no quarrel with serving as steeds, provided their dignity is respected. However they are very choosy about which humans they will serve, and usually only take service under great heroes or leaders. Needless to say, they expect the finest fodder and quarters from their chosen master.

Politics

The herds keep to themselves. Even the omnipresent Goblins have little cause to trade with the non-technological Horses. They respect the Elves, and honor them when they meet. Many Horses who leave the herd end up among the Elves. Likewise they are on good terms with all the sylvan races, though such folk seldom come far enough out of their woods to meet the Horses.

They get along well with other intelligent equine races such as Centaurs and the magical Unicorns. Their territories often adjoin or intersect those of the Centaurs, and the two races are great friends and often allies against common enemies (the bow-using Centaurs can make up for the Horses' greatest tactical weakness – their lack of ability to use ranged weapons). Unicorns, of course, come and go as they will, but they seem to be exceptionally fond of the herds. Some sages have proposed some sort of genetic link between the two races, but evidence is inconclusive.

They are sometimes visited by Great Eagles, and the Eagles have even been known to aid them in battle. This is seen as a strong argument for the common origin of the two races.

They hate Orcs fiercely, and dislike Gargoyles and Kobolds. They often live nearer the Insect Men than any other race, but the two peoples ignore each other completely. They mistrust humans, but are not inherently hostile towards them. Some horses who leave the herds eventually come to the service of a human hero.

Fauns in the Campaign

All the sylvan races are shy by nature – the Fauns are by far the most outgoing. Fauns like people. They really, *really* like people. In fact, someone with large amounts of Charisma and positive Appearance may find it necessary to stay out of the woods entirely or be continually swamped with Faun “admirers.”

The love-struck Faun admirer can provide an amusing bit of comic relief, but the race should be played as more than cartoon characters. Fauns are excellent NPCs for any type of wilderness campaign. They are good sources of information about the local area, and are expert on such topics as herbalism and the habits of woodland monsters. A Faun guide would be a useful NPC addition to any party on a woodland adventure.

A more destructive or lawless party, on the other hand, will find the Fauns to be deadly enemies. Fauns should never be played as helpless victims; any group that presents an aggressive threat to a Faun community will find that a formidable home-team advantage lies with the Fauns.

Fauns react at +2 to Elves and Centaurs, and +1 to the other sylvan races. They react at -1 to Dwarves or humans trespassing on Faun territory, unless the human has an exceptional Appearance or Charisma, in which case normal reaction bonuses are *doubled*.

The GM should build normal NPC Fauns on 50 to 100 points. Elders or adventurers can be built on 200 points or more.

Faun PCs

Although they really shine in a wilderness campaign, a Faun makes an excellent addition to any campaign. The obvious Faun occupations are ranger and thief, but other possibilities include healer, bard, and trader. Any of these jobs can be further augmented with a little magery and the careful selection of a few useful spells.

A Faun even makes a surprisingly good front-line fighter. Their good HT and exceptional DX more than make up for their lack of ST. If the GM allows fencing in his campaign, the Fauns also make excellent swashbucklers – their capricious and romantic natures, combined with their remarkable agility, make them naturals for characters right out of *The Three Musketeers*. The GM should not regard the Fauns' general racial distaste for sharpened weapons as in any way restrictive of individual PCs.

The moderate racial cost, and the generally useful nature of the race's advantages, make virtually all the above career options affordable in a 100-point campaign.

FAUNS

Fauns (males are more formally known as Satyrs) are humanoids with the legs and horns of a goat. They stand an average of 5 feet tall, and are solidly, but not heavily built (they stand 8" less than normal for their ST; weight is normal for their height). Their bodies become “goatish” just below the navel. Their lower parts have short tails and woolly fur, and their legs bend backwards and end in small cloven hooves. The hair on their heads is also thick and woolly. Their horns are small and curved, and their ears are pointed. The Fauns' features are sharp and alert, and their complexions are swarthy. Males have a good deal of hair on their chests and backs, but their facial hair is usually limited to a thin moustache, small goatee, and sometimes thick sideburns.

Fauns have no nudity taboo, and they seldom don clothing for protection from the elements. They love finery and bright colors, however, and will often wear outlandish costumes purely for decoration.

Faun Racial Package

25 points

Attributes: ST -2 [-15]; DX +3 [30]; HT +1 [10].

Racial Advantages: Alertness +2 [10]; Animal Empathy [5]; Musical Ability +2 [2].

Racial Disadvantages: Lecherousness [-15]; Reputation -1 (Crude and unreliable) [-5].

Racial Skills: Carousing (P/A) HT [2]; Scrounging (M/E) IQ [1].

Psychology

The human myth that holds Satyrs to be the embodiment of lustfulness is an exaggeration, but one based on fact. Fauns are dedicated sensualists who live for good food, good drink, good music and romance – not necessarily in that order.



Fauns are enthusiastic lovers, and will offer their attentions to a remarkably wide range of races. However, the profound respect which the race has for the erotic arts ensures that, if anything, Satyrs are much less prone to rape than members of other civilized races – it is an unwise man who entrusts his maiden daughter to the care of a Satyr, but he may take what satisfaction he can in knowing that, whatever her condition when she returns home, it was her own choice. Fortunately, Fauns are infertile with any other race.

This applies to both sexes. Though not as notorious as Satyrs, Faun-maids are, if anything, more enthusiastic than the males of the race in their pursuit of pleasure.

There is little subtle or refined about a Faun's advances. They are an earthy, plain-spoken race and make their propositions directly and, by the standards of polite human society, crudely. Although lacking in subtlety, there is a certain innocent charm to a Faun's approach. Fauns are not the race to look to for discreet liaisons either – while they completely lack the human tendency to boast of their conquests, they also have difficulty understanding the need for discretion in such affairs.

Next to romance, the Fauns' greatest love is nature. They live at peace with the forest, and dislike being among man-made objects. They are dedicated caretakers of the wild places of the earth. Many a "haunted" wood is merely the home of a few imaginative Fauns who don't entirely trust their human neighbors.

Fauns hate to live in buildings, and usually find natural shelter – typically large hollow trees, shallow caves, or dugouts. Paradoxically, as much as they hate buildings, they love the smaller comforts of human society. This can lead to such amusing juxtapositions as a hollow tree furnished with a rocking chair and a grandfather clock, or a cave-wall hung with inspirational samplers.

The Fauns are musicians second only to the Elves. Although lacking the depth and complexity of Elvish work, Faun music has a direct emotional impact that few can resist. A Faun can leave a human weeping, laughing, dancing, or sweetly melancholy with only a few notes. Fauns are best known for their mastery of the flute or pan-pipe, but some also play the lute or harp. They have strong, clear singing voices. Their dances are acrobatic and dizzying, and a Faun will willingly cavort for hours, desisting only when he exhausts himself.

Most Fauns prefer to stay near home, but it isn't uncommon for an individual to be smitten with wanderlust, and devote his days to exploring. A few notable heroes even leave the forest entirely, sojourning among men, Dwarves, and other strange races. Such daredevils are considered great heroes, but rather frightening and not entirely to be trusted by the normal Fauns.

Fauns are somewhat more magical than humans, but seldom have the patience to master more than a few minor spells. Magic Resistance is uncommon among the race.

Fauns are not great warriors, mostly because of their intense dislike for armor and sharp objects. A Faun will seldom use a bladed weapon larger than a knife. For self-defense they prefer staves, cudgels, and slings.

Though not vengeful by nature, they will never forget an insult, or a favor.

The Fauns were originally taught to speak by the Elves, and Elvish was their first language. Now they speak whatever tongue is most common in their area. Fauns draw their names from many languages and sources. Most names are singular, short, and pleasant on the ear. Natural names (Pinecone, Mint, Mink) are popular.



Faun Adventure Seeds

Cupid's Arrow

A young Faun of the opposite sex becomes obsessively enamored of the most beautiful or charismatic member of the party. The swain is a 50-point character with no particular combat or magical skills. The Faun will insist on going everywhere the party goes, to be near his (or her) beloved. Even worse, the Faun will not let the chosen PC do anything dangerous, but will insist on trying to do whatever needs doing, regardless of how outrageously *unqualified* for the job the Faun might be.

Snubs or insults will make the Faun depressed and morose, but won't shake his determination to spend the rest of his life with the chosen. If the party is cold-blooded enough to consider abandonment or extermination, the GM could provide them with an inducement to keep the Faun alive – perhaps he's the ward of a powerful Elf-noble.

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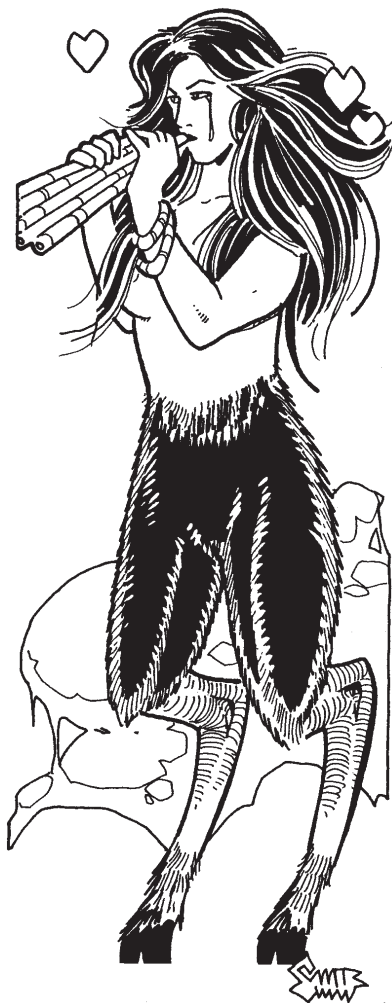
Faun Adventure Seeds (Continued)

Over the River and Through the Woods

This adventure will allow the adventurers to coordinate a tactical-level military operation. A large army is invading the PCs' kingdom. The first line of defense is a large, ancient forest. Half of the forest (where the main thrust of the invasion is expected) is being defended by a small army of Wood Elves; the PCs are sent to defend the other, more remote half, by mobilizing and coordinating the local population of over 200 Fauns.

The PCs will need to defend at least one major road and several smaller forest paths over a wide geographic area. The Fauns will be able to point out the best spots for traps and ambushes, but it will be up to the PCs to allocate forces and set up lines of supply and communication.

The Fauns should be brave, cooperative, and effective guerrilla troops. Of course, a small, elite enemy unit may appear, requiring direct confrontation with another small, elite unit such as the PCs.



They do not tend to express themselves visually through painting or sculpture, preferring to pour their souls into their music. A few are clever woodcarvers, but few Fauns are craftsmen. Some Faun minstrels excel at the extemporaneous improvisation of comic verse, but the race is not otherwise poetic. Only a few eccentric scholars ever learn to read.

Most Fauns follow a simplified version of the Elvish religion, and a few have been converted to human faiths. They have little patience with pomp, ritual or (needless to say) petty morality.

Ecology

Fauns are certainly a magical race, but they seem to be a byproduct of the earth's natural magics rather than the creation of some ancient wizard or demon. The Fauns believe that the earth brought them forth as special caretakers of the woodlands.

Their culture is certainly very ancient. Many scholars consider it likely that they were the first sentient race encountered by the newly-awakened Elves (discounting a less-likely tradition among the Ellyllon).

Many ignorant humans have jumped to the overly-obvious conclusion that a Faun is the product of a union between a human (or some other race) and a goat. This is demonstrably false. Furthermore, a Faun will find any such suggestion highly insulting.

Fauns are omnivorous, but they will eat the meat of no animal more advanced than a small bird or rodent. Most of the meat in their diet consists of birds, fish, and certain insects. Though they live the lives of simple hunter-gatherers, they do, after a fashion, cultivate the land they live off of. A Faun will make subtle and sophisticated alterations to his environment (pulling this plant when he finds it, transplanting this other, burying the corpse of a small creature where its decaying body can nourish a helpful shrub) which tend to maximize the food-production of an area and minimize the occurrence of noxious pests and parasites.

Fauns are natural conservationists, and their tinkering will never upset the natural balance of the area. Fauns love all forest animals, but they are particularly friendly with robins, rabbits, and foxes. They never eat these creatures, which in return will perform many remarkable services for their Faun friends, including running messages to remote neighbors.

Oddly enough, given their racial libido, Fauns are monogamous (meaning that a female will only produce children with a single male). Apparently, the female Fauns have secret methods of insuring that conception only takes place when they wish, and by custom and instinct they only conceive with their chosen mate. A Faun woman will take a new mate if her first one dies.

Fauns bear one to three children at a time. Most females give birth every 2 to 5 years. Babies are walking, talking and weaned within 1 year. The young fauns stay with their mother until they are considered adults, at age 15. Fauns begin to age at 50.

Culture

Fauns society is tightly-knit, but not heavily regulated. It is a gerontocracy – the oldest members of the community settle disputes and make whatever decisions seem necessary. Fauns have no concept of status in the human sense. Certain extreme actions – banishment, for example, or community military action – require the consent of the entire community, after open debate.

It is somewhat misleading to speak of a “community” of Fauns. The term does not refer to a village or tribe in the human sense, but to all Fauns living in a wilderness area encompassing an area as large as several hundred square miles. It can take several days for all the Fauns in a given community to gather in one place.

Most Fauns live alone, though sometimes one will set up housekeeping with a mate, sibling, or friend. The nearest neighbor will be anything from a half-mile to 5+ miles away. This wide dispersal is necessary to ensure that each Faun has enough foraging land to support himself. Nonetheless, they are sociable, and will get together with neighbors or relatives at least once a week.

A community can range in size from two dozen in a small wood to hundreds in a major forest. A community customarily gathers twice a year, at the budding of the leaves and the turning of the leaves. At these festivals matings are formalized, infants are accepted into the community, and adulthood is formally granted to youngsters. Of course, there is also much dancing, feasting, and impromptu romance. These revels are often visited by local Elves, Ellyllon, friendly humans, and (among remoter communities) Wildmen. Human and Goblin traders and entertainers often attend, to give the festivals an even more carnival atmosphere. Midwinter and Midsummer's Eve are occasions for more localized celebrations, involving a few close friends and neighbors.

Fauns seldom step outside of the few generally-accepted rules of their society. The rare serious wrongdoer is punished by banishment or (very rarely) death. Minor infringements are punished by community service or public humiliation – dunking is common, as is a more humane variation on the “tar and feathers” concept involving tree sap and dried leaves. The lawless stranger is either escorted out of the area, or unceremoniously exterminated, depending on the severity of the offense.

In times of emergency the community can either gather or go into hiding with remarkable speed. Fauns can spread the word of a crisis quickly, using runners, friendly bird and animal messengers, and sometimes beacons or mirror flashes.

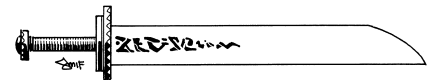
In the event of an invasion, the Faun community will go underground, harassing the enemy with diabolically clever traps and ambushes. A handful of Fauns in their home territory have been known to make the forest unlivable for whole divisions of invaders. Fauns seldom participate in an out-and-out war, but some have been known to sign on as a scout or guide, for a just cause.

Politics

Fauns are the most numerous of the sylvan races and (excepting only the Wood Elves themselves) the most important. They have excellent relations with the other Sylvan races – the Ellyllon, Leprechauns, and even the shy Wildmen. Of course, they revere the Elves, and trust them implicitly. They are also on close terms with the nature spirits and fairy folk of their woods.

There is a deep and ancient friendship between the Fauns and the Centaurs. A Centaur band will often detour into a wood to visit a particular Faun, or a whole Faun community will come to the edge of their forest to rendezvous with Centaur friends. Centaur teachers often bring their charges among the Fauns for a time, to study woodcraft and the proper stewardship of nature.

Fauns have no particular racial enemies. They tend to dislike Dwarves, however, whom they find dull. A Faun will torment a Dwarf incessantly with taunts and pranks. They like humans as individuals, once they get to know them, but will be shy with strangers (of course, *attractive* strangers are another matter). Large groups of humans intimidate them. They find the thought of human cities terrifying, and will not willingly enter one. A human who wishes to enter or cross a Faun forest should come prepared with gifts of delicacies and trinkets to pacify the inhabitants. However, some isolated human communities in the edges of the woods have formed alliances with the local Fauns that have endured for generations.



Faun Character Example

Nevil

100 points

Age 32; 5'; 140 lbs.; dark hair and eyes, always carrying a pan-pipe.

ST 8 [-]; **DX** 13 [-]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 11 [-]

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry: 8.

Advantages: Animal Empathy [5]; Faun Racial Package [25]; Luck [15].

Disadvantages: Compulsive Behavior (Wandering) [-5]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Pacifism (Cannot kill) [-15]; Sense of Duty (Nature) [-10].

Skills: Bard-14 [4]; Blowpipe-13 [4]; Boating-12 [1]; Carousing-11* [-]; Climbing-13 [2]; Cooking-12 [1½]; Dancing-13 [2]; Escape-12 [2]; Fast-Talk-14 [4]; First Aid-14 [2]; Fishing-12 [½]; Knife-13 [1]; Lasso-13 [2]; Musical Instrument (Pipes)-20* [14]; Naturalist-16 [10]; Performance-12 [1]; Poisons-12 [2]; Scrounging-13* [-]; Staff-13 [4]; Stealth-14 [2]; Survival (any)-13** [-]; Swimming-13 [1]; Tracking-15 [6].

* Includes adjustments for racial package.

** Default from Naturalist.

Nevil is a noted woodland traveler. He has a knowledge of the wild that few can equal, but he's most commonly known as a brilliant musician. Master bards the kingdom over bow to Nevil's skill with the pipe. He will become legendary if he lives to an old age.

He loves to wander, and finds it difficult to spend more than a day or two in one place. Occasionally he'll even journey beyond the woodlands, visiting the mountains, the plains, or even the desert or ocean.

Nevil has an intense curiosity about anything new or strange, and a highly-developed code of honor. He will not take the life of another sentient creature, and he will do anything within his power to defend the wilderness from the ravages of uncaring individuals. His remarkable luck has so far kept his occasionally rash nature from landing him in trouble he couldn't get out of.

Nevil is a balanced starting character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.

Fishmen in the Campaign

Fishmen are perfect for the GM who wishes to inject some horror into his campaign. The Fishmen, with their dark, ancient cities, their old, evil artifacts, and their legendary libraries of forbidden lore, are tailor-made to bring the characters face to face with Things That Man Was Not Meant To Know. The adventurers don't even need to actually *meet* the Fishmen to get themselves in trouble – all they need to do is stumble across one of the Fishmen's ruins or artifacts. An ancient Fishman object of power might cause the character to be possessed by an evil power, or awaken an uncontrollable craving for human meat, or perhaps initiate a transformation that might slowly change the helpless victim into a Fishman.

Of course, they can also function merely as generic bad-guys, in a heavily marine-oriented campaign.

Fishmen react to all other races at -3. Every race that knows about the Fishmen reacts to them at -4, except the Merfolk and Dolphins, who hate the Fishmen so passionately that they react at -6.

The Fishmen present the GM designing a multi-racial campaign with a choice. Were Elves the first intelligent race, according to well-established FRPG tradition, or were the Fishmen and the Reptile Men the true firstcomers? Either choice presents the GM with interesting options for developing his campaign world and designing adventures.

A powerful Fishman would make a good enemy for a character or party that spends a lot of time on or in the water.

Most Fishmen "grunts" should be built on 100 points. Champions should be built on 200 to 300 points, and wizards and leaders on 200 to 500 points.

FISHMEN

Fishmen are underwater humanoids standing 6-7 feet tall (height is 4" more than normal for their ST, weight is normal for their height). Their flesh is scaled, with a glossy sheen. Their hands and feet are webbed. Their heads are their most inhuman parts, with large, black, unlidged eyes, no nose, a broad, lipless mouth, and ears made up of sharp spines connected by webbing. A webbed, spined crest runs from the center of the forehead down the back of the neck. Fishman flesh is always a shade of green, from very pale to almost black. Fishmen wear no clothes other than equipment harnesses or crude jewelry.

Fishman Racial Package

30 points

Attributes: ST +1 [10]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +1 [2]; Amphibious [10]; Dark Vision [25]; Damage Resistance 1 [3]; Gills [10]; Nictating Membrane × 1 [10]; Passive Defense 1 [25]; Pressure Support [15]; Speak with Fish [10].

Racial Disadvantages: Bad Sight [-25]; Cold-Blooded (50-degree threshold) [-5]; Dependency (Water, daily) [-15]; Fanatic [-15]; Intolerance [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Eat Other Sentients) [-15]; Reputation -4 [-20]; Unattractive Appearance [-5].

Psychology

Fishmen are an evil race of cold-blooded amphibians. They are utterly depraved, and feel nothing resembling human emotion. The Fishmen, as a race, are devoted to the worship of ancient and evil deities. Many Fishmen, perhaps most, are mad by human standards.



Like the Reptile Men, the Fishmen were once much more numerous and technologically advanced than they now are. They still live in the ruins of their monolithic cities, built on the edges of bottomless marine trenches.

Religion is the center of the Fishmen's lives, but it is a dark and inhuman religion. The gods of the Fishmen are older than the world, perhaps older than time. The Fishmen siphon power from these mystic beings through ritual and sacrifice.

The Fishmen have their own ancient tongue, but it is completely unpronounceable out of the water. For this reason all Fishmen learn another tongue for use above the waterline. This second tongue varies from city to city, but is usually of human derivation. Fishman names have a monstrous ring to human ears. Examples include Arrog, Spaddur, Blixtt.

Though the rest of their culture lies in ruins, the Fishmen have never lost their skill in the magical arts. A full third of the population has some degree of magical ability, and their leaders are wizards of terrible power. The Fishmen are masters of all type of sorcery. The only mystical field where their skills have declined is enchantment – their craftsmanship is no longer adequate to create objects capable of holding powerful magical energies. They still, however, manufacture lesser items, and many great objects of power from the apex of their civilization still exist. These artifacts will often have strange and horrible effects on any non-Fishman who tries to wield their power.

Fishmen fight with the traditional underwater weapons of spear, knife, net, and trident. Sometimes they also use a short thrusting sword. They armor themselves with breastplates and small shields or bucklers of shell, bone, or coral (functions as scale mail).

All of their works and dwellings are carved with bizarre grotesqueries and obscenities. This is as true today as it was millennia ago, though the artistic power of the race has declined to the point where modern Fishman "art" is a crude parody of past works.

There are rumors of vast Fishman libraries, where the ancients recorded their vile secrets on thin and corrosionless plates of metal. If such collections do exist, it is certainly better that man does not know of them.

Ecology

There are those who believe that the Fishmen are the oldest intelligent race in the world. These radical scholars point to a time long before the awakening of the Elves – even before the first mammal appeared – when the Fishmen, the Reptile Men and perhaps the Insect Men fought mighty wars and manipulated strange magics.

The race's own earliest legends speak of a time when the Fishmen were little more than clever beasts, struggling dumbly for survival in the teeming, hostile oceans of the young Earth. The legends say that these proto-Fishmen uncovered the sepulcher where an ancient evil had been imprisoned at the world's creation. They released the evil one, and were slain for their trouble. The old god raged to the surface, determined to utterly destroy the world that had been its prison.

It was prevented in its mission by the more benevolent powers of the surface world, who eventually drove it to take refuge in its undersea tomb. There the evil one conceived a new plan. It reached out to creatures like the ones who had freed it, and gave them the seeds of language, craft, and magic. Then it made its escape to some black corner of space or hellish alternate reality. Someday, the Fishmen say, it will return to finish the job, and its army of destruction will be the Fishman race it conceived so long ago.



Fishmen PCs

As they're written, there's nothing to stop the Fishmen from being player characters – their most debilitating mental disadvantage is Fanaticism, which can be easily bought off or transferred to a more wholesome creed.

Still, the GM should think seriously before allowing Fishman PCs, if for no other reason than because to do so would tend to limit or dilute their effectiveness as villains. At the very least it is strongly recommended that a Fishman who regularly associates with any land dweller be automatically regarded as a traitor and placed under sentence of death by the rest of his race. Of course, if the PC party is evil, this is less of a problem.

Although more capable out of water than the Merfolk, a Fishman PC requires that the party stay near water. Long inland journeys will require complicated logistics to keep the Fishman alive and comfortable. Perhaps the best place for a Fishman PC would be as a traitor to his race in an underwater campaign where most of his companions are Merfolk and Dolphins. In such a party, the Fishman would probably contribute most as a mage, enhancing and expanding the limited magical capabilities of the Merfolk.

An efficient Fishman PC can be created for any level of campaign.

Fishman Adventure Seeds

Fish Out of Water

As they journey toward plains or desert, the adventurers discover a number of strange tracks near the last body of open water for hundreds of miles. The tracks lead up, out of the water, continue for a few hundred yards, then end abruptly, as though the creatures that made them suddenly vanished or took to the air. The tracks are splay-footed and appear to be webbed, and are larger than a human foot. They indicate 12 or fewer in the group. If the party continues in the direction of the tracks, they will come to another similar group of tracks after several hours – as though their mysterious quarry materialized or alighted for a time, then continued.

After two more days' travel, the PCs will finally meet the group they've been following. Unbelievably powerful magic has been at work. The desert sands have been blown away to form a huge sunken bowl, at the bottom of which lies ancient ruins. Somehow, the bottom has been filled with brackish, shallow water.

Also in the ruins are the party of Fishmen the PCs have been following. They are preparing to hold a ritual and sacrifice at the site of one of their most ancient cities. They've brought their own sacrifice, a securely-bound young Sea Elf.

The Fishmen are all powerful wizards and warriors, but they are still magically exhausted from their journey. If the party doesn't waste time and uses their heads, they should have a reasonable chance to rescue the Elf before the sorcerers have recovered enough Fatigue to begin the sacrificial ritual.

Up From the Depths

The party has booked passage on an ocean-bound ship. One night, in the middle of the passage, a raiding party of several dozen Fishmen slips on board to kill the crew and steal the ship's riches. However, the Fishmen were *not* expecting to stumble into a cabin full of seasoned adventurers.

There are several ways the GM could play the ensuing fight: 1) the party could fight its way to the crew's quarters, rouse the crew and lead them in a pitched battle against the Fishmen, 2) the crew could be under the influence of a Mass Sleep spell or similar enchantment, leaving it entirely up to the party to save the day, or 3) the crew could already be dead, forcing the adventurers not only to drive off the Fishmen, but also to pilot the ship into port afterwards.

The GM should gear the number of Fishmen to the strength of the party and the direction in which he wants to take the scenario, but whatever the strength of the raiders, they should have at least one mage of significant power.

The most alien feature of the Fishmen is their eyes. They see in a spectrum completely invisible to other races. Their vision is less acute than that of humans and most other races, but they can see perfectly well in the complete absence of what we call visible light.

Fishmen can breathe air as well as water, and can remain on land for an indefinite amount of time provided they immerse themselves daily for an hour or so, allowing their bodies to reabsorb moisture. In particularly cold or arid climates, the Fishman might need to immerse himself much more often. They find life on the land confining and uncomfortable, however, and will not willingly remain there longer than absolutely necessary.

They are strictly carnivorous. They mostly eat fish, of course – raw, red meat is considered a great delicacy. They ingest no vegetable matter except certain psychoactive and hallucinogenic fungi and sponges.

Their females spawn twice a year, dropping thousands of eggs in a breeding pit, which is then fertilized by several males chosen for their ability to enhance the race. Then the pit is covered while the eggs gestate. Several months later, when the pit is uncovered, 1 to 6 fat, vicious infants swim in the brine, sated on the flesh of their slower or weaker siblings.

Fishmen young are raised in a creche environment, schooled with emotionless cruelty by elderly masters in combat, magic, hunting, and what remnants of craft the race has retained.

Fishmen reach maturity at about age 20, and begin to age at 50.

Culture

The Fishmen have no concept of such ideals as fundamental rights or the dignity of the individual. Their social structure is survival of the fittest in its rawest form, with "the fittest" usually being the most ruthless and magically adept. Assassination is the approved method of social advancement. The leaders of the race are usually old, wise, magically potent, and utterly without pity. No Fishman without magecraft could ever become a real leader in the society, though some of the cruelest and most audacious warriors can earn a great many comforts and privileges.

Fishmen do not distinguish between the sexes. Males and females have equal chances to kill their way to the top. A non-Fishman cannot tell the difference between males and females except through dissection.

The Fishmen support themselves mostly through hunting and gathering, but an essential sideline to the racial economy is piracy and looting. They launch stealthy midnight raids on small merchant vessels, coastal fishing villages and occasionally even on outlying settlements of the Sea Elves. Fishmen are excellent assassins, and have been known to silently sneak aboard a ship to slit the throats of sleeping sailors.

They raid the surface for meat, magic and non-ferrous metals. Sometimes they also take captives, who are kept alive through magic while awaiting their turn to become the center of attention in a vile ritual sacrifice. They're even greater menaces to the other undersea races, the Merfolk and the Dolphins (p. 111), whom they take as slaves and sacrifices.

The Fishmen cities were originally built to house hundreds of thousands of individuals, but today none has a population of more than 2,000. There are presently a hundred or so inhabited cities. The sites or ruins of several hundred more are known, and it seems certain that even more hundreds have been utterly forgotten.

Fishmen have a great affinity for sharks, kraken, and other monsters of the deep. They can speak to such creatures, and often use them as draft animals and shock troops. They are said to know their way around the bottomless trenches



of the ocean, where the ancient and forgotten leviathans of the sea dwell. Furthermore, there are rumors that they are able to summon and control these monstrosities in great need . . .

Roughly every nine years the Fishmen must come to certain spots on the dry land and make sacrifices to their gods. It is impossible to predict exactly when the Fishmen will emerge to conduct their rites, and some believe that they are scheduled according to a calendar that has nothing to do with our world or its sun. They have many sacred spots, and might not return to the same place for centuries.

Their are rumors that the Fishmen have sacred spots far, far inland, in the dry and wasted places of the Earth. These are said to have been the sites of the Fishmen's greatest victories and cities, millennia ago when the seas covered much of the land. Every few centuries a small band of pilgrims will make the perilous journey, following the rivers for as long as they can. Once there they will perform certain essential rituals and sacrifices. In view of the difficulties the Fishmen undergo to reach their goal, the importance of these rituals, and the consequences to the Fishmen should they go uncompleted, can only be imagined.

Politics

The Fishmen have no friends or allies. They have sometimes made short-term alliances with the Bales, the Dark Elves or with evil humans. Even the demons of men are said to fear the Fishmen and their dark gods.

They are hated and feared by the great seafaring races – humans, Elves, and Goblins – and by anybody who lives near the ocean. The Dwarves have no direct contact with the Fishmen, but there are rumors of Dwarven miners finding the ruins of Fishman cities in the heart of a mountain that used (who can say how many centuries past?) to be the bottom of an ocean trench. It is said that whole Dwarven nations have fallen because of such discoveries . . .

The hatred of the surface races for the Fishmen, of course, pales to insignificance before the passionate loathing that the Merfolk and the Dolphins hold for them. In fact, the Fishmen are probably the only creatures that the gentle Dolphins truly hate. If a member of either of these races sees a Fishman, he'll try to kill it. If they see a group of Fishmen they will hurry to their tribe and warn them to take defensive action.

The Reptile Men have legends that speak of ancient, destructive wars against a mysterious race of water-dwellers that seem almost certain to have been the Fishmen. Whether any of this primeval hatred still lingers among the Reptile Men seems doubtful, however. Indeed, it seems unlikely that even a single Reptile Man and Fishman have come face to face in centuries.

Fishman Character Example

Derrch the Questioner 200 points

Age 36; 6'2"; 160 lbs.; virulent dark green skin/scales and a twisted, horrific face.

ST 11 [-]; DX 11 [10]; IQ 15 [60]; HT 12 [-]

Speed 5.75; Move 5 (Swim 5).

Dodge 5; Parry 5.

Advantages: Charisma +3 [15]; Clerical Investment [5]; Fishman Racial Package [30]; Magery 3 [35]; Status 5 [25]; Strong Will +3 [12].

Disadvantages: Megalomania [-10]; Paranoia [-10]; Sadism [-15]; Ugly* [-5].

Quirks: Chuckles constantly to himself [-1].

Skills: Hypnotism-15 [4]; Interrogation-16 [4]; Leadership-16 [4]; Occultism-14 [1]; Physician-14 [2]; Spear-11 [2]; Strategy-13 [1]; Theology-13 [1]; Traps-14 [1].

Spells: Bravery-16; Charm-16; Create Water-16; Daze-16; Enslave (VH)-15; Fear-16; Foolishness-16; Loyalty-16; Mass Sleep-16; Mind Reading-16; Mind Sending-16; Panic-16; Purify Water-16; Seek Water-16; Sense Emotion-16; Sense Foes-16; Shape Water-16; Sleep-16; Telepathy (VH)-15; Terror-16; Truthsayer-16; Water Jet-20. [29]

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

As an inquisitor, Derrch is one of the most important Fishmen in his community. He's completely mad (paranoid, sadistic, and megalomaniac), but in his line of work that's considered an asset. He's a powerful mage, specializing in Communication and Mind Control spells, and is also an excellent hypnotist. Whenever possible, though, he prefers to get his information the old-fashioned way – with a rack and skinning knife. He has the unconscious habit of making a very unnerving chuckling sound as he goes about his work.

Derrch is an experienced character suitable for use as an opponent, Enemy, or NPC encounter.

Gargoyles in the Campaign

Gargoyles can be either a menace, a nuisance, or (rarely) a help to the adventurers. The GM should play up the race's various personality defects, both to establish their character and to catch the party off-guard if he should ever wish to send them up against a Gargoyle who happens to be competent or formidable.

A few Gargoyles can add plenty of local color. City Gargoyles should be played as shiftless and pathetic; rural Gargoyles are more suspicious. It is important for the GM to remember that any Gargoyle that buys off the Laziness and Uneducated disadvantages (a total of -15 points) has no obstruction to becoming as competent and versatile as a human adventurer. The GM may want to throw the party up against a super-Gargoyle. Such an individual would very likely adopt the deceptive pose of being just another Gargoyle bum.

Gargoyles are unlikely candidates as either Patrons or serious Enemies (unless the character somehow managed to get every Gargoyle in the world after him). More conventional Gargoyles make excellent flunkies and sidekicks, for both the PCs and their opponents. They're also good opponents for low-power parties. The most dangerous Gargoyle might be the one the party never sees – they may think they've cleanly penetrated the wizard's castle . . . until the Gargoyle watchman, perched high on the wall across the courtyard, flaps off to raise the alarm!

Most Gargoyles should be built on 50 to 100 points, though exceptional individuals with up to 200 points are possible.

GARGOYLES

Gargoyles are hairless, winged humanoids. Their skin ranges from off-white to ebon black and has a stony grain. The wings are bat-like, with a 10- to 12-foot wingspan. Bodies and limbs are solid and ungraceful. Gargoyles have bowed legs that give them a peculiar rolling gait when on the ground. Their hands end in fierce claws. Gargoyles stand 4½-5½ feet tall (weight is normal for their ST, but height is 12" less than normal).

The most peculiar feature of the Gargoyle race is their faces, which are extremely mutable from individual to individual. Many are human grotesqueries. Others resemble fish, lizards or other beasts. A few faces are remarkably beautiful, but on misshapen gargoyle bodies such features are perhaps the most horrible of all.

Gargoyles seldom wear clothing, except perhaps for a few cheap trinkets of iron or tin.

Gargoyle Racial Package

25 points

Attributes: IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Claws [15]; Damage Resistance 2 [6]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Night Vision [10].

Racial Disadvantages: Cowardice [-10]; Gluttony [-5]; Laziness [-10]; Reputation -1 (Thieves and bums) [-5]; Ugly Appearance [-10]; Uneducated [-5].

Racial Quirks: Bully. [-1]



Psychology

In spite of their fearsome appearance, Gargoyles are a completely unassuming race. Most of them live as “hillbillies” – lazy, unambitious rustics from wild, unsettled areas. They are universally despised by honest farmers of all races for their midnight raids against sheep, swine, chickens, ripened produce, and anything else not tied down. (Even Gypsies scorn the Gargoyles – though less for their habit of thievery than for being so *graceless* about it.)

A few Gargoyles gravitate toward the city, drawn by the plentiful scavenging opportunities. There they usually naturally descend to a social strata just under that of the honest beggars and the professional thieves. Even the much-abused Kobolds are better regarded than the Gargoyles – in spite of their mental and physical deficiencies, Kobolds are industrious, and after their own fashion reliable. Gargoyles will often be used by bands of human thieves as second-story men, footpads, and, should anything go wrong with the law, scapegoats.

It's not that Gargoyles are evil, they're just extremely irresponsible and lazy. Even as thieves they're no great danger. Most Gargoyles are cowards, and would never dream of taking the risks involved in waylaying a traveler. If they didn't shirk from the physical effort involved, they might steal more! When there's nobody around to steal from, Gargoyles live a simple life of hunting and gathering.

A few do manage to make an honest living. Though rare, Gargoyle merchants and craftsmen are not unheard of. Most working Gargoyles are unskilled laborers, but some make good livings as scouts and night watchmen. The race's wings and night vision are powerful inducements to make employers overlook the general racial undependability – anyway, a job that only requires sitting above a door or gate for a few hours every night suits the Gargoyle temperament very well. Nonetheless, only a fool would put his security entirely in the paws of Gargoyles.

Magery is extremely rare among the Gargoyles (though Magic Resistance is quite common). Those few who do possess some magical aptitude rarely rise above the level of hedge-wizard.

Many Gargoyles never go armed, trusting instead in their tough hide and claws for protection. Those who do use a weapon generally favor short spears and knives. Those rare individuals who undergo some formal combat training usually fight with either short sword and buckler or net and trident. It is with the later combination that the airborne Gargoyle is the most dangerous – he'll swoop overhead and out of reach until he entangles his opponent in the net, then land and use the trident to finish him off from a safe distance.

Gargoyles usually speak a debased form of the local human tongue. There are no native Gargoyle names – they're all borrowed from humanity. Their names are usually one short word.

Gargoyles have no art and no native crafts. They almost never take the time to learn to read. Gargoyle songs are crude, vulgar, and repetitious. They will often enthusiastically embrace whatever religion is offered to them, in the fervent hope that the gods (or their religious brethren) will provide food and necessities that they might otherwise be forced to work for!

Ecology

Gargoyles live on hills and low mountains, nesting in shallow caves and hollows or sometimes building rickety huts. They may represent a cross between earthly beasts and either very minor demons or particularly debased Faerie-folk. The Elves never thought them worthy of their gifts – they owe their language and what little civilization they possess to humanity, a race with which they've been associating for only a few centuries. As a result, remote Gargoyle tribes will often have some very *strange* beliefs and legends – derived from human myth, but strangely twisted and altered to fit Gargoyle sensibilities.



Gargoyle PCs

Playing a Gargoyle can be entertaining. They fit in equally well in both “silly” and “straight” campaigns. The GM should allow the player to freely buy off the racial Laziness and Cowardice disadvantages, but the race's social disadvantages should remain until release is earned through experience. The race's claws, high HT, and natural toughness make them useful in a battle-oriented campaign, while their wings and Night Vision make them equally handy in a more stealth-oriented party.

A Gargoyle in a cinematic campaign, or one with a great deal of experience, should consider adopting a camouflage persona of a shiftless hanger-on, turning the racial image problem into a potential asset by leading people to seriously underestimate his abilities. Alternately the character could build up his personal image, gaining some measure of notoriety (“Don't worry, it's just a Gargoyle.” “You fool, that's not just *any* Gargoyle!”).

The most common professions for Gargoyle adventurers will be thief, gofer, and ex-gladiator. However, players who want to look beyond these categories to discover new potential for the race should be encouraged.

Gargoyle Adventure Seeds

The Child Stealer

A child is missing from the village. Witnesses say a big Gargoyle swooped down and stole the toddler. The PCs are hired to travel to the nearby Gargoyle-infested hills and rescue (or avenge) the stolen child.

If the party questions the Gargoyles, the Gargoyles will be terrified at what they're being accused of and the possible repercussions. One of the younger Gargoyles will remember seeing something "much too big and ugly to be a Gargoyle" flying overhead, carrying what may have been a child in its arms. If the party believes this (it's the truth), they now know what direction the kidnapper is heading in. The Gargoyles will send a few young males to scout ahead of the party.

The babe was actually taken by a minor demon sent by an evil sorcerer to procure an innocent for a sacrifice. The villain lives in a forgotten ruin many miles out in the wilderness. The demon is an even more ponderous flyer than the Gargoyles, and must spend much of each day traveling by foot. The Gargoyles will soon spot him, and the party can catch him in the wilderness if they hurry. The demon is under strict orders not to hurt the child, and is much too stupid to think of making empty threats.

The Gargoyles will not help in the fight, but one of them will spot the ruin in the distance, and they will escort the child safely back to her parents if the party decides to investigate further. If the party dawdles, the demon will deliver the child to his master. The sacrifice won't take place for several weeks, but the party will have a much harder time rescuing the child from the wizard's dungeons.

Squatters

The old cathedral in the heart of the city desperately needs work. The higher towers, vacant for years, are crumbling. Unfortunately, the upper regions have become infested with Gargoyles, and the work crews refuse to enter. The adventurers are hired to clear the seven ancient towers. In addition to driving out any uninvited guests, they're expected to make maps and take extensive notes on the condition of each chamber and stair. The Gargoyles will set traps and snares for their tormenters, but only a few will offer any kind of direct resistance. Of course, there may be other sorts of creatures lurking above...

Gargoyles are weak and clumsy fliers. They stay low and rest often – they can't keep aloft for more than an hour at a time. Power dives and aerial acrobatics are completely out of the question.

They normally hunt small game, using only their claws. Some also use primitive snares and traps. Most Gargoyles prefer their meat raw. Gargoyles will eat a few wild fruits and herbs, but the race is mostly carnivorous.

The young are born live, and Gargoyles are prolific – a female can give birth (producing one to three young) every year of her adult life. However, Gargoyles also have a high infant mortality rate. They are weaned and flying by the end of their first year. A Gargoyle is fully mature, and considered an adult, at about age 12. They begin to age at about 40.

Culture

The Gargoyle social order is extremely primitive. The basic unit of society is the extended family – typically 6 to 20 individuals. The family is ruled by the strongest, largest male. This alpha male has exclusive rights to all the females in the area. For this reason most of the Gargoyles who leave the nest are young males.

Other races divide Gargoyles into roughly three classes – convicted thief, unconvicted thief, and employed thief. Among the Gargoyles it's less a question of Status than pecking order. Gargoyles establish precedence through successful thievery, trickery or combat. A working Gargoyle would be respected by his peers – not because he was working, but because of the trinkets and toys he could buy with his wages.

There is only one way to challenge the alpha male, however – to face him in combat. Gargoyle ritual combat is unarmed and airborne. The object is to get above the enemy and grapple him. At the last moment, the grappler lets go and resumes flying, theoretically leaving his opponent to plummet to his doom. Given Gargoyles' aerial clumsiness, it's not surprising that these combats often result in the death of both combatants. Either side can peacefully concede defeat by landing and refusing to take off again.

Gargoyle females are smaller and weaker, on the average, than the males. They're usually downtrodden and abused by their mates. This is not sexual discrimination per se – a Gargoyle will abuse *anyone* who's smaller and weaker. Females with the physical prowess to stand up to the males can rise high in the pecking order, and even become group leaders (with *their* pick of the men).





Gargoyle Character Example

Whitey **100 points**
Age 20; 5'2"; 150 lbs.; white skin.

ST 10 [-]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 11 [20]; **HT** 12 [-].
Speed 6.25; Move 6 (Fly 12).

Dodge 6; Parry 6.

Advantages: Alertness +2 [10];
Gargoyle Racial Package [25].

Disadvantages: Albinism [-10]; Greed [-15]; Intolerance (Dwarves) [-5]; Status -2 [-10].

Skills: Bow-13 [8]; Brawling-14 [2]; Camouflage-13 [4]; Carousing-13 [4]; Fast Talk-12 [4]; Fast-Draw (Knife)-13 [1]; Knife-14 [2]; Lockpicking-14 [8]; Scrounging-12 [2]; Stealth-15 [8]; Streetwise-12 [4]; Survival (Urban)-12 [4]; Traps-14 [8].

The imaginatively-named Whitey is an albino Gargoyle living in the city. Though just as lazy as most of his kindred, he's somewhat more ambitious and intelligent than the average – he's taken the time to learn a few professional burglary skills. He's audacious enough when it comes to concocting plans for breaking and entering, but he tends to panic when threatened with any sort of physical violence. When he first arrived in the city, Whitey attempted to panhandle from a Dwarf who'd been having a bad day, and was laid up for several weeks thereafter. Since that encounter, he's harbored an intense dislike for the entire Dwarven race.

Whitey is a balanced character ready to begin adventuring.

There are no Gargoyle military units – the discipline problem would be insurmountable. Individual Gargoyles do acquire military training, usually through service as aerial scouts or city night watchmen. They are also favorites in the gladiatorial arenas, for their monstrous appearance and the novelty of a flying combatant. A few longbowmen and large hunting hawks on duty are usually enough to discourage a low-flying Gargoyle from trying to escape over the stands of the amphitheater. Although most Gargoyles are cowardly, a few have distinguished themselves in war or in the arena.

Politics

Gargoyles have no special racial friends or enemies. Elves and Dwarves dislike them, as do the Winged Folk and the Great Eagles. The sylvan races consider them an annoyance.

Humans, Halflings, and Goblins will all sometimes use Gargoyles as servants or hirelings, but there is no particular love or hate involved.

The Gargoyles find their staunchest allies and deadliest enemies among those races that normally share their low social strata – the Kobolds and the Hobgoblins.

Gullible Gargoyles are easy prey for such charismatic villains as Bales and other evil wizards. A few Gargoyles have become debased enough to voluntarily place themselves in the service of the Orcs.

Many Gargoyles are enslaved by various races. Gargoyle slaves may include gladiators, field hands, and house servants. They are drawn from convicted criminals, hapless victims of war and even a few pathetic individuals who cherish the freedom from choice or responsibility that slavery offers.



GHOULS

Ghouls in the Campaign

The GM has great latitude in deciding how to play the Ghouls. They can fill any niche in the campaign . . . from an innocent, persecuted minority to slaving, man-eating monsters.

One thing's for certain – no matter how bad the GM decides Ghouls should be, the PCs should believe they're even worse.

Members of other races visiting Ghoulish quarters should roll for disease as through visiting a plague-ridden area (see sidebar, p. B133). If exceptional sanitary precautions are taken, the GM may allow an appropriate bonus.

Ghouls are at -5 to Disguise to impersonate humans, Goblins, or other similar races; nevertheless, they will often have Disguise skill at high enough levels to make the impersonation feasible. Many will augment their disguises magically. The most common Ghoulish spells are Alter Visage and Illusion Disguise.

Aboveground Ghouls make excellent Enemies. The players should not know that their enemies are Ghouls – and given the racial preference for mundane and magical disguise, they will often not even know who their Enemy is. A Ghoul would make a remarkably efficient assassin. If the party does serious damage to a Ghoul community, they can expect to be hounded by a revenge squad of at least a half-dozen Ghoul hunters, that will appear on a 12 or less.

A Ghoul might also make a good Patron, hiring the party to seek out some magical artifact that would aid a Ghoul community to protect itself or obtain food.

Remember that individual PCs do not have to conform to racial prejudices about the Ghouls or any other race. However, any party that befriends Ghouls is well advised to keep it under its hat. Aiding Ghouls – or concealing knowledge of their existence – is a capital crime in most human lands.

All races react to known Ghouls at a -4, except for Goblins, who react normally. Certain isolated human or nonhuman communities may also lack prejudice against Ghouls, at the GMs discretion.

Ghoul hunters, travelers and mages should be built on 100+ points. Other Ghouls should be based on 25 to 50 point

Ghouls are pallid, hairless humanoids. They have splayed, clawed hands, and long, thin limbs. Their faces are narrow, with pointed ears, long noses, and sharp chins. They have broad mouths filled with small, sharply-pointed teeth. They usually wear clothing – mostly ancient human finery and grave-clothes for which the original owner has no further use (height is normal for ST, weight is 20 pounds lighter than normal).

Ghoul Racial Package

-5 or -20 points

Attributes: ST +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Alertness +2 [10]; Double-Jointed [5]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Night Vision [10]; Silence × 1 [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Dependency (Fresh brains from sentient beings no more than 1 week old, occasional, monthly) [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Eat human carrion) [-15]; Reputation -4 [-20]; Sense of Duty (Welfare of race) [-15]; Ugly Appearance[-10].

Racial Skills: Camouflage (M/E) IQ+1 [2]; Scrounging (M/E) IQ [1]; Stealth (P/A) DX [2].

Note: Ghouls who live among Orcs become debased, and acquire IQ -2 [-15]. It costs -5 points to play a Ghoul, or -20 points to play a degenerate Ghoul.



Psychology

Since the dawn of history, Ghouls have been hunted by humans and other races. Many times man has thought that the Ghouls were completely exterminated, but the Ghouls have always endured, living secretly beneath man's feet, using his graveyards for their larder. The Ghouls are masters of stealth and camouflage as well as disguise both magical and mundane. A human – or even an Elf – could pass within a few inches of a whole family of Ghouls and never suspect their presence.

Even though they are universally considered inhuman monsters, the Ghouls are *not* an evil race. They are suspicious, and occasionally ruthless. Occasional individuals (and even whole communities) can turn to evil – twisted by centuries of genocidal persecution – but by and large they will seek not to harm the living as they struggle for survival. Ghouls take remarkably good care of each other – no Ghoul will ever harm, rob, hurt, kill or betray another Ghoul – in that respect they're *superior* to humanity.

Still, they are not a pleasant or wholesome race. Their appearance – particularly their toothy grin – is disquieting. They are uncouth (by human standards) and callous about many things which humans consider taboo. Since they are completely immune to disease, their living conditions are extremely unsanitary.

Magery is more common among the Ghouls than among humans, and many Ghouls know a small handful of spells. They particularly favor Body Control and Illusion Spells (for disguise), and often know Earth, Darkness, Protection and Warning, or Sound Spells. Contrary to humans' expectations, Ghouls are very seldom necromancers – Ghouls don't like to play with their food. However, they are favorite *servants* of necromancers – the mages help the Ghouls find plentiful food, and the Ghouls provide generations of grave-robbing expertise. Such Ghouls are often the most evil and depraved of their race.

Ghouls will also sometimes serve Vampires or similar powerful monsters. Those not in the service of a necromancer or Vampire consider the undead a menace to their society, and will not tolerate their presence.

Ghouls do not have literature or art – such artifacts might provide clues about Ghoulish methods and hiding places to other races. They do have a rich oral tradition. Ghouls do not dance, but they sing. Humans find their soft songs bone-chilling. The Ghoulish sense of humor is black in the extreme.

Ghouls have their own language – notable for the complete absence of any sibilants (“s” sounds) or clicks that might carry the sound to unfriendly ears. They also speak whatever tongue is common to their prey above. They draw their names from both tongues. Ghoul names are single words, one or two syllables long. If further designation is required they will append their place of birth. Their religion is usually a debased form of whatever faith is practiced above.

Ecology

Ghouls are carrion eaters, and prefer their meat well-aged. Only a starving Ghoul (or a very unusual one) will eat fresh meat. Ghouls cannot digest cooked meat. Animal flesh will support them on a day-to-day basis, but periodically – at least once a month – a Ghoul *must* partake of the brains of a sentient being. Furthermore, the brain must be fresh – no more than one week old. One adult brain will feed up to ten Ghouls, however. Ghoulish metabolism requires certain elements found only in the brains of intelligent creatures, but very few non-Ghouls know that it's brains that Ghouls crave. They also like the taste of manflesh, and are very frugal by nature, so they usually eat the entire cadaver (cracking and gnawing all the major bones) and not just the brain. Ghouls seldom leave enough of a meal to animate or resurrect magically.



Ghoul PCs

First of all, a Ghoul PC will need either an incredible (19+) Disguise Skill or a reliable magical disguise – preferably both. The Ghoul does not have to let his fellow adventurers know his true nature. This will occasionally cause problems, however. It will be particularly difficult around the campfire, where the Ghoul must avoid fresh or cooked meat. This can be gotten around with some discretion – for instance, the Ghoul could claim he's under a vow never to eat in others' presence. More touchy would be the need to obtain a fairly fresh sentient being's brain every month. Eventually, the Ghoul PC will find it practical to reveal his true nature to the rest of the party – but he may want to reserve this revelation until he's proven his trustworthiness and usefulness. He should never, however, reveal any secrets of the Ghoul race to non-Ghouls unless he first buys off the racial Sense of Duty, and then he must be prepared to face the consequences of his actions.

Ghoul PCs make good spies, thieves, and spellcasters. They will seldom be front-line fighters, though their high ST gives them an edge in combat.

As with any race, the GM is free to disallow Ghouls for PC use. Playing a Ghoul will be a remarkably challenging experience. Any player who wants to play a Ghoul in order to indulge in uncouth sociopathic behavior and unrestrained mayhem is acting against the spirit of the race. Such players (if the GM is disposed to tolerate them at all) should look to Orcs, Ogres or Hobgoblins.

Ghoul Adventure Seeds

Graveyard Shift

A Ghoul has been surprised and killed in the town cemetery. The citizens know that where there's one Ghoul there are usually more. The adventurers are hired to guard the cemetery and seek out and destroy the Ghouls.

If the PCs find the concealed entrance to the Ghouls' home, the local high priest will stop them as they enter. He's an old, honest man who's been secretly aiding the Ghouls for many years, tending to their spiritual and physical needs, and allowing them free access to the abandoned husks of his aboveground flock. The priest will plead on the Ghouls' behalf. If the PCs refuse to listen, or harm the priest in any way, they will be immediately ambushed by a large band of Ghoul hunters (GM determines number, based on party strength). The hunters will attack from concealment with throwing knives, then charge en masse.

If the party agrees to let the Ghouls live, six Ghouls will emerge from the shadows: three hunters and three ordinary Ghouls of both sexes. Over the priest's protests, the hunters stab their unresisting comrades to death. The victims are volunteers, sacrificing themselves for the greater good of the community. The PCs are told to take the dead Ghouls to the village leaders, collect their reward, then leave and never return.



For as long as there have been humans there have been Ghouls living below them. There are many myths and legends about their origins, most of them colored by human prejudice. The Ghouls themselves say that when the creator was done with the immortal Elves and the long-lived Dwarves, he turned his attention to the short-lived humans. After they were made he said "Soon these creatures are going to be dying all over the place. I'd better make someone to take care of the mess." Ghouls regard their persecution at the hands of humanity as an insult to the creator, and claim He will see that the humans get theirs – some day.

Ghouls are themselves inedible. Their meat is putrid and indigestible. Within 24 hours of death a Ghoul decomposes into an unimaginably foul soup. Forty-eight hours later the process is complete and the Ghoul is reduced to a clear, odorless liquid. This substance is very good for plants, particularly certain edible subterranean fungi which Ghouls favor as a dietary supplement. Dead Ghouls are usually stored in a pot for three days, then used as fertilizer.

A Ghoul's life cycle is identical to a human's. Ghouls are not prolific; an average female will produce 1 to 3 offspring in her life. Ghouls mate casually, without commitment. There is necessarily a great deal of inbreeding among the race, but this does not seem to harm them.

Culture

Ghouls have a close-knit, interdependent society. It is a placid, dark, and quiet culture – the Ghouls live with a minimum of light and sound to avoid attracting unwelcome attention.

No Ghoul will ever betray the secret paths to their underground communities. A captured Ghoul will often kill himself rather than submit to torture. Just as often the captive will vanish mysteriously – a captured Ghoul should be kept in the highest tower, because they almost always have secret tunnels into dungeons. A Ghoul who betrays racial secrets is outcast, and all Ghouls will attempt to kill him. About one in four adult Ghouls is a "hunter" – a scavenger and robber of graves. Ghoulish hunters are resourceful and formidable survivalists. They tend more towards magic and stealth than armed might, but they are clever and extremely dangerous enemies. Hunters seldom wear armor, and are lightly armed with knives and throwing knives.

Other important Ghouls are engineers (who build and conceal traps, tunnels, and accessways), mages and travelers (see below). The rest guard and care for the home, or excavate graves under the direction of engineers. A Ghoulish community can empty a human grave in two hours, entering from below and leaving no sign of their presence (other than the missing body).

A Ghoul's home is surprisingly comfortable, with a remarkable number of decorations and conveniences scavenged from the folk above. Human visitors will be appalled by the amount of rotten meat and bones left casually about. The smell, though, is quite bearable – Ghouls use herbal preparations to freshen the air, lest their homes be found via foul odors emitting from their secret ventilation shafts. Nonetheless, the environment is most unhealthy for humans, and many who enter fall sick (treat as a plague-ridden area; see sidebar, p. B133).

Ghouls are, of necessity, ruthlessly suspicious of intruders. Most who invade their territory are unceremoniously slaughtered. However, Ghouls are good at finding allies among the folk above. These are usually loners, rebels, or eccentrics. Ghouls use their human friends only sparingly, and mostly as sources of information.

Ghoul Communities

The limiting factor on the size of a Ghoul population is, of course, the supply of fresh brains. It takes a population of around 5,000 to provide an average



of a death a week (which would support ten Ghouls safely without refrigeration or preservative magic – because though Ghouls need their treat only once per month, it has to be *fresh* when they get it). Thus, most Ghoulish populations hide in the sewers and catacombs of large cities, where the food supply is steady.

However, most Ghoulish mages know Preserve Food, and all Ghouls prize chests or bags enchanted with that spell. By using Preserve Food, a single Ghoulish mage can survive for ten months on a single adult brain. This makes tiny rural Ghoulish communities, or even lone wanderers, possible.

Disguised Ghouls

It is possible (though difficult) for a Ghoulish mage to disguise himself as a human (see sidebar, p. 78) . . . and there are always a few Ghouls living among the humans. They are usually mages, using both spells and disguise to conceal their true natures. They gather intelligence, purchase necessary supplies and carry news between Ghoulish settlements. Most do not live long, but the Ghouls consider them great heroes. Occasionally, a whole Ghoulish group will live on the road, disguised as gypsies or merchants.

When a Ghoulish traveler's true nature is discovered, it often sets off a witch hunt. All strangers, as well as local crones and loners, will be suspected of Ghoulishness – sometimes for years to come.

Politics

Humans are constantly seeking to exterminate the Ghouls. On rare occasions, an isolated human community will cooperate with Ghouls, voluntarily leaving its dead out to be scavenged. This usually results in the extermination of both the Ghoulish and human community when the arrangement is discovered by more civilized humans.

Human antipathy towards Ghouls is fed by a number of myths, including: Ghouls are undead monsters; Ghouls steal children and attack the living; Ghouls can turn humans into new Ghouls, either through their bites or through unspeakable magics; Ghouls worship dark gods who hate all life. If the GM decides that any of these is true, it should apply only to small and isolated Ghoulish bands.

Ghouls do not normally prey on either Elves or Dwarves. These races both have very low death rates. Furthermore, Elven funeral customs do not lend themselves to Ghoulish interference, and the well-defended, trapped, and stony Dwarven tombs are too difficult to penetrate. Ghouls will live on Halfling, Gnome, Goblin, and most other humanoid races. Some of the sylvan races even cooperate and trade with the Ghouls, freely allowing them to dispose of their dead.

Some Ghouls live among the Orcs, but these are a desperate and degenerate folk. Apparently the Orcish brain is less nutritious than the human. The degree to which Ghouls are tolerated varies widely among the various Orcish tribes.

Ghoul Character Example

Gregor 100 points

Age 37; 5'11"; 150 lbs.; an average-looking Ghoulish mage always disguised as a human peddler.

ST 12 [-]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 13 [30]; HT 10 [-].

Speed 5.5; Move: 5.

Dodge 5; Parry: 5.

Advantages: Literacy [10]; Luck [15]; Magery 1 [15].

Disadvantages: Bad Sight [-25]; Ghoulish Racial Package [-5]; Secret (Ghoulish) [-5]; Status -2 [-10]; Struggling [-10].

Quirks: Likes to Dance. [-1]

Skills: Acting-12 [1]; Camouflage-14* [-]; Dancing-12 [2]; Disguise-19 [14]; Escape-13 [8]; Fast-Talk-13 [2]; Knife-13 [2]; Merchant-12 [1]; Scrounging-13* [-]; Stealth-12* [-]; Streetwise-12 [1].

Spells: Alter Body-14; Alter Visage-14; Climbing-13; Clumsiness-13; Complex Illusion-13; Dexterity-13; Illusion Disguise-14; Itch-12; Pain-13; Paralyze Limb-13; Perfect Illusion-14; Simple Illusion-12; Spasm-12; Total Paralysis-14. [35]

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

Gregor is a traveling Ghoulish spellcaster. He wanders the kingdom bearing news from one Ghoulish community to another. He's pretty much a free agent who does what he wants and goes where he will. His cover is that of a traveling human peddler of unremarkable appearance, and he is never found without a large pack of goods on his back. His disguise is always at least two layers deep, with a carefully-constructed mundane disguise worn under an Alter Visage or Alter Body Spell. He keeps his Illusion Disguise spell on hand for emergencies. He keeps his spell-casting abilities secret.

Gregor is an accomplished thief and spy. He is quite nearsighted and will not even try to attack from a distance. He deliberately keeps himself quite poor, the better to avoid attracting attention. Gregor has become enamored of the human custom of dancing, and will participate in human dances at every opportunity. Gregor is witty and a good conversationalist, and he's learned to subdue his Ghoulish sense of humor around humans.

Gregor is a balanced character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.

GIANTS

Giants in the Campaign

Giants do not have a uniform character in fantasy literature. As far back as *Morte d'Arthur* most giants were cruel and bloodthirsty, but some allied themselves with Arthur and his knights.

This description attempts to accommodate all the popular concepts of Giants, from the cannibalistic miser of *Jack and the Beanstalk*, to the genial bumpkins of C.S. Lewis' *Narnia*, to the various grotesqueries of Greek mythology.

As written, most Giants are fundamentally decent beings, though dangerous to the ignorant or incautious. The actions of a few deviants and renegades account for the race's monstrous reputation. If the GM decides that in his campaign the evil Giants are in the majority and the harmless rustics are outnumbered or nonexistent, he is welcome to make whatever alterations he feels are needed. The characteristics can stand (with perhaps the addition of an appropriate Odious Racial Habit and a mental disadvantage or two), and the Giants' anarchic, savage culture will need only fine-tuning to accommodate creatures who are fundamentally decent or depraved.

Even a benevolent Giant can present a menace, however. They are immensely powerful and unsophisticated creatures, and they have little understanding for the fragility of humans and their works. They won't understand why they shouldn't eat any cow, pig or horse they happen to stumble across, nor will they necessarily realize that a thatched roof is unsuitable as a seat for a creature weighing tons.

Giants react normally to Elves (if they recognize them), Dwarves, and Gargoyles. They react to most other small races at -2, but to Orcs and Minotaurs at -3 and Ogres at -4.

The 35-foot size limit is somewhat arbitrary, but some limit is necessary if Giants are to be regarded as a plausible PC race instead of a freakish monster. If the GM wants to populate his campaign with behemoths of the sort found in Japanese horror movies, he should feel free to do so. Such creatures are, however, beyond the scope of this book.

NPC Giants can be built on any number of points from 200 to 1,000 points or higher.

Giants are extremely large (9 to 35 feet tall) humanoids. Many are otherwise indistinguishable from humanity. However, they are a remarkably mutable race, and some individuals can be freakishly malformed. The limbs and features of some Giants are horribly twisted and their skin is covered with disfiguring warts and blemishes. Even more bizarre mutations are possible; Giants with two heads are quite common, as are Cyclops – Giants with only one large eye in the center of their forehead. Giants with four or more arms are known, as are Giants with hundreds of eyes all over their heads.

However, most Giants merely resemble robust humans. They are always massively muscled, and they tend to be either remarkably hairy or completely hairless.

For normal Giants, figure height based on ST before racial considerations (i.e., ST 10 plus the individual's ST adjustment), then increase it by 60%. Weight is 4 times that of a man of the same ST (before racial bonuses are added). For Huge Giants double the height of a normal Giant and take the weight times 4. For Colossal Giants, triple the height of a normal Giant and multiply the weight by 16.

Giants usually wear clothes – anything from a few untanned pelts to a colossal suit of armor. Giants come in three sizes – Giants (9-15 feet), Huge Giants (16-25 feet), and Colossal Giants (26-35 feet).

Giant Racial Package

180 points

Attributes: Enhanced ST 25/12 [98]; DX -1 [-10]; HT +4 [45]; Extra Hit Points +3 [15].

Racial Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; DR 2 [6]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 1 [10]; Extra Reach (+1 hex, both arms) [20]; High Pain Threshold [10]; PD 1 [25].



Racial Disadvantages: Bad Temper [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance or Shyness [-10]; Reputation -2 [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

Huge Giant Racial Package

284 points

Attributes: Enhanced ST 40/14 [126]; DX -1 [-10]; HT +4 [45]; Extra Hit Points +6 [30].

Racial Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; DR 4 [12]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 2 [20]; Extra Reach (+2 hexes, both arms) [40]; High Pain Threshold [10]; PD 2 [50].

Racial Disadvantages: Bad Temper [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance or Shyness [-10]; Reputation -2 [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

Colossal Giant Racial Package

390 points

Attributes: Enhanced ST 55/16 [141]; DX -1 [-10]; HT +4 [45]; Extra Hit Points +12 [60].

Racial Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; DR 6 [18]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 3 [30]; Extra Reach (+3 hexes, both arms) [60]; High Pain Threshold [10]; PD 3 [75].

Racial Disadvantages: Bad Temper [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance or Shyness [-10]; Reputation -2 [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

Special Giant Advantages and Disadvantages

Cyclops

-5 points

A Cyclops has only one, extra-large eye in the center of its forehead. Depth perception and vision rolls are normal. Because the eye is much larger than normal, a critical head blow will totally blind the character on a result of 4-7 on the Critical Head Blow Table (p. B202), in addition to any other indicated damage.

Extra Head

25 points per extra head

The Giant has more than one head. He automatically gets the Independently Focusable Eyes advantage, and cannot be killed instantly by a Critical Head Blow. Instead, a result of 3 on the Critical Head Blow Table (p. B202) indicates that one head has been severed. This does triple damage, and permanently reduces IQ by 3. The Giant won't fall unconscious until all of his heads have been knocked out. He will, however, lose 3 points of IQ for each knocked-out head until they recover. If all but one head is blinded, the Independently Focusable Eyes advantage is negated. If a head is deafened, the Giant is treated as if he had the Hard of Hearing disadvantage.

Other Effects

Giants with extra arms can buy them normally according to the Extra Limbs rules. The designer should remember that the Extra Arms will seem freakishly short unless bought with the appropriate Extra Reach.

A character with multiple eyes can buy the 360-Degree Vision advantage and Hideous Appearance.

A freakishly malformed giant could buy Hideous Appearance and possibly also reduce DX.

It is suggested that GMs consider the disadvantages Cyclops, Hideous Appearance and lowered DX resulting from freakish deformation as optional racial disadvantages, which do not count against the character's normal individual disadvantage total.

Giant PCs

A Giant cannot be a PC in a 100-point campaign. A "small" Giant, however, will fit in quite neatly in a cinematic campaign (200+ points). Larger Giants can likewise be played in extremely high-powered games. Huge Giants can be created in a 300-point campaign (though they would probably work better at 350 or 400 points) and Colossal Giants can be gamed only with 400+ points.

Of course, the GM must make sure the player knows exactly what he's getting into when he plays a Giant – he won't be able to stay at an inn, or even go inside under normal circumstances, he'll have to scavenge his food or pay a prohibitively high price just to eat, and he'll be unable to participate in most underground or city adventures.

Figuring encumbrance for Giant-sized characters is tricky. The best way to do this is to assume that a Giant-sized object is just as encumbering to a Giant as a human-sized object of the same sort is to a human. To find the actual weight of a Giant-sized object, simply multiply the weight for a human-sized object of the same kind by the proportional difference between the average strength of a human (10) and the average strength of a Giant (25, 40, or 55). Thus, the weight of a Giant-sized pair of boots, for example, would be 3 pounds times 2½, 4, or 5½, depending on the size of Giant they were made for.

This system can also be applied to find the weight of objects sized for Ellyllon, Leprechauns and other very small races. It should *not* be applied to races without the Inconvenient Size disadvantage, such as Halflings or Minotaurs.



Giant Adventure Seeds

Hello, Country Bumpkin

A Colossal Giant is terrorizing the countryside. He's eaten countless cattle, destroyed several houses and barns, and killed a handful of peasants who dared approach him. The Giant is a shambling, deformed monster at least 30 feet tall. The people have put out a call for mercenaries to rid their land of the menace.

The Giant is not a bad sort, just lost, ugly, and mind-numbingly stupid (IQ 6). He doesn't want to hurt anybody, but hasn't quite decided that those tiny creatures that run screaming every time he approaches are real people. If attacked or angrily confronted the Giant will respond in kind – he's a 750-point character wielding a club made from an entire great oak.

However, if he's approached in a friendly manner (particularly if gifts of food or toys are offered) he'll be inclined to listen. Though he only has the vocabulary of a human toddler, a patient party can make him understand that he must not continue in the direction he's going. He'll be willing to turn aside. However, unless he is shown to a new home with lots of amenities (a particularly fertile valley, say, or the farmlands of an enemy race or kingdom) he'll be lured back in one to six weeks by the memory of plentiful food and pleasant vistas.

If the party asks him to accompany it he'll be willing – even eager. However, the GM should take every opportunity to demonstrate to the party why having a 30-foot moron for a friend is, at best, a mixed blessing.

A Meeting With the Big Shots

This adventure is recommended only for very powerful or experienced parties.

The adventurers are assisting in the defense of a besieged city. Intelligence reports (perhaps gathered by the PCs themselves) indicate that the enemy has paid for a squad of Giant “siege-engines,” and that these will arrive within a matter of days.

The party must sneak out of the city, through the invading army, and travel along the well-patrolled main highway until they meet the Giants. Then they must stop the Giants or turn them back.

The Giants (6 to 10 of them, depending on the strength of the PCs) are of all sizes, built on between 200 and 1,000 points. All are relatively intelligent, well-armed, and hardened, combatants against both sword-play and magic. Good luck.

Psychology

Giants are a reclusive folk. Their reputations as ravening monsters is almost entirely undeserved. Giants acquired their bad name from a combination of a few renegades and a few unfortunates who offended or intruded upon a Giant. Mostly, the population reacts poorly to their sheer terrifying size.

Most Giants live far in the wilderness – as far away as possible from the annoying swarms of smaller folk. When confronted with other races, most Giants will either bashfully retreat or angrily drive the intruders off. Of course, there are always a few anomalous individuals who *like* little folk, regarding them as either potential friends and companions, or as interesting and talkative “pets.”

There are legends of magic-using Giants, but most scholars believe that the Giants completely lack the ability to cast spells. This does not appear to be due to a racial inability to *understand* magic, but simply due to a conspicuous absence of Magery amongst the Giant population.

Their prowess as warriors, however, makes them a match for all but the greatest wizards. Most Giants fight with colossal swords, axes, or clubs. A few of the most remote and primitive Giants will use a crudely-sharpened spear, often made from an entire tree. Giants usually wield their weapons two-handed, and only those with more than two arms will ever use a shield. They do not use ranged or throwing weapons, preferring instead to hurl great boulders down upon their enemies. Giants like to wear armor, but finding the raw materials and the craftsmen necessary to produce Giant-sized armor is impossible for all but the richest nobles. For this reason, a Giant will sometimes indenture himself to a patron for a period of time as a guard or mercenary, in exchange for food, shelter, arms, and armor. This can easily match the cost of keeping a full company of heavy infantry, but in times of war, the Giant's services are often worth it.

Giants have no art or song of their own, but many love the small, pretty things produced by other races. They have no indigenous religion, though some have been converted to human faiths. They often have short, simple names taken from the closest human tongue.

Ecology

Often an ancient song or legend will speak of a Giant “as tall as a tree” or “the size of a mountain.” In general, such reports can be put down to exaggeration by a frightened peasant or overambitious bard. It is also possible that the sighting was actually a supernatural being in colossal form. There are no reliable reports of true Giants more than 40 feet tall (although other tales tell of a far-off land where both men and beasts can grow to a height of hundreds of feet).

How or why the Giants came to be is a mystery. Some myths say they are the descendants of a large and stupid god. At any rate, they appear to have been around for at least as long as humanity.

Giants are almost entirely carnivorous, though they will sometimes make a salad of a young tree or large bush. They mostly eat their food raw – probably a necessity when one considers the size of a fire large enough to prepare a Giant-sized meal.

Many tales speak of evil or depraved Giants with a taste for the flesh of men or other intelligent beings. Most Giants, however, do not share this appetite.

Giants mate casually, though sometimes a male will claim a female for his own and drive off any rivals. Giants mutate apparently at random – the most deformed Giantess can give birth to a perfect infant, and vice versa. The child of a 9-foot Giantess can grow to an adult height of 30 feet.

Giant births are almost always single. They gestate for almost three years – however, like Ogres, Giantesses can remain completely active right up to the point of delivery. Newborn Giants can range from 25 to 100 pounds, depending on the size of the mother. Birth weight has little or no bearing on final adult size. The young mature slowly – they reach full growth at about age 30, and begin to age at 60.

Culture

Though not, as a race, stupid, Giants have few customs and little culture. They do not even build shelter (being almost immune to the elements anyway), though some have set up housekeeping in large, open caves or ancient human ruins.

They avoid one another as assiduously as they avoid other races. In general, the larger Giants are less sociable and live farther from civilization than the smaller. Although all Giants learn at least a rudimentary language, many can live for decades without ever speaking a word to another intelligent being.

When a Giant goes looking for a mate he becomes edgy and unpredictable. If there is a male rival he will fight him for the rights to the female. If there is no male present he will just as often have to fight the female before she grants her favors. Those few travelers who have witnessed these titanic struggles (and their aftermath) have gone away with a feeling of awe.

Most Giants live the lives of simple hunters, with few skills beyond their favorite weapons. Some, however, have some skill at leatherworking (to make garments and pouches) or stone or woodworking (to make weapons). A few even know metalworking – Giants seldom forge their metal tools, instead using their awesome strength to shape the metal by main force. Such skilled Giants often do a bit of trade with their neighbors, offering finished goods in exchange for food or raw materials.

As previously mentioned, some Giants will forsake the wild; sometimes out of love for smaller folk, other times out of love for the comforts of civilization. Often these “civilized” Giants become mercenaries. Occasionally they have even joined forces, to become a mercenary company of 5 to 20 individuals. Even a small platoon of Giant mercenaries will command the price of a full regiment of normal-sized soldiers, and well worth it. Giants are particularly coveted for besieging walled cities. Few gates have ever been built that could withstand the combined onslaught of a handful of determined Giants. Furthermore, they can act as living artillery pieces, hurling boulders over the walls and upon the defenders.

Politics

Giants avoid almost everybody, but they exterminate Orcs, Ogres, and Minotaurs on sight (although there are cases of renegades who have enslaved Orcs and led them to conquest). Bales and Dark Elves have been known to enslave or enchant Giants to do their dirty work.

For reasons that remain obscure, there is a hot racial hatred between the Giants and the Ogres. A Giant will not only react violently to any Ogre he meets, he will also become remarkably annoyed with anybody who speaks of Ogres in other than the most disparaging terms.

No honest giant will willingly harm an Elf, but he may not be able to easily spot the difference between an Elf and a peskier, more disposable human on first glance. Giants often live near the sylvan folk, without disturbing or being disturbed by their neighbors.

Giant Character Example

Farl

200 points

Age 36; 11' 8"; 625 lbs.; long, curly blonde hair, dressed in leather trousers and vest.

ST 26/13 [10]; DX 12 [30];

IQ 10 [-]; HT 15/18 [10].

Speed 6.75; Move 12 (6 for Dodge).

Dodge 6; Parry 6.

Advantages: Giant Racial Package [180].

Disadvantages: Greed [-15]; Laziness [-10]; Overconfidence [-10]; Truthfulness [-5].

Quirks: Hates Bagpipes [-1].

Skills: Brawling-13 [2]; Carousing-14 [1]; Throwing-12 [4]; Two-Handed Sword-13 [4].

Farl is not overly ambitious, but he likes money and comfort, and can be lured into helping a military operation or accompanying a quest if the price is right. He tends to underestimate the capabilities of smaller folk. Farl is very proud and will never tell a lie. He finds the sound of bagpipes painfully annoying, and has been known to award pipers a free flight to the next kingdom. In battle he wields a colossal 10-foot two-handed sword.

Farl is an experienced character, suitable for use as an NPC encounter, or as a PC in a cinematic or high-level campaign.



Giants and Dwarves

Giants and Dwarves respect one another, as both races have a similar attitude about the virtues of privacy. This respect, combined with the Dwarves' metal wealth (they can usually spare enough for a giant coat of mail) makes the Dwarves the favorite employers of the Giants. Many a mighty Dwarven underground kingdom has had a Giant doorman camped on the doorstep at some point in its history. One remote Dwarven colony actually recruited several Giants and employed them as strip miners, in an operation that remained remarkably profitable until the vein was utterly exhausted.

Giants sometimes keep a Gargoyle or two as a companion/pet.

Goblins in the Campaign

The Goblin race should always be a little enigmatic. The adventurers should never know quite where they stand with Goblins (even when there are Goblins in the party). They should seldom be physical threats, but the characters should always have the feeling that the Goblins are up to something, even when their motives are perfectly innocent.

The GM should play up the Goblin affinity for magic. The robed, white-bearded mage with a pointy hat will often find that he has a couple of Goblins following him around, asking naive questions or just watching in awe. Likewise, the warrior with a glowing, singing broadsword will attract Goblin admirers.

Goblins react at +1 to anyone who obviously knows or uses magic, more for an obviously powerful mage. They react to all other races normally.

Goblin merchants make good Patrons, and a rogue or gypsy would make an insidious Enemy. Likewise a Goblin gypsy band would make colorful and intriguing recurring NPCs.

Both Goblins and Hobgoblins make excellent followers. Hobgoblins will probably be only good for extra cannon fodder, but any reasonably competent wizard could attract a Goblin for an apprentice *cum* valet.

NPC Goblins should be built on 25 points and up. Leaders, traders and wizards should have at least 100 points.

GOBLINS

Goblins have green skin, pointed ears, and sharp, white teeth. Many Goblins of both sexes are completely hairless. When a Goblin *does* have hair, it's dark, wiry, and grows only on the very top of the head. Their heads are extremely elongated, with high foreheads and pointed chins. The rest of their bodies are quite human, though their nails are long, sharp and clawlike. They stand about 5½ feet tall (height is normal for their ST, weight is 10 pounds less) and wear clothing according to local fashion.

Goblin Racial Package

5 points

Attributes: ST -2 [-15]; DX +1 [10]; IQ +1 [10].

Racial Advantages: Night Vision [10].

Racial Disadvantages: Impulsiveness [-10].

Hobgoblin Racial Package

-25 points

Hobgoblins are large (6 to 7 feet), primitive relatives of the Goblins. They are somewhat hairier than their smaller relations, with a hulking body and a brutish cast to their features.

Attributes: ST +1 [10]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -2 [-15].

Racial Advantages: Night Vision [10].

Racial Disadvantages: Bad Temper [-10]; Poverty (Dead broke) [-25]; Stubbornness [-5].



Psychology

Magic is the Goblins' first love. More than half the race has some degree of magical talent. There are few mighty Goblin wizards, but they produce a formidable number of hedge-wizards and dabblers.

Goblins revere powerful mages, and follow them if permitted. Many great wizards keep a Goblin or two about their towers to serve as lifelong apprentices and general help. Goblins also have a weakness for magical paraphernalia, and many an otherwise law-abiding Goblin has succumbed to temptation and pocketed an object of power that he had no business touching, making a world of trouble for himself and others.

Goblins also love to bargain. They're honest merchants, after their own fashion. Goblin traders don't actually *lie*, but they don't always tell the whole truth. They seldom violate a contract, but the other party is well advised to consider all the possible ramifications of every word of the agreement before he signs.

Goblins are, by nature, tricksters. It is a great coup for a Goblin to best his opponent in a battle of wits. Falsehood and theft are considered the easy way out. Subtlety and misdirection are proper tools to the Goblin mind. There is no honor in swindling the poor, the stupid or the naive (though there are always unscrupulous Goblins who will stoop to do so) – but to get the better of the great, the wise or the powerful in a “fair” deal, that is the true Goblin way. Anyone who can beat a Goblin in a deal will earn his respect and that of other Goblins as well; a trader will always tell a good story, even if it's on himself. But the Goblins will redouble their efforts to out-deal someone they respect!

Many Goblins are gypsies, wandering constantly wherever their fancy leads. Others choose the life of caravan merchants or mariners – they have a home that they return to every so often, but most of their lives are spent between somewhere and somewhere else. Still others settle down for a few years, until the wanderlust hits them, then pull up stakes and head for new scenery. But many Goblins are as settled as the most homebound of Halflings.

Goblins aren't a naturally combative race. When they do bear arms they prefer bows and slings, or polearms (to keep their enemy at a distance). For day-to-day use, however, the Goblins rely on light armor and weapons that can be conveniently carried. Though they can be courageous at need, the preferred Goblin method for dealing with a threat is simply to run away. Goblin warbands prefer to fight as skirmishers or guerrillas.

The original Goblin language still survives, though it is only in common use among the gypsies. Goblins use both traditional names and names borrowed from other languages. Traditional Goblin names use explosive consonant sounds like P, B, J, T, and CH, and have long vowel sounds – Baajikiil, Jitotii, Toov'tekki. Most Goblins use only one name. There are no “male” and “female” names among Goblins, so a Goblin in a human city might name her daughter John or Edward after an admired local figure.

Goblins have a very sophisticated sense of irony. Their wit is sometimes subtle enough that non-Goblins don't even notice it. Although they have little artistic tradition of their own, a few Goblins have become well-known through their mastery of another culture's art. Many Goblins are clever, even inspired, craftsmen and inventors. An ornate or complex mechanical curiosity is nearly as fascinating to a Goblin as a magic item.

The Goblin voice is rough and their songs are ugly to other ears. Some Goblins (particularly gypsies) become good instrumentalists and dancers.

Goblins take their religion from the other races around them. Even their earliest-known faith was a somewhat less sanguinary version of the Orcish religion.



Goblin and Hobgoblin PCs

Next to Elves, the Goblins are one of the best races for players who may want to mix and match magical ability with some other specialty. Where the Goblins have the best of the Elves is in their freedom to be a little wilder, and a little more bizarre. Goblins are unique in their ability to fit into a “straight” and a “silly” campaign equally well, with very little difference in how they're played.

Hobgoblins are probably the best race for a player who feels a real need to play something big, dumb, and violent – Orcs and Ogres are too likely to be attacked on sight, and Minotaurs and Reptile Men are very expensive. Note that a 100-point Hobgoblin would be a real paragon of the race!

Goblins' very low point cost makes them extremely versatile characters. Although Goblin warriors are not unheard of, Goblins generally work best for players who prefer quick thinking and audacity to swordplay when solving problems. The caravan merchant and sailor, two excellent PC professions that combine survival, combat and mercantile ability into a convenient package, have always been mysteriously neglected in fantasy roleplaying. Goblins are excellent choices for either type.

Goblin Adventure Seeds

Battle of Wits

Some minor but obviously magical item of the party's has caught the eye of a pair of young Goblins. The two make a bet on who can wrest the object from its owner first. The Goblins will begin by offering spurious trades . . . sucker deals that the characters would have to be stupid to fall for. They'll progress to ever more elaborate tricks, cons and ruses, and finally outright theft. After a few days of constant harassment the PCs should be ready to just give the thing away. The Goblins will keep at it for up to two weeks. The GM could supply the Goblins with influential families, or experienced adventurer siblings who would make dangerous Enemies, to discourage the vexed characters from simply slicing the nuisances open.

Continued on next page . . .



Ecology

The first civilized race to meet the Goblins was the Dwarves. At the time the Goblins were engaged in a fierce war with an Orc nation – neither side could remember a time when the Goblins and the Orcs hadn't been fighting.

The Goblins and Dwarves joined forces, and soon wiped out the Orcish forces. Less than a century later the Goblins were forever banned from living in Dwarven lands. The Dwarves claim that the reason for the ban has been “forgotten” (though the ban has never been lifted). This almost certainly means that the Dwarves were swindled, or otherwise tricked or embarrassed, by their new-found allies. The Goblins have countless improbable legends about what this great trick might have been. Before their exile, however, the Goblins learned about humans and Elves, and headed for those lands.

Goblins will eat almost anything. Though not particularly fond of it, they have a very high tolerance for carrion (some sages have suggested that the Goblins and the Ghouls are somehow related). Normally, however, they conform to whatever dietary customs are practiced locally.

They are polygamous. Usually one male will have one to four wives, but custom also allows one wife to have several husbands, if all parties agree to such a relationship. Goblin births are usually twins or triplets; female births outnumber males by more than two to one. A female can give birth yearly. Though the race is prolific, the dangers of the road control the Goblin population. Young Goblins grow fast, reaching majority at age 15. They begin to age at 45.

The Hobgoblins are hulking, primitive versions of the Goblin race. They completely lack the subtlety and wit of their smaller kin. Some Hobgoblins still live in the wild, in small and desperate bands, but many of them live among the Goblins. The Goblins provide the Hobs with security and guidance, and the Hobs provide the Goblins with willing labor and formidable physical protection. The two races cannot interbreed.

Hobgoblins have a problem with the concept of property. They understand money – it can be used to buy food, drink, and entertainment. But they just don't get the concept of deferred gratification. A Hobgoblin will spend a fortune in a few days on trinkets and delicacies. Within a week everything he purchases will be eaten, lost, or destroyed. Most Hobgoblins only own a single primitive weapon and a few rags or furs to keep them warm.

Many Hobgoblins serve Goblins, humans, and even sometimes Dwarves as guards and laborers. Their masters provide them with the necessities of life and, occasionally, a few small coins to play with. Uncontrolled, wild Hobgoblins are generally savage, ruthless, and brutal (though not as cruel as the Orcs), and should be avoided.

Culture

Precedence and status among the Goblins is determined entirely by merit, gauged by the individual's success at deals, usually (but not always) measured by his wealth. The most accomplished individual is proclaimed the leader of the Goblin band or community by the people. When the community can't reach a consensus, the dissidents simply take their chosen leader and head in another direction. Alternatively, a would-be leader will attempt to prove his qualifications by opposing and arguing with the current boss at every opportunity. This is a dangerous course, and it usually only works if the challenger really is more competent than the boss.



Goblin Adventure Seeds (Continued)

Oh . . . Never Mind

The adventurers wander into town at the same time as a caravan of Goblin gypsies. The next morning they wake up to find some prized possession (magic, jewelry, or a small heirloom) gone . . . and the gypsies are gone too. The party's course is obvious. Unfortunately, it's also wrong. The gypsies never came near the PCs. The item just fell out of someone's pocket, or perhaps it was taken by a raven or a squirrel. The gypsies will deny everything, but then, they would anyway, wouldn't they?

If the party makes a real nuisance of itself, the gypsies will send a couple of their own youngsters back to town to find the misplaced item. They'll return in a few days to present the lost article to the embarrassed PCs – possibly not before the party picks up a minor but annoying gypsy curse. If the characters take to torturing or murdering Goblins, they'll earn a much more serious curse – the scrutiny of local authorities and the enmity of all Goblin gypsies.

Strange Gypsies

After a gypsy caravan leaves a small town, it is discovered that several recent graves have been opened. At first, the gypsies are suspected of robbing the corpses' jewelry. But the bodies are gone, too! Why would gypsies go to all that trouble?

Unless the gypsy caravan is a whole band of Ghouls in disguise . . .

Real Goblin gypsies, if properly and *discreetly* approached, would cooperate fully in investigating this rumor. Bad enough that they might be accused of robbing the dead. For the gypsies to be suspected, as a group, of harboring or being Ghouls would be a disaster. This means that, *especially* if the story is true, the Goblins would want it hushed up!

Goblin society can be divided into three rough classes – trading Goblins, town Goblins, and gypsy Goblins. The traders go singly or in groups, by caravan, ship, or on foot. They reach every corner of the globe.

The town Goblins may live in settlements of their own, or in cities of another race; almost every large human town has a Goblin quarter. The most respected town Goblins are the caravan merchants or mariners. Such folk are seldom at home, but they do often maintain a single home their entire life. These are the most competent and prosperous Goblin-folk. Even town and gypsy bosses will defer to a trader when one is present. Skillful craftsmen also earn respect, especially if they hammer out good deals when they sell their wares! The rest of the town Goblins are mostly simple workers and tradesmen.

The gypsy Goblins have adopted the culture of the human nomads. Like human gypsies, they are a flamboyant people, moving from place to place in brightly-colored wagons. They make their living as coopers, peddlers, and entertainers, supplemented by petty thievery. A savvy village will welcome a few town Goblins among them, as the town Goblins will consider it a challenge to prevent their gypsy kin from robbing their neighbors blind. Both sets of Goblins will enjoy the contest of wits, and the locals will find their losses sharply curtailed when the gypsies come to town.

Though most Goblins are not evil, there are many who make their living as professional criminals. Most are simple thieves or swindlers, but professional spies and assassins are not unknown. Goblins are very credulous when it comes to religion, and they can easily be seduced into dark cults.

Goblins are not as pugnacious as men or Orcs, but they can fight bravely at need. Their intelligence and dexterity makes them dangerous foes as light infantry (especially skirmishers). Their impulsiveness can interfere with discipline. On the other hand, the morale of a Goblin unit will always improve if their leader has a magic item! Goblins will often be found as quartermasters or staff officers in human or mixed armies.

Goblin seafarers are also common. There are many Goblin trading ships, as well as a few Goblin pirates.

Goblin Character Example

Barak One-Eye 100 points

Age 41; 5'6"; 145 lbs.; wears a patch over missing left eye, a turban, and loose, light-colored clothing.

ST 9 [10]; DX 13 [20]; IQ 13 [20]; HT 10 [-].

Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 6; Block 6.

Advantages: Charisma +1 [5]; Goblin Racial Package [5]; Luck [15]; Magery 1 [15]; Wealth (Comfortable) [10].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Business ethics) [-10]; Greed [-15]; One Eye [-15].

Quirks: Always wears a turban. [-1]

Skills: Accounting-12 [2]; Administration-11 [½]; Animal Handling-12 [2]; Blackjack-12 [½]; Brawling-13 [1]; Buckler-12 [½]; Carousing-10 [4]; Cooking-12 [½]; Fast-Talk-13 [2]; First Aid-13 [1]; Gesture-13 [1]; Holdout-12 [1]; Knife-13 [1]; Law-11 [1]; Leadership-12 [1]; Merchant-14 [4]; Packing-12 [1]; Riding-11 [½]; Savoir-Faire-12 [½]; Scrounging-13 [1]; Seamanship-12 [½]; Shortsword-12 [1]; Stealth-12 [1]; Survival (Desert)-11 [½]; Teamster-11 [½]; Tactics-10 [½]; Veterinary-11 [1]; Whip-12 [1].

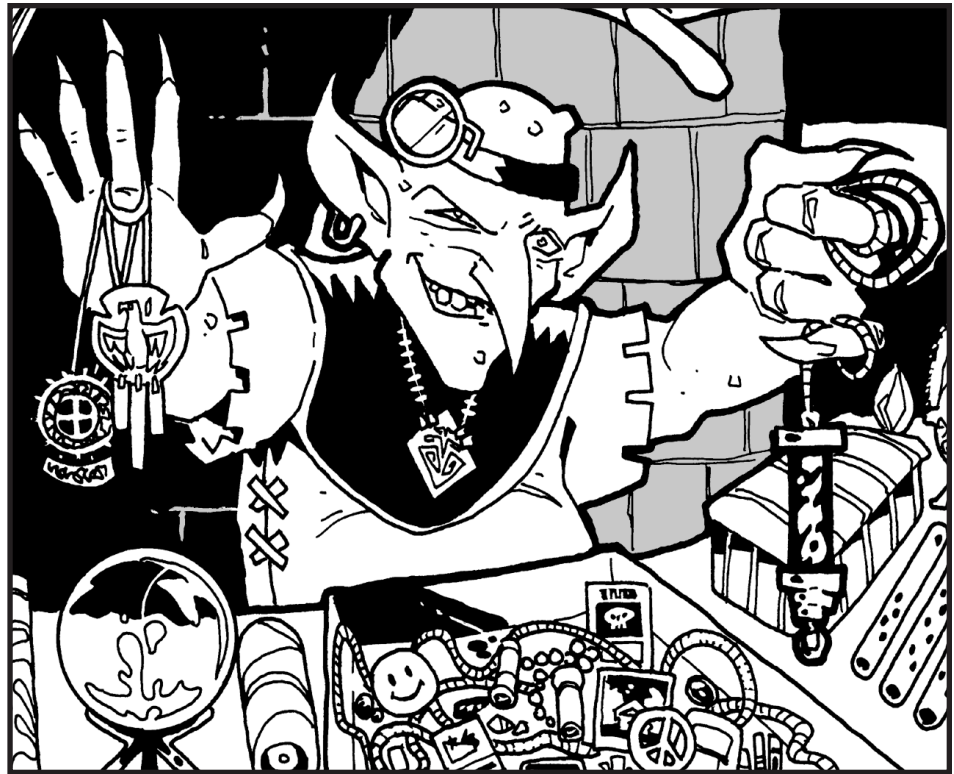
Spells: Beast-Soothe-12; Find Direction-12; Light-12; Master-12; Persuasion-13; Sense Emotion-12; Sense Foes-12; Truthsayer-12. [9]

Barak is a traveling merchant. He organizes and leads small, medium-range caravans dealing mostly in luxury items. He has about 10 Goblin traders and a half-dozen Hobgoblin guards/laborers. However, he mostly relies on hired adventurers to protect his wares.

Barak lost his left eye as a child. He thinks the patch makes him look dashing, and in a peculiar sort of way it does. He normally carries a shortsword and a whip, with a knife and a sap concealed somewhere about his person.

He's a bit more honest than the average Goblin, but he's always on the lookout for a quick profit. He knows a few simple spells and would like to learn more. He's a generalist – he's not really a master of anything. He often has to fall back on his luck, but so far it's carried him through – he's a success at his chosen profession.

Barak is a balanced character suitable for a PC, Patron, or NPC encounter.



Politics

Goblins predominantly live among humanity, adopting most of their fashions, customs, and tongues from that source. Generally they are accepted, and judged on their individual merits, though they are sometimes outlawed in provincial rural villages, or in the more militantly conservative nations.

The Goblins' relationship with the Dwarves is bizarre. The Dwarves consider the Goblins flighty, and they know that the Goblin fascination with magic and gadgetry makes them potential thieves. They also know that the Goblins are sharp dealers. But the Dwarves, mercantile yet stay-at-home, would be cutting their own throats if they did not trade with the roving Goblins! Thus, a Dwarf (at least, a Dwarf with goods to sell) will welcome a Goblin trader, but will not trust him *nearly* as far as he could throw him. The Goblins, of course, respect the Dwarves' craftsmanship and magic, and this respect makes them all the more eager to swindle the Dwarves at every opportunity. The Dwarves will occasionally allow a Hobgoblin or two to work in their mines.

Elves confuse Goblins. They are too wise to be easily swindled, and too otherworldly to be interesting or amusing. Elven magic is usually too low-key to amuse the Goblins for long. Transactions between the two races are usually minor, cordial, and as brief as possible. For their part, the Elves find the Goblins amusing. Halflings and Goblins get along splendidly, since Halflings enjoy dickering almost as much as the Goblins. Oddly, though the two peoples trade together often, they seldom settle in the same area.

They generally ignore the sylvan races, since these folk have little need of trade – but occasionally a Faun will purchase a knick-knack from a passing Goblin peddler, or a caravan will drop off a load of iron to be turned into shoes and weapons for Centaurs. Goblin mariners often know and trade with the seafolk.

The feud between the Goblins and the Orcs is ancient, but in recent centuries the Goblins have preferred to stay where humans are, which usually means a place where Orcs aren't.

GREAT EAGLES

Great Eagles are intelligent birds the size of human beings. They have a 12-foot wingspan, and adults weigh over 100 lbs. (wingspan equals twice normal height for their ST, weight is 50 pounds less than a human of that ST). They are distinguished from “regular” giant eagles by their hoods – giant eagles have dark, bristling head feathers, while Great Eagles have a smooth white hood.

Great Eagles wear no clothing or ornamentation, and do not carry tools or weapons of any kind.

Great Eagle Racial Package

25 points

Attributes: ST +3 [30]; DX +2 [20]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Acute Vision +1 [2]; Claws [15]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Sharp Teeth (Beak) [5]; Telescopic Vision $\times 1$ [6].

Racial Disadvantages: Bloodlust [-10]; Compulsive Behavior (Rabidly seeks solitude) [-15]; Fragile [-20]; Intolerance [-10]; Mute [-25]; Poverty (Dead broke) [-25]; Primitive -3 [-15].

Racial Skills: Flight skill (P/A) DX+1 [2].

Psychology

The Great Eagles are the most intensely private of races. They make their nests atop the highest peaks of the very largest mountain ranges, and they resent anyone who disturbs their privacy.

They are not, however, an evil race. While their threats are intimidating – piercing screams and terrifying swoops at the invader – they seldom escalate beyond that point (unless the target molests the nest). They have even been known to help members of other intelligent races who become lost or injured in the

Great Eagles in the Campaign

The Great Eagles are a good race for the GM to keep in reserve – there’s no reason for the PCs to know right from the start that the big birds up in the mountains are intelligent. The existence of unintelligent giant eagles (see *GURPS Fantasy Bestiary*, p. 22) can compound this ambiguity.

Eagles can be introduced to the campaign as adventure objects, as unexpected aid for a distressed party or character, or perhaps as opponents (the unwilling slaves of a major-league evildoer).

Eagles can learn to understand human speech, but can never verbally communicate with humans. Eagle psychology is not oriented towards abstract thought, and it is recommended that the GM charge a 10-point Unusual Background against any Eagle who takes the Literacy advantage.

However, Eagle speech is a Mental/Very Hard skill for a human. Furthermore, no human can ever communicate in Eagle with an effective skill of more than 9, regardless of his comprehension level.

Eagles react to most races at -3, but they react normally to Elves, Dwarves, and Winged Folk, and at +1 to Exalted Horses. They react to Orcs at an additional -2, and to Dragons at an additional -3.

Most NPC Eagles are 75- or 100-point characters; 150-200 points for kings and mages.

Great Eagle PCs

If the players know that Great Eagles exist, they can use them for PCs. The extreme limitations required by the Eagle’s unusual psychology and physiology make this a race best suited to experienced roleplayers looking for a challenge. Of course, some players will be amused as the rest of the party squabbles over some trinket or material good – after all, what use do Eagles have for such trifles?

Unlike Exalted Horses, Eagle PCs should not have to pay an Unusual Background to be mages, but the GM can require Unusual Background if the Eagle wants an especially sophisticated or inappropriate spell. Most of the Healing college is OK, but the Enchantment college should be forbidden.

The Eagles’ rock-dropping attack is a separate Physical/Hard skill. Treat it as a specialization of the Throwing skill, unique to the Great Eagles. Other flying races, such as the Winged Folk or Gargoyles, could also learn this skill, but they’d have to train themselves or convince an Eagle to train them.

Continued on next page . . .





Great Eagle PCs (Continued)

Feathers as a Mana Organ

In the real world, a Great Eagle would be too massive to fly unless it had an almost crippling large wingspan and exceptional physical strength. Fortunately, Eagles live in a magical world. The feathers of a Great Eagle are considered to be “mana organs” (see p. FB113 for more on mana organs) that store mana and allow the Eagle to fly. Assume that if there is any mana at all, an Eagle can fly without difficulty. In a region without mana, an Eagle would be grounded. However, Great Eagles only live on magical worlds, so this is merely a special effect and is worth no points as a limitation.

Since Great Eagle feathers actually store “flight aspected” mana, they are in high demand as ingredients for magical elixirs of flight and as material components for flight-related spells. A mage who is aware of a Great Eagle community in his area may be able to come to an agreement with the Eagles to trade his magical services for cast-off feathers. Less ethical mages may just try to steal the feathers, or even kill Eagles to obtain them!

mountains. They sometimes allow virtuous hermits or sages to live among them, and will even care for such wise men, bringing them meat and fruit from the lowlands.

The Eagles may behave like savages, but they are actually an extremely magical race. It is well known that the properly prepared wing feather of a Great Eagle is a potent magical talisman.

It is not surprising, then, that some Eagles appear to have an instinctive spellcasting ability. Most Eagle wizards lack the sophistication for any of the most powerful or subtle spells. Eagle spells usually have to do with healing, hunting or the weather. They are also, not surprisingly, adept with spells of the Air College.

Giant Eagles use no weapons – they don’t need any, with their razor-sharp talons and scimitar-like beaks. They have a formidable repertoire of tactics, all borrowed from their unintelligent kinsfolk. These include power dives from incredible heights, and lifting their opponents off the ground and dropping them from heights of 50 feet or more. An Eagle of average ST can lift almost 200 pounds, albeit with difficulty. They have one formidable attack that normal birds cannot imitate; they pick up stones in their claws and drop them on their targets (see sidebar, previous page). This is their preferred method of initiating combat. If the victim fails an IQ roll (Alertness helps), he gets no active defense against the first such attack – he simply didn’t notice the eagle or the rock until it was too late! Great Eagles are very clever about not giving away their position to enemies with undue noise or tell-tale shadows. This attack makes a small band of Eagles the match of even a squad of longbowmen, since the Eagles have the formidable ally of gravity on their side.

Eagles are fundamentally anarchic, and do not often gather in groups of more than two or three. In emergencies, an Eagle can gather from five to seven neighbors to deal with a threat. Such a group can coordinate their attacks to deadly effect.

Their “language” appears to consist as much of gesture and expression as it does sounds. It is extremely hard for other races to decipher Eagle communication, and even harder for them to make themselves understood in it. Eagles can learn to understand a spoken tongue (though they lack the vocal apparatus necessary to use it), but most never bother.

Eagles do not appear to have names in the human sense. Their form of address for each other can best be translated as “you, over there” (with gesture and inflection indicating an exact position), or “you, with the black wings.” They will sometimes accept use-names from humans, but usually prefer to be addressed as “the Eagle,” or “Sir.” Most Eagles, however, find it insulting to be addressed as “the Bird.”

Though they sometimes make use of found objects like stones and sticks, the Eagles scorn wrought tools, and neither construct them or make use of them if they are offered. Culturally, they are a remarkably unsophisticated race, with no art and few myths, legends, or even jokes (dropping an Orc over a cliff is the pinnacle of Eagle humor).

They practice an extremely primitive religion – basically sun-worship – with no formal rituals or doctrines.

Ecology

Most sages are now certain that enhanced beasts such as the Great Eagles or Exalted Horses (see p. 62) are descended from ordinary animals. How these races achieved their remarkable intelligence is a matter of hot debate, however. Certainly, magic of the very highest order was involved. In fact, many scholars are certain that nothing less than divine intervention was necessary to bring these races into existence.



Sages believe that they were created in historical times, in the time near the rise of the earliest human civilizations. The Eagles, with typical reticence, have no myths of their own creation. One popular and poetic theory among theologians holds that these creatures were created to guard the wilderness against the encroaching hordes of humanity.

The Eagles are strictly carnivorous, living by the hunt. They will eat anything rabbit-sized or larger, but prefer wolves or small deer. They consider birds (of any size) to be great delicacies. Certainly, an Ellyl (p. 54) should be wary of flight in Great Eagle territory!

Great Eagles have been observed perched over streams or lakes, waiting to swoop down on trout or salmon near the surface. They are even said to fly out miles over the ocean in search of flying fish or other treats near the surface. At least one naturalist claims to have observed a Great Eagle, during a severe food shortage, digging for clams with his beak.

Eagles mate for life, and will remain solitary if their mate is killed. They produce eggs in clutches of 1 to 3, sometimes more. Young Eagles stay with their parents until age 12. They begin aging at 40.

Culture

Eagles are solitary by nature, and do not organize or gather into large groups. They tend to live alone or in mated pairs, several miles (or even several mountains) away from their nearest neighbors. Even fledglings, once they learn to fly (at about age 3) usually set up their own nest, several hundred yards to a mile away from their parents. From this time on the youth is expected to do most of his own hunting (though his parents frequently help).

All the Eagles of a given area (usually one mountain range) have a central authority, usually called a “king” by humans, though they have little resemblance to actual monarchs. An Eagle king is simply the largest, oldest, and most intelligent Eagle in the area. He cannot properly be said to rule – he merely acts as a mediator in interpersonal grievances, and a rallying point in times of common crisis.

An Eagle king will lead a community of as many as 1,000 Eagles, spread out over a territory extending for thousands of square miles. The king customarily has his nest on the highest mountain, and he can be located by that token.

Great Eagle Adventure Seeds

Egg Hunt

An enchanter is offering premium rates for the eggs and wing feathers of giant eagles. If the party heads for the nearest mountain range, they’ll find big eagles, alright, but of course they’re really Great Eagles. Humans who live on or near the mountain know about the Eagles, but don’t know that they’re intelligent.

Raiding the nest of a 100-pound eagle is a challenge under any circumstances, but the PCs should be completely unprepared for the determined and coordinated opposition they face. It should quickly become obvious that they are not dealing with ordinary birds.

If the party can establish communication with the Eagles they’ll be willing to make a deal – if the adventurers return any unbroken eggs to the nest, then leave immediately and never return, the Eagles will let them live. Unless, of course, the PCs killed any Eagles, in which case their best plan is to run and keep running. The trek back down the mountain, while being continually harassed by the Eagles, should be memorable.

The Old Man of the Mountain

While journeying through the mountains, the party is accosted by several agitated Great Eagles. If the party doesn’t panic or do anything rash, it will become obvious that the Eagles aren’t angry, but want the travelers to follow them. If they do, the adventurers will face a three-day trek through hidden passes and up sheer cliffs (if the party has pack or riding animals that need to be left behind, the Eagles will watch them).

The reason for all this fuss lies in a hermit’s cave, where an ancient holy man lies on his deathbed. Once at the cave the GM has several choices: 1) he can let the party nurse the hermit back to health and send them on their way with a useful bit of wisdom; 2) he can have them given a talisman or message by the dying ancient, to carry to a far-off colleague or student; 3) he can have the dying man be a guardian, and his cave lead back to some eldritch horror – a major demon, perhaps, or a really big Dragon – that the hermit has been holding prisoner for years by the sheer force of his purity. When the hermit dies, there will be nothing between the horror and the unsuspecting world except the PCs.



Great Eagle Character Example

Windshadow 100 points

Age 15; 12' wingspan; 110 lbs.; dark feathers at the wingtips.

ST 13 [-]; DX 13 [10]; IQ 12 [20]; HT 12 [-].

Speed 6.25; Move 6 (Flying 12).

Dodge 8.

Advantages: Absolute Direction [5]; Alertness +2 [10]; Great Eagle Racial Package [25]; Luck [15].

Disadvantages: Impulsiveness [-10]; Kleptomania [-15]; Overconfidence [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

Quirks: Loves music [-1].

Skills: Acrobatics-14 [8]; Brawling-16 [8]; Camouflage-14 [4]; Escape-14 [8]; Fishing-13 [2]; Flight-14* [-]; Scrounging-14 [4]; Stealth-14 [4]; Survival (Mountains)-13 [4]; Throwing (Rock-dropping)-14 [8]; Traps-14 [6].

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

A young Eagle of a decidedly larcenous bent, Windshadow got his name from the folk of a nearby village, who often feel the sting of his stealthy raids. Windshadow loves shiny trinkets and toys, snatching them from the villagers and carrying them off to his nest (where they're soon lost or forgotten – he steals more for sport than for personal gain).

Windshadow is an audacious thief, and he loves to press his luck to the very limit. Once he fixates on an object he wants, he'll try to get it again and again until he succeeds. He's become quite good at detecting and disarming snares and traps.

He has a secret love for human music, and often will put himself at risk to get within hearing range of a minstrel playing at the local inn or village square.

Windshadow is a balanced character ready to begin adventuring.

Kings rule for life. Their authority cannot be challenged – their decisions can be questioned, or even ignored, but the actual office is not transferable. A king may step down due to extreme age or severe injury. When the king dies or steps down, the community gathers to select a new leader. Questions of precedence are settled at this time, often through ritual combat. These combats are no-holds-barred aerial battles, and can easily leave one or both contestants dead. By custom, magic-using Eagles cannot be king, but they acquire a respected status in the community.

Male Eagles are usually somewhat larger and stronger than females; therefore the king is usually a male. Other than that the race is remarkably sexually egalitarian.

Eagles have no funerary customs. The deceased is just pushed out of the nest for the scavengers. However (in stark contrast to their non-sentient kin, and even many intelligent cultures) the Eagles are remarkably solicitous of their aged. Mates, children, and neighbors will hunt for a sick and aged Eagle for as long as the senior can eat. However, many Eagles prefer to die in action, and an aging Eagle who feels the onset of decrepitude will often fly off to seek battle – against a lion, perhaps – hoping to die in combat. The ideal resolution to such contests is for both the Eagle and his opponent to be slain, leaving the meat of the prey as a final gift to the community.

Politics

The reticent personalities of the Eagles keep them from having any strong racial allies, and their remote location protects them from major enemies. There are, however, certain identifiable patterns to their relationships to other beings. They usually live in harmony with any Winged Folk (p. 136) that happen to live in the area. The two races simply ignore each other. There have been unfortunate hostilities between the races over territory, but more often they will cooperate against a common threat. The Eagles shun the cloud cities, however, and those Winged Folk who live in them.

They also get along well with Dwarves, who customarily leave offerings of live meat animals for any Eagles who happen to live atop their peaks. The Dwarves consider this an entirely reasonable investment in the security of their lands. In times of siege, the Dwarves have received great aid from the Eagles as scouts and even skirmishers.

Eagles respect Elves, and will even go so far as to formally ally with the powerful and reclusive Mountain Elves. However, they mistrust humans intensely, and will not normally allow them near their nests.

They have a strange, friendly relationship with Exalted Horses, often visiting the herds in their far-off plains. They will aid any herd that happens to be in trouble. There is no explanation for this friendship, other than the possibility that the two races share a common origin.

They do not get along at all well with Dragons, almost the only race that competes directly with the Eagles for territory. For their part, the Eagles are one of the few races that Dragons are wary of. Though much smaller than a Dragon, Eagles are still formidable combatants, and they're *much* more skillful fliers. A half dozen Eagles against a Dragon will sustain heavy casualties, but have a better than even chance of winning an airborne combat. The most common Eagle tactic is to attack the Dragon's wings or eyes to force a (hopefully) fatal crash.

The Eagles' hatred for Orcs is nearly equal to that of the Dwarves. Eagles will not eat Orc-flesh, but they will often hunt Orcs purely for sport. The Orcs, of course, reciprocate these feelings in full measure.

HALFLINGS

Halflings are so named because they are about half the height of the average human (1½ feet shorter than humans of their ST, but normal weight for humans of their ST). Otherwise they look exactly like humans. Halflings are typically plump, fair-skinned, round-cheeked, and curly-haired, and can be easily mistaken for a human child on first meeting. They rarely grow mustaches, and beards are almost unknown. Their demeanor is pleasant, and few are remarkably ugly or especially attractive. One unique feature of the Halflings is their broad, sturdy feet. They prefer to go barefoot, except in fierce weather or rough country. They wear simple but brightly-colored clothing according to the current human fashions.

Halfling Racial Package

5 or 10 points

Attributes: ST -3 [-20]; DX +1 [10]; HT +1 [10]

Racial Advantages: Reputation +1 (Good neighbors) [5]; Silence × 1 [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Hospitality) [-5]; Gluttony [-5]; Reduced Move -1 [-5].

Racial Skills: Stealth (P/A) DX+1 [4]. Racial skill bonuses Bow +2 [4]; Sling +2 [4]; Throwing +2 [4].

Quirks: Dislike traveling by water. [-1]

Notes: Many, but not all, Halflings also have an Addiction to tobacco or the local equivalent [-5], which does not count against personal disadvantages. It costs 10 points to play a Halfling (5 with the Addiction).

Psychology

Halflings are a simple, cheerful folk. They prefer country life, but most large human cities have a Halfling neighborhood. Most Halflings prefer to stay at home, with little love for any person, thing or circumstance that interferes with their peaceful routine. They love good food and beer, hot baths, songs, and jokes – but they are quite willing to work hard to acquire these comforts.



Halflings in the Campaign

The secret to the Halfling race is that there is always just a bit more to them than meets the eye. Halfling NPCs should always be just a bit braver, tougher and more competent than they appear – although, given the race's innocuous appearance, that isn't much of a challenge! Adventurers who harass Halflings should face a tougher fight than they thought, those who come to the Halflings' aid should get truer, more faithful friends than they ever expected.

Too often, NPC Halflings are either victims or relegated to the background of the adventure as "local color." The GM should remember to let them come to the fore occasionally as Patrons, opponents, or even Enemies – a Halfling Enemy won't be able to go head-to-head with the party, but through trickery and guile he can make them wish for an honest fight.

One other thing to watch out for – making an NPC a Halfling should be more than just a "special effect." There's more to making a shopkeeper a Halfling than sticking a pipe in his mouth and giving him a Monty Python accent. Again, the best tool for making those who meet Halflings miserable is misdirection. Make the party think that the merchant gave them a great deal just because he's a nice little guy, then have them discover whatever they bought available for half the price in the next town. Or make the jolly Halfling innkeeper a more complete and valuable source of information than the local priest, sage and ranger combined.

Halflings react normally to all races. Anyone who sets a generous table, or offers to share his ale, will get a +1 reaction from a Halfling. Anyone who seems "wild" or "dangerous" will get a -2 from a village Halfling, though city-bred types or adventurers will not share this timidity. A bad reaction from a Halfling usually means snubs and closed doors rather than combat.

Members of mammalian, civilized races react to Halflings at +1, because of their pleasant, innocuous appearance.

Most NPC Halflings are 25- to 75-point characters.

Halfling PCs

The classic FRPG Halfling is the “Professional Treasure Hunter” – a thief by trade, but one who only steals from monsters and abandoned ruins. Many others are simply thieves, who steal from whoever or whatever happens to be at hand.

The race is certainly well-suited for that role, but Halflings deserve better than to get caught in a thieves’ rut. In *GURPS* a Halfling could do quite well as a healer, a bard or even a ranger!

The main thing to remember when playing a Halfling is to play smart. Halflings should be energetic, but seldom dangerously impetuous. It takes a survivor to be a three-foot adventurer in a six-foot world.



Halflings are natural thieves and spies, with a gift for stealth equaled by few other races. This ability is innate – a fat, elderly Halfling farmer who’s never faced a moment’s physical danger in his life can slip away from a band of brigands with the ease of a practiced, professional human thief!

Halflings like to have the earth firmly under their feet. They dislike boats intensely and seldom swim. They prefer their homes low to the ground and sprawling. Some of the best Halfling dwellings, in fact, are underground, carved into the side of a hill or embankment. When guesting with other races, Halflings prefer to sleep on the ground floor. Phobic fears of heights or open water are common.

Halflings are not magical. Magic Resistance is much more common than Magery. Some Halflings do know a spell or two, but there are almost no professional Halfling wizards (although the race has produced a few notable magical healers).

They are unsuited to military service, and rarely enlist. When they are forced into service (either by rule or by circumstance) they usually form their own small, lightly armored units of bowmen and slingers. Halflings have keen senses and a great affinity for thrown and projectile weapons. Despite their distaste for violence, Halflings will courageously defend their homes, and the invasion of a Halfling community should not be lightly undertaken. Invaders will find themselves harassed by a sporadic but deadly accurate rain of arrows and stones from undetectable snipers. If these commando tactics aren’t enough to demoralize and drive off an enemy, the local Halflings will merely slip away, a few at a time, to safer climes.

In every generation there are a few individuals dissatisfied with their placid life, who yearn for adventure. Such “odd eggs” are considered mad by their neighbors.

The aboriginal Halfling tongue is forgotten. They now speak whatever the local populace does. They all have a personal and a family name. First names are short and either meaningless or from nature (Star, Lily, Heather). Family names are usually meaningful in the local tongue, and are nature-oriented (Thorntree, Hilltop, Redapple). A few very old families have meaningless names that seem to come from the ancient Halfling speech (Maggo, Gilli, Kork).

Halflings are clever craftsmen. Most of the community’s needs in the way of food, tools, and comforts are produced locally. Their homes, clothing, and crafts are often attractively decorated, but Halfling art seldom goes beyond that.

They love to sing. Halfling songs are very simple and tuneful, and usually either comic or sentimental. Some of them become extremely popular among humans, and a few even amuse the Elves. All Halflings love jokes, particularly puns and pranks. They dance often.

Halflings are not very religious. They believe in higher powers, but they feel that as long as things are going well there’s little reason for the Halflings and the gods to bother one another. The gods appear to be content with this arrangement. Likewise, they have little affinity for philosophy, though they are an excellent source of folk aphorisms.

Ecology

Nobody knows the Halflings’ origin. They are the most recently-discovered major race – their first encounter was with humans, barely a millennium ago. Those early Halflings were wanderers, but as civilized as the larger folk. Records are unclear, but there are hints that the Halflings lived undetected near or among the humans for years before they revealed themselves.

This mystery is compounded by the fact that they are the only civilized race with no creation myths. Many have theorized that Halflings are a hybrid of two other races. Humans and Gnomes are the most popular candidates, but sages (as well as Halflings and Gnomes) scorn this theory.

Halflings can (and do!) eat everything that humans enjoy. The two races' tastes seem almost identical. Halflings are true gourmands, and often fine chefs, as well. Halflings eat as often as five times per day, putting away as much as a well-fed, hard-working human twice their size. What happens to Halfling fare after it's digested is a mystery, since they are rarely either extremely fat or extremely energetic.

Halflings mature very slowly – they reach puberty at about 16, and their emotional and social development takes even longer. They are not considered to reach their majority until age 33. Before that time they cannot marry, do business or hold office. They begin to age normally at age 65.

They have only one mate at a time, and seldom remarry. Multiple births are almost unheard of, but families with six or more children are not uncommon.



Culture

Halflings do not have strong rulers – their society is naturally so orderly that they do not need a central authority to keep the peace. The heads of a few old families are deferred to by tradition, and all-Halfling villages elect mayors to settle disputes and regulate trade. Status is determined through economic success – not how much money you have, exactly, as much as how many comforts you've acquired.

Most Halflings in authority are male, but there are no hard and fast rules against women running an estate or community, and sometimes they do.

Another important group is the border guards. Such folk customarily carry a staff and a sling, and sometimes wear leather armor. Though most of their time is spent escorting drunks home at night and searching for lost pets, their most important function is to watch for intruders, and to alert and organize the community against sudden dangers or natural disasters.

When (as often happens) Halflings settle an area in lands nominally ruled by other races, they make quiet, loyal subjects. However, they will insist on a good deal of autonomy. They will not balk at reasonable taxation to finance the common defense and to “pay off” the big folk to leave them alone, but oppres-

Halfling Adventure Seeds

Mr. Big

The city is helpless against the gang of Halfling thieves that are systematically draining the best homes and families of their treasures. The little guys specialize in burglary, and so far none of the expensive guardian fighters, mages and beasts that the affluent have brought in to control the crime wave have even caught a glimpse of the thieves.

The GM should design 6 to 8 thieves on 100-200 points each, including a Goblin or Gnome mage providing magical support. The leader should be a 300-point master thief.

The city is offering a bounty of \$1,000 for each thief, and \$10,000 for the leader, dead or alive. If three or more of the band are captured, the boss will pull up stakes and run. It would be well worth the party's time to try to follow.

For an extra twist, the Halflings could have been doing a “Robin Hood” imitation, making themselves heroes among the poor. If any of the thieves are killed, it could lead to an explosive situation. Even if the thieves are humanely captured for fair trial, the hunters will find no cooperation from the working folk.

Runaway

While traveling in civilized lands, the party stops to spend the night at the home of a well-off Halfling country squire. His young son is so enamored of the adventurers' tales that he runs away that very night to search for adventure. There's really only one place he could be heading – the nearest big city, about three days' journey by the road. The squire offers a reward for the safe return of his son. If the PCs don't think of it themselves, somebody will point out that the squire's men can cover the road, and suggest that the party take the overland route through wild country. This route takes about a week, and is indeed the path the lad took. Build the fugitive on 75 or 100 points, with lots of Stealth and Camouflage. A group of human-sized adventurers will have to be sharp to find a single Halfling in the wilderness, and sharper still to hold him once they've got him. If the lad makes it all the way to the city, the hunt can continue in that venue. If the PCs are short on stealth, they may want to forget the reward and invite the Halfling to join as an NPC party member. Needless to say, the squire will not be at all pleased if his son is in any way harmed or unduly humiliated.

Halfling Character Example

Dan Redapple 100 points

Age 50; 4'1"; 135 lbs.; dark curly hair, dressed in sharp-looking clothing (on or off duty).

ST 7 [-]; **DX** 14 [30]; **IQ** 11 [10]; **HT** 11 [-].
Speed 6.25; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 7; Block 7.

Advantages: Acute Vision +2 [4]; Ambidexterity [10]; Halfling Racial Package [10]; Magic Resistance +3 [6]; Military Rank 1 [5]; Strong Will +1 [4].

Disadvantages: Addiction (Tobacco) [-5]; Bully [-10]; Compulsive Gambling [-10]; Duty (City guard) [-10]; Struggling [-10].

Quirks: Dandy; Uses words he doesn't understand. [-2]

Skills: Bow-18* [16]; Brawling-15 [2]; Buckler-14 [1]; Carousing-12 [4]; Crossbow-14 [1]; Fast-Draw (Arrow)-15 [2]; First Aid-12 [2]; Gambling-12 [4]; Knife-14 [1]; Knife Throwing-14 [1]; Leadership-11 [2]; Scrounging-11 [1]; Shortsword-14 [2]; Sling-17* [8]; Stealth-15* [4]; Streetwise-14 [8]; Tactics-11 [4]; Teaching-12 [4] Throwing-14* [1].

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

Dan represents a bit of a rarity – a Halfling professional soldier. Dan is a career sergeant in the city guard, where he manages two platoons of the wall patrol – one of slingers and one of bowmen.

He's a good leader and trainer, though he's earned a reputation for riding his men hard. Dan's major character flaw is his gambling habit, which keeps him perpetually poorer than his station might indicate.

On duty Dan wears heavy leather and carries a short bow, sling, shortsword, buckler, and a couple of throwing knives.

Like most Halflings, he has a pipe in his mouth most of the time. He's a bit of a blowhard, with the unwittingly comical habit of trying to make his conversation sound more authoritative by using big words he doesn't fully understand, "Yeah, I've been to the palace. Most lustrous place I've ever seen. A real bordello."

Dan is a balanced character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.



sion will result in a spontaneous but effective program of non-violent civil disobedience. The government will find it almost impossible to govern the Halflings, but equally impossible to pinpoint exactly who's causing the trouble. The representatives of despots also find that accidents mysteriously multiply in Halfling territory. If persecution continues, the tyrant will probably wake up one morning to find that most of his Halfling subjects have vanished for parts unknown.

Halfling hospitality is legendary, and many are excellent innkeepers or restaurateurs. They are kind-hearted, and will give to the point of self-denial to the truly needy. They are also remarkably cagey at sniffing out frauds and humbugs. Many a human con man has gone away congratulating himself on his success among the Halfling "rubes," only to find, hours or days later, that he's the one who came out on the short end of the deal.

Though Halfling rogues are not uncommon, they seldom prey on their fellow Halflings, instead victimizing local humans and Goblins (a good Halfling thief vs. a canny Goblin merchant often makes for a truly epic battle of wits). Sometimes urban Halflings will organize into a frighteningly effective burglary ring. Such criminal organizations will never rob the poor, and seldom endanger life or needlessly destroy property. They often become heroes of the common folk.

Politics

There is little arcane or underhanded about Halfling politics. They are a forthright, neighborly, non-threatening race, and most other peoples are fond of them. They get along very well with almost everybody – the exception, of course, being Orcs, Ogres, Minotaurs, and others of that ilk, who regard Halfling as a particularly dainty appetizer.

They get along wonderfully with Gnomes, and frequently a few such craftsmen can be found in a Halfling community. Their relationship with the Goblins, though sometimes adversarial, is basically friendly. The Elves, as well as the sylvan races, find them a delightful people. They seldom encounter true Dwarves, but get along well when they do (mostly because the races share similar attitudes about the virtues of hard work, beer, and pipe tobacco).

Perhaps because of their resemblance to human children, humans feel a bit protective of Halflings, and often treat their Halfling neighbors better than other humans of their acquaintance.

INSECT MEN

The Insect Men are bizarre human-insect hybrids. Like insects, they have hard, chitinous skin of a shiny bronze color; gleaming, black, multi-faceted eyes, and long, curving antennae; but, like humans, they also have ears, a mouth, and a nose. Their ears are pointed, and their mouths have sharp, bony ridges instead of teeth. They are as tall as a man, but thinner (determine height and weight normally for ST. The character will *appear* thinner than a human of the same ST, as Insect Men are more dense than humans). Their limbs end in long, spindly hands and feet much larger than a human's. Insect Men have no hair.

Insect Men wear clothing, often in a fashion borrowed from humanity.

Insect Man Racial Package

37 points

Attributes: ST +1 [10]; HT +1 [10].

Racial Advantages: DR +2 [6]; PD +1 [25]; Secret Communication [20].

Racial Disadvantages: Mute [-25]; Sterile [-3]; Unattractive appearance [-5].

Racial Quirks: Secretive [-1].

Insect Warrior Racial Package

52 points

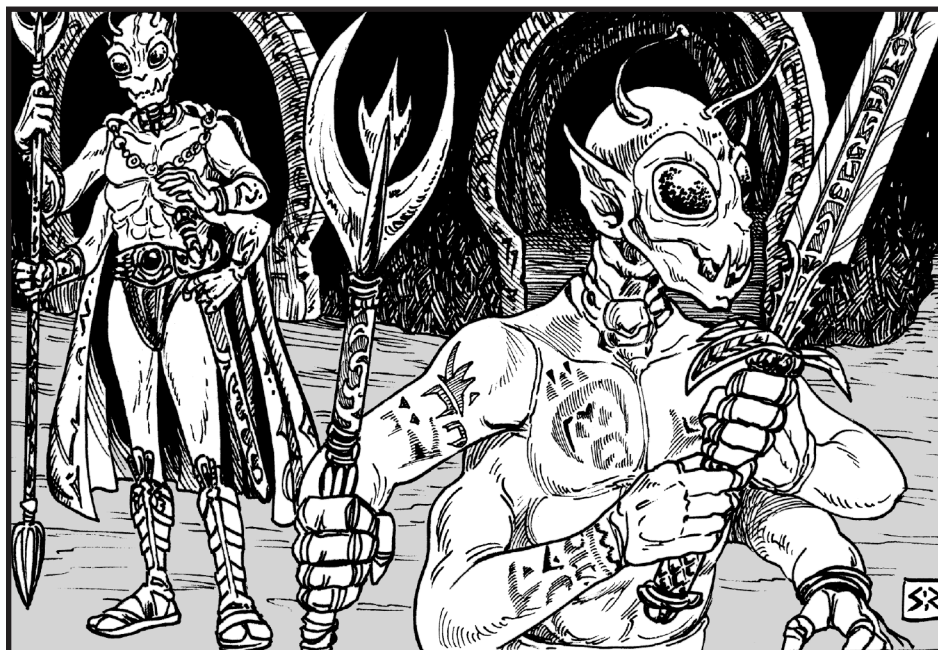
These are the warrior and servant caste of the Insect Men. They are taller and brawnier than their masters (add 3" to height; determine weight normally), but their most obvious difference from the rulers is their extra pair of arms.

Attributes: ST +2 [20]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +1 [10].

Racial Advantages: DR +2 [6]; Extra Arms × 2 [20]; Full Coordination × 1 [50]; PD +1 [25]; Secret Communication [20].

Racial Disadvantages: Mute [-25]; Short Lifespan [-10]; Slave Mentality [-40]; Status -1 [-5]; Sterile [-3]; Unattractive Appearance [-5].

Racial Quirk: Secretive [-1].



Insect Men in the Campaign

Insect Men live deeper in the earth than any other race detailed in this book. They can easily provide a gateway to the vast and fabled underground realms so much beloved by fantasy authors and gamers.

They are a bizarre and mysterious race, and make excellent opponents for the party. Their advanced magical skills will make them particularly attractive targets for an average adventure party, and their subterranean warrens provide excellent opportunities for that most venerable of fantasy scenarios, the "dungeon crawl."

They do not, however, have to be antagonistic to the party. GMs and players will find it challenging and fun to establish lines of communication with the Insects and eventually come to an understanding of their strange and ancient culture.

Insect Men make good Enemies or Allies, and might even provide a Patron for the party (the reclusive Insect Men prefer to hire somebody to procure the goods and services they need from the surface world). Insect Men have no special racial friends or enemies.

Most NPC Insect Men are built on 75 or 100 points, but 200-point and higher characters exist.

Insect Men PCs

One of the most intriguing aspects to playing an Insect Man is the racial Muteness disadvantage. Since this trait is shared by several races in this book, it deserves consideration at length.

When Muteness is bought on a racial basis, it is assumed that the race can still communicate, more or less freely, among itself, but that speech with members of other races is impossible. It is further assumed that the requirements of an adventuring life will force the Mute PC to travel away from his race for much of the time. If the Mute race is the most numerous or most important race in the campaign, the points for racial Muteness should be dramatically reduced or eliminated. The Secret Communication advantage is *not* essential for the race to communicate among itself. Secret Communication indicates that the race's speech is unlearnable and indecipherable to other races.

The issue is further complicated by the problem of Mute spellcasters and psionists. In *GURPS*, a disadvantage which does not inconvenience the character is worth no points. If the character can freely communicate with everybody through magical or psionic means, he is not Mute, and must buy off the disadvantage.

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Insect Men PCs (Continued)

For mages who know the spells Mind-Sending, Telepathy or Voices, there will come a time when the mage can no longer be considered Mute. It is suggested that the GM scale the disadvantage so that the character can buy it off a little at a time as he increases his skill with the spells. The GM should require the mage with the spell Voices to buy off 1 point of the disadvantage for every level of skill with the spell. For the somewhat more costly Mind-Sending and Telepathy, the GM should require the mage to buy off 5 points of Mute to learn the spell at all, plus 1 point for each level of skill beyond 10.

The GM should require a psionic character with the Telesend skill to buy off 5 points of the Mute disadvantage for every level of Telepathy power beyond level 2. Insect Men can be psionic only if the GM allows psionic powers in his campaign.

An Insect Man who bought off the Mute disadvantage and who could therefore speak normally would be considered a freak – the GM may want to assess a moderate Unusual Background cost in such an instance.

Many players who are interested in Insect Men PCs will want to eliminate the Secret Communication advantage to save points. It is entirely up to the GM whether this is allowed – such an individual would be regarded as a mutant and an outcast among his own people. On the other hand, a GM who wishes to encourage Insect Men PCs might consider eliminating the advantage entirely, to decrease the racial point cost and make characters more versatile.



Psychology

It is difficult for humans to fathom the inner working of an Insect Man's mind, partially because the two races are so different, but mostly because the Insects do not practice speech as we know it. They can hear, and they can understand human words, but they cannot vocalize. They communicate freely among themselves through methods which remain mysterious even to wizards and sages.

Still, a few Insect scholars have learned to write, and a few intrepid human sages have actually descended into their warrens to live for a time. Thus, some report of the lives of the Insect Men has returned to human civilization.

Their silent underground cities are orderly and, by human standards, impeccably clean. Insects hurry about on errands, or stand patiently – for hours or days – awaiting a call to duty.

They are clever craftsmen and smiths. The Insect Men decorate all their works in intricate geometric patterns. Humans can see no meaning in their carvings, and find them slightly disturbing – likely because the designs aren't meant to appeal to any mammalian aesthetic.

Insect Warriors are versatile during times of war, and make and use very nearly every weapon known to man. They are terrifying opponents, fighting with a merciless ferocity. Their frenzy is made all the more horrible by their complete silence in battle. This unnatural quiet gives an Insect Man battle a surreal, dreamlike quality that can unnerve even the most hardened veteran.

Some Insects have the ability to use magic, and the race has even produced a few great archmages. Insect mages produce magical items for their own use. Some of these objects of power are unpredictable and dangerous when used by humans.

They have a written language, which is extremely difficult for humans to learn, as it communicates pure thoughts and concepts without attempting to represent any sound or signal. This writing is only taught to the highest leaders and an elite caste of scribes (who may also make up the mysterious priesthood of the Insect religion). Insect Men do not use names, and it is not clear how they differentiate between one another among themselves. Among humans, their hosts usually give them a name, or simply refer to an Insect Man as "the Bug."

The Insects keep no shrines, idols or holy books. They seem to have a religion, however, for they will not speak (that is to say, write or magically communicate) of other races' gods or beliefs, saying only that they are forbidden to dwell on such matters. Such a deeply-ingrained racial taboo suggests the existence of a strong – and secret – religion or philosophy.

Ecology

It is just a convenience to speak of the entire race as *Insect Men*. The Insects hatch from eggs, produced by a "queen" that is nothing more than a mindless, immobile engine of procreation. Yet the intelligent Insect Men are actually neuters, with no part in the propagation of the race. The queen's true consorts are scuttling creatures the size of small dogs, with no more intelligence than a normal spider or centipede. A typical consort has ST 3, DX 10, HT 4, IQ 3. Move is 6 and Dodge is 8; they have no PD or DR. The bite does 1d-3 damage.

Queens live for centuries, and can reach weights of more than a ton. Non-Insects find the sight of the pallid, pulsating, eyeless mass of the queen – almost completely covered with the small, chittering forms of her hundreds of

bridegrooms – repulsive. Few non-Insects have ever seen this sight, however, as Insect Men guard their queens with a paranoid intensity.

No sentient Insect Man ever touches the queen. Her small consorts, in addition to their procreative duties, instinctively keep her clean and free of parasites. They also pre-digest her food. This food is mostly provided by the sentient drones, but always contains a liberal spicing of small or slow consorts.

The queen produces an egg three times per day. Four out of five eggs turn out to be consorts. Of the remainder, two-thirds are warriors and one-third are nobles. A queen produces a potential successor once a year. The young queen will be unable to produce eggs for two years after hatching. At birth, she's taken to a chamber of her own and cared for until another young queen hatches. If the old queen is still in good health, the yearling queen is disposed of and the hatchling takes her place as insurance for the community's survival. Sometimes an extremely prosperous colony – or one with a severely depleted population – will keep two or even three queens in production, but this is very rare. More commonly, a community will make a decision to establish a new colony. Once a site has been chosen by scouts, a select group of colonists are sent out carrying a hatchling queen and a few healthy consorts.

In contrast to the primal chaos of the queen's chamber, the young drones are raised in a controlled and orderly environment, under the constant scrutiny of ancient tutors. Warriors are taught to fight, work, and serve. Nobles learn to lead and care for the warriors and nest, and also various arts, crafts, and sciences. The warriors are fairly intelligent, but are almost completely without will. Without a noble to guide them (or at least an established daily routine to follow) they are completely lost, and unable to take any independent action other than the most basic food-gathering and self-defense. A warrior will follow a human leader (or any other race) if no Insect nobles are available.

The nobles are considered adults at 20, and begin to age at 55. The warriors are much shorter-lived, reaching maturity at 12 and beginning to age at 35.

Insect folk are omnivorous, but prefer fungus to green plants. They do not cook their meat, but will sometimes smoke or dry meat to preserve it. In spite of the cannibalistic habits of the consorts, the sentient Insect Men will not eat each other, or any other intelligent race.

Culture

Most Insect Men live below the ground in anthill-like warrens that can stretch for miles. Most of what's known of the race comes from those few communities that live near the surface and forage above ground for their food. Some say, however, that these are only the smallest and weakest of the Insect Men's outposts, and that the true Insect civilization lies below the deepest Dwarven mines.

Certainly it seems odd that a race as intelligent, resourceful and prolific as the Insect Men should confine itself to only the most wasted and lonely regions of the world. It has been suggested that they are playing a centuries-long waiting game with the aboveground races . . . that the Insect Men live below our feet, plotting, breeding, and waiting for the day when they will boil up from the ground and completely overrun the soft races of the surface. More rational minds, however, usually hold that the surface is of only passing interest to Insect Men because they have all the vastness of inner space to explore. There are persistent rumors, or legends, of huge subterranean caverns where Insect Men cultivate strange fungus, or vast herds of giant, rolling grubs the size of sheep – the Insect Men's cattle.

Insect Man Adventure Seeds

A New Friend

In a large and barbaric city, the party is suddenly confronted with the frightening sight of a large, armed Insect Warrior. Instead of attacking, however, the creature merely falls into step behind the party. The creature will unhesitatingly carry out, to the best of his ability, any order, request or wish of one particular party member (the one with the most Charisma . . . if no one in the party has Charisma, roll randomly).

The Insect was on a mission under the supervision of a noble when his master was killed. Confused, the Insect wandered to the nearest human city. The PCs are the first potential masters he's met who haven't run screaming when he approached.

The party will no doubt be glad to get a powerful, voluntary slave. But there is, as always, a catch. The night before, the Insect was attacked by three frightened peasants. Only one survived the encounter, and reported the incident to the city watch. As the masters of the Insect, the party bears legal responsibility for his actions. The local constabulary is neither sympathetic nor fair-minded. The party will either have to make excellent Law and/or Fast-Talk rolls, escape from the city as wanted fugitives, or give up most of their worldly goods to the authorities to pay fines and wergelds.

An Old Friend

The party is hired by an ancient wizard to escort him into the wilderness, where he must consult with an Insect Man colleague on a matter of utmost importance.

When they arrive at the Insect warren, they're admitted courteously enough, but the Insects tell a horrible story. It seems that a few weeks earlier, the old Insect sage was taking notes in the queen's chamber when he accidentally strayed too close, and was seized by her consorts . . . there was nothing left to bury.

All seems lost. The wizard tries a Summon Spirit, but to no avail. But wait, suddenly the old mage has an inspiration – the Insect Men believe that the personality of an individual devoured by a queen is somehow preserved and passed on to the next generation. Perhaps if he were to cast the Summon Spirit spell *within* the queen's chamber . . . ?

Of course, if the Insect Men ever discover that outsiders dared to approach the queen they'll be murderously offended, and the wizard is quite firm that none of his old friend's non-sentient relations are to be harmed. The party is merely to keep them clear long enough for the mage to cast his spell and ask his question.

Insect Man Character Example

The Fire Ant **100 points**

Age 22; 7'10"; 360 lbs.; a very large Insect Warrior wearing piecemeal hardened leather and chainmail.

ST 13 [10]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 9 [-]; **HT** 11 [-].

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 8; Block 8.

Advantages: Insect Warrior Racial Package [52].

Disadvantages: Bloodlust [-10]; Gigantism [-10]; Jealousy [-10]; Paranoia [-10].

Quirks: Clicks teeth and claws loudly when agitated. [-1]

Skills: **Brawling**-14 [2]; **Crossbow**-13 [1]; **Fast Draw (Arrow)**-13 [1]; **Fast Draw (Knife)**-13 [1]; **Fast Draw (Two-Handed Sword)**-13 [1]; **Gesture**-9 [1]; **Knife**-15 [4]; **Polearm**-14 [4]; **Shield**-16 [8]; **Stealth**-13 [2]; **Two-Handed Sword**-16 [16]; **Wrestling**-15 [8].

The Fire Ant is a gigantic Insect Warrior, who has spent his entire adult life in human gladiatorial arenas – his own people sold him into slavery at an early age. He got his nickname from his habit of swarming all over his enemies in combat, and from his success against much larger foes.

He customarily goes into battle carrying a two-handed sword, a shield and a knife – all at once. He spent some time in a noble's bodyguard, where he learned to use a crossbow. He usually wears an armor ensemble of hardened leather and chainmail.

He's a proud creature, in his own strange way, and he likes being the toughest creature around. He'll become dangerously jealous of any fighter who may be mightier than he (unless that fighter is his official master). His years in the arena have driven him close to the edge of insanity, and he's convinced that almost everybody is plotting against him and his master.

The Fire Ant is a balanced character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.

The only thing that is known for sure is that when humanity meets Insect Men it is usually in small colonies of 200 to 500 individuals, located in the most wild and remote corners of the land. The Insect Men seem to have little concern with what sort of terrain their colonies lie under . . . they're as likely to be found in desert as in jungle. The only terrain they seem to avoid is the frigid arctic.

Insect society is rigidly stratified. Every "noble" belongs to one of a number of subcastes. Known castes include administrators, scribes, food-gatherers, queen-keepers, judges, warriors, and several "craft guilds." The racial rulers are chosen from among all these castes, through a combination of election by the other rulers and competitive examination.

Conformity is valued above all else by the Insect Men. Anyone exhibiting alarmingly deviant behavior is fed to warriors (never to the queen or consorts, in the belief that otherwise the queen might absorb and pass on the insanity). On the other hand, especially valuable members of the hive are honored, at death or in useless old age, by "serving" the Queen one last time . . . as dinner. It is speculated that this somehow allows the best of the neuters to pass along their genetic inheritance, though they can never actually breed.

Those who show an undue amount of initiative or free will, yet seem reliable and loyal, are sometimes appointed colony scouts. Other independent thinkers are sold into slavery to other races. Some avoid this fate by fleeing the nest – most Insect Men who live among other races fall into this category.

The warriors are also often traded to slavers. Insect warriors are almost perfect servants – loyal, obedient, and unable to betray their master's secrets. They are also often used for bodyguards, and are extremely popular in gladiatorial arenas.



Politics

The Insect Men keep to themselves. Their only formal contact with other races comes from their dealings with Goblin traders or human slavers.

Sometimes they live near a village of sylvan folk, Reptile Men or even human pioneers. Such rural communities find the Insect Men good neighbors, who keep to themselves, don't interfere with the community's food supply, and discourage Orcs, bandits, and similar hazards. However, Insect Men *have* gone to war against other communities (Insects or other races) who threaten the warren or its food supply.

The Insect Men are of most concern to the other underground races. Orcs fear them, and will block off any newly-discovered tunnel which looks like Insect Man work. Some of the larger communities of Ghouls will trade with them, exchanging the unneeded finery of their meat for Insect-made tools and weapons.

Their connection to the Dwarves is mysterious. There is some evidence that the two races trade, making deals across deep, hidden borders sealed off with strong Dwarven-made doors of iron. But if such alliances do exist, they are kept secret by the close-mouthed Dwarves.

KOBOLDS

Kobolds are small (height and weight normal for their lowered ST), with blue-tinted skin. They sometimes have dark blue or black head hair, but there is no hair anywhere else on their bodies. Their features have a brutish, rather stupid cast, and their eyes bulge. Their bodies are compact and solid and their limbs are short but sturdy. Kobolds usually wear clothes – rags or cast-offs from other races.

Kobold Racial Package

-30 points

Attributes: ST -2 [-15]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -2 [-15].

Racial Advantages: Cast Iron Stomach [15].

Racial Disadvantages: Short Attention Span [-10]; Uneducated [-5]; Weak Will -1 [-8].

Racial Quirks: Love practical jokes; Easily offended. [-2]

Psychology

Kobolds are certainly the least favored of the intelligent races. Weak and dull-witted, they live lives little above the beasts. Small, ugly, and stupid, most other races regard them as nuisances to be ignored or eliminated. At best, Kobolds are permitted to enter the lowest strata of society as slaves, unskilled laborers, or flunkies.

Most Kobolds live under the dominion of more powerful races such as humans, Orcs, or Dwarves. Only a few still cling to their freedom, living in the most wild and forsaken places.

Kobolds are passionate and stupid. They have attention spans of only a few minutes. Kobolds love crude jokes and pranks – their taste in humor runs to belching contests or surreptitiously drenching a victim with a bucket of slops.

Kobolds in the Campaign

The GM has a great deal of freedom in his interpretation of Kobolds. They can be minor menaces, underfoot annoyances, comic relief, or an exploited and down-trodden minority.

The most important thing for the GM to remember when using Kobolds is their changeable nature. A Kobold will be cringing in terror before the PCs one moment, treating them like life-long buddies the next, and calling them every foul name in the book the next. It is also important for the GM to play up the Kobold's short attention span.

Most NPC Kobolds will be casual encounters, but a player might want to engage a Kobold valet – someone to polish his armor while picking up a few points for the dependent.

Kobolds have no special racial friends or enemies, though many societies, of various races, will dispassionately exterminate any Kobolds they happen to meet.

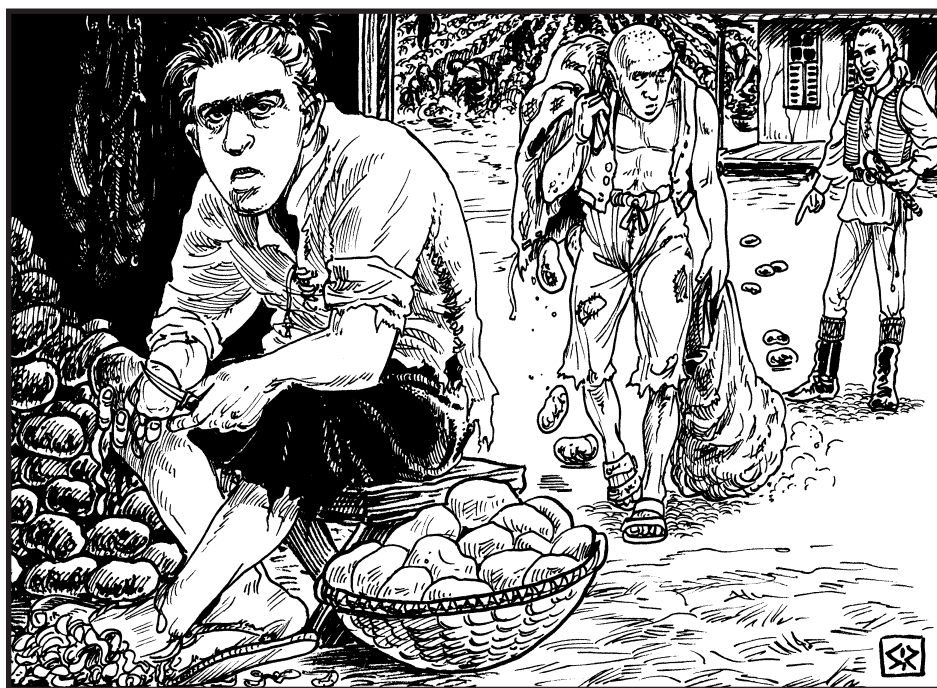
Most NPC Kobolds should be built on -20 to 0 points. No Kobold, PC or NPC, should ever be allowed to raise his ST or IQ above 10 under normal circumstances – even an exceptional Kobold isn't too strong or smart.

Kobold PCs

It is doubtful there's ever been a 100-point Kobold in the history of the race. Players should not look to the Kobolds for PCs unless they crave the challenge of playing an almost totally incompetent character.

A typical PC Kobold might be a 0- to 25-point character. This is not quite as grim as it sounds, however, since PC Kobolds can take the full 40 points of disadvantages and 5 points of quirks, in addition to the 30-point disadvantage of being a Kobold. This gives the player either 75 or 100 points to use to develop his Kobold. Nonetheless, a Kobold will be markedly less effective than his co-adventurers.

Kobold PCs would probably get on best in a "silly" campaign.





Kobold Adventure Seeds

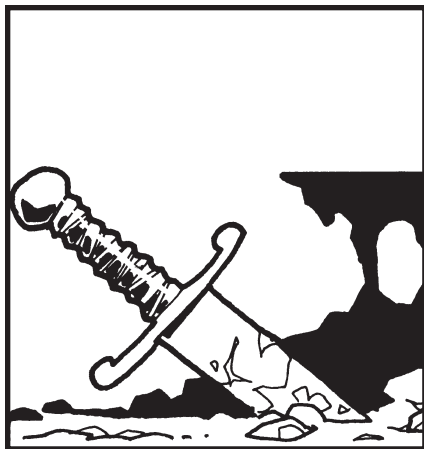
Breakout

The owner of a Kobold work gang had the misfortune to annoy a traveling mage. That night the guard fell into a suspiciously deep sleep, the slaves' chains mysteriously came undone, and all the Kobolds vanished into the sleeping town. Of the offended wizard, there was no sign.

The town has strict laws to control loose Kobolds. The Kobolds' boss has been given one week to round up his charges and get out of town. He can't do it alone, so he hires the adventurers. He offers a bounty of one silver piece per Kobold returned (small potatoes compared to the fine the town's holding over his head).

There were about 60 Kobolds in the gang. A dozen or so will come back on their own when they get hungry, a couple will meet with mishaps, and a few others might head for the hills. The rest will have to be flushed out of the town's cellars, attics, alleys, and sewers, one or two at a time.

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As much as they love to dish it out, Kobolds cannot take it. Any slight or insult, real or imagined, will send a Kobold into a profound sulk, a livid rage, or perhaps even provoke him to violence. Such snits never last for more than a few minutes, however, as the changeable Kobold nature finds something else to hold its brief interest.

The Kobold's ability to be distracted often verges on the farcical. For example, canny travelers in the wild use a well-known procedure for dealing with Kobold brigands. As the bandit pack approaches, the traveler points over their heads and cries, "Look, Bigfoot!" As the bandits all turn around to hunt for Bigfoot, the traveler makes his escape in the opposite direction. The Kobolds (and usually their prey as well) have no idea what "Bigfoot" might be, but the ruse works almost every time, and has for centuries.

For a Kobold to master even the most rudimentary magical spell is almost unheard of. Many Kobolds, however, possess some degree of Magic Resistance. Most Kobolds are simultaneously fascinated and terrified by magic. Ostentatious displays of power will hold them enthralled, but any sort of magical threat will send them screaming.

Although they possess the instinctive caution of most small creatures, they are not, by nature, cowardly. Many military and mercenary units keep a few Kobolds as cooks' assistants, valets, and water carriers. They also often fulfill similar functions on shipboard. Occasionally a Kobold camp follower, by being in the right place at the right time, has managed to influence the outcome of a battle, or even save his unit. Kobolds are unpredictable friends and allies, but they have been known to place themselves in great jeopardy to help someone who had been kind to them.

Kobolds are in some demand as servants among those who could not possibly afford a retainer of their own race. A particularly successful beggar will often hire a Kobold to keep his hovel. Kobold valets are also favored by adventurers – mostly for their ability to be talked into going almost anywhere.

Kobolds have their own chattering tongue. Several dialects of this simplistic language still survive in the wild. Kobold art is limited to crude graffiti. Their songs are annoying sing-song chants. Kobolds either worship as ordered or adopt the religion with the most noisy and ostentatious services.

Ecology

The Kobolds seem to be an ancient race. Neither the Elves nor the Dwarves can remember a time when they weren't struggling to keep Kobolds from overrunning their territories. Sadly, millennia of exposure to more civilized creatures seem to have done little to advance the Kobold race.

Kobolds are naturally diurnal, but many have been forced underground – either to escape human expansionism or because they were enslaved by Orcs. In the wild they mostly live by hunting and trapping small game, but they are not above scavenging the leavings of large predators. They can eat almost anything.

Though they have no formal mating rituals, Kobolds will often bond into lifetime pairs. They are tremendously prolific. Females are capable of producing three to eight young up to twice a year. In the wild, natural dangers keep the population steady, but civilized areas must be cautious lest a too-benevolent civic policy result in the town being overrun with Kobolds.

Kobolds are considered adults when they reach physical maturity at about age 10. They begin to age at 40.

Culture

The aboriginal Kobold culture was organized into small family/tribes of 12-20 individuals hunting and gathering in a small territory with a typical



circumference of 5 to 20 miles. If a tribe grew too large, a group would simply split off and find a new territory.

Kobold bands were organized only loosely. The largest and most aggressive individuals had first pick of food and other comforts, but little power to command others. The direction of the group's wanderings was determined by consensus, usually strongly influenced by custom.

Only a few remote bands of Kobolds still live in this manner. Most wild bands have taken to thievery rather than scavenging. These outlaws, traveling in bands of 12 to 20 individuals, make a living through pilfering local farms and waylaying lone travelers. Kobold brigands prefer to strike from ambush. The more organized will use nets or rope snares to entangle their prey, then move in with spears and daggers to finish him off before looting the body. Other times the brigands will simply block the victim's path and demand all his possessions. Often a stubborn and confident refusal to yield will cause Kobold thieves to simply give up and run away, rather than risking a fight.

Unless extremely desperate, Kobold bandits will only attack unarmed victims, and prefer odds of at least 10 to 1. These rural terrorists have resulted in Kobolds being completely banned from some villages, and even whole nations, under penalty of death.

Town and village Kobolds are not nearly so dangerous. When part of an urban community, Kobolds are seldom encountered in groups of more than two or three – too few to seriously threaten their neighbors. They will still, of course, engage in petty thievery at every opportunity. Stealing is second nature to Kobolds – a remnant of their scavenging past where everyone took whatever they could grab. Even a Kobold who's making a comfortable living will grab whatever trinket comes to hand if he thinks he can get away with it.

The danger from town Kobolds is more subtle. They breed at such a rate that, if unchecked, there is a real danger they will overrun the city, depleting the food reserves and creating an unhealthily crowded environment. Most cities meet this threat by having the watch or militia make periodic sweeps of the Kobold population, banishing or eliminating all Kobolds who cannot produce proof of employment or solvency. Extermination, sad to say, usually works much better than banishment, as those who were driven out often slink back into town after a week or two. Many cities, particularly those where work or supplies are scarce, simply ban Kobolds entirely (some make a temporary exception for Kobold servants of legitimate visitors to the town).

Kobold Adventure Seeds (Continued)

The Smartest Kobold in the World

A Kobold – a bit of a loser even among his own people (ST 7, DX 10, IQ 7, HT 9) – finds an ancient amulet that contains the soul of a mighty sorcerer of a bygone age. The sorcerer has an IQ of 21 and a host of the mental skills and advantages. He “possesses” the poor Kobold, displacing the original soul and taking over the body. Fortunately, his Kobold host is Magic Resistant, and is unable to cast any of the spells the sorcerer knows (though the sorcerer is working on the problem). If the Kobold meets an untimely end the sorcerer will not be able to possess a new host for 1,000 years, so he's stuck where he is for the time being.

Right now the sorcerer is organizing his fellow Kobolds into an effective bandit ring. He's managed to unite several tribes and currently has about 100 Kobold servants. His current goal is to amass enough capital to move on to more ambitious plots.

The party is commissioned to find out why Kobold brigands have suddenly become so dangerous. As they penetrate Kobold country they'll meet with a series of fiendish traps and a frighteningly efficient guard and warning system.

Though the sorcerer is a master planner, his minions are still just Kobolds. Unless the sorcerer is actually present, the party will usually be able to exploit their unreliable natures and general stupidity.

The sorcerer will conceal his true nature if the party actually confronts him.



Kobold Character Example

Onion **25 points**

Age 15; 5'6"; 140 lbs.; dark blue hair, dressed in slightly loose-fitting clothes.

ST 8 [-]; **DX** 13 [20]; **IQ** 9 [10]; **HT** 10 [-].
Speed 5.75; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 6.

Advantages: Danger Sense [15].

Disadvantages: Compulsive Lying [-15]; Kobold Racial Package [-30]; Pyromania [-5].

Skills: Brawling-14 [2]; Cooking-12 [6]; First Aid-10 [2]; Knife-14 [2]; Pickpocket-13 [4]; Professional Skill (Valet)-10 [4]; Sling-13 [4]; Stealth-13 [2]; Streetwise-10 [4].

Onion (he chose the name himself – he likes onions) is a professional adventurer's valet. He's a slightly above-average Kobold with a taste for the fast life. Onion is a decent cook, a competent armor-polisher and sword-sharpener, and knows how to bind wounds. He's also a skilled cutpurse.

Onion tells entertaining and extravagant lies about his past and prowess. Most persons of at least average intelligence will have no problem recognizing that the Kobold is lying, but getting a straight answer out of him can be a trying task. Onion's inordinate fondness for fires, large and small, is also of concern to his masters. These faults are more than compensated for, however, by Onion's preternatural ability to anticipate danger. His masters soon learn that when Onion drops out of sight it's time to loosen their swords. Onion will be very faithful to a kind master.

Onion is a low-level character suitable for use as a Dependent or low-point-value PC.

Politics

Kobolds are the most universally exploited of races. They have not been assigned a racial Status penalty, but in most areas they will have a Status of -2 or even worse. Only Gargoyles are generally lower on the social scale, and an individual Gargoyle is much better equipped to defend himself than a lone Kobold.

Humans and Orcs both make extensive use of Kobold slave labor, using them to work huge plantations or deep mines. In spite of the Orcs' reputation for ruthlessness, a Kobold slave would be hard-pressed to differentiate working conditions under the two sorts of master. The enslaved Kobolds are kept in vermin-infested, inadequate hovels, fed the bare minimum to keep them working, and given little or no medical care. Slaveholding societies of both races consider any Kobold not already serving a master as legitimate fodder for the mines. The plight of the Kobold slaves stirs no pity in their free kinsfolk. A free Kobold is likely to strut and gloat in front of a slave – even though he may be seized at any moment himself.

Kobold personal servants are usually free – slavers find it unprofitable to deal in Kobolds in lots of less than 100, and volunteers are easy to find. A Kobold servant – well-fed and safe from enslavement – has reached the very pinnacle of Kobold society.

Dwarves also sometime make use of Kobolds in their mines and forges. These Kobolds are somewhat better treated than those under humans and Orcs, but those the Dwarves decide are no longer needed are unceremoniously shown the door, and are left to survive or starve in the upper world.

Elves do not exploit the Kobolds, but they do not allow them to enter Elvish lands, either. Reptile Man tribesmen are likely to slaughter any Kobolds they might meet in an effort to protect their sparse food supplies from such prolific competitors. And, worse, some "civilized" Reptile Men do not believe the Kobolds to be truly intelligent . . . which means that they are considered, literally, fair game.

The Land of Kob

There are persistent legends of a mythical land where the Kobolds rule. This "Land of Kob" mostly exists as a setting for cruel jokes, ribald songs and nonsensical children's tales. The Kobolds of Kob are said to have built cities, domesticated animals and perhaps mastered the magical arts. There is even a (scarcely credible) rumor that the Kobolds of Kob have found some even more unprepossessing race which they have subjugated.

Those scholars who are predisposed to accept such tales differ on whether the rulers of Kob are actually "Kobold Superior" or simply ordinary little brutes who have managed to rise to the top of their local food chain. The more cynical scholars theorize that the rulers of Kob are actually human pygmies who dye their skins blue to fool their Kobold underlings. If this last theory is correct, any rash explorers that invade the fabled Kob – expecting to encounter only Kobolds – will doubtless meet the fate their impetuosity deserves from the ruthless pygmy rulers.

A typical Kob tale:

One day two wise Kobolds of Kob were walking past a potato patch, when they noticed two more Kobolds in the middle of the field, frantically paddling a canoe.

"We should tell those fellows they won't get anywhere that way," the first scholar said.

"Yeah," his friend replied. "Too bad we don't have a boat."

LEPRECHAUNS

Leprechauns are tiny, only about a foot high. Determine height normally for their ST before racial modifiers are applied, then double it and read inches for feet. Weight is negligible – 10 to 15 pounds. They have rosy cheeks and bright eyes. Their hair is curly, tending toward black or red, turning to white in older individuals. Their complexions are ruddy. Most males wear bushy side whiskers, and a few wear close-cropped beards. Their builds are portly.

Leprechauns are seldom seen without their full ensemble of white shirt and hose, green breeches, vest, coat and hat, and shiny black shoes with a gleaming buckle. Females wear green dresses and bonnets with white petticoats and the same sort of shoes as the males. Most males carry an unhewn, knobby walking-stick.

Leprechaun Racial Package

5 points

Attributes: ST -4 [-30]; DX +2 [20]; Reduced Hit Points -2 [-10].

Racial Advantages: Acute Hearing +1 [2]; Longevity [5]; Luck [15]; Magery 1 [15]; Musical Ability +1 [1]; Night Vision [10].

Racial Disadvantages: Inconvenient Size [-15]; Miserliness [-10].

Racial Skills: Leatherworking (M/E) IQ+1 [2].

A Leprechaun may buy up to three spells as though they were racially innate (see p. 13). The only limits on these spells are that they may not be Mental/Very Hard spells, may not require Magery 2 or 3, and may not have an energy cost greater than 3. The GM may also declare any spell or group of spells “off limits,” either for the Leprechaun race or for a particular character.



Leprechauns in the Campaign

Like the Ellyllon, Leprechauns are a good substitute for the true Faerie folk. They can be used whenever a wood needs haunting or a party needs bedeviling.

Although not highly suitable as Patrons, Leprechauns do make remarkably good goals for adventurers (see *Leprechaun Adventure Seeds*, p. 108).

A Leprechaun can make an interesting enemy – following the players around, making himself a nuisance in a multitude of small ways, and stirring up the sylvan folk, beasts, and nature spirits against the party.

Rarely will the PCs meet a Leprechaun armed with anything other than a traditional shillelagh. A shillelagh does damage as a baton (though many are magically enhanced) and is wielded using Staff skill (a human-sized shillelagh, of course, would do damage as a quarterstaff). Leprechauns do not often use ranged weapons, preferring to rely on their magics.

Leprechauns react at +1 to the other sylvan races. They react normally to Dwarves, Gnomes, and Halflings, and at -2 to other large races. However, they react at a +1 to any offer of gold, or +2 to a known customer for their crafts!

Almost all male Leprechauns, and many of the women, like to gamble. Many have the Compulsive Gambling disadvantage!

NPC Leprechauns should be built on around 100 points, though a very young one might be worth only 50 points, and a great hero might have 200 points or more.

Leprechaun PCs

A Leprechaun can be an enjoyable PC for a player looking for something with a unique flavor. Their love of gold combined with their small size and their magical nature tends to lead them into the role of mage/thieves, but they can also be useful on a wilderness adventure.

The Leprechauns' greatest advantage is their innate spell ability. In fact, the combination of an easy-going GM and an ambitious PC can seriously upset the balance of the game using this rule. Therefore, one simple guideline bears repeating . . . *the GM may declare any spell or group of spells “off limits,” either for the Leprechaun race or for a particular character.* This means that just because the party once met an NPC Leprechaun with the ability to use Explosive Fireball innately, the GM does *not* have to allow a new Leprechaun PC to take the same advantage.

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Leprechaun PCs

(Continued)

A Leprechaun can find a (non-magical) shillelagh in any wooded area, at any time, for free. If the PC decides to augment his traditional weaponry with something a bit sharper, however, a Leprechaun-sized spear will do damage as a large knife, a sword will do damage as a small knife, and arrows will do damage as blowgun darts.

Leprechaun Adventure Seeds

Pot o' Gold

It's the old, old story. The adventurers capture a Leprechaun and refuse to let him go until he gives them his treasure. In return, the captive offers a wager. Each of the PCs will compete against one of his friends in a test of physical prowess. If the party can win even one contest, the Leprechaun will give them a pot of gold for his freedom. If they lose all the contests, they must release the Leprechaun for nothing. If they refuse the wager the Leprechaun will simply clam up until dusk the next day. At that point, all his relatives will show up and things will get *really* interesting for the PCs.

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The Leprechaun may buy his skill with these spells up to 13 or his IQ + Magery 1, whichever is higher. He does not have to buy *any* spells if he doesn't want to. However, if he doesn't buy these spells during initial character creation, he cannot buy them later. All other rules of racially innate spells apply.

Psychology

Leprechauns are closer to the faerie folk than any other Earthly race. Like them, they are magical, shy, and unpredictable. However, Leprechauns are mortal, and there is a practical, industrious side to Leprechaun nature that is completely foreign to the true "Good Folk."

Leprechauns are, by profession, shoemakers. Some are also tailors, but every Leprechaun knows how to make shoes. Mostly they trade with the faerie races, Ellyllon, and Elves.

Many Leprechaun shoes (and other garments) are magical, though usually only to the extent that they are always shiny and difficult to soil, or perhaps they prevent the feet from getting sore on long journeys. More complicated enchantments appear to be beyond the Leprechauns' ability. Human and Elven enchanters find Leprechaun garments much easier to work with when enchanting such items, due both to the magical nature of their creators and their exquisite workmanship.

Leprechauns are notoriously tight-fisted, and generally acknowledged to be even more reluctant than the Dwarves to part with their gold. They are tough bargainers who buy no more than they need. The only way to get a Leprechaun to part unnecessarily with a penny is to offer him a wager – most Leprechauns have a weakness for games of chance.

Although magic pervades their whole being, Leprechauns do not become mighty wizards. Rather, they all know a few small, helpful spells. Unlike other races, who must laboriously learn each spell, most Leprechauns are born knowing a spell or two, and master them in earliest childhood. Of course, they can later learn additional spells the conventional way. Leprechauns do not keep



spell books – they pass along their knowledge by word of mouth. A Leprechaun will freely share his mystical knowledge with other Leprechauns, provided both can find the time away from their trade to study magic.

The Leprechauns are a peaceful folk, who avoid war and violence. They defend themselves with their magic, and with their shillelaghs – stout walking sticks of unhewn wood. Most Leprechauns know at least one useful stealth spell, and the preferred method for dealing with violence is to avoid it by quietly slipping away.

Leprechauns are tricksters. This is not out of any inherent sense of mischief, but rather, as a survival mechanism. Against casual intruders, Leprechaun pranks will merely be frightening or embarrassing, designed to encourage the stranger to return from whence he came. Against Orcs and other more serious invaders, Leprechaun tricks can get bloody.

The Leprechauns work almost entirely with textiles; carpenters or smiths are rare. They have no art as such, but they can produce decorated shoes or garments of great beauty and craftsmanship. Even at their most ornate, however, Leprechaun garments remain extremely durable and comfortable.

Leprechauns love music and dancing. They have clear, strong singing voices and often learn to play pipes or horns of some sort. Leprechauns and Fauns who live near one another love to get together for wild dances. The Leprechauns invented the athletic dance known as the jig, and can do it like no other race.

Leprechaun names tend to be no more than one or two syllables long. They don't use family names.

Literacy they hold in low esteem, but they love poems and stories, and have a rich oral tradition.

Like the Faerie creatures, Leprechauns have little regard for the affairs of the gods, and have no known religion.

Ecology

The origins of this strange and magical people remain shrouded in mystery. Some have suggested that they are a cross between Halflings and some sort of the Good Folk, but the wise find this theory absurd – Leprechauns are recorded as living among the Elves for millennia before the first record of the Halfling race.

One picturesque Leprechaun legend says that the father of the race was a Faerie lord of a particularly industrious nature who became tired with the constant noise and frivolity of the Seelie Court. On a visit to Outer Earth, he stole away from his people and went on a quest. At the end of his journey he met Father Death, and offered him a deal . . . he would, in due time, surrender himself to Death, if he could be allowed in the meantime to remain on Earth, where it was quiet and he could get some work done. Death accepted the bargain, and from that day the Leprechauns have been a mortal race.

Leprechauns favor a diet much like humans'. They prefer simple fare, consisting mostly of game and wild herbs. Unlike the other sylvan races, some Leprechauns keep vegetable gardens.

They are not a prolific race. Most unions produce no more than 3 or 4 children over 20 or 30 years. Leprechauns are completely monogamous, and many never bother to marry at all. A Leprechaun is considered an adult at age 22. They begin to age at 55, but age much more slowly than humans – most Leprechauns are still vigorous after a century, and it's not rare for one to reach his 200th birthday.



Leprechaun Adventure Seeds (Continued)

If they agree, the Leprechaun will name the contests, one for each party member. They may include wrestling, running, swimming, singing, jumping, climbing, and drinking. The party then decides who will take which contest. The Leprechaun will then summon his "friends." The wrestler will be a bear, the runner a hare, the swimmer a salmon, the jumper a deer, the singer a nightingale and the climber a squirrel. The humans can withdraw from their contests (no, the poor barbarian doesn't *have* to wrestle the bear), but the forfeit goes to the Leprechaun. No outside interference is allowed, but the competing characters can freely use any spells or innate abilities that they possess (after all, the Leprechaun will).

If the party fails against all the animals, the final contest will be a drinking bout against the Leprechaun himself. This is a Contest of Skills between the Leprechaun's Carousing skill of 17 and the PC's Carousing skill (defaults to HT-2).

If the PCs win, the Leprechaun will cheerfully guide them to a small pot of gold worth about \$2,500 – he's got more stashed elsewhere, and the night's entertainment was worth it. If the party loses but refuses to free the Leprechaun, the whole forest will rise up against it.



Leprechaun Character Example

Kallum 100 points

Age 77; 11"; 13 lbs.; a typical-looking Leprechaun always carrying a pipe and shillelagh.

ST 7 [10]; **DX** 13 [10]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 11/9 [10].

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 9.

Advantages: Charisma +1 [5]; Leprechaun Racial Package [5]; Magery 2* [10]; Musical Ability +3* [2].

Disadvantages: Addiction (Tobacco) [-5]; Compulsive Behavior (Gambling) [-10]; Greed [-15]; Impulsiveness [-10].

Quirks: Whistles incessantly [-1].

Skills: Climbing-14 [4]; Escape-13 [4]; First Aid-14 [2]; Gambling-15 [6]; Leatherworking-14* [-]; Naturalist-12 [2]; Singing-15 [2]; Staff-14 [8]; Stealth-14 [4]; Tracking-14 [4].

Spells: Blur-13; Colors-13; Continual Light-13; Cook-13**; Darkness-15; Flash-15; Invisibility-15; Light-13; Light Jet-15; Minor Healing-13**; See Invisible-13; Tangle Growth-13** [23].

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

** Innate spell.

Kallum is a thorough rogue – a lazy Leprechaun with an incredible gift for getting himself into trouble. He's always on the lookout for a get-rich-quick scheme, and he's not above larceny if the opportunity presents itself. In spite of these character flaws, he has a quick wit and a winning way about him.

He's constantly whistling ancient airs, and at any moment he can break out in song with his clear, strong tenor.

Kallum is a balanced character suitable for a PC or NPC encounter.

Culture

Leprechauns make their homes under the roots of trees. These tiny houses are clean, dry, and very comfortable – if one happens to be 12" tall. They do not keep more than a fraction of their money at home, preferring to cache it in one or several cleverly concealed hiding places.

Leprechauns prefer to let other races assume the light responsibility of ruling them. Therefore, they usually declare themselves loyal subjects of some local sylvan authority – usually an Elf-lord, or a Ellyllon noble, or a ruler of Faerie. The Leprechauns demand a high degree of personal liberty and autonomy, but since none of their chosen lords are prone to tyranny, there's seldom any difficulty.

The Leprechauns will be loyal subjects of their chosen liege, taking his part (in so far as they are able) against his enemies and sending regular tribute of fine shoes and garments. When it comes to wrongdoers, however, they prefer to keep their own house, and only the most serious crimes will ever go to the lord for judgment. Usually, when a Leprechaun is known to have committed a crime against others or against custom, he will be confronted by a few of the older Leprechauns and offered a choice between formal judgment and some punishment, ranging from some trivial but embarrassing task to several years banishment.

Like Fauns, Leprechauns like to spread out. A family will usually be a half mile or more from their nearest neighbor. They have only one official gathering time – Midsummer's Eve, when every Leprechaun for miles will meet at a pre-arranged spot, usually an ancient "fairy mound," where they will revel until dawn with their unearthly kin.

From time to time a young Leprechaun will get an urge to see the world, and leave his home forest to travel about. Most return home and settle down after only a few years, but rare individuals take to a life of adventure. Some Leprechauns have become noted travelers and even heroes!

Leprechaun women are more reticent than the men, and seldom are seen outside the home. They rarely deal directly with non-Leprechauns, and almost never go adventuring.

Politics

Next to the Wildmen, the Leprechauns are the most reticent of the sylvan races, and seldom encounter anyone except other forest folk. When they do, they get along well with the hard-working Dwarves, and especially the Gnomes (who often share their fascination with leather and cloth). The rustic Halflings are also kindred associates to the Leprechauns.

They dislike and mistrust Goblins, Kobolds, and Gargoyles, and will usually drive them from Leprechaun lands. Goblins realize that the Leprechauns don't wish to trade with them, so leave them mostly alone.

Like many other races, Leprechauns are ambivalent about mankind. They find them dangerous and frightening, but realize they cannot avoid humans entirely. An individual human wandering near a Leprechaun's home is likely to be run off unless he offers to buy their crafts – Leprechauns cannot bear to forego the gold they collect from human customers.

Leprechauns sell their wares to humans for a minimum of 10 times what an equivalent human-made article would cost, payable entirely in gold. This price is compounded by the fact that Leprechauns refuse to deal in bulk, and a buyer must send an agent to the woods every time he wants a new pair of boots. Nonetheless, many wealthy humans find Leprechaun-made footwear and clothing worth even this exorbitant price.

MERFOLK

Merfolk have the heads, arms, and torsos of humans, and the lower bodies of fishes – complete with finned tails and scales. The skin of their upper bodies can be any color from very fair to swarthy, but it always has a blue or greenish cast. Their hair is thick and wavy, and can be any color from platinum blonde to jet black. Red hair is almost unknown, but vivid blue or green tresses are common. Merfolk eyes are always vivid blue or green. Their fish-halves are covered with glistening scales of blue and green, and their tails are forked. Their upper bodies are proportioned normally for their ST, but they weigh 30% more than normal.

Being legless is *not* a disadvantage to either the Merfolk or the Dolphins – they spend their life in an environment where legs aren't needed! Since they can't move around normally on land, they're not considered Amphibious; although since Merfolk can breathe both air *and* water, they do qualify for Gills. Merfolk do not wear clothes, but do like to wear decorations of coral, shell or plant matter. They often wear equipment harnesses of fishgut or seaweed.

Merfolk Racial Package

40 points

Racial Advantages: Enhanced Move (Swimming) × 1 [10]; Gills [10]; Pressure Support [10]; Sonar Vision [25].

Racial Disadvantage: Dependency (Water, daily) [-15].

Merfolk in the Campaign

The Merfolk are a perfect race to introduce the PCs to undersea adventuring. The Merfolk can help the PCs, or the PCs can help distressed Merfolk. Either way, the net result is to involve the players in a whole new adventuring world.

Notice that the Merfolk's Dolphin companions are not referred to as "enhanced" beasts. Real-world Dolphins are perhaps the most intelligent non-human species on Earth. Nobody's sure exactly how smart they are, but giving them an average IQ equal to humanity's is not out of line with some scientific thought. The intelligent Dolphins may actually be the *least* fantastic race in this book!

The party will have to come up with a method to cross the water barrier. It's possible that a Merfolk tribe will have magical water-breathing devices handed down from their mythical past, or even that a particularly ambitious and organized bunch of undersea hedge-wizards would manage to cobble together one or two such items on their own. The GM should definitely not, however, have every random

Merman on a rock handing out water breathing devices to the whole party (a much better source for such devices would be the Sea Elves, who probably keep quantities on hand for their own use). Most of the time, however, the GM should leave the method up to the inventiveness of the PCs.

Merfolk react normally to most other races, but they have a +2 reaction to Sea Elves, and a full -6 to their racial enemies, the Fishmen.

NPC Mermen should be built on 75 to 100 points, with an occasional 200-point chief, shaman or champion.



Dolphin Attacks

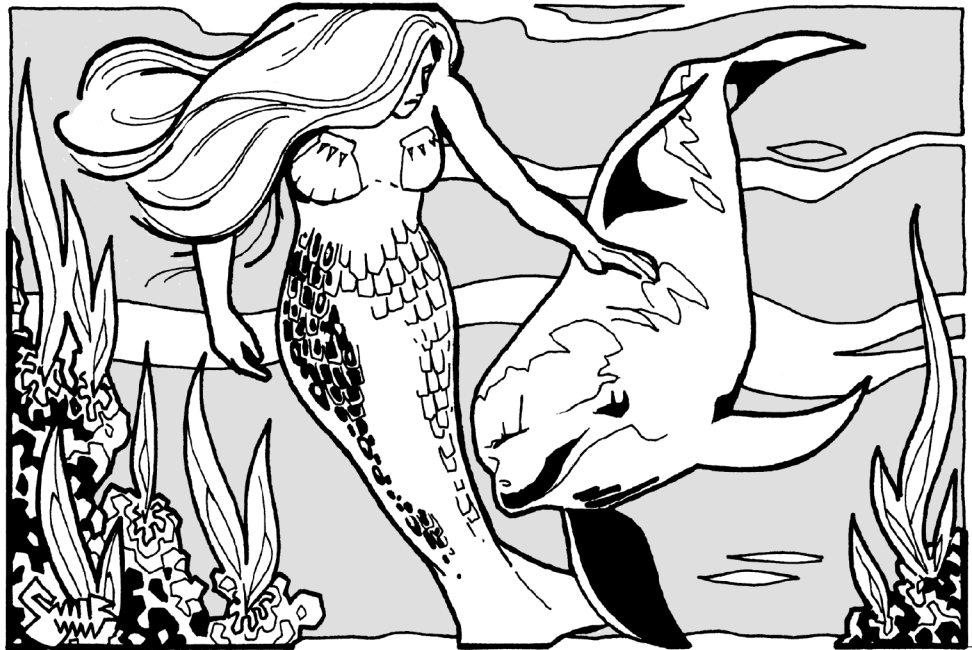
A Dolphin's bite does crushing damage appropriate for his ST (see p. B140). In addition, a Dolphin can ram a swimming opponent for swing+3 crushing damage with a 6-hex "swimming start." This attack should be handled as a Slam (see p. B112), with a swimming human opponent receiving an *extra* -2 in the initial Quick Contest of DX.

Merfolk PCs

Normally, Merfolk cannot function as part of a conventional adventuring party. Their lack of legs, combined with their dependency on water, is simply too crippling for them to be useful adventurers. If, however, the GM and the player both agree that an amphibious character would enhance the party, the GM should allow the player to exchange the Enhanced Move (Swimming) advantage (which is probably the result of having a fish tail) for the Amphibious advantage and play a two-legged Merman. (There is no cost for the legs – the Amphibious advantage allows the character to function normally on land.) Such an individual would be considered freakish – perhaps the only one of his kind. However, this would merely provide him with a good reason for living among the land folk. The GM might wish to charge such a character a moderate Unusual Background.

For a change of pace, the GM might run an all-underwater campaign. A party made up of, perhaps, two or three Merfolk, a Dolphin, an expatriate Fishman, and a Sea-Elf or a human with a special water breathing ability (such a character should pay the 10 points for Gills, plus an Unusual Background – say, 10 points for Sea Elves, more for other races) would provide an interesting mix.

If the GM decides to allow Dolphin mages, an Unusual Background of at least 10 points is suggested.



Dolphin Racial Package

30 points

The Dolphins are the traditional friends and allies of the Merfolk. They are large (determine length and weight normally for ST) intelligent mammals.

Attributes: ST 16/14 [35]; DX +2 [20]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Alertness +3 [15]; Absolute Direction [5]; Blunt Teeth [-]; Enhanced Move (Swimming) × 1 [10]; Nictating Membrane × 1 [10]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Pressure Support [10]; Sonar Vision [25].

Racial Disadvantages: Dependency (Air, hourly) [-20]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Mute [-25]; No Manipulators [-50]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Short Lifespan × 2 [-20].

Racial Skills: Acrobatics (P/A) DX [4]; Gesture (M/E) IQ [1].

Psychology

The Merfolk are nomads who live in the coastal shallows of the world's oceans. Most Merman bands live in conjunction with a pod of Dolphins, traveling and hunting together.

There is some debate among scholars as to whether those Dolphins which live among the Merfolk are more intelligent than wild Dolphins, or merely more culturally advanced. Evidence seems to favor the latter theory. Merfolk communities have been known to adopt wild Dolphins, and these creatures seem to be able to integrate themselves thoroughly into the Mer/Dolphin culture.

The interrelationship between the Merfolk and the Dolphins is complex. Dolphins have no problem comprehending the Merfolk language. The Dolphins communicate among themselves, however, with a proto-language. They are able to communicate a wide range of concrete facts (where to find food, what sort of danger threatens), but aren't much on abstract thought. Dolphins express their thoughts and feelings with "body language." A Dolphin can usually make himself understood even to a human, and communication with the Merfolk is remarkably complete.

The Merfolk themselves have the ability to speak in two dramatically different registers. Their own language is designed to carry underwater. When spoken out of water it's loud, piercing and pitched at the very upper edge of

human hearing. They can also speak in tones normal to land-dwelling beings. Many Merfolk learn a second language – Elvish or a local human tongue – in order to communicate on the surface. Merman names are unpronounceable and unspellable. Those who have dealings with surface folk usually adopt use names taken from the local surface culture.

The Merfolk have a racial talent for magic at least equal to humanity's. The race's savage environment and nomadic lifestyle are not conducive to magical research, though. Their indigenous magic is somewhat backward, being confined to a few simple healing and hunting spells on a shamanistic level. A few Merfolk, however, have studied under more sophisticated mages (usually Sea Elves) and become adepts of notable skill. The Merfolk have legends of Dolphin mages, but these may be simply tall tales.

Merfolk fight with short spears and knives, and sometimes use weighted, braided nets. In past times they made their weapons themselves with shell and bone. Modern Merfolk, however, trade with surface folk for forged weapons of non-ferrous metals, usually bronze. Their armor is similarly constructed. Though Dolphins cannot wield weapons, their powerful jaws and large size make them formidable combatants.

Within the limitations of their environment, the Merfolk are clever craftsmen, making the most of what the sea provides. Their tools and ornaments are customarily carved with intricate seascapes and swirling abstract patterns. In some quarters their jewelry – bright shells, coral or thin pebbles artfully arranged on thongs of seaweed or fine chain obtained from the surface – commands a high price.

Their music is mostly inaudible to humans, though they do have a few traditional songs in their lower register for singing on the surface. Humans find these simple but beautiful. The Merfolk love to dance, and their graceful, three-dimensional promenades can fascinate observers for hours.

They have no indigenous written language, though some tribes have learned surface alphabets. Their culture and traditions are preserved by a class of skalds, who memorize the legends of the race.

Merfolk worship the sea, which they regard as a living thing. They believe the sea is feminine and intelligent, and do not embody it in Mer-form.

Ecology

There are legends that say that the Merfolk were once human – a proud race that ruled a great kingdom on a lost continent. When their land sunk, it is said, a few survivors were changed by the great wizards of that time so that they could continue to live in their ancient home, now beneath the waves.

The Merfolk themselves reject such stories. They regard themselves as the chosen children of the mother ocean. That was what they were created as, and that is what they're content to remain. Some, however, will point to the rotting undersea ruins of what were once mighty surface cities and wonder.

Merfolk Adventure Seeds

Sunken Treasure

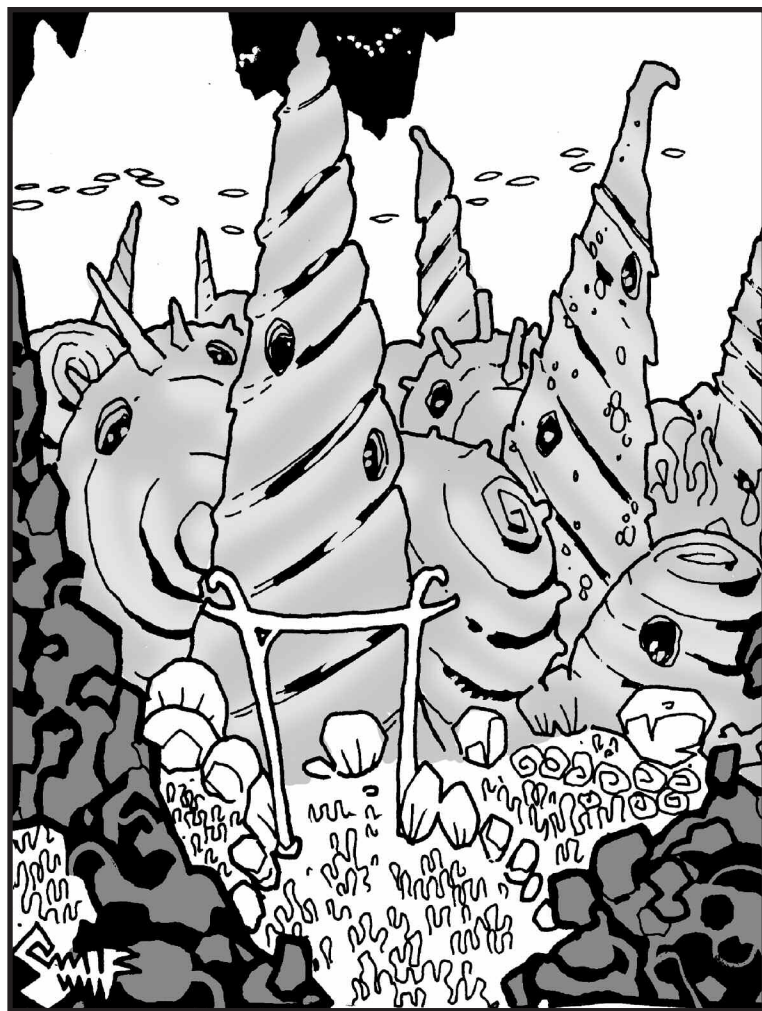
A ship carrying a very important cargo has gone down on a treacherous reef several hundred miles from civilization. The adventurers are hired by the Crown or the wreck's owners to recover the cargo. When they get there, they find a small band of young Mermen who have discovered the wreck, and who are wondering if they can assist at all (and possibly profit from it). The Merfolk will be very receptive to any reasonable offer from the PCs for help in the salvage effort.

Of course, complications are likely, in the form of sea-monsters, pirates or enemy warships, Fishmen, and even the weather.

Net Loss

A remote fishing village is reporting attacks on their boats – by Merfolk! Several boats have been lost, and the rest are beached. Since the local navy is occupied elsewhere, the Crown offers a reward to any adventurers who can get the fishermen safely back in the water.

Continued on next page . . .



Merfolk Adventure Seeds (Continued)

What the fishermen *aren't* mentioning in their report is that they were regularly catching – and killing – Dolphins. The Dolphins sought out a nearby Merfolk band for aid. When the Merfolk tried to intervene on the Dolphins' behalf, the fishers refused to negotiate, and angrily ran the Merman delegation off. The Merfolk took this as a declaration of war.

If the investigators waded into battle with the Mermen without asking questions, the Merfolk will give up and move on after three or four lost battles. The party will be paid by the Crown, but they'll also acquire an extremely bad Reputation among Merfolk (though probably at a very low recognition factor).

If the party makes any effort to talk to the Merfolk, the Mers will be suspicious, but will eventually give their side of the story. With their livelihood seriously threatened, the humans will now be more willing to negotiate. The Merfolk will merely insist on the humans' pledge to never knowingly destroy a Dolphin or a Mer, and the Crown's promise to enforce that pledge. Any attempt to extort reparations from the Mers for those ships and crews lost in battle will result in the breaking off of negotiations and the resumption of hostilities.

The townspeople are a sullen, insular lot, and nothing short of a deliberate and successful attempt at Interrogation (or powerful, mind-reading magic) will get them to give up any useful information.



There are also interesting legends of Mermen born with fully functional gills, but with legs instead of a tail. Are these merely legends, or “throwbacks” to the race's former state?

Although they can survive indefinitely in fresh water, they find it unpleasant and dull. Few Mermen will willingly travel more than a couple of days away from the sea.

Merfolk have both gills and lungs, allowing them to breathe either air or water for a more or less indefinite time. In practice, however, a Merman undergoing a protracted stay on land must completely immerse himself for at least an hour every day, or his skin will begin to dry out, eventually causing cracking and open sores which lead to infection. Also, if a Merman is not allowed to swim freely for several hours every day, he risks allowing several important muscles to atrophy, eventually resulting in a noticeable overall loss of agility and vigor.

However, in order to remain truly healthy, an aquatic Merman must also surface periodically and exercise his lungs for several hours. Otherwise, he risks infection. Many Merfolk, particularly those who live near land, will surface daily; the bare minimum is once per week. Sometimes a Merman will pull himself onto the beach to sun himself, but generally they prefer to bask on off-shore rocks. Of course, a Merman can also simply float on the surface – they float very well when their lungs are inflated.

The Dolphins, of course, are air-breathers only, and must surface regularly to breathe. In addition to true Dolphins, some Merfolk communities have been known to travel in the company of porpoises, and even killer whales. Though they do not migrate together, Merfolk are on good terms with the great whales.

Merfolk reap the full bounty of the sea, eating all sorts of fish and undersea plants. Red meat makes them ill, but they can eat fowl, and will sometimes ambush sea-birds from below as they rest on the water. No Merman would ever eat any undersea mammal, considering it cannibalism.

Merfolk mate for life, though males may have more than one wife. Their children are born from eggs. Most births are single, though on rare occasions a Mermaid (the universal term for a Merfolk female, regardless of marital status) may lay two eggs at once. Other than that, their lifespan is identical to humanity's.

Although the Dolphins who live among the Merfolk are somewhat longer-lived than those who live in the wild, they still have a lifespan much shorter than the Merfolk. They reach adulthood at age 8, and begin to age at 25. They age twice as fast as Merfolk. Dolphins mate freely, and their young are born alive, usually one at a time.

Culture

The Merfolk are nomadic hunters and gatherers. Each band has a regular migratory route that can cover several thousand miles and require years for a complete circuit. Most Merfolk bands hug the shoreline, but there are a few that spend most of their time in the deep sea. These tribes are known for their barbarism, and also for their friendship with killer whales.

A typical community consists of 100 to 300 Merfolk and a like number of Dolphins. Less typical bands can range from a dozen or so individuals to as many as 500.

The chieftainship of a Merfolk band is hereditary. If a band splits in two, it is customary for the reigning chief to appoint one of his younger brothers or sons to take on the chieftainship of the new band. If a chieftain proves to be grossly incompetent, his people can depose him, but they are expected to look first to the former leader's immediate family when appointing a replacement.



Even more remarkable, the Merfolk have a king! In spite of their dispersed society and barbaric culture, there is one king over the whole race. The title is largely honorary, but every Merman knows who, and where, the current king is. Those who favor the theory that Merfolk are a lost race of humanity point to this obsolete shred of monarchy as evidence that the race once had a much more highly advanced culture, organized along human lines.

The current king is the chieftain of a band of about 150. He meets Merfolk outside his own band perhaps twice a year. Yet he claims to be hereditary ruler of the Merfolk race, 115th of his line – and none of the Merfolk dispute that claim.

Most Merfolk bands will meet at regular intervals to trade, gossip, and exchange brides. These congregations can include anywhere from two to several dozen bands, and usually meet at intervals of one, three or seven years. Frequently, the Merfolk hold their congregations near important human ports, to allow easy access for human and Goblin traders.

Politics

The Merfolk are well-liked by all the seafaring races (principally humans, Elves, and Goblins). They often trade with passing ships. They have also been known to save shipwrecked sailors from drowning, take messages to port regarding castaways, and even to tow small, becalmed vessels into currents.

However, they consider themselves the guardians of the ocean and her creatures, and woe betide the captain who harms or harasses Merfolk, or the fisherman who neglects to free Dolphins who become entangled in his nets. In the Merfolk's mind such mariners have convicted themselves and their crews to death by drowning.

The race is much less helpful to known pirates or slave-manned galleys than they are to other seafarers, even when those folk are not directly harassing the Merfolk.

The race is also close to the Sea Elves. They often act as food gatherers, spies, or treasure hunters for the Elves. A few Merfolk have even permanently settled with the Sea Elves in their undersea city. There they serve as guards, rangers, and herdsmen to large schools of fat, complacent food fish bred by the Elves.

The war between the Merfolk and the Fishmen stretches into the forgotten past, and will continue until one of the races is extinct. Merfolk and Dolphins consider capture by the Fishmen a fate worse than death, and they have been known to cut their own throats, or tear their flesh and swim directly into a school of sharks, rather than face it.



Merfolk Character Example

Irlis **150 points**

Age 22; 6'; 210 lbs.; pale green skin, black hair, piercing green eyes, dark green fish-half.

ST 11 [10]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 12 [20].

Speed 6.25; Move 12 (swim only).

Dodge 7; Parry 11; Block 9.

Advantages: Combat Reflexes [15]; Danger Sense [15]; Merfolk Racial Package [40].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Protect the innocent) [-5]; Impulsiveness [-10]; One Eye [-15]; Overconfidence [-10].

Quirks: Distrusts land folk; Fascinated by fire; Prefers to hunt alone. [-3]

Skills: Armory-13 [4]; Brawling-14 [2]; Buckler-16 [8]; Camouflage-13 [2]; Fishing-13 [2]; First Aid-12 [1]; Knife-14 [2]; Net-12 [2]; Scrounging-13 [2]; Spear-15 [8]; Stealth-13 [2]; Survival (Ocean)-13 [4]; Tactics-12 [4].

Irlis is an angry young Merman with a chip on his shoulder. He's notorious for always hunting alone. Since his solitary hunting expeditions are usually successful, nobody complains much, but most of his kinsmen privately believe that one of these days Irlis won't be coming back from the hunt. They may be right, but not for the reason they think. Irlis is disgruntled with the nomadic lifestyle, and planning to take off soon in search of adventure. He thinks he might like to prey on the Fishmen, or maybe on human pirates and slavers. Irlis is an idealist who doesn't like to see innocents harmed.

While still in his early teens, Irlis and some friends were gawking at a naval battle from below, when he became entangled in a large chunk of wreckage and lost his eye. Though the accident was his own fault, he has never since been able to bring himself to trust land folk.

He once saw a tree on the shore get hit by lightning and burn to the ground. Ever since he has had a secret fascination with the concept of fire.

Irlis is a seasoned character suitable for an NPC encounter.

Minotaurs in the Campaign

Minotaurs are as close to true “monsters” as a potential PC race should ever get. They’re savage, stupid, and uncivilized. Most of the time their only motivation is to attack, kill, and eat whatever they might encounter. Most Minotaurs will just be obstacles the adventurers have to fight their way through. Of course, the race does have extremely respectable origins – with its roots in classical myth, the Minotaur’s labyrinth is certainly the earliest adventuring “dungeon” to appear in heroic fiction.

Minotaurs and everybody else react to each other at -3.

For 55 points, a player can buy off all of an individual Minotaur’s mental disadvantages, and still have plenty of points left over to create a formidable 200-point character. If the party’s getting too lawless or bloodthirsty, the GM might find it amusing to introduce a mellow Minotaur to encourage more responsible behavior.

Minotaur PCs

A Minotaur PC will be extremely constrained in a 100-point campaign. A 100-point Minotaur will have to play most or all of his racial disadvantages, making him a real loose cannon – one that could blow up in the party’s face at any time! A 100-point Minotaur will fit best in a party oriented towards mayhem and lawlessness.

One interesting possibility in a 100-point campaign is to play a Minotaur mommy. The character will gain a number of starting points by trading 30 points of psychological disadvantages for a pack of newborn Dependents. A newborn Minotaur litter is worth 96 points (two or more dependents, completely helpless, appear almost all the time). This should not unbalance the game, as Minotaurs grow rapidly, and most of the mothers’ initial earned experience will go towards reducing the cost of her Dependents as they grow. By the time she drives them away, a pair of Minotaur kids is only worth 36 points. At that time, the Minotaur is probably ready to bear a new litter (for which she gets no extra points, although if she doesn’t give birth she’ll have to reduce her disadvantage total still more, down to the 30 points that she gets for the Odious Racial Habit and Berserk disadvantages).

The whole party will find keeping track of the Minotaur brats a challenge. However, such an unusual character should never be taken without the GMs’ consent and full cooperation.

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MINOTAURS

Minotaurs are monstrous creatures with the heads of bulls and the bodies of massive humans (figure Minotaur height normally for ST, then add 3”; weight is normal for their height). The fur on their heads is usually red or black, and matted. The rest of their bodies are exceptionally hairy. Their eyes are red and their skin is that of a swarthy Caucasian. Females also have the heads of bulls, though their lower bodies are those of stocky human women.

Minotaurs seldom wear armor, but prefer to wear some sort of clothing, even if it’s only a loin-cloth or untanned animal skin.

Minotaur Racial Package

75 points

Attributes: ST +3 [30]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -2 [-15]; HT +3 [30].

Racial Advantages: Absolute Direction [5]; Acute Hearing +3 [6]; DR +3 [9]; Horns (Long Tusks) [50]; Magic Resistance +3 [6]; Peripheral Vision [15]. Minotaurs also have an extra +2 DR on their exceptionally thick skulls [3].

Racial Disadvantages: Berserk [-15]; Bloodlust [-10]; Hideous Appearance [-20]; Intolerance [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Eat other sentients) [-15]; Uneducated [-5].

Racial Skills: Brawling skill (P/E) DX [1].

Notes: A pregnant or nursing female Minotaur will not have the Berserk or Odious Racial Habit disadvantages, but will have at least two dependents, of varying point cost depending on the age of the young.

Psychology

Minotaurs are ugly, savage, and aggressively antisocial. They are solitary by nature, and do not tolerate the proximity of any other Minotaur, even a mate.





All other creatures are viewed by Minotaurs as either enemies or food – usually both. Minotaurs will not hesitate to attack anything short of an army. Even a large Giant who strays into a Minotaur's hunting-grounds will eventually find himself the target of a kamikaze attack.

Minotaurs have a low martial cunning that makes them dangerous foes. They will stalk their prey carefully, picking a spot for their attack that minimizes the prey's chances of escape or defense. If stalking a large group, the Minotaur will bide his time, picking off stragglers until his opponents have been whittled down.

Once actually embroiled in a battle, the Minotaur is an implacable foe. He drives himself into a berserk rage that prevents him from yielding or accepting surrender. The favorite Minotaur weapon is a battle axe, preferably two-handed. Since few Minotaurs ever bother to learn any sort of trade, though, most make do with a rough wooden club until they can ambush a foe with a weapon more to their liking.

Minotaurs love cramped, confusing living quarters that provide plenty of good opportunities for ambush. The best known Minotaur lair is the underground cavern labyrinth, but they have also been known to haunt thick jungles and swamps, craggy badlands, ruins, and even the underground sewers of an active city.

Minotaur women are actually more numerous than the males, but most of the Minotaurs encountered are male. Minotaur women are almost always pregnant or nursing, and at such times chemical changes in their brains dampen the racial tendency to go berserk, and mute the racial taste for sentient meat.

A few, rare Minotaurs live among other races. Often these are captives or slaves. Keeping a Minotaur prisoner is a very dangerous hobby, but sometimes a Minotaur, if taken young and not abused, will become somewhat socialized. It's even more rare, but a few Minotaurs appear to lack the racial intolerance, and voluntarily leave the wilderness to live among others.

Most captive Minotaurs are gladiators – their size and ferocity makes them favorites in the arena. They are also often used as involuntary guards or executioners – locked in a dungeon or treasury and occasionally thrown food, they wait for the odd criminal or would-be thief to drop in. If the rightful owner needs access to the area, the Minotaur's daily meat is simply drugged with a powerful soporific.

Minotaur PCs (Continued)

More conventional Minotaur characters work best in 200+ point campaigns. At these levels the player has more freedom to individualize his character, and can also buy off enough disadvantages to make his character controllable. It is recommended that, whenever possible, a Minotaur PC buy off at least 20 points of mental disadvantages in any less-than-sociopathic campaign.

Minotaur mages are not encouraged. The GM should assess a substantial Unusual Background cost against any Minotaur who sells off his Magic Resistance and buys Magery.

The Minotaur's Horns

The Minotaur's horns are truly deadly weapons, bought as Horns (Long Tusks) for 50 points. The Minotaur can either butt in close combat for thrust/impaling damage, or do a head-toss at reach 1 for swing/cutting damage. In either case, the Minotaur must make a DX roll in order to hit with his horns.

As well, the Minotaur has an extra DR 2 on the head (above and beyond the racial DR 3 and the usual DR 2 for the skull), for a total of 7 there. (This isn't covered by the race creation rules; it's included as an example of an interesting feature added when a race is created, and assessed a value of 3 points.) Thus, the monster can indulge freely in head-butts, even against armored foes, with little fear of damage to itself.

Minotaur Adventure Seeds

Hot Date

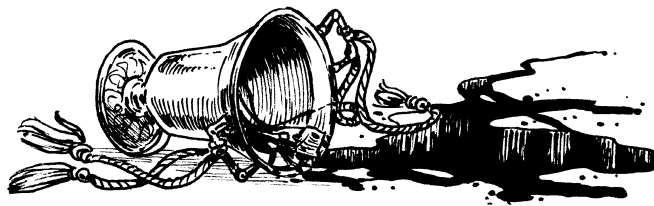
As the party is camping in the wilderness, the late-autumn night is shattered by a hellish wailing. If the party follows the sound they will find two huge male Minotaurs about to square off over a female. Three small Minotaur children huddle around their mother. The attention of all the Minotaurs is riveted on the fight, and they are at -3 on all sense rolls to notice the observers.

If the party remains concealed the males will fight until one is dead. The adventurers will be well advised to let the fight go on to its end, because as soon as their presence is known, all the surviving adult Minotaurs will go berserk and attack.

If their mother is harmed, the children will attack as well. They have average characteristics of 6, and no horns, skills or advantages. If the PCs are careful they can capture the young alive, to sell profitably into slavery or to raise themselves.

Minotaur Maze

Here's a fiendish predicament to use if the party is ever captured by a powerful foe. The party is drugged, stripped of all but minimal armor and weapons, and taken individually to separate parts of a vast maze. A like number of Minotaurs are also drugged and dropped in the maze. There's one exit – just wide enough for an unarmored human to wiggle through; the Minotaurs can't fit through it. Any PCs leaving the maze will be either released or recaptured, depending on the inclinations of the captors. Minotaurs who meet each other have a 50% chance of fighting to the death, and a 50% chance of both turning around and going in the opposite direction. Any time a Minotaur meets a PC, he will go berserk and attack to the death. Players should not be allowed to map unless they have Absolute Direction or Eidetic Memory. Their Absolute Direction advantage will give the Minotaurs a 100% chance to recognize a corridor they've already been in and remember the route between two points they've already visited. Prisoners who find the exit will be allowed to re-enter the maze to seek their friends, provided they do so immediately.



There will always be a small number of Minotaurs who are both free and social. There are records of Minotaurs who learned a craft and made an honest living among humans. Others take to a life of adventure. Most such are desperate, dangerous individuals living as bandits or enforcers, but there are records of a Minotaur falling in among noble companions and becoming a hero.

Minotaurs have no art, no music and no language. They communicate by learning a few grunted words of whatever race they usually prey on. Many don't even know that much, and are effectively mute – not from any sort of physical handicap, but from never having bothered to learn how to communicate. Minotaur names are monosyllabic grunts and growls – Snarg, Gorm, Garr.

Minotaurs cannot be said to have a proper religion, but individuals have been heard to curse the spirits of their ancestors.

Ecology

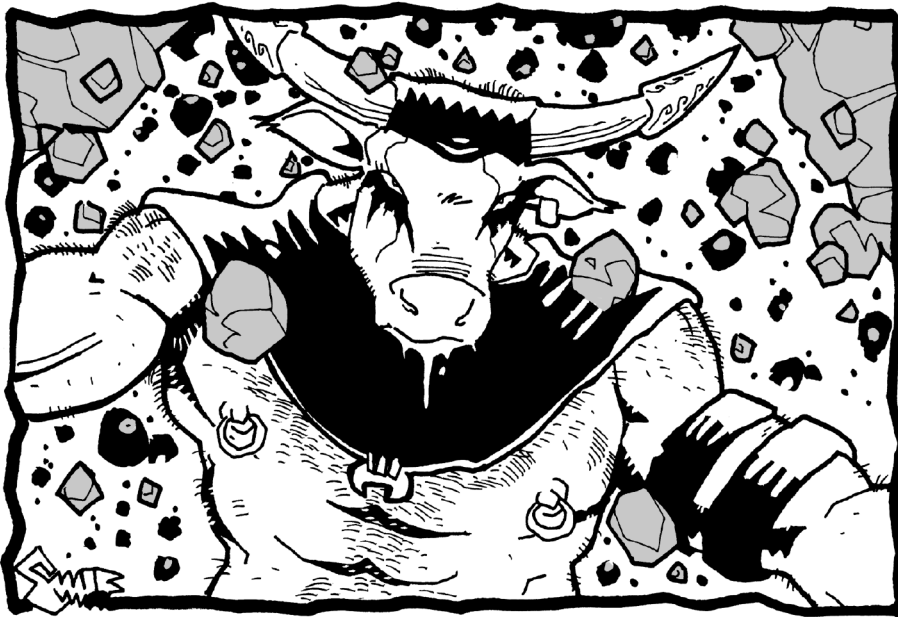
It seems certain that such a bizarre hybrid race as the Minotaurs cannot be natural. Some legends say that the Minotaurs are the result of a curse placed on the Earth by a powerful demon or dark god. Others suggest the race is an unsuccessful experiment by the Dark Elves to breed a warrior and servant race.

Minotaurs are strictly carnivorous. They enjoy the meat of intelligent beings, and males seem to also have a preference for the flesh of virgins. They are not above cannibalism, and they like their meat fresh. Only a starving Minotaur will eat carrion.

Minotaurs are born in litters of three to six. A female can bear children every two years. The young stay with their mother for only two years, then she drives them away to fend for themselves. A surprising number survive to maturity.

Minotaurs are fully grown by age 10. They begin to age at about 45.





Culture

Minotaurs cannot be properly said to have a culture, since they never associate with one another, and seldom with other races.

The only time Minotaurs come together is to mate. The Minotaur rutting season is in the early winter. The female summons her suitors with wailing roars that can be heard for miles, and with powerful pheromones that create a scent trail a male can follow for days.

A female stays in rut for 5 weeks out of the year. She will only mate at the end of that time. If any male appears early, the female will hold him off through force or by hiding. If more than one male is attracted to the same female, the rivals will fight to the death. The victor will offer the female first pick of the choicest parts of the fallen, in a savage courting gift. Only when she is finished will her suitor devour any leavings. Such combats might occur several times over a single female. There are usually more females than males, however, and often no suitors will answer the mating call. When this happens the female will stay in rut for as much as two months, and will mate with the first male to approach. Very old males, whose strength is waning, will often wait for this part of the season to seek a mate, in order to avoid combat with younger, stronger rivals.

At the end of her season (always on the night of the full moon), the female and her surviving suitor (if she has one) will consummate the relationship, mating only once. Fortunately, this almost always results in impregnation. Since Minotaurs have gestation periods of about 14 months, the female will not mate again for two years. When her next litter is born, she will drive her previous batch of young away to fend for themselves. At that time the young are already about the size of a six-year old human child, and much stronger.

Politics

Minotaurs are universally loathed. Although certain abnormally social individuals have found a place among human or Orcish society, most races will not hesitate to destroy any Minotaur on sight.

If any race can be said to hate Minotaurs more than others, it's the Dwarves. This is because the Minotaurs like to slip into remote sections of Dwarven halls and mines and prey on any unfortunate passers-by.

Minotaur Character Example

Snarg

100 points

Age 28; 6'2"; 190 lbs.; black hair, olive skin, wears a fur cloak and loin cloth.

ST 14 [10]; DX 12 [10]; IQ 8 [-]; HT 14 [10].

Speed 6.5; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 7.

Advantages: High Pain Threshold [10]; Minotaur Racial Package [75].

Disadvantages: Gluttony [-5]; Greed [-15]; Gullibility [-10] Miserliness [-10].

Skills: Brawling-13* [1]; Tracking-11 [8]; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-15 [16].

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

Like most Minotaurs, Snarg is an ignorant, bloodthirsty savage. He's somewhat unusual, however, in that his hatred for other living things is at war with a passionate love of gold. Snarg is also a bit of a sucker, and his Greed combined with his Gullibility mean that he might be persuaded to accompany an adventuring party if the promised rewards were sufficient. Of course, such adventurers will want to be very, very careful not to get Snarg annoyed, and those promised rewards had *better* materialize by the end of the adventure.

Snarg is a decent tracker, but he's mostly of value for his remarkable skill with his terrifying two-handed battle axe. Snarg is a glutton, and will eat himself sick if given the opportunity.

Snarg is a 100-point character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.



OGRES

Ogres in the Campaign

Ogres were designed to fill several different possible slots in the campaign. On the one hand, they can certainly fulfill their traditional role as monsters – the larger, uglier cousins of the Orcs. They can also take a more heroic part as “gentle giants” – simple, affectionate, but physically formidable sidekicks, companions, or guardians. Between these two extremes are any number of gradations, from savage wild Ogres to the dreaded Ogre tavern bouncer.

Of course, it's important to remember that most races (except Orcs and their associates) react to Ogres at -3. Ogres react to other races normally, unless they're hungry.

If he feels his campaign calls for it, the GM can always choose a particular point on this continuum and say that all (or almost all) Ogres in his game act like that – all ravening monsters, or all peaceful behemoths. It is also quite possible to have a believable campaign in which all the above sorts of Ogres are represented, with each individual's behavior depending on where and how he was raised.



Ogres are large, immensely strong humanoids. They stand between 7 and 8 feet tall, and are much more muscular than the human norm. Their features are coarse and vacant. Their bodies are very hairy, but the hair on their heads is either scant or missing. Their teeth are irregular and sharp, their complexions are pasty and blotched, and it is quite common for one eye to be strangely bloated. Their posture leans forward, and their arms are very long, in a manner suggestive of a giant, hairless ape.

The GM should figure an Ogre's height based on his ST without the Enhanced ST advantage, then increase it by 60%. Average weight is 5 times that of a human of the same ST (without the Enhanced ST). Half-Ogres have normal height for their ST, but twice normal weight.

Ogres usually wear some clothing – typically rags or rancid furs. They love armor, but have trouble finding any that fits.

Ogre Racial Package

95 points

Attributes: Enhanced ST 20/12 [74]; DX -2 [-15]; IQ -3 [-20]; HT +4 [45].

Racial Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +1 [2]; DR +3 [9]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Magic Resistance +2 [4]; Night Vision [10]; PD +1 [25].

Racial Disadvantages: Hideous (Intimidating and ugly) [-20]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Eats other sentients) [-15]; Uneducated [-5].

Racial Skills: Brawling (P/E) DX [1].

Half-Ogre Racial Package

45 points

The Half-Ogre is the offspring of an Ogre and an Orc. Half-Ogres are rare. They resemble slender, hairy Ogres 6 to 7 feet tall.

Attributes: Enhanced ST 16/12 [50]; DX -1 [-10]; IQ -3 [-20]; HT +2 [20]; Extra Hit Points +2 [10].

Racial Advantages: Acute Taste and Smell +1 [2]; Alertness +1 [5]; DR +2 [6]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Magic Resistance +1 [2]; Night Vision [10].

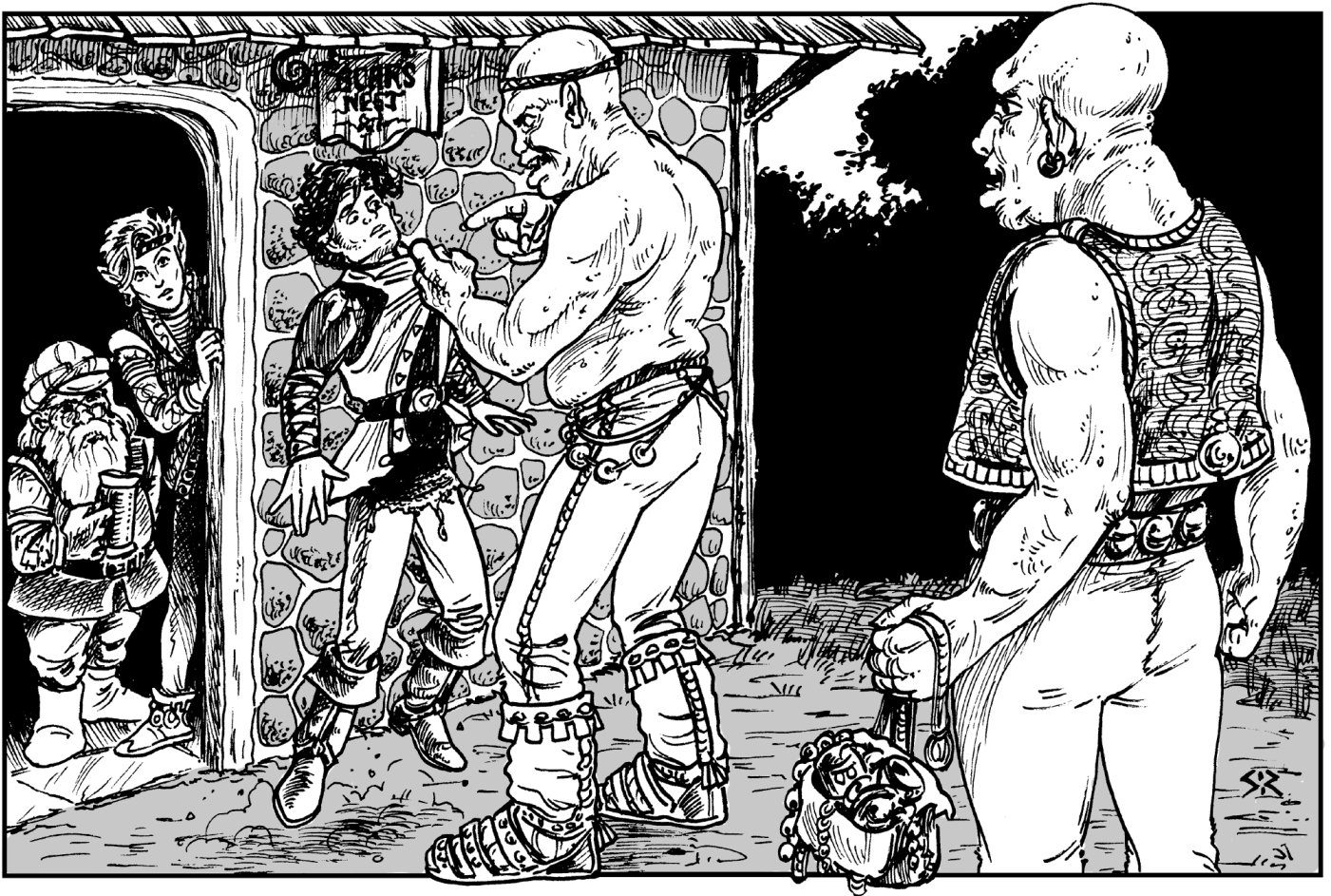
Racial Disadvantages: Intolerance [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Eats other sentients) [-15]; Ugly [-10]; Uneducated [-5].

Psychology

Ogres are easily the stupidest of the major races. They are not as purely evil as Orcs, but are savage and unpredictable. These traits, combined with their low racial IQ, make them a dangerous foe.

Although individuals are capable of sickening depravities, there are just as many capable of affection and loyalty. As a race, they are not at all malevolent. Two things prevent the Ogres from gaining general acceptance among the “civilized” races – first, their immense power and abject stupidity make them an unacceptable risk to life and property, and second, Ogres are stubbornly incapable of comprehending that it is anything less than perfect manners to eat the body of a dead enemy (or, for that matter, friend).

They are nearly immune to the weather, and live anywhere from the arctic to the desert. Ogres often live happily underground.



There is no record of any Ogre ever successfully learning even the simplest spell. They have a superstitious dread of magic in *any* manifestation. Few Ogres will ever willingly serve a sorcerer or use a magical device. If an Ogre is harmed or frightened by a magic item, he will either attempt to destroy it or flee. It is prudent to remember that the Ogrish mind will often be unable to distinguish between a magical device and clever machinery.

Ogres love to fight, and are completely fearless in battle. Their preferred weapon is a massive two-handed mace or club (especially one with spikes – Ogres really love spikes), but two-handed axes, flails, and swords are also common, as are thrusting spears and polearms.

They disdain shields as cowardly, but love armor of all types. Of course, Ogres are incapable of manufacturing armor themselves, meaning that they usually have to either steal armor and attempt crude modifications to its size, or induce a smith to construct it especially for them.

Most Ogres speak a debased human-Orcish pidgin. Their names are usually meaningless monosyllables – Og, Gog, Mog, and so on.

They have no comprehension whatsoever of art or poetry – they are incapable of even the irrational hatred the Orcs feel for beauty. Some Ogres like music, but they are completely incapable of producing it themselves. Ogres do dance – an awkward, ponderous hopping that can unexpectedly turn into a free-for-all battle royal. Other races are most unsafe at an Ogre cotillion.

Ogres are capable of only the vaguest sort of religious consciousness, and will profess any religion that is presented to them persuasively, though the moral tenets of that religion will probably have little effect on the Ogre's behavior. For example, a "Christian" Ogre might enjoy the idea of traveling to the Holy Land to kill the heathen, but he would be unlikely to show mercy or practice celibacy because of his faith.

Ogre PCs

It is recommended that the GM assess an Unusual Background cost to any player who wishes to eliminate the racial Magic Resistance advantage and Uneducated disadvantage and play a magic-using Ogre. Otherwise, the net change in point cost will be a mere -1 point, which inadequately represents the fact that Ogre wizards are quite contrary to the racial conception. Suggested Unusual Background costs are at least 30 points for an Ogre and 25 points for a Half-Ogre. It is also recommended that the GM limit PC Ogres (and Half-Ogres) to a maximum IQ 10. Like Kobolds, even exceptional Ogres aren't *that* smart.

In spite of the very high racial point cost, an Ogrish brawler could be effectively designed in a 100-point campaign. The player might even be able to spare the points to buy off the Odious Racial Habit disadvantage. Higher point value campaigns allow Ogres to be more powerful, but not much more versatile – if the player wants anything besides a big, scary fighter he should look to other races.

Ogre Adventure Seeds

Little Ogre Lost

An Ogre was taken in infancy and raised as one of the house-servants in a rural castle. He has become the faithful servant, protector and friend of the young heir to the family title. Now the young noble is 14 years old and making his first trip to the big city. On the first day a joyous crowd participating in a street festival sweep the boy and his Ogre apart. The young lord is in town on important family business, and cannot spare the time to hunt for his friend. He hires the PCs to find the Ogre, keep him out of trouble and return him to his master in one piece.

The Ogre, a simple soul, is lost, confused, and frightened. He has spent the last 24 hours ineffectually looking for either his master or a quiet hiding place, in the process innocently damaging a good deal of property and scaring the dickens out of the city folk. Even now a mob is forming to hunt down and destroy the "monster" . . . and he's starting to get hungry . . .

Open Season

The master of the largest gladiatorial arena in the land is looking for Ogre "recruits." A bounty of \$5,000 is offered for every Ogre delivered to the arena. What the party does with this opportunity is up to them . . . they might try a daring raid into the heart of Orc territory, they might enter the wilderness and track an elusive band of wild Ogres, or they might simply creep up behind any local farm hand or builder's assistant Ogres with an iron bar and a very large, sturdy bag.

Ecology

There have been Ogres for at least as long as there have been Orcs, and the history of these two races is inexorably intertwined. Orcs have always sought out the Ogres for their effectiveness in battle and their usefulness as heavy labor, while the Ogres idolize the Orcs for their (comparatively) quick wit and dominant personalities. An Orc tribe of any size will have at least a few Ogres living among them.

Some Ogres live apart from the Orcs. These are typically small family/tribes of 4-10 adult individuals, living the most primitive of hunter/gatherer existences. Such wild Ogres are less malicious than those under the thrall of the Orcs. Though marginally less dangerous, they tend to be violently suspicious of strangers.

Ogres are mostly carnivorous, though they do gather a few nuts and roots. Ogres are particularly fond of the fresh meat of intelligent creatures, including other Ogres and Orcs. Ogres prefer their meat uncooked.

Ogre females will only mate with the strongest male in their tribe. Younger or smaller males must either challenge the leader, wait their turns or kidnap a female and run off to start a new tribe. Ogres gestate for 20 months, and births are always single, but the extremely vigorous Ogrish constitution allows the mother to remain fully active up to the moment labor begins. Thus, a female can remain pregnant almost continuously, without reducing her usefulness to the tribe.

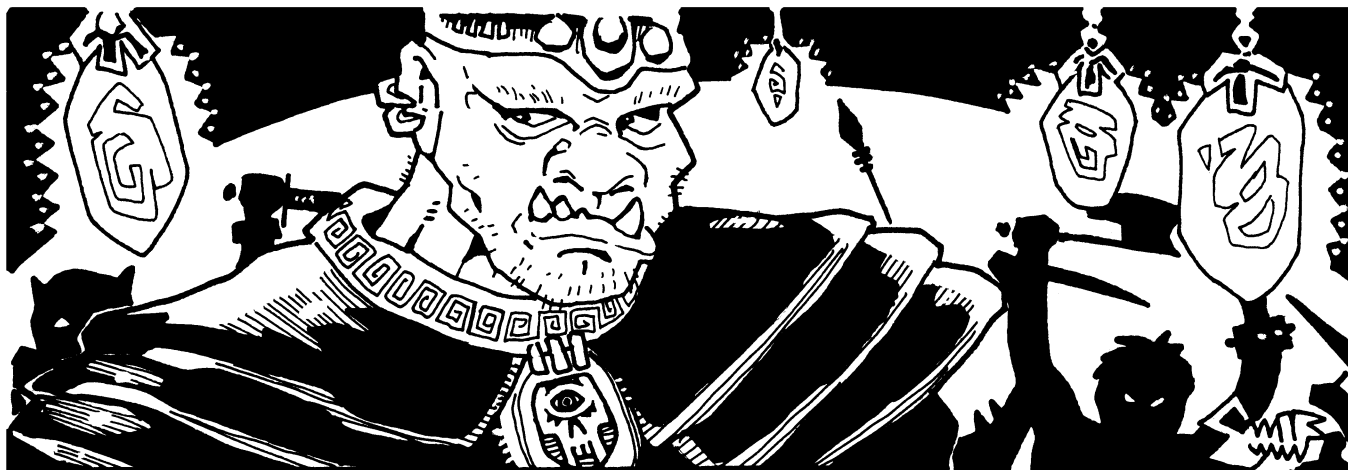
Young Ogres are independent of their mothers after about a year, but do not reach their full adult strength until about age 20. Ogres begin to age at 50, but most aging Ogres are killed by younger rivals long before they die of old age.

The Half-Ogre combines the worst traits of both the Orcs and the Ogres. They almost never leave their tribes, and are seldom encountered in the wild.

Culture

Ogres have only the most primitive of cultures. The tribe/family is under the absolute tyranny of the dominant male. Anybody who steps out of line must either passively submit to whatever beating the leader might wish to administer, or be prepared to fight the leader to the death. A miscreant can always flee,





but when he returns he will have to take the beating, or, worse, he will be treated as a stranger – to be attacked and driven off by the whole tribe.

Ogres that live among the Orcs lead a somewhat more comfortable and orderly existence. The alpha male still has authority, though he defers to the Orc chieftain and his officers. The biggest perk to being the toughest Ogre in an Orc tribe is that he retains sole proprietorship of the females. An Ogre will not behave subserviently to Orcs – he considers himself their equal. Any attempt to precipitously command an Ogre will probably result in the unfortunate demise of the presumptuous Orc. However, after generations of practice, the Orcs have become very good at manipulating the Ogres into doing whatever they wish.

Finally, there are a few Ogres who live among the civilized races. It is not easy for a human community to accept an Ogre to its bosom, but it has been known to happen. Usually the Ogre is an exceptionally intelligent individual, with the willpower to confine his diet to unintelligent meat. These “village Ogres” often work as laborers, blacksmith’s assistants, bouncers or guardsmen. More commonly, an Ogre living among humans will join with a band of mercenaries or adventurers, or become part of the entourage of a powerful individual. Under such conditions tragedy is much less likely if the Ogre goes out of control, and his companions are better equipped to bring him back in line (or eliminate him) than a pack of farmers and shopkeepers.

Politics

The close and ancient ties between the Ogres and the Orcs have already been discussed. Ogres usually get on well with Trolls, when both sorts are under the domination of the Orcs.

Giants hate Ogres for reasons of their own, and the Ogres respond to such antagonism as might be expected. In fact, an Ogre will gleefully brawl with anything approximately his own size, including Minotaurs, Reptile Men, and Centaurs.

Most “village Ogres” live among humans, but they have also been known to settle with Halflings, Goblins, and even (though this is extremely rare) the sylvan races.

The Dwarves have, from time to time, experimented with Ogre labor in their mines and forges. However, so many Dwarves have met their ends at the hands of Ogres through the centuries that most Dwarves remain unwilling to welcome even friendly Ogres into their halls.

Ogre Character Example

Alexander 100 point

Age 35; 9’6”; 1,200 lbs.; a fat Ogre with a paunch, wears only a loin cloth, carries an iron mace.

ST 21/13 [10]; **DX** 10 [20]; **IQ** 7 [-]; **HT** 14 [-].

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 6.

Advantages: Ogre Racial Package [95].

Disadvantages: Bad Temper [-10]; Duty [-10]; Eunuch [-5]; Fat [-10]; Gluttony [-5].

Skills: Brawling-12* [3]; Throwing-10 [4]; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-12 [8].

*Includes adjustments for racial packages.

Alexander is an Ogre slave, taken as a small child and castrated for use as a harem guard – a position he’s filled for most of his life. He’s content, even happy with his lot. He likes the plentiful, rich food (occasionally augmented with a fresh criminal or suspected traitor). He likes the pretty rooms he guards and the girls are nice to him. He will gladly risk his life for any of the ladies he guards.

Although he never loses his temper with his master or his charges (he’s not *that* stupid), the other guards and servants have learned not to annoy “Big Al.” Soft living, combined with emasculation, has allowed him to develop a considerable paunch, but it would not be wise to take that as a sign of weakness.

He is a balanced character suitable for use as a PC or NPC encounter.

ORCS

Orcs in the Campaign

Orcs are well-entrenched as the “cannon fodder” of fantasy roleplaying. Well, it’s a dirty job, but somebody has to do it.

On the other hand, they possess an interesting culture, if the GM cares to explore it. Orcish society can be fascinating in its ruthless efficiency, and no one can argue against the fact that the Orcs possess a formidable racial courage and audacity.

Both the players and the PCs will have a host of preconceptions concerning Orcs. Every once in a while – not too often, or the players will catch on – the GM should have the Orc commander offer a truce . . . *and honor it*, or have the captive Orc promise to show the adventurers where the treasure is if they spare his life . . . *and then show them the treasure*. A good way to humble a party is to have an Orc rival behave more bravely, intelligently, or honorably than the PCs! If the party tends to chop first and ask questions later, the GM can toss in an Orc or two who are valued servants to an important noble, then let the hapless adventurers talk their way out of an Orcslaughter charge.

The GM must remember to make Orcs cunning, sneaky and dangerous . . . not victims or “easy wins” for the party. Likewise, he should beware of designing his Orcs with a rubber stamp. All intelligent NPC races should be made up of individuals. Some Orcs will be more depraved than average, some will be more clever and sneaky, and some will just wish to be left alone.

In general, Orcs react to other races at -3, and vice versa. The exceptions to this rule are the Ogres and Trolls, who react normally to Orcs.

Most Orcs will still be “cannon fodder,” but the GM could make a small tribe or an extra-powerful individual the party’s special Enemy. It can also be interesting to maneuver the party into a situation where they are forced to accept an Orc Ally or Patron.

Most NPC Orcs should be built on 0 to 25 points, though leader-types will have up to 100 points. Orc heroes built on 200 points or more are possible, though extremely rare.

Orcs are squat, hairy humanoids. They have broad noses, small, squinty eyes, and broad mouths dominated by enlarged canine teeth. Most Orcs stand about 5½ feet tall (height is 2” less than normal for their ST, weight is 10 pounds heavier). Their arms are long and powerful, their legs are bowed, and their hands and feet are broad and coarse. Their skin is dark with a leathery texture. Though not furred, their bodies are much hairier than the average human’s. Curiously, the hair on their head is sparse, short and wiry. Few Orcs have any sort of facial hair. Hair colors other than black are very rare. Most Orcs wear grimy hides and furs, though slaves go naked and leaders wear crude armor and perhaps a few pieces of barbaric finery.

Orc Racial Package

-10 points

Attributes: IQ -2 [-15]; HT +2 [20]; Extra Hit Points +1 [5].

Racial Advantages: Acute Hearing +2 [4].

Racial Disadvantages: Intolerance [-10]; Reputation -3 [-15].

Racial Skills: Brawling (P/E) DX [1].

Notes: The GM can assign one or more of the following advantages to individualize a tribe of Orcs: Acute Vision, Alertness, Combat Reflexes, High Pain Threshold, Night Vision, Recovery, Rapid Healing, and Temperature Tolerance. The disadvantages Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Bully and Unattractive Appearance are also very common, on both the tribal and individual level.



Half-Orc Racial Package

0 points

Half-Orcs are the offspring of an Orc and a human. A Half-Orc can pass for a human, though they are usually quite homely. Half-Orcs have normal height for their ST, and weigh 10 pounds more than a human of the same height.

Attributes: IQ -1 [-10]; HT +1 [10]; Extra Hit Points +1 [5].

Racial Advantages: Acute Hearing +2 [4].

Racial Disadvantages: Reputation -2 [-10].

Racial Skills: Brawling (P/E) DX [1].

Psychology

Orcs are almost perfect survival machines – mean, tough, and prolific. They can thrive almost anywhere, overwhelming and destroying anything that gets in their way.

The only thing preventing the Orcs from taking over the world is their almost complete inability to cooperate with – or even tolerate – other races. Their vicious drive to dominate and destroy others is so overwhelming that potential victims will always be at maximum alert at the approach of Orcs.

Among their own kind, Orcs are highly social – they gather into large tribes and nations – but they’re not particularly efficient or organized. Tribes are constantly expending time and energy warring with other tribes or squabbling for control of their own group.

Periodically, a great leader will arise among the Orcs, to gather several different nations into a formidable alliance and rampage across civilization. Inevitably, however, the leader is killed in battle or assassinated by the enemy (or his own underlings). His alliance then splinters, and the remnants of his force are easily annihilated. Nonetheless, an Orcish invasion remains one of the greatest fears of any civilized nation.

Orcs believe that the universe is intrinsically hostile, and that the only thing an individual can do is grab as much as he can while he’s alive and kill anything that tries to take it away from him. Many Orcs are pathologically paranoid.

Orcs are fearless fighters; every adult Orc knows how to use weapons and usually goes armed. Possession of a sword or two-handed weapon is a sure sign of high standing among the Orcs. Likewise, only the most respected leaders and heroes own armor or shields.

Though not unknown, magic use is extremely rare among the Orcs. They fear and hate magic and will slay anyone who shows any inclination in that direction. The only exceptions to this rule seem to be primitive tribal shamans who prey upon Orcish superstition.

In many lands, merely being an Orc is considered a capital crime. In some of the rougher human cities, though, a few Orcs live among men. These individuals are almost always at the very lowest strata of society and are usually part of the criminal element.

Orcs have a deep hatred of beauty, and love to destroy or deface what other races consider beautiful. Nonetheless, they do have art – most notably the macabre and obscene carvings which decorate their homes and artifacts. They also have music – Orcs have strong voices, and their dark war-chants and work songs can produce lifelong nightmares for other races.

They are clever craftsmen, particularly in the construction of weapons, siege engines, and implements of torture.

There was once an Orcish language, but only the most remote and isolated tribes still remember it. Most modern Orcs speak a debased form of the human tongue. Orcish names are either a single, meaningless grunt or a descriptive nickname. Orcs almost never learn to read.



Orc PCs

There’s nothing to prevent Orc PC or NPC party members. As always, however, the GM is free to declare Orc PCs inappropriate to his campaign.

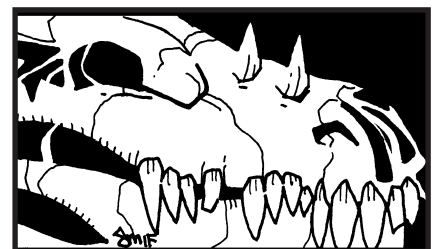
Likewise, if the GM does not want homicidal or psychopathic PCs in the campaign, he should make his wishes known. Orcs do not *have* to be played as maniacs, but they will tend to attract players whose tastes run in that direction.

Most Orcs will lean toward the more unsavory adventuring specialties – mercenary, thief, assassin, tax collector, secret police agent, pirate. Other types of adventurer are certainly possible, however.

If the GM allows Orc PCs at all, he should freely allow the players to buy off the Intolerance disadvantage and any applicable (antisocial) tribal disadvantages, if they wish.

The biggest problem an Orc adventurer will face is the eagerness of almost everybody he meets to see him dead, regardless of *his* behavior. An Orc living mostly among other races might be well advised to invest in a helmet with a full-face visor and a large cloak.

Half-Orcs can be played as anything from slightly better-groomed Orcs to romantic outsiders. The GM certainly should not force players of Half-Orcs to play their characters as maniacal psychopaths.



Orc Adventure Seeds

Eviction Notice

A petty king or local duke hires the adventurers to clear a certain area within his lands of Orcs. The area in question is about 100 square miles of heavily-forested hills. About 200 Orcs, divided up into a dozen or so small bands, make their home in this area. The party is to find the bands and engage them one by one, or, if a group is too large for frontal assault, drive them towards a certain canyon where the ruler will construct an ambush.

If the party stops and asks questions at any of the several villages surrounding the area, they'll find the locals curiously non-plussed at their lord's action. Nobody around those parts has any particular need for the Orc hills, and the Orcs themselves never bother anybody – sometimes they even come down to trade.

The Orcs in question are a scraggly and degenerate lot, eking out a miserable living through hunting and trapping, and careful to do nothing to offend the much more numerous humans who surround them on all sides. The lord wants them cleared out so he can present their lands to a younger son.

The first Orcs the party finds will throw down their weapons and beg piteously for mercy. It should be obvious that the job at hand is one of slaughter, not battle.

This scenario is designed to force the party to make some hard moral choices. There is no question of rescuing the Orcs, since that would involve sneaking 200 Orcs through several hundred miles of heavily settled, hostile human territory. Direct action against the lord's troops would be suicidal, even with the Orcs' help. The party will probably be forced to either: a) warn the Orcs and then abandon both them and its promised fee, or b) grit its teeth and carry out the grisly and dishonorable assignment. The only possibility for a happy ending is if some party member contacts the lord and succeeds in a roll vs. Diplomacy-5. In that case the lord will agree to grant the Orcs safe passage to one of his remoter borders, provided the party goes along to see that the Orcs don't turn aside or steal from the locals (raising the knotty question of just what the dirt-poor Orcs will eat on their long journey).

Of course, if any of the PCs has a stronghold somewhere, he could probably obtain a cheap (if rather ragtag) company of Orcs to man it!

Orcs are maltheists. Many serve dark and ancient gods and spirits. Others serve nothing at all. Orcs aren't sure who or what the supreme being might be, but they know he has it in for the Orcs, and someday they'll get him for it . . .

Ecology

Orcs love the underground, and their earliest ancestors might have been troglodytes. The exact origins of the race are shrouded in mystery, though it is known that both Elves and Dwarves warred with the Orcs before the two races met one another – ages before man even appeared.

Orcs can eat anything, but they prefer raw, red meat and warm blood. They seldom eat other sentients except when supplies are scarce, or when they want to terrify captives, or when they're in a bad mood . . .

Orcs mate casually and often. A strong or important male can reserve certain females for himself, but the custom of marriage is alien to the Orcish mind. When an Orc gets tired of a wench, he merely drives her away from his quarters for whoever wants to claim her (or sometimes slays her, so no one else can have her).

Orcs spawn in litters of 3 to 8, and a woman can bear children every year for 30 years or more. Infant mortality is high, but the race is still terribly prolific. The constant warfare of the Orcs is, in part, a method of population control. Since most warriors are male, there are usually several females to every male Orc.

An Orc is considered an adult at age 12. They begin to age at about 40. Unless he is very politically powerful, an aging Orc is slain when his feebleness begins to outweigh his usefulness to the tribe.

Half-Orcs are usually the product of wartime rape. Contrary to the general human assumption, the unfortunate mother is Orcish as often as she's human. Both societies hate these crossbreeds, and few survive to adulthood. Most Half-Orcs are slaves, or the lowest forms of brigand or thug. A few, however, have become great leaders among the Orcs, and there are always those who rise above their origins and live productive, virtuous lives. There are even a few mighty Half-Orc heroes recorded in the sagas.

Culture

Orc tribes and nations have been found in the plains, jungles and forests, in hills and mountains, in deserts and on desert islands, in the arctic, and in the tropics. The most organized and advanced Orcish nations, however, always live underground. Their society can range from a scraggly, primitive tribe of one or two dozen to a militarily advanced and strictly regimented horde numbering in the tens of thousands.

Orcs are ruled by the strongest, cleverest, and most ruthless. No Orc has any rights, only privileges he's fought for. Since the males are usually stronger than the females, the females are frequently abused. If a female is strong enough to dominate the males for a time, her rivals will wait until she's weak from pregnancy and get her then. Life is very hard for the Orcish women.

More than half the population of most Orcish nations will be slaves. Most are Orcs of other tribes taken in war, but there are always a few members of other races, valued more as trophies than workers. Kobolds are the most common – treated more like cattle than slaves, but Hobgoblins and Gargoyles are often seen as well. Humans, Halflings, and Goblins are more of a novelty. Best of all is an Elf or a Dwarf, though such captives seldom survive their imprisonment for long. Slave drivers occupy a high station in Orcish society, right below torturers and war leaders.

Clever engineers and artificers can also earn a few privileges in Orcish society, under the patronage of a leader with enough intelligence to see the advantages of such a minion.



Orcs have no crime, because there is no law other than “Thou shalt not annoy those who are stronger or more powerful than you, neither shalt thou get in their way when they’re in a bad mood.”

Whether above or below the ground, nomadic or permanent in nature, an Orc camp can always be recognized by the squalor, filth, and stench, and by the wanton destruction Orcs leave behind wherever they may be. Orc children are taken away from their mothers when they’re weaned, and raised in groups in a stark, barracks-like environment by the oldest and cruelest Orc warriors. Those who emerge (and many don’t) have had all mercy and love beaten out of them, and are ready to find their place in the hellish world of the Orcs.

Orcs attack in hordes. Often a vanguard of lightly armed slaves and the weakest Orcs are driven against the enemy’s front lines, while better armed units of elite warriors make controlled strikes against the flanks and rear.

Certain great leaders have forged highly trained Orcish fighting forces of impressive skill and discipline. Such leaders are sometimes very gifted Orcs; other times they have been human mages or warriors, or even intelligent Giants or demons.

Politics

Orcs are the mortal enemies of practically all other intelligent races – few people don’t automatically regard Orcs as deadly enemies. The closest thing to a racial ally are the hulking Ogres, who often live among the Orcs. The sub-human Trolls also sometimes share the Orcs’ abode in exchange for wartime help. Orcs have been known to ally with Giants and Minotaurs, and sometimes with Kobolds (such “alliances” are inevitably unfavorable to the Kobolds, but marginally preferable to mass slavery or extermination).

All other races are seen by the Orcs as merely rivals or victims. However, their hatred for Elves, Dwarves, and humans is special.

Orcs hate Elves above all else. There’s no good reason for this, other than the fact that the Elves are everything graceful, beautiful, and noble that Orcs can never aspire to. This irrational rage is stronger even than the formidable Orcish survival instinct – an Orc will eagerly sacrifice himself for the chance to slay an Elf.

The hatred for Dwarves and humans is more understandable. Orcs war with Dwarves because they covet the Dwarves’ broad, dry halls, and their rich mines. The Dwarves reciprocate Orcish hatred much more aggressively and persistently than any other single race.

Finally, humanity is the only race that can challenge the Orcs in terms of fecundity, adaptability, and sheer aggressiveness. Though not as durable as Orcs, humans are considerably more intelligent and much better organized, making the contest a close one. Certain cynical scholars have suggested that the Elves’ special patronage of humanity came about because the Elves foresaw the eventual domination of the Earth by either humans or Orcs, and picked humans as the marginally better choice.

Orc Character Example

No-Nose

100 points

Age 25; 6’; 175 lbs.; a particularly ugly Orc with no nose and a large scar on his face.

ST 13 [30]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 9 [10]; HT 14/15 [20].
Speed 6.5; Move 8 (Running).

Dodge 6; Parry 6; Block 6.

Advantages: Alertness +1 [5]; Status 2 [10]; Toughness (DR 1) [10].

Disadvantages: Alcoholism [-15]; Bully [-10]; No Sense of Smell/Taste [-5]; Orc Racial Package [-5]; Ugly Appearance [-10].

Quirks: Always carries lots of weapons; Wears heavy earrings; Doesn’t want to rule. [-3]

Skills: Axe/Mace-13 [4]; Brawling-13* [-]; Broadsword-13 [4]; Camouflage-10 [2]; Carousing-13 [1]; Climbing-13 [4]; Escape-10 [1]; Fast-Draw (Sword)-13 [2]; Interrogation-9 [2]; Leadership-9 [2]; Politics-9 [2]; Running-12 [1]; Shield-12 [1]; Spear-13 [4]; Spear Throwing-12 [1]; Stealth-12 [2]; Survival (Plains)-9 [2]; Tactics-9 [4]; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-12 [2]; Whip-12 [2].

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

No-Nose acquired his *nom de guerre* in his first battle, against a quick-beaked Great Eagle. The scar makes him look even uglier than the average Orc.

A notable hero among his own people, No-Nose is a feared general, but not otherwise a great leader. Instead of running things, he prefers to throw his considerable support behind whatever faction or leader seems to be headed for the top. No-Nose drinks too much, but it hasn’t yet affected his performance.

His favorite weapon is a fine broadsword he won in battle against Elves, but he is never seen without at least three weapons. In battle he carries his sword, a spear, a two-bladed axe, a whip, and a mace. He owns a set of battered plate armor, stained a vivid blood-red. He always wears at least six large metal earrings.

No-Nose is a balanced character suitable for use as a PC, NPC encounter, or Enemy.

REPTILE MEN

Reptile Men in the Campaign

There is no reason for the party to fight every band of Reptile Men they meet. If treated courteously, the Reptiles will often be content to let the party pass. They might even become valuable friends.

However, life is hard in the blasted desert, and if the party appears to be endangering the local tribe's food supply, or just getting in the way, they will eventually come to blows.

If the party does battle Reptile Men, they're in for a memorable fight. Reptiles are physically tougher than most of the other races in this book, and don't have as limited an IQ as of many of the stronger folk.

The ancient ruined cities of the Reptile Men can be just as important to the campaign as the race itself, being excellent goals for quests and treasure-hunting expeditions.

The GM should not allow any Reptile Man to learn a mammalian language beyond IQ level, and the Language Talent advantage should not be allowed to this race.

A Reptile shaman or gladiator would make a formidable Ally or Enemy.

Most other races react to Reptiles at -3, because of their (exaggerated) reputation as man-eaters. Reptiles react to everybody else at -3 as well, but prefer to avoid contact rather than look for trouble.

Horses unused to Reptile Men will be terrified of them. The rider of a horse first encountering Reptiles must make a Riding roll to keep the horse from shying and throwing him.

Reptile Man hide makes good armor. It weighs 50% more than regular leather armor, costs at least twice as much, and has PD 3 and DR 3. An uncured Reptile Man hide weighs 30 lbs. and is worth \$500. Needless to say, a Reptile Man will not be delighted to meet an individual wearing such armor.

Ordinary Reptile Men should be built on 100-125 points. Leaders and shamans should be built on up to 200 points.

The Reptile Men are humanoid saurians. Their skin is scaly, tough, and completely hairless. Their scales are glossy and glint with brilliant colors in the light. Their heads are completely inhuman, dominated by a large snout filled with big, pointed teeth. In certain tribes, the males' snouts end in a vestigial horn. Their eyes are wide and dark. Their bodies are powerful and very human, except for their broad saurian tails, the articulation of their massive legs, and their clawed, paw-like feet. Reptile Men have normal height for their ST, and weigh 30 lbs. more than a human of the same height. They seldom wear clothes except weapon and tool harnesses and armor.

Reptile Man Racial Package

75 points

Attributes: ST +4 [45]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20].

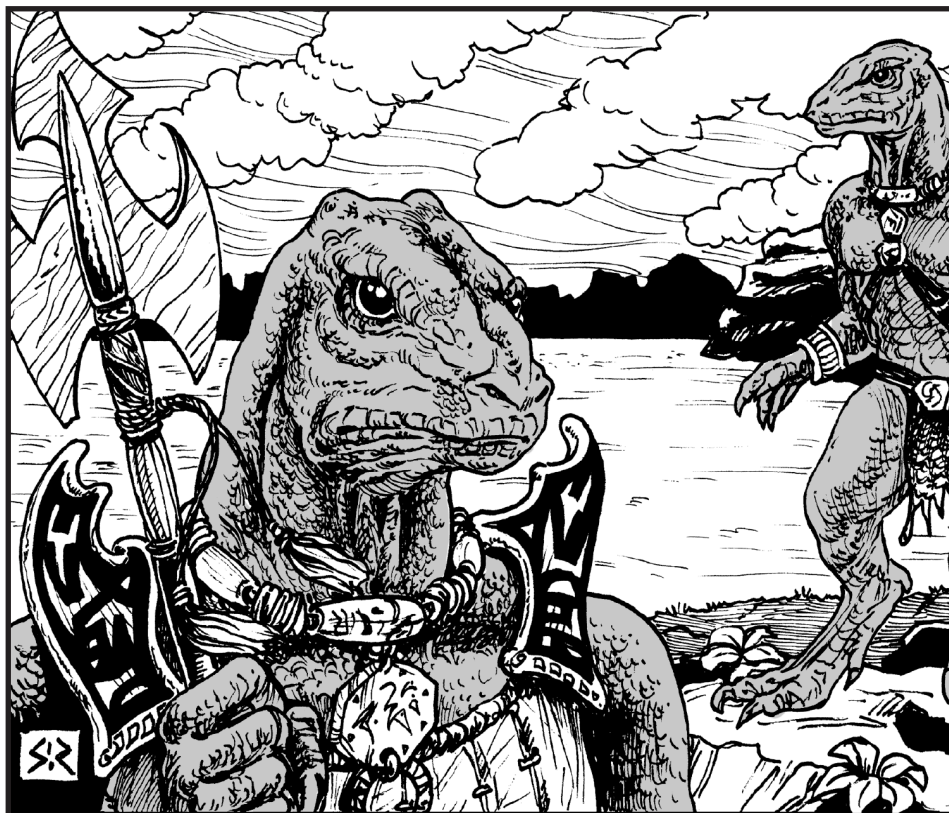
Racial Advantages: Claws [15]; DR +1 [3]; Longevity [5]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Temperature Tolerance $\times \frac{1}{2}$ [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Intolerance [-10]; Reputation -3 [-15]; Shyness [-5].

Racial Quirks: Inscrutable [-1].

Racial Skills: Camouflage (M/E) IQ [1]; Survival (Desert) (M/A) IQ [2].

Notes: Although they are cold-blooded, Reptile Men do not seem to suffer from moderate cold and therefore do not receive the Cold-Blooded disadvantage. The "comfort zone" afforded by their Temperature Tolerance ranges from about 25° to 140°.



Psychology

The Reptile Men are an ancient, reclusive race. They thrive in dry, barren plains and desert where no other race could survive. Long ago, the Reptile Men were a mighty civilization, building monolithic cities on the plains. Today the race is scattered, living as nomads around the baking hulks of their former glory.

The physical power of a Reptile Man is truly fearsome. One-on-one, a Reptile Man is a match for even a bloodthirsty Minotaur. Fortunately for other races, they are not usually aggressive. The Reptile Men will avoid casual contact with members of other races. They will only fight if threatened directly.

It is difficult for the mammalian mind to comprehend the workings of the Reptile mind. Their behavior often seems inscrutable, even paradoxical, making them dangerous and unpredictable. An enslaved Reptile Man has been known to passively submit to the most inhumane treatment for years, then suddenly turn on his captors in a berserk, suicidal rage. The best course to take when meeting a Reptile Man is exaggerated politeness and extreme respect for his privacy.

Humans usually address all Reptile Men as “he.” It is difficult to tell the male Reptiles from the females – impossible if the individual is clothed.

They have their own language which they use almost exclusively – it is very difficult for the Reptiles to master mammalian languages. In the remote past they had a written language as well, but this is utterly dead, surviving only on ancient inscriptions that no one today can read. The Reptile tongue is harsh and painful to the human palate. Their own name for their race is the Gnag’garak’k. Sample personal names include Gressik, Arrang, and Hissepp.

They have not entirely forgotten their ancient magics, although today the race’s mages seldom rise beyond the level of a tribal shaman. Sometimes a Reptile mage will become “possessed by the spirits of his ancestors” and start to prophecy madly. These outbursts are hysterical and incoherent, and could be put down to some genetic tendency toward madness, except that the mage’s power often surges, and he begins casting spells he couldn’t possibly know at power levels he couldn’t formerly dream of. Sometimes these seizures wear off after a few minutes. Other times, the fit will turn into a berserk madness, and the victim will destroy himself or others. Still other times the visionary will wander off on strange quests, sometimes taking a small band of followers along.

Reptile warriors fight with heavy, two-handed swords and axes, or bizarrely-configured halberds. Ranged weapons are usually bone shortbows or, among the more primitive tribes, spear throwers. Though their immense strength makes them a natural for fighting in heavy armor, their lack of technology combined with the shortage of raw materials in their habitat means that the best armored Reptile Men usually wear hardened leather.

If they have a sense of humor, it’s opaque to non-reptile minds. In the remote past they had an artistic tradition, but today it’s largely forgotten. They neither dance nor sing.

Reptiles worship strange gods. Some fear that the Reptile Men serve dark and ancient forces, but among the few who know anything useful, most believe that the Reptile gods, like their worshippers, are old, tired, and completely uninterested in the fate of the upstart warm-blooded races.

Ecology

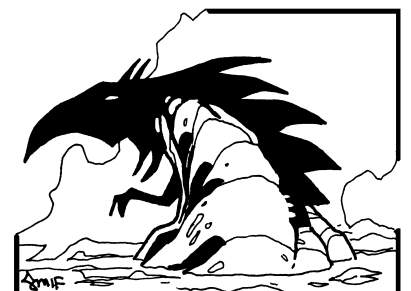
There is some debate among the scholars as to the exact age of the Reptile Man race. A few radical scholars say that the race had its day of glory long before the Elves awoke! They point to a strange and remote epoch when the ancestors of the Reptile Men and the Fishmen waged mighty wars and cast strange magics while the most advanced mammals were busily learning to climb trees.



Reptile Men PCs

A simple Reptile brawler can be designed for a 100-point campaign. Such characters are ideal for a player who’s mostly interested in physical prowess and a formidable appearance. They work even better than Minotaurs or Ogres since, unlike the other two races, the average villager will feel no particular urge to form a posse and hold a lynch party upon meeting a Reptile Man. This is not to say that ordinary humans won’t find Reptiles impressive and frightening, it’s just that most Reptile tribes are so remote that there is no significant rivalry or enmity with other races. The racial Intolerance disadvantage is somewhat less of a handicap to Reptile Men than it is to some races, since most members of other races will be more than happy to leave Reptile Men alone!

In cinematic campaigns, it is possible to come up with more versatile Reptile characters. A shaman or a highly-trained gladiator spring to mind, as does a desert guide, with high scores in tracking and survival.



Reptile Man Adventure Seeds

The Prophet

On a journey through the desert the PCs are accosted by a Reptile Man shaman and three or four followers. "You are the chosen," the old Lizard croaks out in broken human speech. "You must come with us to the ancient home!"

The shaman is "possessed of the spirits of his ancestors," and his ancestors have told him to travel to a particularly ancient Reptile city in search of . . . something. The old lizard isn't exactly sure what he's looking for, but figures his ancestors will let him know when he sees it.

The Shaman is a 200-point character, but currently he has an extra 100 points of spells, courtesy of his ancestors. The GM should feel free to ignore normal prerequisites in assigning these "bonus" spells. His followers are 100- to 150-point warriors. If the party refuses to join the holy quest the Shaman will use whatever magical or physical means he deems appropriate to get them to the ruins.

Once they arrive at the city (now almost totally buried in the sand), the GM can either contrive to separate the Reptiles from the PCs, or devise menaces potent enough to threaten the augmented party.

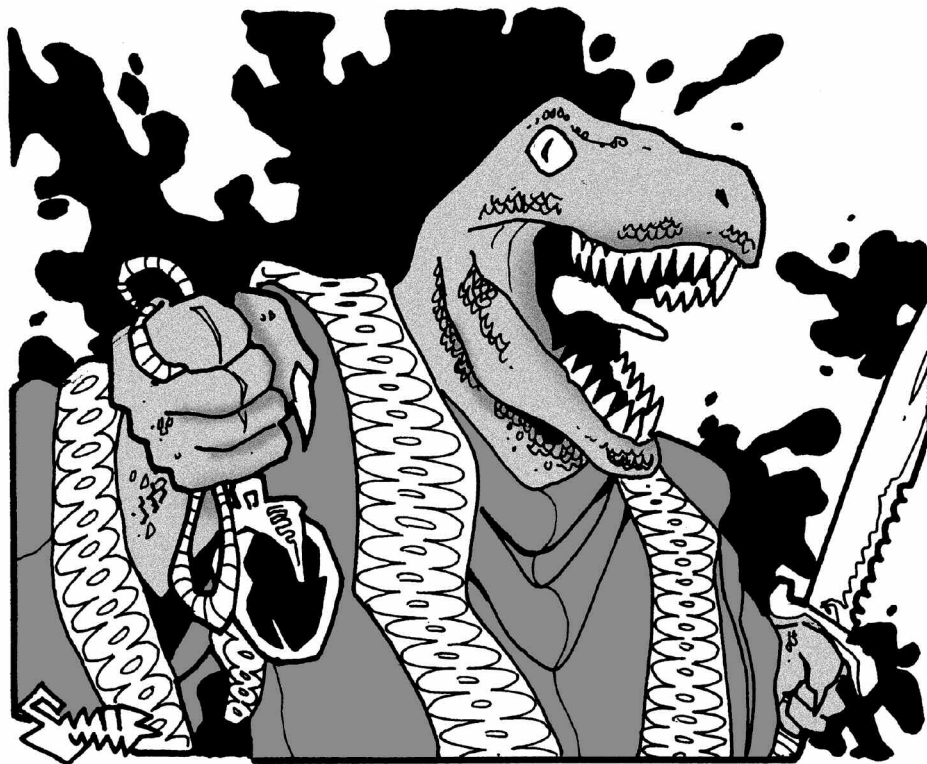
It is the GMs' option as to whether or not the PCs are really necessary to achieve the goal of the quest, or whether there really is, in fact, a goal at all!

Arena Escape

The whole city is abuzz over the prowess of a certain Reptile Man gladiator. This warrior has defeated all comers for several weeks. Next week's match promises to be the best yet, as the Reptile faces three of the most popular human gladiators . . . solo.

One night a lone Kobold appears at the characters' door. He says he's been sent by the Reptile (one Narrum) to make a deal with the PCs. If the party can get him out of the arena before the next big match, his sword will be entirely at the party's service for one year. Narrum should be designed as an incredibly formidable fighter, at least 100 points higher than the starting value of the campaign.

Of course, the party will never be welcome in that city again, but the thought of having such a remarkable warrior serving in the band for a full year for free should be tempting. If the rescue succeeds, Narrum will bring along his Kobold friend as a sidekick. If the attempt is delayed, Narrum will be killed in his next match.



More conservative sages reject this scheme, but agree that the Reptile Men are ancient indeed. Conventional historical theory puts the height of the Reptile civilization at about the same time that Elves first encountered Dwarves. While the Elves ruled the plains and forests and the Dwarves were hollowing out the mountains, the Reptiles were leaving their own imprint upon the dry and lonely places of the Earth.

It is certain, however, that Reptile civilization had fallen to its present low state by the race's first recorded encounters with humanity.

Reptile Men are strictly carnivorous hunters. They obtain their meat by means of cunning snares as well as bow and spear. They hunt both by night and day. Meat is scarce in Reptile Man country, and there is no room for waste. The Reptile Men return the meat of their dead to the tribe, and will not hesitate to serve up any member of another sentient race who happens to meet his fate nearby. They do not, however, hunt each other or other intelligent races merely for food. Reptile Men cook their meat only to preserve it.

A Reptile tribe will bury itself in sand during the hottest part of the day, each individual in his own shallow burrow. Other than that they use no shelter, aside from the odd cave or ruin within their territory that they can use for a temporary headquarters.

Reptile Men are oviparous. Females can produce an egg every year. Males and females mate only to reproduce, with no commitment. The Reptile Men hold no special emotional relationship between the child and its biological parents. The young are raised by the entire community. A Reptile youth is considered an adult at age 16. They begin to age at 70.

Culture

The ancient cities of the Reptile Men could each hold tens of thousands of citizens, but now the race lives in small, nomadic tribes of no more than a few dozen. There are probably less than 100,000 Reptile Men world-wide.

The tribes are ruled by the most competent. In the Reptiles' savage existence, this usually means the strongest, but good planners and food-finders are also valued, as are healers and mages. There is complete equality of the sexes among the Reptiles, and the tribal headman is just as likely to be female.

There is little contact between the various Reptile Man bands. Every couple of years a band will happen upon its near neighbors, and there will be some trading of news and goods, and perhaps an exchange of children. War between Reptile tribes appears to be an infrequent occurrence.

Each tribe has its own large territory in which it has exclusive hunting rights. This territory can encompass hundreds or even thousands of square miles. Most bands fall into a certain pattern of wandering, where they can be counted on to reach a given spot after a certain interval. Reptile wanderings have much less to do with open water sources than would be the case with human desert nomads. The race seems to have its own ways of obtaining water from the local fauna, flora, and even (if certain reports can be believed) from the desert stones.

Once in a great while, several bands will gather together to oppose a particularly determined incursion of nomadic humans or Orcs. More often, the local Reptile Men will simply give ground before such incursions, moving into an even more remote and inhospitable part of the desert.

When they do battle, Reptile Men are expert and deadly desert fighters. A favorite tactic is for the entire Reptile war party to bury itself in the enemy's path and emerge in his very midst as he marches over.

Custom is very important to the Reptile Men, and an individual who violates tradition is often exiled from his tribe. The most serious offenders are branded so that no other band will accept them either. Such outcasts are the most common sorts to dwell among other races. Often the "crimes" of such individuals would seem completely innocuous to members of other races – some bizarre and apparently trivial violation of an ancient Reptilian taboo.

Outcast Reptile Men are in great demand as gladiators, mercenaries and adventurers, but there are never many available.

Politics

The Reptile Men have as little to do with other races as possible. The Bales, who also frequent the wastelands, have been known to enslave Reptiles.

They have the most contact with nomadic bands of Orcs or humans. They avoid or fight Orcs, and treat humans much the same (though they sometimes trade with them a bit). However, any human caught wearing armor made from Reptile Man hide is in terrible trouble indeed.

The actions of those few, depraved bands who see men, Elves, etc. as dinner and Halflings as *hors d'oeuvres*, publicized by certain lurid popular ballads and tales, have given the entire race a bad reputation in civilization, which they really don't deserve.

There are always a few intrepid traders, however, who are willing to pitch their goods even to "inhuman cannibals." For this reason they get on best with the Goblin caravan merchants. Sometimes they trade, offering strange artifacts of their ancient cities for weapons, medicine, and supplies. Other times the Goblins will simply give them a few trinkets in exchange for the privilege of passing through the tribe's land.

They are the only two-legged race to get along well with Dragons, though the two races do not actively ally.

Reptile Man Character Example

Gressik 200 points

Age 38; 5'10" 170 lbs.; a small Reptile Man with unusually glossy scales.

ST 12 [-15]; **DX** 10 [-]; **IQ** 13 [45]; **HT** 12 [-].

Speed 5.5; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 5; Block 6.

Advantages: Charisma +1 [5]; Clerical Investment [5]; Magery 1 [15]; Reptile Man Racial Package [75]; Status 2 [10]; Strong Will +1 [4].

Disadvantages: Duty (Tribe, 15 or less) [-15]; Phobia (Heights, severe) [-20]; Stubbornness [-5].

Skills: Buckler-12 [4]; Camouflage-13* [-]; Detect Lies-13 [4]; Flail-11 [8]; Gesture-12 [1½]; Leadership-14 [4]; Physician-15 [8]; Politics-11 [1½]; Psychology-12 [2]; Spear Thrower-12 [8]; Survival (Desert)-14* [2].

Spells: Create Earth-12; Create Water-13; Cure Disease-13; Decay-12; Lend HT-13; Lend ST-13; Major Healing (VH)-15; Minor Healing-12; Neutralize Poison-13; Purify Water-12; Recover ST-12; Restoration (VH)-14; Sand Jet-15; Seek Earth-12; Seek Water-12; Sense Emotion-12; Sense Foes-15; Shape Earth-12; Sterilize-12; Test Food-12; Truthsayer-13. [55]

* Includes adjustments for racial package.

Gressik is the leader, healer, and shaman of his people, and has been for more than 10 years. Though smaller and weaker than most of his people, Gressik is still an impressive individual.

Gressik has an extreme fear of high places. The flat wastes his tribe frequents, combined with his superior intelligence, have allowed him to hide this weakness from his tribe for all these years. He does not welcome advice from others, but his judgment is usually sound.

He does not normally wear armor. He usually fights with a flail and a buckler.

Gressik is a very experienced character, suitable for an NPC encounter or Patron.

Wildmen in the Campaign

Wildmen make an excellent “secret” race – there’s no reason for PCs to know they exist until suddenly they’re face to face with them. Alternatively, they could be known through only the vaguest of rumors, and the party could go in search of these elusive creatures, perhaps under the patronage of a sage or naturalist, or simply for the thrill of discovery.

Wildmen react to Elves and Fauns at +2, and to the other sylvan races at +1. They react at -1 to Kobolds and Gargoyles, -3 to Orcs, and -4 to Dark Elves. They habitually avoid all other races, but when they choose to reveal themselves they react normally.

Goblins, and any sylvan races, react to Wildmen at +2.

Parties in the deep wilderness may meet the Wildmen if they are in desperate need of help and don’t seem evil or destructive.

The players should not simply stumble upon the Wildmen except under highly extraordinary circumstances. It should be remembered that, to this day, no one is really sure if Bigfoot actually exists in the real world, in spite of countless expeditions into our ever-shrinking wilderness. The fantasy Wildmen and Sasquatch should be at least as clever and elusive as the hypothetical real-world Bigfoot, with a lot more territory to hide in!

WILDMEN

The Wildmen are shaggy humanoids standing between 5 and 5½ feet tall (height is 8” less than normal for their ST, weight is normal for ST). Their fur is brown or black, though some individuals with golden or auburn fur have been observed.

Their faces are mostly human, though their skin is wrinkled and leathery like an ape’s. Their noses are also broad and ape-like. They have sharp, prominent canine teeth. Their eyes are large and brown, and almost seem to glow. They have no tails. Their limbs are long, limber, and strong. Their hands and feet are broad, tough, and hairless. Wildmen never wear clothes.

Wildman Racial Package

35 points

Attributes: DX +1 [10]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Alertness +2 [10]; Animal Empathy [5]; Danger Sense [15]; DR +2 [6]; Mimicry [15]; PD +1 [25]; Silence × 1 [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Protect the wild) [-10]; Pacifist (Self-defense only) [-15]; Poverty (Poor) [-15]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Shyness [-10]; Truthfulness [-5]; Vow (Use no technology) [-15].

Racial Skills: Camouflage (M/E) IQ [1]; Stealth (P/A) DX [2]; Survival (Woodlands) (M/A) IQ+2 [6].

Sasquatch Racial Package

60 points

The Sasquatch are the larger, stronger, and less intelligent cousins of the Wildmen. They stand over 6 feet tall (determine height normally for ST; weight is



50 pounds more than normal). Otherwise, they resemble Wildmen, though some mountain dwellers have been known to have white fur. They secrete a pungent musk which more civilized races find unpleasant at close range

Attributes: ST +3 [30]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Alertness +2 [10]; Animal Empathy [5]; Danger Sense [15], DR +3 [9]; PD +1 [25]; Silence × 1 [5].

Racial Disadvantages: Odious Racial Habit (Smell Bad) [-10]; Pacifist (Self-defense only) [-15]; Poverty (Poor) [-15]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Shyness [-10].

Racial Skills: Camouflage (M/E) IQ+1 [2]; Stealth (P/A) DX [2]; Survival (type) (M/A) IQ [2]. The Survival skill will be specialized for Woodlands, Mountains, or Arctic areas, depending on the Sasquatch's home.

Psychology

The Wildmen are primitives, but by choice. They lack neither the intelligence or the resources to produce a sophisticated technology, yet they prefer to do without.

The chosen lifestyle of the Wildmen is early Stone Age (TL 0) – they will make simple weapons and tools out of wood, bone, and rock, but they refuse to use fire, erect shelter, produce cloth or leather, or cultivate the land. They also scorn the practice of lying.

They are a reclusive folk who avoid other intelligent races. They do not look down upon those who use technology – Wildmen believe that every individual and race has its own predestined path. They simply prefer that their path not cross those of other races.

Wildmen live much deeper in the wilderness than the other sylvan races, and they claim a divine mission to preserve the pristine state of their haunts. Though they do not lie, and they do not fight unless attacked directly, they know a thousand ways to discourage, intimidate, frighten, or misdirect a would-be invader of their homes.

They are great friends with the birds and beasts of the forests, and these will come to the aid of a Wildman who's hurt or in danger. Though the Wildmen and the beasts occasionally eat one another, this is accepted as part of the natural order. The Elves tell of a great Wildman shaman with the ability to control and communicate with multitudes of beasts. This ancient hero finally met his end in the jaws of a lion. The Shaman's last words were to the effect that the lion was hungry and he had nothing better to do that day. Then he walked into the lion's den and never emerged.

Wildmen will fight only when cornered, using cudgels, stone axes and short spears of wood, bone or chipped stone. They will usually run away from a foe, and harass him from hiding using non-violent tactics. However, when faced with marauding Orcs or other merciless foes, they have proven themselves as adept at traps, ambushes and bloody guerrilla tactics as any of the sylvan races.

Their affinity with nature makes them a very magical race. Magical Aptitude is at least as common as among humans, and they can weave any number of spells, including most of those found in the Animal, Body Control, Communication and Empathy, Elemental, Healing, and Knowledge colleges, as well as a few spells from other colleges. The only colleges they avoid entirely are Enchantment, Making and Breaking, and Necromantic.

Most tribes speak a pidgin version of the area's prevalent human tongue, though some of the most ancient and isolated bands speak an almost unrecognizable dialect of Elvish. Their names are short and musical: Illa, Ummu, Shar.



Wildmen PCs

Assuming the existence of the Wildmen is general knowledge (see sidebar, previous page) they can make an excellent choice for a player character, particularly in a wilderness-oriented campaign.

If a PC Wildman wants to buy off the racial Pacifism to give himself more leeway in combat, he should be allowed to do so. However, the player who wishes to buy off the Wildman's Primitive or Vow disadvantages should probably be told to look at another race. Without their primitivism, Wildmen are little more than shaggy humans.

Because of their pacifism and their limited choice of weapons, many players will decide to make their Wildmen spellcasters. This is fine, and the low racial point cost makes it easy for them to acquire a useful portfolio of spells. However, the race's affinity with nature also makes them ideal woodsmen, and their good DX and gift of stealth can make a good thief.

The mysterious rapport between Wildmen communities need have no affect on individual characters of that race. Of course, the GM can always use it arbitrarily, as an adventure seed – "You wake up howling after a strange and vivid dream of your people in the great forest being conquered by a powerful demon. At the end of the dream, the eldest Wildman turned and addressed you by name, begging you to bring help."

Sasquatch are mostly useful as savage brawlers, but they have an advantage over Ogres, Minotaurs, Reptile Men, etc., in that not even the most fanatically virtuous party can object to the presence of a Sasquatch among them on the grounds that he belongs to an "evil race."

Wildman Adventure Seeds

The Hunting of the Sasquatch

The king has declared a sizable reward for the capture of the legendary Sasquatch. The bounty is higher for a live, healthy specimen, but the first corpse brought in in good condition will also bring a reward.

Now adventurers from all over the kingdom are descending on the ancient woods. If the party doesn't know the true nature of the Sasquatch (and why should they?), they'll probably be tempted to go along.

Eventually, if the party has any sort of conscience whatsoever, they'll have to face the fact that they've kidnapped an intelligent member of a peaceful and ancient race. This revelation can come at court (where the party will probably want to help the Sasquatch escape), in the woods (where they'll want to get news to the king of the horrible mistake he's making), or before they ever meet a real Sasquatch (most Wood Elves will probably know the true nature of the Wildmen and their kin). In the latter case, the party will very likely take it on themselves to either appeal to the king to withdraw the commission, or take a lonely stand against the influx of Sasquatch hunters.

The Guardians

The party has great need of a certain powerful magical artifact to combat some great evil. They discover that the object is in the care of a tribe of Wildmen who have safeguarded it from the evil and power-hungry for hundreds of generations.

When contacted (no easy feat in itself) the Wildmen will be sympathetic but completely unhelpful. They will simply refuse to believe that there's any possible danger greater than that posed by the artifact itself.

The PCs have their orders, but they'll (hopefully) be reluctant to harm the Wildmen (if they're operating under any sort of non-evil Patron or sponsor, they'll be under strict orders to see that no Wildmen come to harm). At the same time the Wildmen will not wish to see the party physically harmed, unless the adventurers turn to violent tactics first.

The PCs will have to discover where the artifact is kept, procure it, and return with it. The Wildmen will be doing whatever they can to stop the theft. Both sides, however, will take pains not to harm each other.

Three to six days after the PCs first contact the Wildmen, Wildmen reinforcements will begin to arrive, summoned by the mysterious rapport between forest communities.

No Wildman would ever learn to read, but they remember a host of ancient songs and legends. They love to sing and to dance. Though primitive at first glance, their ululating chants and athletic dances have an undeniable raw power, combined with a subtly sophisticated rhythmic undercurrent.

They are not an artistic race, preferring to let nature's beauties stand alone, without trying to manipulate them into anything more or less than what they are.

They have no religion other than their deep and abiding love of nature. They have evolved their relationship with the wild into a simple but profound natural philosophy. Many of the greatest sages have spent years hunting for a Wildman teacher who could unfold to them the path of peace with the wilderness.

Ecology

Like the other sylvan races, the Wildmen are very ancient. The Elves have known of them since before they met the Dwarves. Though the fathers of the Wildmen eagerly accepted the Elvish gift of language, they knew even in that remote aeon that they wanted no part of craft.

The Wildmen believe (and the Elves agree) that they were created to ensure that there would always be a deep wilderness beyond the reach of more aggressive and intrusive races.

Though their primary habitat is deep, temperate forests, they can also be found in thick swamps. Many have migrated to unknown jungles and rain forests still undiscovered by civilized man.

Most of their diet is plant matter, augmented with a few insects, fish, small rodents, and lizards. They will only hunt larger game when food is scarce. Lacking fire, of course, their food is always eaten raw. The closest they ever come to agriculture is the production of a crude alcoholic beverage – certain herbs, berries, and barks are allowed to ferment in water held in a stump or hollow log. The resulting potent concoction is imbibed on special occasions.

They are mostly diurnal, relying on their gift of stealth and remote habitat, rather than cover of night, to protect their privacy.

They mate freely, but not casually. A female will consider carefully before choosing a male whose children she wishes to bear. These two will remain bound by affection, and share primary responsibility for raising the young, but either might next conceive children with a completely different mate. The Wildman females bear young in litters of two to five. They are considered adults at age 13, and begin to age at 50.

The Sasquatch are not as refined as their smaller relations. Though they usually live in harmony with their environment, they lack the elaborate philosophical base which the Wildmen possess. Though they have no ethical bias against technology, they do not understand it, and therefore fear it. Few, if any, Sasquatch are mages, and they likewise fear magic.

They share a common habitat with the Wildmen in the deep temperate forests, but while the Wildmen tend to expand into warmer, more fecund surroundings (jungle or swamp), Sasquatch tend towards the cold and barren wilderness. Whole tribes are rumored to live atop the highest mountain ranges and upon northern glaciers and tundras.

Culture

The Wildmen culture, like their lifestyle, is deliberately primitive and uncomplicated. The individual is granted the maximum amount of freedom possible, and necessary decisions are made by the oldest and wisest members of the community.

In addition to the elderly, other important members of the Wildman community include the storytellers – Wildmen endowed with eidetic memories who

have learned volumes of ancient lore, legend and wisdom passed down from ancient days. Healers and mages of any sort are also respected.

Wildmen usually live in tribes of 30-100 individuals. Sometimes they all live together, particularly when there's natural shelter such as a large cave or protected valley nearby. However, the tribe can also spread out over a hundred square miles or more, each individual staking out his own hunting and gathering territory. Often they will live close together, preferably under shelter, for the cold months, and disperse when the weather improves.

A Wildman community comes together on nights of the new moon, when they hold their wild dances. These monthly festivals seem to have a religious significance – a bonding between the individual, the tribe, the earth, and the sky. The Wildmen have no other holidays.

Though one tribe might be separated from another by a heavily settled plain, a desert or even an ocean, there appear to be mysterious channels of communication accessible to the whole race.

Individual Wildmen separated from their tribe have no special knowledge of their people, but one tribe will often know of events happening to another tribe hundreds – or even thousands – of miles away. When the Wildmen are asked about this curious faculty, their answers are vague and confused – they “just know.”

Politics

The Wildmen value their privacy, and avoid all other races. When they have to contact other races, there are some they will deal with more readily than others.

Their friendship with the Elves is ancient and deep. Elves can freely pass through Wildman lands. The Elves, in return, have great respect for the Wildmen, perhaps more than for any other mortal race.

They also coexist peacefully with the other sylvan races, particularly the Fauns, who share a similar belief in their stewardship of the wild. Both races agree that the Fauns exist to defend the open, sylvan woods, while the Wildmen guard the ancient and remote places.

They find the noisy, aggressive humans and the industrious, emphatic Dwarves alien and frightening. They dislike having such intruders in their territory, and will drive them off if they don't readily move on of their own accord.

There is little reason for the Goblins and the Wildmen to ever meet, but from time to time over the long history of the two races the Wildmen have come to the aid of a distressed or injured Goblin. The Goblins – whose memory is much longer than most other races suspect – remember these ancient services and do what they can to protect the Wildmen's valued privacy. Wildmen find Halflings curious and amusing, on those exceedingly rare occasions when the two come together.

The only race that customarily shares Wildman territory is the Insect Men. These two races seem quite capable of living within a mile of one another, or even a few feet, without ever interacting, or even acknowledging the other's presence for generations at a time. The Insect Men have learned that it's in their own best interest to respect and defend the Wildmen's privacy.

Wildmen will drive Kobolds and Gargoyles from their lands. They fear Orcs, and will not hesitate to fight them, for long, bitter experience has taught them that no Orc will hesitate to kill a Wildman. The only race they truly hate, however, is the Dark Elves, who have on several occasions attempted to subdue or exterminate the Wildmen. To this day, no Wildman will look at a Dark Elf, or speak to him, except in battle, unless that individual has proven himself utterly opposed to the cruelty and bigotry of his kind.



Wildman Character Example

Illa **100 points**

Age 18; 5'; 145 lbs.; shiny golden fur and luminous golden eyes.

ST 9 [-10]; **DX** 12 [10]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 12 [-].

Speed 6; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 5.

Advantages: Absolute Direction [5]; Magery 1 [15]; Wildman Racial Package [35].

Disadvantages: Cowardice [-10]; Gullibility [-10]; Phobia (Snakes, mild) [-10]; Sense of Duty (Birds) [-10].

Skills: Acrobatics-12 [4]; Animal Handling-16** [2]; Axe/Mace-12 [2]; Brawling-12 [1]; Camouflage-13* [-]; Climbing-12 [2]; First Aid-14 [2]; Fishing-14 [2]; Jumping-13 [2]; Naturalist-13 [4]; Singing-12 [1]; Stealth-12* [-]; Survival (Woodland)-15* [-]; Swimming-13 [2]; Throwing-12 [4]; Tracking-13 [2]; Ventriloquism-12 [2]; Veterinary-15** [-].

Spells: Beast Link-12; Beast Seeker-12; Beast Soother-12; Beast Speech-12; Beast Summoning-12; Bird Control-15; Lend HT-12; Lend ST-12; Mammal Control-12; Minor Healing-12; Recover ST-12; Rider Within-15; Seek Food-12. [23]

*Includes adjustments for racial package.

** Includes +4 for Animal Empathy.

Illa is a female Wildman mage with a particular affinity for animals, especially birds. She can speak to them and even see through their eyes. In return, she feels responsible for the care of any sick or injured bird she encounters.

Illa is rather naive, and terrified at the thought of violence. Her only possession is a wood and stone hand axe which she uses as an all-purpose tool. Though she has been taught how to fight, she has never had to defend herself physically.

Illa is a balanced character ready to begin adventuring.

Winged Folk in the Campaign

Ever since Icarus, men and women have yearned to fly with wings like a bird's. The Winged Folk are simply humans who have realized this ancient dream. This race makes an excellent adventure goal – the PCs could be sent out to find them and either take them as slaves or offer them employment as messengers or scouts. This sort of adventure can be an excellent device to introduce travelers to the cloud cities.

The Winged Folk customarily avoid everybody. They react to most races at -2, except for Dwarves, Eagles, and Goblins, to whom they react normally.

The radically feminist sisterhood of the Brides can be introduced if the GM wants Amazon warriors in his campaign.

Winged Folk can make surprising and challenging opponents for the party. A whole community could also make an effective Enemy.

Each wing of a winged warrior can take up to ½ HT damage before it becomes incapacitated. Only half of the damage done to a wing will count against the character's normal hit points. If only one wing is incapacitated, the Winged One will be forced to crash-land, doing damage as per a fall of 10 to 60 feet or his actual elevation, whichever is less. A successful role vs. the Flight skill will halve the effective falling distance. If both wings are crippled, or if the flyer is unconscious, he takes the usual damage for falling from his actual elevation.

Normal NPC Winged Folk should be built in the 100-point neighborhood.

WINGED FOLK

The Winged Folk are, as their name implies, humans with wings. They are slender and beautiful, with dark hair and skin and piercing blue eyes (remote tribes of Winged Folk are rumored to exist with other hair, eye, and skin colors). Their hair is thick and customarily worn long. It can be either straight or curly. They are not tall, seldom reaching 6' in height (height is 3" less than normal for their ST, weight is 10 lbs. less than normal for their height).

Their wings are feathered, very broad, and brilliantly white. They have an adult wingspan of 12 to 15 feet.

Winged Folk customarily wear light, loose, open-backed halters, shorts, or loincloths, and light sandals.

Winged Folk Racial Package

50 points

Attributes: ST +1 [10]; DX +2 [20].

Racial Advantages: Acute Vision +3 [6]; Flight (Winged) [30].

Racial Disadvantages: Fragile [-20].

Racial Skills: Bolas (P/A) DX [2]; Flight (P/A) DX+1 [2] (bought from the default of DX).

Psychology

The Winged Folk are a reclusive people who live far from the mainstream of humanity, in the high passes of mighty mountain ranges or in mysterious cloud cities that from time to time sail over the lands of men.



They are a warlike and fiercely independent people, who value their personal freedom above all else. Winged Folk tend to have extreme reactions to any outside attempt (real or perceived) to control their actions.

They are not entirely civilized, and have many customs and rituals that strike most other races as brutal or barbaric, particularly in their marriage, funeral, and penal practices. Yet those rare travelers who have spent time among the Winged Folk say that they are a hearty and honest people, willing to grant as many liberties as they demand. Their racial reticence seems to stem not from any innate paranoia or timidity, but from a series of unfortunate encounters with humans and Orcs, who mistook the Winged Folk for attacking demons, or saw them as a curiosity to be caged and displayed.

They have the talent for magic, but not the art. Lacking access to the millennia of lore that has brought the great human and Elven wizards to such a pinnacle of power, the magic of the Winged Folk seldom rises beyond the level of tribal shamanism.

In war they are formidable. Of course, they cannot go heavily armed or armored and still fly at full efficiency, but their ability to control the air above an enemy is more than compensation. Winged Folk fight with small bows, light pikes, javelins, nets, and slings; but their most common and feared weapon is the bolas, which they can use both to tangle the legs of a grounded foe and to tangle the wings of a flyer. A Winged hunter has been observed to snare a rabbit at 40 yards away from 100 feet in the air.

For obvious reasons, they prefer to avoid close combat. However, many will carry a light dagger, a short spear, or perhaps a thin shortsword for self-defense. A flight of Winged warriors is most vulnerable to massed archers, preferably firing from under set pikes. Winged Folk never fight wearing anything heavier than cloth or light armor, and many go completely unarmored.

In spite of their lack of magical and cultural sophistication, they are fine craftsmen, and excel at the creation of extremely light and finely-tempered steel weapons. Their craftsmanship is characterized by a simple elegance, with a complete lack of unnecessary ornamentation.

The Winged Folk have their own language, which is recognizably related to several major human tongues. They have a system of writing, but it is only known to the nobility and the priesthood. Most names sound human but “different” – for instance, Eirah, Neeman, Piala, Corris, Dollea. One who needs to further identify himself will use the name of his tribe or his father’s name.

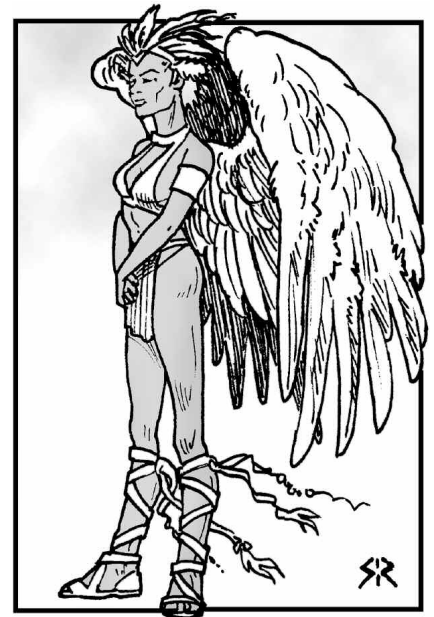
They also have a unique religion. They are monotheists, worshipping a personification of the sun as the supreme being. They firmly believe that they are the only Chosen People of their god. Winged Folk are remarkably resistant to any attempts to convert them to any other religion.

Their artists produce lovely paintings, particularly colorful, stylized landscapes. Their music is airy and haunting, played mostly on pipes and light stringed instruments.

Ecology

There is no doubt that the ancestors of the Winged Folk were ordinary humans. The two races are almost identical, except for the wings, and the less-obvious difference that the bones of the Winged Folk are hollow, and lighter than a human’s.

The Winged Folk’s own myths call the father of their race Chemor, a human who was the first and greatest priest/champion of the sun-god Arrai. The legends say that after numerous heroic deeds on behalf of Arrai, the god granted wings to Chemor, his five wives, and all his children. Many sages of other races believe that there may be a core of truth to the myth – that the



Winged Folk PCs

The ability to fly isn’t cheap – it’s a significant advantage with a significant point cost. The 50-point racial cost for the Winged Folk will tend to limit the player’s options in a 100-point campaign.

With careful character design, a hundred-point Winged One can be anything he wants, but he won’t be able to be everything at once – a Winged warrior will have to concentrate on combat, while a mage must spend almost all his points on spells. A Winged Folk character will be most effective if the player picks a simple, standard profession and sticks to it.

The Winged thief presents an interesting case. On the one hand, 12-foot white wings do not tend to make one inconspicuous. On the other hand, they do open up a dazzling array of possibilities for illegal entry. Such a character could be challenging and enjoyable, but would require some unorthodox play.

At cinematic or higher-level campaigns, of course, the Winged Folk will find virtually any option open to them. Because of their magically primitive society, the GM may choose to levy an Unusual Background cost against any Winged Folk mage who takes a spell not found in the *Basic Set* during initial character creation.

Winged Folk Adventure Seeds

Lines of Communication

A remote but hostile foreign power is invading. They have recruited a small corps of renegade Winged warriors to carry orders and reports between the front and their capital. This remarkably fast and efficient means of communication is proving to be a major advantage for the invaders.

The PCs are hired to go behind enemy lines and shut down the “aerial pony express.” How they accomplish this is their own problem – they can find out where the couriers rest and set an ambush, they could improvise some remarkably accurate long-range magical or missile attack, or they could come up with something completely different.

Libbers

A particularly rowdy separatist sect of the Brides has broken the ancient racial taboo against visiting the lowlands. They are spreading the gospel of the moon goddess to the unenlightened females below.

They’re visiting village girls and wives and telling them to throw off the chains of masculine oppression and stand up for their right to control their own destiny. Rumor has it that they’re teaching women to read, to defend themselves, and even to make a few subtle poisons that can be slipped into a cooking pot to rid oneself of an encumbering spouse or family.

The adventurers are hired to hunt down the rabble-rousers before they can instigate a full-fledged female revolt. Of course, they may well decide that they prefer to take the women’s side in the conflict.

The visiting Brides number about a dozen. They are experienced warriors with an average of 150 points each. They have several mages among them, including at least one very powerful healer. The GM may decide whether the Brides are really as dangerous as rumor has it, or just the victims of vicious male propaganda.



Winged Folk are descended from a single individual or family granted wings by a divine or divinely-powerful being. All non-Winged Folk reject most of the details of the myth, however, including the ending that has Arrai making Chemor his second in command, with authority over the night – i.e., the moon.

In spite of their common ancestry, humans and Winged Folk can no longer interbreed.

The Winged Folk are omnivorous, though their diet contains more meat than most humans would require. Winged Folk eat only cooked meat. They get their food both by hunting and small-scale husbandry. The most common domesticated meat animals are small goats and guinea pigs.

Winged Folk society is polygamous and patriarchal. Warriors typically have one to five wives. Their reproductive pattern and aging cycle is identical to humanity’s.

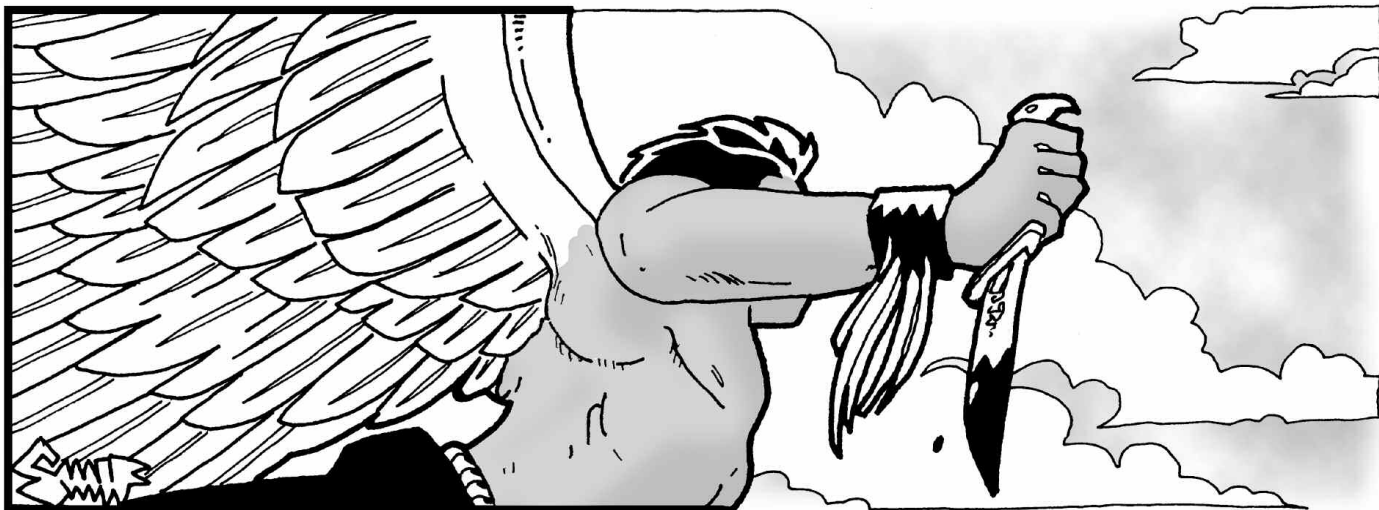
Culture

The Winged Folk culture is tribal and uncomplicated. Each tribe is autonomous, ruled by a chief – always male – selected by a council of warriors and elders. The chief is advised by a shamanistic priest of Arrai. He may also appoint sub-chiefs in charge of war and hunting, if he wishes. An older chief will almost always appoint young, energetic sub-chiefs to these posts, both to save his own strength and to train potential successors.

They live in tribal villages tucked away in the high valleys of major mountain ranges. The favorite haunts of the Winged Folk are “secret” valleys with no obvious passes leading in or out. They build their small huts from wood or natural rock, and often make use of natural caves or overhangs as stockades or gathering places. Most villages harbor 50 to 300 souls.

Winged Folk are also often found living on the mysterious “cloud cities” that float high above the Earth. No one knows for sure who builds these strange artifacts, but it’s certainly not the primitive Winged Folk. Rather, when a cloud city is, for whatever reason, abandoned by its makers, the Winged Folk are always the first ones to move in, as the only race with easy access to the city. The cloud-dwellers are, if anything, more primitive and savage than their brethren, as they are cut off from many natural resources, and must rely heavily on raiding and long-range hunting parties for their existence. Some appear able to control their dwellings’ courses, while other tribes can predict but not control the paths taken by their cloud cities – and some are simply passengers, with no idea where in the clouds they will next wander!

Like many tribal cultures, the various Winged Folk enclaves alternately trade with and pillage one another. One way or another, a given tribe will encounter several other tribes every year. In recent generations, however, there has been some movement towards greater cooperation between bands in the face of ever-increasing human and Orcish encroachment. Women are subordinate among the Winged Folk, and in some tribes, the fathers barter their daughters like livestock. Beautiful daughters are sold to the highest bidder. Ugly or sickly girls are given to anyone who will take them off the family’s hands. There is a caste, however, of sacred female warriors, known as the “Brides of Arrai.” They are theoretically sacred virgins, though this vow is a source of some humor in the Winged Folk villages. The Brides help with both war and hunting. They are also the Winged Folk’s best midwives and healers. Occasionally a group of more militant Brides will break off and form an all-female village. There are persistent rumors that the Brides secretly reject the orthodox doctrine that the moon is Father Chemor, and actually worship the moon as a goddess. Suspicion of blasphemy has led to many tribes outlawing the Brides entirely.



Crime and Punishment

Winged Folk justice is harsh – any violation of tribal law or taboo results in a beating, torture or death. Interpersonal disputes are settled through ritual combat. Winged Folk “arenas” are flattened areas at the very tips of mountain peaks, no more than 30 feet wide. In traditional duels both parties are given three bolas and both begin to fly, circling the mountain top. If either drops below the arena floor at any time he has lost. The combatants are not allowed to change the direction of their flight or to grapple one another. They throw their weapons at will. At any time a combatant can land for a new set of weapons, but a target on the ground is much easier to hit. The combatants cannot both land at the same time, and they cannot fly over the arena without landing. Needless to say, most of these duels end in death, as a bolas-entangled Winged One has little chance of freeing himself before he crashes.

Winged Folk Funerals

Winged Folk are cremated at death. Since it is hard to fly kindling to the top of a mountain, the elevation of a funeral is a sure indicator of the deceased’s status. Lesser warriors and women will be burnt in the heavily-forested lowlands, while a great chief might have a bier at the top of the highest mountain.

Except for a funeral, it is taboo for the Winged Folk to ever visit the lowlands, and a Winged One who leaves his mountains is considered an outcast. Of course, this does not apply as strongly to the cloud-city tribes, which get much of their sustenance from raiding the lowlands races.

Politics

With very few exceptions, the Winged Folk avoid other races entirely. Though in the past they have fought fierce territorial wars with the Great Eagles, the two races generally share the mountains harmoniously, and have been known to cooperate against common foes.

Even the high and secret enclaves of the Winged Folk are no match for the ambition of a Goblin trader, and those few intrepid Goblins who make it to Winged Folk territory are welcomed, along with their wares.

The Winged Folk have a ancient and harmonious relationship with the Dwarves. Dwarves build high exits from their mines to which the Winged Folk can descend to trade meat and hides for weapons and implements. The Winged Folk have even been known to aid the Dwarves in their ongoing wars against the Orcs, serving mostly as scouts and messengers.

Winged Folk Character Example

Eirah

100 points

Age 21; 5’8”; 135 lbs.; black hair, dark skin, wears only a loincloth and sandals.

ST 12 [10]; DX 14 [20]; IQ 11 [10]; HT 11 [10].
Speed 6.25; Move 6 (Flight 12).

Dodge 9; Parry 8; Block 8.

Advantages: Combat Reflexes [15];
Winged Folk Racial Package [50].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Rogue’s) [-5]; Impulsiveness [-10];
Lecherousness [-15]; Overconfidence [-10].

Quirks: Dislikes sweets; Likes blonde humans. [-2]

Skills: Bolas-15* [2]; Brawling-14 [1];
Buckler-14 [1]; Flight-15 [-]; Knife-14 [1];
Knife Throwing-15 [2]; Lasso-15 [4];
Net-14 [4]; Sex Appeal-11 [2];
Shortsword-14 [2]; Spear-16 [8].

A brash young bravo, Eirah is a typical warrior of the Winged Folk. He’s a good fighter, with notable skill in several weapons. His most obvious trait is his tendency to womanize – a hobby he’s very good at. In spite of his lustful nature, he will not take a woman against her will, nor tolerate such behavior in others. He has a somewhat perverse taste for human females, particularly blonde ones, which has several times tempted him to violate the racial taboo and secretly visit the lowland villages of the humans.

In battle he wears no armor, but customarily carries all or most of the weapons he’s proficient in.

Eirah is a balanced character ready to begin adventuring.

APPENDIX

Point Breakdowns for Racial Templates

This appendix is a quick reference guide that will be useful for GMs who wish to modify the races in this book, or who are designing their own races and wish to make quick comparisons. Point costs are in brackets [].

Bales 100 points

IQ +3 [30]; HT +2 [20]
 Damage Resistance +3 [9]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Hard to Kill +2 [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Injury Tolerance: No Blood [5]; Magery 1 [15]; Metabolism Control $\times$ 5 [25]; Regular Regeneration [25]; Temperature Tolerance $\times$ 1 [10]; Unaging [5]
 Bloodlust [-10]; Dependency [-20]; Fanaticism [-15]; Intolerance [-10]; Megalomania [-10]; Odious Racial Habit [-15]; Paranoia [-10]; Sadism [-15]
 +1 to occult/magical skills [6]

Centaurs

Centaurs 65 points

Split ST for Hybrid Races:
 Upper body: +3 ST, No Jumping Bonus (-5%) [29]; Lower body: Enhanced ST 26; No Fine Manipulators (-40%) [93]; Average: [61]
 IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20]; Alertness +1 [5]; DR +1 [3]; Enhanced Move (Running) $\times$ 1 [10]; 4 legs [5]
 Inconvenient Size [-10]; Overconfidence [-10]; Phobia (Claustrophobia, mild) [-15]; Stubbornness [-5]
 Animal Handling @ IQ [4]; Jumping @ DX [1]; Running @ HT [4]; Survival (Plains) @ IQ [2]

Onocentaurs 60 points

Split ST for Hybrid Races:
 Upper body: +1 ST; No Jumping Bonus (-5%) [10]; Lower body: Enhanced ST 22; No Fine Manipulators (-40%) [78]; Average: [44]
 HT +2 [20]
 Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Alertness +1 [5]; Enhanced Move (Running) $\times$ 1 [10]; 4 legs [5]
 Phobia (Claustrophobia, mild) [-15]; Social Stigma [-5]; Stubbornness [-5]; Unattractive Appearance [-5]
 Teamster @ IQ [2]

Dwarves

Dwarves 36 or 40 points

ST +2 [20]
 DR 1 [3]; Extended Lifespan [5]; Extra Encumbrance [5]; Extra Fatigue +2 [6]; Hard to Kill +1 [5]; Longevity [5]
 Greed [-15]; Miserliness [-10]; Reduced Move -1 [-5]
 Intolerance for Orcs [-1 or -5]; Never shave beards [-1]; Suspicious of Elves and Goblins [-1]

Axe/Mace @ DX+1 [4]; Merchant @ IQ [2]; +3 to Craft skills [18]

Gnomes 25 points

DR 1 [3]; Extra Encumbrance [5]; Extra Fatigue +1 [3]; Hard to Kill +1 [5]; Longevity [5]
 Reduced Move -1 [-5]
 Do not like to live underground [-1]; Never forget a favor or an injury [-1]; Trim beards close [-1]
 +4 to craft skills not involving metalworking or engineering [12]

Ellyllon 20 or 30 points

ST -5 [-40]; DX +3 [30]
 Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Acute Vision +3 [6]; Appearance: Handsome [15]; Early Maturation *royalty only* [5]; Extended Lifespan *royalty only* [5]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Night Vision [10]; PD +1 [25]; Ultrahearing [5]
 Code of Honor [-5]; Fragile [-20]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Reduced Hit Points -4 [-20]
 Flight @ DX+1 [2]; Savoir-Faire @ IQ [1]; Stealth @ DX [2]

Elves

Elves 30 points

ST -1 [-10]; DX +1 [10]; IQ +1 [10]
 Attractive Appearance [5]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Magery 1 [15]; Musical Ability +2 [2]; Unaging [15]
 Code of Honor [-10]; Sense of Duty [-15]
 Bard +2 [2]; Savoir-Faire +2 [1]

Half-Elves 30 points

IQ +1 [10]
 Extended Lifespan [5]; Magical Aptitude [15]

Dark Elves 25 or 30 points

ST -1 [-10]; DX +1 [10]; IQ +1 [10]
 Attractive Appearance [5]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Magery 1 [15]; Musical Ability +2 [2]; Unaging [15]
 Code of Honor [-10]; Intolerance [-10] or Social Stigma *radicals only* [-15]; Sense of Duty [-15]
 Bard +2 [2]; Savoir-Faire +2 [1]

Exalted Horses 25 points

Enhanced ST [28]; No Fine Manipulators (-40%) [99]
 HT +3 [30]
 Acute Hearing +3 [6]; Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; Attractive Appearance [5]; Blunt Teeth (0); Enhanced Move (Running) $\times$ 1 [10]; 4 Legs [5]; Peripheral Vision [15]
 Bad Sight [-25]; Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Poverty (Dead Broke) [-25]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Social Stigma [-10]; Uneducated [-5]
 Brawling @ DX [1]; Gesture @ IQ [1]; Running @ HT-1 [2]

Fauns

25 points

ST -2 [-15]; DX +3 [30]; HT +1 [10]
Alertness +2 [10]; Animal Empathy [5]; Musical Ability +2 [2]
Lecherousness [-15]; Reputation -1 [-5]
Carousing @ HT [2]; Scrounging @ IQ [1]

Fishmen

30 points

ST +1 [10]; HT +2 [20]
Acute Taste and Smell +1 [2]; Amphibious [10]; Dark Vision [25]; DR 1 [3]; Gills [10]; Nictating Membrane × 1 [10]; PD 1 [25]; Pressure Support [15]; Speak with Fish [10]
Bad Sight [-25]; Cold-Blooded [-5]; Dependency [-15]; Fanatic [-15]; Intolerance [-10]; Odious Racial Habit [-15]; Reputation -4 [-20]; Unattractive Appearance [-5]

Gargoyles

25 points

IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20]
Claws [15]; DR 2 [6]; Flight, Winged (-25%) [30]; Night Vision [10]
Cowardice [-10]; Gluttony [-5]; Laziness [-10]; Reputation -1 [-5]; Ugly Appearance [-10]; Uneducated [-5]; Bully [-1]

Ghouls

-5 or -20 points

ST +2 [20]; IQ -2 *degenerates only* [-15]
Alertness +2 [10]; Double-Jointed [5]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Night Vision [10]; Silence × 1 [5]
Dependency [-10]; Odious Racial Habit [-15]; Reputation -4 [-20]; Sense of Duty [-15]; Ugly Appearance [-10]
Camouflage @ IQ+1 [2]; Scrounging @ IQ [1]; Stealth @ DX [2]

Giants

Giants

180 points

Enhanced ST 12 [20]; Enhanced ST +13 (ST 25); Natural (-40%) [78]
DX -1 [-10]; HT +4 [45]
Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; DR 2 [6]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 1 [10]; Extra Hit Points +3 [15]; Extra Reach: +1 hex, both arms [20]; High Pain Threshold [10]; PD 1 [25]
Bad Temper [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance *or* Shyness [-10]; Reputation -2 [-10]; Stubbornness [-5]

Huge Giants

284 points

Enhanced ST 14 [45]; Enhanced ST +26 (ST 40); Natural (-40%) [81]
DX -1 [-10]; HT +4 [45]; Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; DR 4 [12]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 2 [20]; Extra Hit Points +6 [30]; Extra Reach: +2 hexes, both arms [40]; High Pain Threshold [10]; PD 2 [50]
Bad Temper [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance *or* Shyness [-10]; Reputation -2 [-10]; Stubbornness [-5]

Colossal Giants

390 points

Enhanced ST 16 [70]; Enhanced ST +39 (ST 55); Natural (-40%) [71]
DX -1 [-10]; HT +4 [45]
Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; DR 6 [18]; Enhanced Move (Running) × 3 [30]; Extra Hit Points +12 [60]; Extra Reach: +3 hexes, both arms [60]; High Pain Threshold [10]; PD 3 [75]
Bad Temper [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance *or* Shyness [-10]; Reputation -2 [-10]; Stubbornness [-5]

Goblins

Goblins

5 points

ST -2 [-15]; DX +1 [10]; IQ +1 [10]
Night Vision [10]; Impulsiveness [-10]

Hobgoblins

-25 points

ST +1 [10]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -2 [-15]
Night Vision [10]
Bad Temper [-10]; Poverty (Dead Broke) [-25]; Stubbornness [-5]

Great Eagles

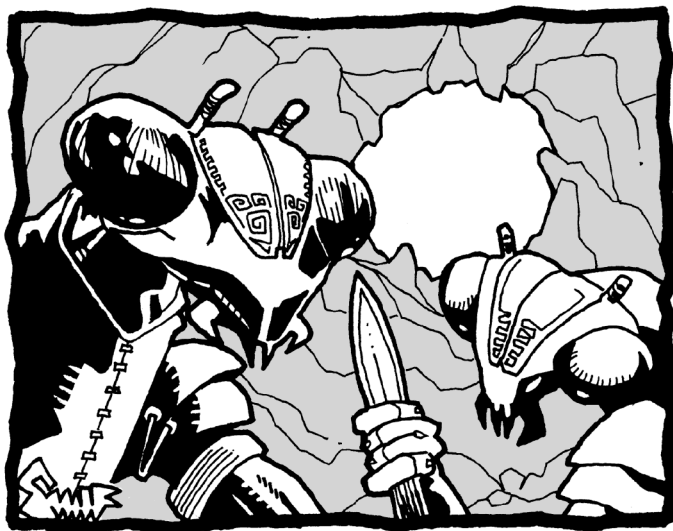
25 points

ST +3 [30]; DX +2 [20]; HT +2 [20]
Acute Vision +1 [2]; Claws [15]; Flight, Winged (-25%) [30]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Telescopic Vision × 1 [6]
Bloodlust [-10]; Compulsive Behavior [-15]; Fragile [-20]; Intolerance [-10]; Mute [-25]; Poverty (Dead Broke) [-25]; Primitive -3 [-15]
Flight @ DX+1 [2]

Halflings

5 or 10 points

ST -3 [-20]; DX +1 [10]; HT +1 [10]
Reputation +1 [5]; Silence × 1 [5]
Addiction *optional* [-5]; Code of Honor [-5]; Gluttony [-5]; Reduced Move -1 [-5]; Dislike Traveling by Water [-1]
Stealth @ DX+1 [4]; Bow +2 [4]; Sling +2 [4]; Throwing +2 [4]



Insect Men

Insect Men

37 points

ST +1 [10]; HT +1 [10]
DR +2 [6]; PD +1 [25]; Secret Communication [20]
Mute [-25]; Sterile [-3]; Unattractive Appearance [-5]; Secretive [-1]

Insect Warriors

52 points

ST +2 [20]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +1 [10]
DR +2 [6]; Extra Arms × 2 [20]; Full Coordination × 1 [50]; PD +1 [25]; Secret Communication [20]
Mute [-25]; Short Lifespan [-10]; Slave Mentality [-40]; Status -1 [-5]; Sterile [-3]; Unattractive Appearance [-5]; Secretive [-1]

Kobolds

-30 points

ST -2 [-15]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -2 [-15]

Cast Iron Stomach [15]

Short Attention Span [-10]; Uneducated [-5]; Weak Will -1 [-8];

Easily Offended [-1]; Love Practical Jokes [-1]

Leprechauns

5 points

ST -4 [-30]; DX +2 [20]

Acute Hearing +1 [2]; Longevity [5]; Luck [15]; Magery 1 [15];

Musical Ability +1 [1]; Night Vision [10]

Inconvenient Size [-15]; Miserliness [-10]; Reduced Hit Points -2 [-10]

Leatherworking @ IQ+1 [2]

Merfolk

Merfolk

40 points

Enhanced Move (Swimming) × 1 [10]; Gills [10]; Pressure

Support [10]; Sonar Vision [25]

Dependency [-15]

Dolphins

30 points

Enhanced ST 14; No Fine Manipulators (-40%) [27]; Enhanced ST +2 (ST 16); No Fine Manipulators (-40%); No Fatigue Bonus (-30%) [8]

DX +2 [20]; HT +2 [20]

Alertness +3 [15]; Absolute Direction [5]; Blunt Teeth [-]; Enhanced Move (Swimming) × 1 [10]; Nictating Membrane × 1 [10]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Pressure Support [10]; Sonar Vision [25]

Dependency [-20]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Mute [-25]; No Manipulators [-50]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Short Lifespan × 2 [-20]

Acrobatics @ DX [4]; Gesture @ IQ [1]

Minotaurs

75 points

ST +3 [30]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -2 [-15]; HT +3 [30]

Absolute Direction [5]; Acute Hearing +3 [6]; DR +3 [9]; DR +2 (Head Only, -50%) [3]; Horns (Long Tusks) [50]; Magic Resistance +3 [6]; Peripheral Vision [15]

Berserk [-15]; Bloodlust [-10]; Hideous Appearance [-20]; Intolerance [-10]; Odious Racial Habit [-15]; Uneducated [-5]

Brawling @ DX [1]

Ogres

Ogres

95 points

Enhanced ST 12 [20]; Enhanced ST +8 (ST 20); Natural (-40%) [54]

DX -2 [-15]; IQ -3 [-20]; HT +4 [45]

Acute Taste and Smell +1 [2]; DR +3 [9]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Magic Resistance +2 [4]; Night Vision [10]; PD +1 [25]

Hideous Appearance [-20]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Odious Racial Habit [-15]; Uneducated [-5]

Brawling @ DX [1]

Half-Ogres

45 points

Enhanced ST 12 [20]; Enhanced ST +4 (ST 16); Natural (-40%) [30]

DX -1 [-10]; IQ -3 [-20]; HT +2 [20]

Acute Taste and Smell +1 [2]; Alertness [5]; DR +2 [6]; Extra Hit Points +2 [10]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Magic Resistance +1 [2]; Night Vision [10]

Intolerance [-10]; Odious Racial Habit [-15]; Ugly Appearance [-10]; Uneducated [-5]



Orcs

Orcs

-10 points

IQ -2 [-15]; HT +2 [20]

Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Extra Hit Points +1 [5]

Intolerance [-10]; Reputation -3 [-15]

Brawling @ DX [1]

Half-Orcs

0 points

IQ -1 [-10]; HT +1 [10]

Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Extra Hit Points +1 [5]

Reputation -2 [-10]

Brawling @ DX [1]

Reptile Men

75 points

ST +4 [45]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20]

Claws [15]; DR +1 [3]; Longevity [5]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Temperature Tolerance × ½ [5]

Intolerance [-10]; Reputation -3 [-15]; Shyness [-5]; Inscrutable [-1]

Camouflage @ IQ [1]; Survival (Desert) @ IQ [2]

Wildmen

Wildmen

35 points

DX +1 [10]; HT +2 [20]

Alertness +2 [10]; Animal Empathy [5]; Danger Sense [15]; DR +2 [6]; Mimicry [15]; PD +1 [25]; Silence × 1 [5]

Code of Honor [-10]; Pacifism [-15]; Poverty (Poor) [-15]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Shyness [-10]; Truthfulness [-5]; Vow [-15]

Camouflage @ IQ [1]; Stealth @ DX [2]; Survival (Woodlands) @ IQ+2 [6]

Sasquatch

60 points

ST +3 [30]; DX +1 [10]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +2 [20]

Alertness +2 [10]; Animal Empathy [5]; Danger Sense [15]; DR +3 (9); PD +1 [25]; Silence × 1 [5]

Odious Racial Habit [-10]; Pacifism [-15]; Poverty (Poor) [-15]; Primitive -3 [-15]; Shyness [-10]

Camouflage @ IQ+1 [2]; Stealth @ DX [2]; Survival @ IQ [2]

Winged Folk

50 points

ST +1 [10]; DX +2 [20]

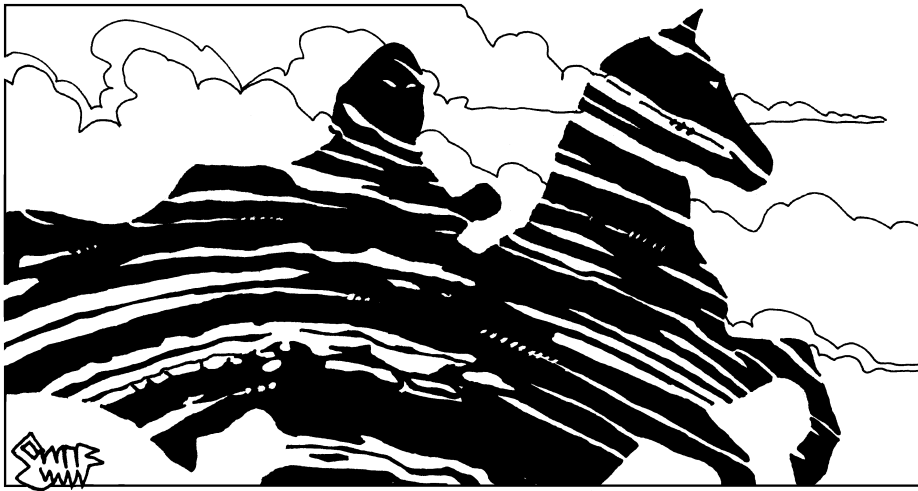
Acute Vision +3 [6]; Flight (Winged) [30]

Fragile [-20]

Bolas @ DX [2]; Flight @ DX+1 [2]

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