

Lifepaths of Man: Black Barbarian Setting

Special Rule

Peaceful Childhood

Only two lifepaths have leads to the Black Barbarian setting: *Born Peasant* or *Born Villager*. A character can only come to this setting directly through one of those two choices.

Lifepath	Time	Stat	Res	Leads
Ripped from Mother's Arms	1 yr	—	1 rp	<i>Servitude</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 1 pt: Slaver-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Orphan, Family Horribly Slaughtered Before Eyes, Riddle of Steel				
Slave to the Wheel¹	6 yrs	+4 P	1 rp	<i>Servitude</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 1 pt: Wheel-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 2 pt: Hardened on the Wheel, Numb, Strength Above All, Depilated				
Pit Fighter²	2 yrs	+1 P	5 rp	<i>Servitude, Outcast</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 8 pts: Brawling, Armor Training, Exotic Weapons, Conspicuous, Pit Fighter-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Brutal				
Failed Pit Fighter³	2 yrs	+1 P	4 rp	<i>Servitude, Outcast, Peasant</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 2 pts: Inconspicuous, Betting-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 2 pts: Maimed, Bitter, Lame				
Champion Pit Fighter³	2 yrs	+1 P	10 rp	<i>Servitude, Outcast, Soldier</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 12 pts: Conspicuous, Sword, Axe, Shield Training, Throwing, Reading, Writing, Poetry, Philosophy				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Taste of Victory, Taste for Women/Men, To Know What is Good in Life				
Wanderer³	1 yr	+1 M	3 rp	<i>Servitude, Outcast</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 6 pts: Wasteland-wise, Foraging, Streetwise, Witch-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Fear of Dogs, Sense of Humor, Hot Sex with Demonic Witches				
Thief⁴	1 yr	+1 M	10 rp	<i>Servitude</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 2 pts: Stealthy, Climbing				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Fear and Loathing of Snakes, Comraderie				
Drunken Leech⁵	1 yr	—	2 rp	<i>Servitude</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 2 pts: Drinking				
<i>Traits:</i> — pt: Binger, Groper, Camel Puncher				
The Tree⁶	1/2 yr	—	3 rp	<i>Servitude</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 2 pts: Pain-wise, Vulture-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Rescued: "Owe Them One", Contemplation, Scarred, Wolverine,				
Avenger-Assassin⁷	1 yr	—	5 rp	<i>Servitude</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 3 pts: Riding, Cult-wise				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt: Honorable, Outright Hatred of Snakes and Cults				
Mercenary	4 yrs	+1 P	8 rp	<i>Servitude, Outcast, Soldier</i>
<i>Skills:</i> 4 pts: Merc-wise, Intimidation, Mending, Hagglng				
<i>Traits:</i> 1 pt				



Mercenary Captain* 4 yrs +1M/P 16 rp *Outcast, Soldier*

Skills: 3 pts: Command, Formation Fighting†

Traits: 1 pt: Unorthodox Brilliance, Aardvark

King by his Own Hand* 17 yrs +1 M.P 100rp *Outcast*

Skills: 5 pts: Hunting, Falconry, Tyranny-wise, Enemy-wise, Subject-wise

Traits: 2 pt: Grey-bearded, Self-Made Man, Bored and Brooding

Requirements

- 1: Slave to the Wheel requires Ripped from Mother's Arms
- 2: Pit Fighter requires Slave to the Wheel
- 3: These lifepaths require Pit Fighter
- 4: Thief requires Wanderer
- 5: Drunken Lech requires Thief
- 6: The Tree requires Thief
- 7: Avenger-Assassin requires The Tree
- 8: Mercenary Captain requires Mercenary and Thief
- 9: King by his Own Hand requires every lifepath in the setting, except Failed Pit Fighter of course.

Barbarian Lifepath Traits

Most of the barbarian traits are fairly self-explanatory, Family Horribly Slaughtered Before Eyes, for example. However, there are a few of the lifepath traits that have attendant rules that bear explanation.

Hardened on the Wheel

Years spent toiling under the wheel and lash reduce hesitation from pain by one.

Numb

As the troll trait—ignore superficial wound penalties

Strength Over All

Those who are broken on the wheel learn that only strength can see them through, nothing else suffices. Characters with this trait must always have a higher Power and Forte than his Agility and Speed exponents. Starting character limit for Power and Forte is 7. In addition, Will must also be higher than Perception.

Depilated

The slavers who run the wheel practice strange rituals of hair-removal. These barbarians grow no beards nor chest hair.

Maimed

A failed Pit Fighter exits his career in one way and one way only: On his back and bleeding. Player must choose how character was maimed and indicate which stat the maiming is tied to. All tests against that stat are at +1 Ob, max for that stat is 7 rather than 8.

To Know What is Good in Life

What is good in life? *To crush your enemies, to see them driven before you, and to hear the lamentations of their women!*

Sense of Humor

Barbarians tend to develop a sense of humor, especially for those less fortunate who have a story to tell.



Hot Sex

Any Demon Witch worth her salt wants to get into the loincloth of this barbarian. He's going places!

Fear and Loathing of Snakes

What is it with cultists and giant snakes? Gah!

Comraderie

The black barbarians tend to be solitary, yet they have a habit of forming warm friendships centered around their exploits. Befriend them forever, cross them once!

Rescued: Owe Them One

The Tree of Woe is bad place that unfortunately many barbarians end up visiting. Unless rescued by their friends, the thirst and vultures finish the mighty warrior. Should the rescue come, the barbarian owes some mighty big favors....

Honorable

When sworn to the path of vengeance, the black barbarian learns at last his code of honor.

Unorthodox Brilliance

A surprise to everyone but himself, the black barbarian makes a brilliant captain of soldiers. Whenever he personally leads his men on maneuver, the opposition must make a Steel test to cope with his brilliance.

Designer's Notes

I developed these lifepaths as an example of what one can do using the Lifepath Creation guidelines in the course of one evening. All told, it took me about two hours to design them and type them up. Of course, this doesn't include the 120 minute movie these are based on!

An evening of work that leads to a lifetime of enjoyment. The great thing about developing lifepaths is that it is never throw-away work. They can be used over and over again, and be used by other players of the game everywhere.

Obviously, these paths are designed around the character Conan's exploits in his eponymous cinematic Barbarian adventure. They are meant to be humorous and over the top. Be forewarned: The numbers here are very favorable. A character taking these paths will start as an extremely powerful individual—and there is only meant to be one black barbarian in your campaign at any one time. (Of course a group of them might be fun for a one off....)

Enjoy!

—Luke, NYC, December 3rd, 2003

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