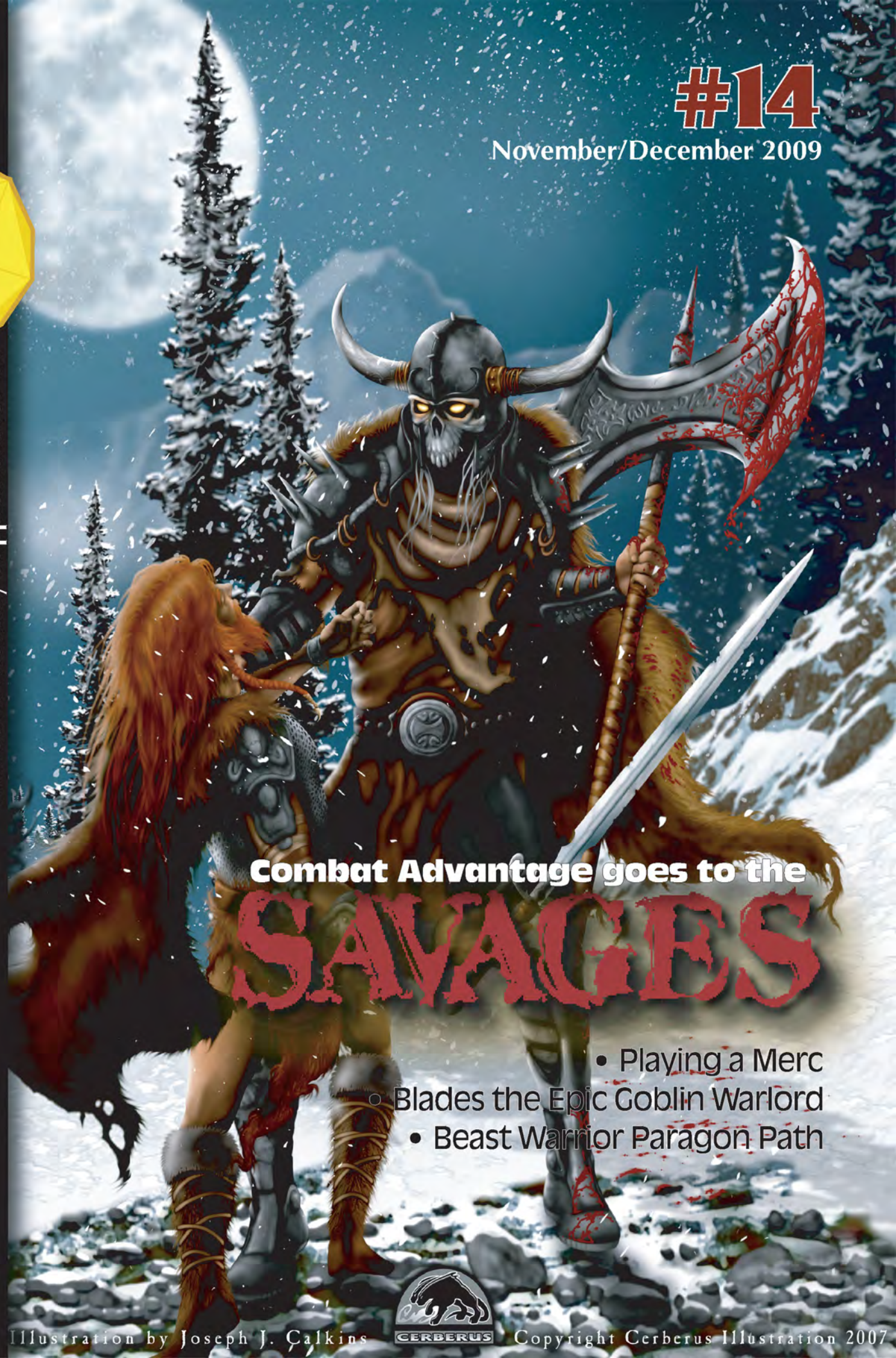


COMBAT ADVANTAGE

A Free Bi-Monthly Supplement for 4E

#14

November/December 2009



Combat Advantage goes to the

SAVAGES

- Playing a Merc
- Blades the Epic Goblin Warlord
- Beast Warrior Paragon Path

Illustration by Joseph J. Calkins



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#14

A Change In The Air...

Ever since it's first issue back in 2008, CA has always been evolving into something bigger. Slowly but surely, it has progressed from that simple 2-page variant rule for Power Knowledge to the 23-page magazine on your screen right now. And we're not done yet.

First, we address this particular issue. I love characters who walk the thin gray line of morality ever since my 2E fighter, Markus, took out a pair of pliers and made a goblin squeal where his treasure trove was kept. Hell, the entire Dark Emerald line was created solely to sate my appetite for the darker side of fantasy roleplaying (without the pesky rule design for a new system). This month's theme came about accidentally as I never intended for CA to have a dark issue and I'll make it up to everyone next time. Trust me.

So enjoy CA14 'cause it's the last one you'll see for this year. CA15 releases in January as we go bi-monthly in one step of our new branding for the best 4E free-zine on the market. By that time, I hope you'll be able to see the fruits of our other concepts. Until then, enjoy your holidays with friends and family and may dice stay warm.

Todd Crapper
Publisher
Combat Advantage

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How many times can you save the poor villagers from the evil wizard locked in his tower? Depends on how often they pay you...

by Todd Crapper

The Beast Warrior Paragon Path pg 10

Rage is but a doorway to your inner beast. Take on this multiclass barbarian/druid paragon path and show them what your hatred can really do...

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Blades: An Epic-Level Goblin Encounter pg 12

Your first 4E encounter had goblins. When Blades' done with ya, they'll become your last...

by Tim Rose

Combat Advantage #14

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Cover:

The perfect example of the bad guy calling the shots, it's also the perfect example of the work produced by the artists at Cerberus Illustration Studios. By Joseph J. Calkins.

www.cerberusart.com

**EMERALD
PRESS** 

Are you tired of rescuing villagers from invading orcs, goblins, or those pesky demons? Have necromancers troubled you one too many times? And what's with those planes? All that dread, danger, and heroics left you tired, weary, and, most importantly, broke?

Then you need to become a mercenary. Toss aside those pesky alignment restrictions and become your own boss. Mercenaries can play both sides and are loyal only to the highest bidder - that means no conflicts of interest. No more favors to desolate commoners because you're going to start working for only the richest blood in the Known World. And don't worry about whether or not they want you dead - you'll know they want you dead!

LIVING ON THE EDGE: MERCENARIES

Without a doubt, the fantasy roleplaying game offers you the chance to become the epic hero you've read about in fairy tales and grand fiction but sometimes you just need a break from all those noble deeds.

When alignment restrictions, divine deals, and estates complete with vassals, taxes, and dominions get you down, mercenary adventures offer the freedom to do just one thing - make money.

Mercenary adventures offer many of the standards in fantasy adventures but with a twist: they are free from the usual constraints of most heroes. If an innocent civilian stands in their way, not only will a mercenary be free to remove that civilian, but can even be rewarded for it. Mercenary adventures grant XP awards for innocents' murder, unlike the standard rules for this game. Even if the person is unarmed and incapable of offering resistance, they will grant an XP award upon their death or dispatch (at the GM's choice).

A heroic party generally collects a group of like-minded adventurers banded together to complete a mission and save the day, working together and understanding each other's strengths and weaknesses. A mercenary band works together to achieve their goals as well (commonly known as the mark), but only for as long as necessary. Most jobs pay a lump sum to be divided amongst the survivors - the fewer returning band members, the more money for the survivors to keep. Such moments are also considered

in these adventures, creating the second difference in a mercenary adventure: betrayal. Private information, secrets, and other scenes that could involve inter-party betrayal are considered, provided, and expected in this type of adventure. These moments can be grand or simplistic, and can also carry over into a continuing campaign.

What it all comes down to is mercenaries take these jobs for one reason: gold. More coin equals more wine, as the saying goes. Yet some mercs strive for more than mere wealth (while never straying far from that objective) and seek out infamy. A known and feared mercenary carries some clout with him as he travels allowing him to jack up the price of his services. Some of them wear severed ears around their neck to demonstrate their dedication and thoroughness on a job, while others ensure at least one victim remains alive to spread the word to others. Just as heroes, they wear their names with pride and take great care not to see it tarnished. Reputation is just as important, if not more so, to the bloodthirsty as it is the noble, and a well-done job works towards that reputation.

This article provides optional rules and suggestions to introduce a band of mercenaries and begin a mercenary campaign. Despite all the points mentioned above, there is always room for players to “do the right thing” and that is the key to these campaigns. There is always an option. If a player has a sudden change of heart and can find a way to resolve a situation morally without destroying his reputation, it can be done. If anything, mercenary campaigns frequent anti-heroes who pretend to be cold and heartless, but accomplish good deeds for their own end. On the same side of the coin, there are also just as many brutal bastards on the market caring little for anyone else’s needs but their own. Nothing about a merc adventure is written plainly with only one end in mind – anyone can be a merc, no matter how devout or twisted they are.

MERCENARY CHARACTERS (MERCs)

A merc is a person who takes jobs for money without question. Heroes take quests to achieve a common goal, fighting oppression and tyranny, rescuing people, and dismantling the plans of powerful individuals bent on personal conquest. A hero must believe in his quest. Mercs have no such burdens – they get paid to do what others would scoff or scowl at.

Playing a merc is different than playing a hero, but the goals between the two characters can be remarkably the same. Most mercenary adventures still involve entering dungeons, slaying monsters, and completing a final goal – they simply take a different direction than a heroic adventure would. The dungeon may be the temple of good-aligned clerics to a god of healing; the monsters could be eladrin servants; and the final goal may be the theft of a holy relic able to cure the sick. As such, characters with an indifference towards alignment are best suited for these jobs, but only those with a purity of heart should truly avoid this line of work.

Any race or class will work in a mercenary adventure, so long as the character is willing to get the job done with no questions asked. There are few, if any, character combinations that will refuse work in this field so long as the character can get the job done. That is why integrity still remains a hallmark in this line of work – you have to fulfill your end of the bargain or else you'll never work again. Or you'll be dead.

Badges: Most mercs try to avoid shouting their names in town, but there are times when you need to drop your name and let the right people know without tipping the authorities. Just as most guilds and families have crests, mercs have badges. Nowhere near like an actual badge in the traditional sense, they are hand carved coins emblazoned with a particular symbol. Each badge is connected to a particular high-profile underworld figure and is generally recognized by those not popular with law enforcement (it takes a DC 20 Streetwise check and you must be trained in the skill). A merc with such a badge can show them to others as proof of their past experiences – sometimes, a good pile of badges is enough to get a merc a job without him ever having to open his mouth. There are never any distinguishing marks or labels on the badge to link it back to a client and they have no monetary value. They are precious to other mercs looking to gain larger bragging rites and stolen badges are common.

Any merc in possession of a badge gains the following benefits:

- automatic +2 bonus to all rolls in a skill challenge designed to gain a job, garner a higher salary, or other tactics of negotiation between the merc and a potential client;
- for every five badges a merc has, he gains an additional 5% to the initial fee offered by a client;
- if captured and interrogated by any member of law enforcement (or any appropriate character) with any badges in his possession, the merc suffers a -4 penalty to all Charisma-based rolls as his guilt leaves him unable to talk his way out.

Certain badges provided additional benefits, even powers, to be used to the merc's advantage.

Bite the Hand...: Mercs think of themselves first and foremost. If they allow someone else to stay alive, it is because they need them to live for their own purposes. This includes other band members as well. Betrayal is a common occurrence in merc bands, so it is expected for such characters.



John M. ... 1/2/25



Mercs receive a 10% bonus to story- and quest- based XP at the end of an adventure if they are able to keep a secret related to the job for themselves without any other members knowing. Other players could be aware of the deception, but their characters must not. As soon as any other character in the band discovers it during the course of the adventure, the XP bonus is nullified and cannot be given at the end of the adventure. If any character discovers the ruse at any point after the conclusion of the adventure, the XP bonus will remain and cannot be taken away.

Furthermore, the merc's XP bonus increases to 20% if he was able to get paid for the job without actually completing it. For example, if the merc was contracted to kill someone and instead put him in hiding, faked his death, and was paid for murdering him, the merc gets a 20% bonus to the standard adventure completion award. As soon as the ruse is uncovered, however, the merc suffers a -20% penalty to all XP collected from that point on until the job is truly finished. This means that a merc caught cheating a client out of the job will have his reputation suffer until he is able to pull through and get it done like he should have the first time. This penalty kicks in as soon as the character finds out he has been caught – this information can come from any character at any time in the campaign.

Brutality: Twisted mercs with a penchant for the dramatic have a tendency of spreading their name through acts of brutal violence. Should this be the path you choose, you can receive a 10% bonus to XP awards from creatures you kill. The level of brutality does vary and awarding the bonus is solely at the discretion of the GM. You cannot use a signature kill (see below) to gain a 10% XP bonus and the benefit of your signature kill – you can only have one or the other (player's choice).

Once you do begin using brutal violence, you become easy to track. Any character attempting to track you over any distance gains a +5 bonus to any required skill check or skill challenge in doing so.

Experience Awards: Mercenaries value one life: their own. Everyone else is expendable. Anyone killed by a merc during the course of a job – even off the job – grants the merc an XP award, regardless of their power and threat to the character. A standard award of 25 XP is granted to anyone killed by the merc and is replaced by any other XP value already awarded based on character level. For example, if a merc sneaks into a tent and kills two guards and a maid, he will receive the standard XP amount for the guards (since they are trained and armed) and 25 XP for the maid that would normally refrain from combat training and would not have an XP value. This award represents the additional renown and respect in the underworld as the word of a merc's ruthlessness spreads.

Ruthless Appearance: Many mercs use their bloody reputations to intimidate others, on the job or during negotiations. If a merc adorns himself in anything gruesome or in a way to clearly suggest his identity (and the reputation that proceeds it), he gains a +2 bonus to all Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Streetwise skill checks.

In addition (while it may not be useful in some adventures), a merc gains a +1 bonus for every four character levels to his Charisma bonus as verbal reputation proceeds him. The merc cannot receive this bonus until the target is aware of his identity. The standard rules for intimidation apply with this bonus.

These benefits have a flip side, however. When captured by an opposing force (such as local law enforcement), you suffer a penalty rather than a bonus. Once you've been busted, those very aspects that spread your infamy and give you sway over others will only hold you back – the law doesn't care how you got that scar, but they'll use it as evidence to throw you in jail.

Signature Kill: All mercs have to make a name for themselves, that much is certain, and there are plenty of opportunities in this shady line of work. A signature kill is a particular delivery of death used to clearly mark the target as a victim of a merc. For example, Pyro got his tag by setting his victims on fire after they died. Many say it's to burn all trace evidence on the body, while others say that only those who don't piss him off are killed before they burn.

Signature kills can also related to distinguishing marks, labels, or signs left at the scene when a person has been killed, caught, or any other action committed by the merc. Murder and mayhem are not the only requirements for a signature kill.

When you have completed a signature kill, you gain one of the following benefits. Each of these are provided as additional uses of the standard type, just like bonus hit points. Once they have been used, they are gone and they do not increase your listed maximum number.

- one bonus healing surge
- 1d6 hit points
- the use of an encounter power

You cannot gain any additional benefits if you have yet to use your previous reward for a signature kill. Not matter the circumstances, you can only have one of the above benefits at a time as a result of a signature kill and you must wait 24 hours after using it until you can gain another one.

MERC BENEFITS AND THEIR COST

While it may seem that mercs have a greater advantage and can increase in level faster than their noble counterparts, there is a serious drawback to being a merc: the law. These benefits are generally only useful when dealing with the underworld and inflict penalties in the “real world” of kingdoms and enforcement. There may be times when it doesn't feel that way and the players need a lesson in subtlety.

If your players are ever caught, sent to trial, or face any form of punishment, inflict the full force of the law on them. If most characters would only face time in prison, threaten to execute them. Fines can be increased by 10%-50%, or can be added up based on the number of XP awards and bonuses received based on their crimes.

More importantly, it can be easy to forget that mercs have a hard enough time dealing with the scum of society and can be betrayed at a moment's notice. Honor goes only as far as someone's needs and the contract can be changed in a heartbeat. Some mercs have even been tailed by other mercs sent to kill them should they fail and that is the biggest risk mercs face: even if they escape the job with their lives, their clients will likely want them dead. There is no peace for a merc.

MERCENARY TAGS

Committing murder, theft, and any number of crimes for the sake of money can create problems if someone goes by their given name. Most mercs use aliases known as "tags" to maintain some form of secrecy from their previous life and to aid in their reputation. In almost all cases, a merc's tag refers to one of his more famous jobs and can be regaled with an origin of the name.

For example, Headstrike is a dwarven merc particularly regarded for his penchant to behead his marks. Bowel has a habit of using foul interrogation techniques, including running a hot dagger along a mark's midsection. Thunderhoof is a minotaur mercenary who gained his name after charging an elf encampment during a thunderstorm and killing all seven elves single handedly – as the story goes, each elf was killed at the exact moment lightning struck the ground, concealing their cries from their comrades until there were none left.

First-level mercs are never expected to have a tag (since having one without a reputation is almost useless, but can be forward-thinking if they are able to gain a reputation later on). Most tags are gained from reputation and come from others who tell the story rather than the person who is the source of the story. Most mercs learn about their tag from others and eventually take it as their own.

THE CANT

Mercs walk a darker side of life and generally frequent less savory locations to relax. Since most of their work is illegal – wherever law exists – they have created their own flavor of language, sometimes for secrecy, and other times just to add some local colour to their dialogue. A sampling of this "cant" is provided below as a starting point. DMs are encouraged to use additional words suitable to their campaign.

Bag: Protect a mark. Even mercs can be hired to keep someone alive (though these marks are normally less than moral characters). This term is normally used as: "Keep him in the bag."

Bank: To guarantee something. Clients will say "this job's in the bank" to imply how simple it would be to finish.

Clean: To kill someone. When used in the sentence "Baren has to clean up his act," it means Baren has to be killed.

Client: The person paying the merc.

Farc: An orc curse, originally used to describe an orc having sex with cattle. Can be used as a verb, pronoun, or any fashion. This is an extremely common curse within mercenary circles.

Gleen: To steal from someone without their knowledge. Swapping a valuable item for a fake is a standard glean.

Going on a trip: Disappear. Most mercs are left to their own discretion on exact details of the disappearance, so long as the mark is never heard from again. Murder is optional, but encouraged.

Jingle: Coin. Also known as “jink” in some bands, though this is not widely used.

Job: The work a merc was hired for, or what heroes would call a “quest.”

Larf: An idiot, imbecile, or ignorant person. Always used as an insult.

Mark: The target of a job. It can be a person or an object and must be eliminated, taken, or protected.

Purse: A person holding or guarding the mark, a term generally used for someone holding an object.

Riding a person: To get information from them. This usually refers to befriending someone with booze and getting the information while the mark is drunk, but physical abuse and dismemberment are also allowed in this context.

Shined: Roughed up. Shining someone normally means beating them up and leaving them for dead with a warning expressly worded by the client.

Slate: A tab or amount of money owed to a client. This term is commonly used when a client hires a merc to do something to pay off outstanding debts, generally spoken as “wiping the slate clean.”

Snatch and grab: To sneak into a place and steal something with secrecy optional. Generally used for jobs in which the victim is expected to find out the mark is missing the next morning.

Swift: To do the job quickly without any witnesses. Once again, whether or not the witnesses are still alive is left to the merc.

Tag: A merc’s nickname or “professional name.” Usually the name he is known by in underground circles. This term is not used to specifically address a person (e.g. “Hey, what’s your tag?”) but to assert someone as a merc when explained to someone else (e.g. “...goes by the tag o’ Bloodline.”) See the section on tags above.

Tip: A bonus fee for going the extra distance on a job. For example, if a merc is told to “send Baren on a trip” and comes back with a severed head, the client will give a tip for the extra effort.

Waddle: Break his kneecaps.

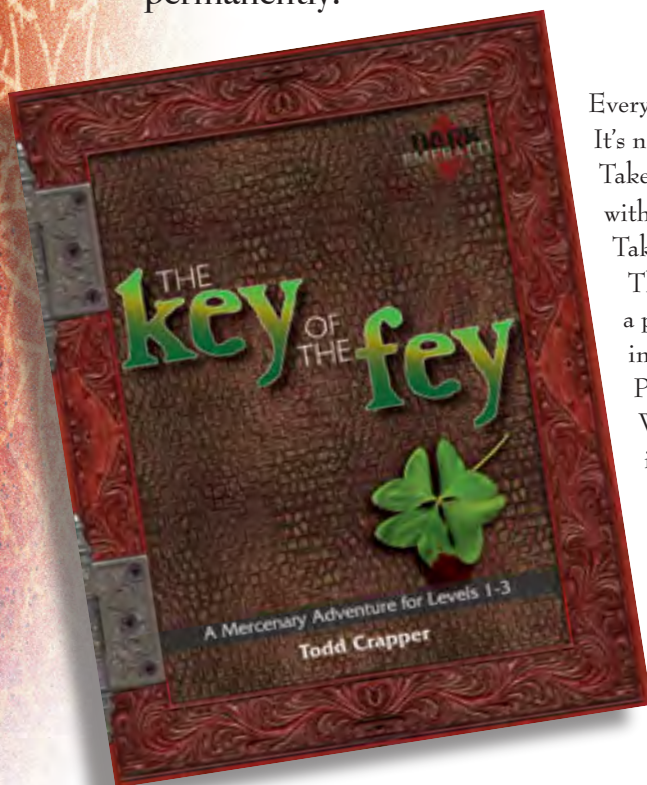
Wink: Steal.

DEALING WITH MERCENARIES

There is an interesting challenge ahead of you, the DM of this campaign. Your players are going to be expected to lie, cheat, and betray their fellow band mates for their own objectives. They will be rewarded for doing something on their own without the attention of others and you may even run the adventure without certain players knowing anything about other players' machinations behind the scenes. Through all of this, there has to be cohesion and teamwork to get through these difficult encounters.

Mercenary adventures (and campaigns) are challenging games to run and are best suited for experienced DMs. Knowledge of the rules are not required as much as a sense of decency and fairness with other players. More importantly, you have to have mature, responsible players seeking to enjoy themselves in a game. When you know your players have the best intentions of the campaign in mind, you can roll with them and encourage their devious actions while winding them back into place when the time is right. If you know your players, you can run an incredible mercenary campaign.

Before the first encounter begins, sit down with your players and discuss intentions and limitations on the campaign. Tell them what you have envisioned and how you intend to portray the world, and listen to their concerns and desires in turn. Certain players will be uncomfortable with extreme situations, so it should be made clear from the very beginning which subject matter is off limits. No matter what. In doing so, anything left on the table can be toyed with endlessly and safely. A poorly chosen situation can offend a player deeply and cause him or her to leave the group permanently.



Everythin' ya see here's been winked by another book. It's not out yet, but keep yer ear to the ground for it. Take everythin' ye've gleaned from this article and put it to work with *The Key of the Fey* from Emerald Press.

Take on yer first job and make a name fer yerself.

The client's an orc named Stump... so if ye've got a problem workin' fer orcs, turn back and drop some jink in that pretty white church back in town and beg forgiveness.

Pay's good and it's a simple snatch'n'grab. So he says.

Wants a portal key taken from some cultists living in the woods and needs it kept real hushed. The purse is a paladin with a real dedicated following and Stump thinks his holy symbol is the mark. Make it swift and walk away with a couple of badges to get ye on yer way.

Coming Soon... so they say.

BEAST WARRIOR

Embrace the inner beast within you. No longer shall you suffer under the power of your rage and the grace of your beast form.

Prerequisite: Barbarian, Initiate of the Old Faith (druid multiclass)

Combining the savagery of the barbarian rage with the shape changing abilities of the druid, you are a fierce opponent on all fronts. Tossing aside your weapons and other possessions, you have attuned your wild shape power to polymorph into a hybrid of humanoid and animal, interchanging from one form to the other with ease in a fierce flurry of claws, teeth, and anger.

Beast Warrior Path Features

Beast Rampage (11th level): When you spend an action point, you regain the use of your beast form encounter power or can use a second beast form attack power before the end of the encounter.

Savage Appearance (11th level): You develop claws or teeth capable of inflicting significant damage to your enemies. As a minor action, your fingers develop long, sharp claws or you gain a mouthful of jagged teeth capable of rendering flesh, causing 1d8 points of damage.

You cannot use your claws or teeth in the same round as any weapon in your possession but they can be used as a melee basic attack.

At 21st level, your claws or teeth inflict 2d6 damage.

Fearsome Growl (16th level): While raging, you can push a target an additional square or have the target grant combat advantage to an adjacent ally.

Enraged Leap

Beast Warrior Attack 11

You spring forward and unleash the full force of your savagery on your enemies, sending them cowering in fear.

Encounter • Fear, Primal, Weapon

Standard Action **Melee** weapon

Target: One creature

Attack: Strength vs AC

Hit: 3[W] + Strength modifier damage

Secondary Target: Any enemies within 1 squares of your primary target.

Secondary Attack: Charisma vs Will

Hit: The target is pushed a number of squares equal to one-half your Strength modifier

Enabling Boost

Beast Warrior Utility 12

Your body takes on the qualities of the beast and grants you the increased strength, ferocity, or stamina to pursue your enemies.

Daily • Primal

Minor Action **Personal**

Prerequisite: You must be raging.

Effect: You gain a +5 bonus to all Athletics, Endurance, or Intimidate checks until the end of your rage.

Rage of the Pure Beast

Beast Warrior Attack 20

The beast inside you consumes your form; no armor is a match for your claws and none shall escape your wrath.

Daily • Beast Form, Polymorph, Primal

Standard Action **Melee** 1

Target: One creature

Prerequisite: Strength vs AC

Hit: 4[W] + Strength modifier damage

Effect: You enter the rage of the pure beast and assume the form of any Medium natural or fey beast with your *wild shape* power. Until the end of the encounter, you can make any attack in your beast form, including those without the beast form keyword and inflict damage equal to your equipped weapon at the time of your transformation.

When you reduce a target to 0 hit points, you can use the daily power of your equipped weapon through your beast form on your next attack.

BLADES

Goblin Warlord

Goblins are undoubtedly at the bottom of the monster power spectrum. Most times what your players can expect are some shifty and sneaky tactics that only delay the inevitable: a relatively cheap, easy, and unfulfilling victory for them, that results in little experience and even less gold.

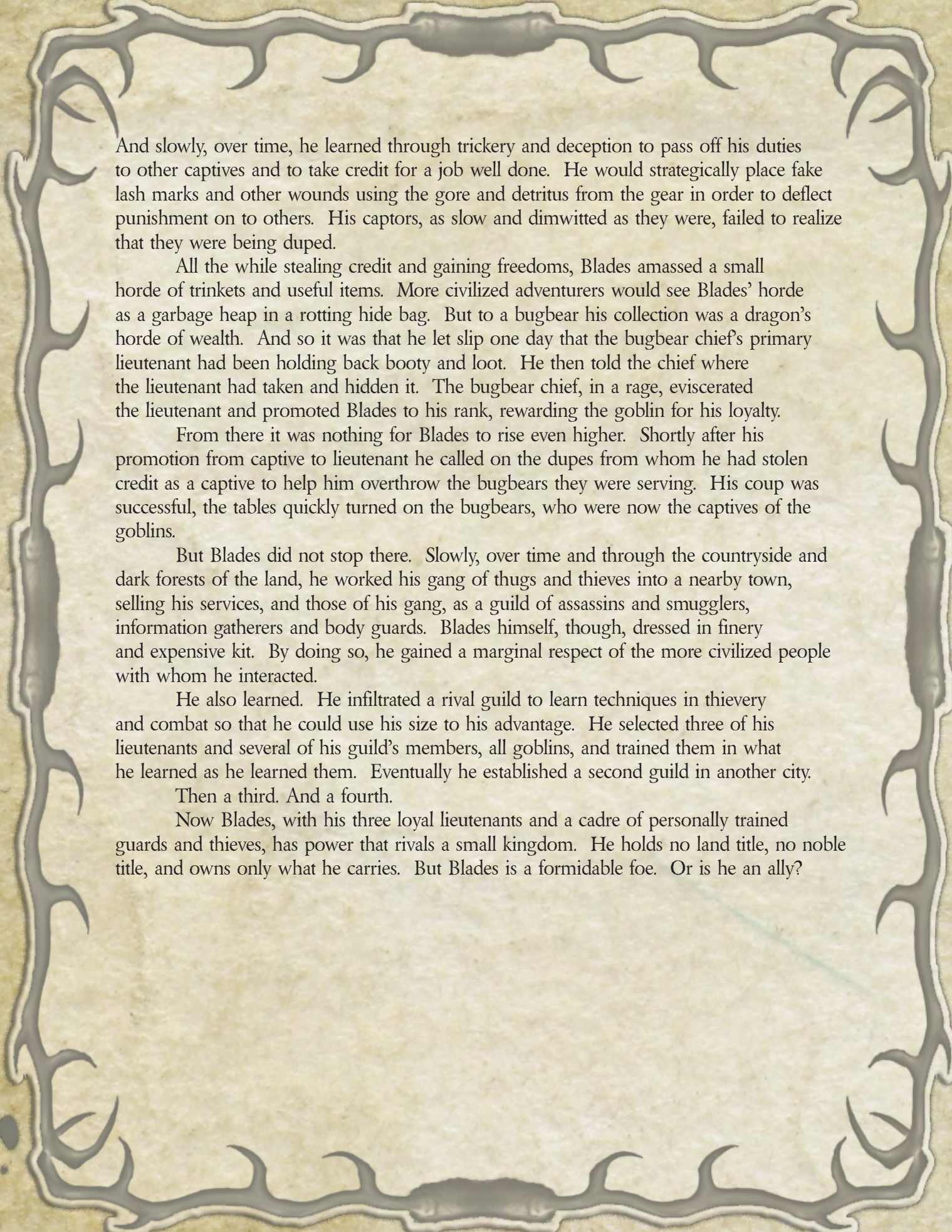
But what if a goblin saw a way out of the lowliness and drudgery of its miserable existence? What if it managed to rise through the ranks of the more powerful goblinoids, eventually to take over a guild of thieves, cut throats, and burglars? And what if it managed to wrangle in with some grudging respect from the more civilized races? The answer: Blades.

He is a crafty goblin that realized his own penchant for bluff and disguise at a very young age under some extreme circumstances, and he learned how to best make it all work for him.

Tim Rose

Most goblins met by heroes are mere fodder. As the least of the goblinoid races, if not the entire essence of being a “monster,” they represent the baseline template for their larger and, often, smarter cousins: hobgoblins and bugbears. But what goblins lack in mind (hobgoblins) and body (bugbears) they more than make up for in craftiness. And Blades more so than any other.

It is every goblin’s dream to be a warlord, or some equivalent, and control his own gang of thugs and thieves. But more often than not their diminutive size only helps to keep them under the thumbs (and feet) of others. Blades saw a way out. As a captive of a bugbear tribe at only three years of age (a juvenile for goblins), Blades was selected to assist the bugbear chief by cleaning his gear of the mud and gore of combat. Daily he was called upon, his chains ever fastened nearby, to scrub, wash, and polish.



And slowly, over time, he learned through trickery and deception to pass off his duties to other captives and to take credit for a job well done. He would strategically place fake lash marks and other wounds using the gore and detritus from the gear in order to deflect punishment on to others. His captors, as slow and dimwitted as they were, failed to realize that they were being duped.

All the while stealing credit and gaining freedoms, Blades amassed a small horde of trinkets and useful items. More civilized adventurers would see Blades' horde as a garbage heap in a rotting hide bag. But to a bugbear his collection was a dragon's horde of wealth. And so it was that he let slip one day that the bugbear chief's primary lieutenant had been holding back booty and loot. He then told the chief where the lieutenant had taken and hidden it. The bugbear chief, in a rage, eviscerated the lieutenant and promoted Blades to his rank, rewarding the goblin for his loyalty.

From there it was nothing for Blades to rise even higher. Shortly after his promotion from captive to lieutenant he called on the dupes from whom he had stolen credit as a captive to help him overthrow the bugbears they were serving. His coup was successful, the tables quickly turned on the bugbears, who were now the captives of the goblins.

But Blades did not stop there. Slowly, over time and through the countryside and dark forests of the land, he worked his gang of thugs and thieves into a nearby town, selling his services, and those of his gang, as a guild of assassins and smugglers, information gatherers and body guards. Blades himself, though, dressed in finery and expensive kit. By doing so, he gained a marginal respect of the more civilized people with whom he interacted.

He also learned. He infiltrated a rival guild to learn techniques in thievery and combat so that he could use his size to his advantage. He selected three of his lieutenants and several of his guild's members, all goblins, and trained them in what he learned as he learned them. Eventually he established a second guild in another city.

Then a third. And a fourth.

Now Blades, with his three loyal lieutenants and a cadre of personally trained guards and thieves, has power that rivals a small kingdom. He holds no land title, no noble title, and owns only what he carries. But Blades is a formidable foe. Or is he an ally?

Blades

Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 23 Elite Skirmisher
XP 10,200

Initiative +17 **Senses** Perception +18; low-light vision

Blades' Blades aura 2; enemies entering the aura take damage equal to Blades' Charisma modifier (4) and Dexterity modifier (7)

HP 430; **Bloodied** 215

AC 33, **Fortitude** 29, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 29

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

Action Points 1

☼ **Aura Dagger** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

Close burst 1; +28 vs. AC; 3d6+7 damage

Aura Dagger (standard; recharge ☼☼, ☼☼☼, ☼☼☼☼)

Blades makes two *aura dagger* attacks.

➤ **Feint Blade** (standard; at-will) • **Charm, Psychic**

Range 5; +20 vs. Will; 2d6+7 psychic damage and the target is dazed until the start of Blades' next turn

✦ **Dagger Flurry** (immediate reaction when first bloodied; encounter) • **Charm, Weapon**

Close burst 2; +20 vs. Reflex; the target is stunned until the end of its next turn

✦ **Blinding Blades of Blades** (standard; recharge ☼☼) • **Charm, Weapon**

Area burst 3 within 10; +20 vs. Will; 4d6+15 psychic damage and the target is blinded (save ends). Blades shifts 1 square as a free action after the attack.

Miss: Half damage and the target is pushed 1 square.

Blades' Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

Blades shifts 1 square.

Combat Advantage

Once per round, Blades inflicts an additional 5d6 damage with a successful attack to a foe against whom he has combat advantage.

First Strike

Blades has combat advantage against any enemy that has not acted in the encounter.

Unaligned **Languages:** Common, Elven, Giant, Goblin

Skills Bluff +23, History +19, Insight +18, Intimidate +20, Perception +18, Stealth +26, Streetwise +20, Thievery +28

Str 11 (+11) **Dex** 24 (+18) **Wis** 14 (+14)

Con 17 (+14) **Int** 16 (+14) **Cha** 18 (+15)

Equipment +5 leather armor, +5 aura dagger

Blades' Tactics

Blades is an attacker, starting combat with feint blade then using double attack only as long as blinding blades of Blades is not recharged

Gaxut
Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 19 Elite Controller
XP 4,800

Initiative +9 **Senses** Perception +11; low-light vision

HP 362; **Bloodied** 181

AC 30, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 29

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

Action Points 1

⊕ **Chain Dagger** (standard; at-will) • **Implement, Weapon**

+24 vs. AC; 2d6+7 damage and makes a second attack against a foe adjacent to him and the primary target

Secondary Attack: +20 vs. Reflex; 1d6+3 damage

✂ **Dagger Hurl** (standard; at-will) • **Implement, Weapon**

Range 5; +24 vs. AC; 2d6+7 damage

✂ **Ray of Pain** (standard; at-will) • **Arcane, Psychic**

Range 10; +22 vs. Will; 2d8+8 psychic damage and the target is dazed (save ends)

❄ **Wall of Flame and Frost** (standard; encounter) • **Arcane, Cold, Fire, Implement**

Area wall 5 within 10 squares; Gaxut conjures a wall of fire and ice that lasts until the end of the encounter. The wall can be 2 squares high and can occupy any 5 contiguous squares. If a creature enters the wall's space or starts its turn there it takes 2d10+8 fire damage and 2d10+8 cold damage. The creature also takes ongoing 5 fire damage and is slowed (save ends both). The wall lasts until the end of the encounter or can be dismissed as a free action.

❄ **Burst of Agony** (immediate reaction, when bloodied; encounter) • **Arcane, Psychic**

Close burst 3; +22 vs. Fortitude; 3d8+14 psychic damage and the target is stunned and immobilized until the end of its next turn

Blades' Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

Gaxut shifts 1 square.

Unaligned **Languages:** Common, Elven, Goblin

Skills Bluff +23, Stealth +26, Thievery +28

Str 9 (+8) **Dex** 13 (+10) **Wis** 14 (+10)

Con 10 (+8) **Int** 17 (+11) **Cha** 21 (+12)

Equipment +3 leather armor, +3 chain dagger, 5 daggers

Gaxut's Tactics

Gaxut is the most adept of Blades' lieutenants. As an arcane controller he will use ray of pain until he can maximize the use of wall of flame and frost against as many foes as possible. He will use wall of flame and frost regardless of how many of his allies will be affected.

Tsozegg
Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 20 Elite Artillery
XP 5,600

Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +15; low-light vision

HP 296; **Bloodied** 148

AC 30, **Fortitude** 25, **Reflex** 31, **Will** 28

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

Action Points 1

Ⓢ **Pinpoint Shot** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

Range 10; +30 vs. AC; 2d6+8 damage

Secondary Attack: +26 vs. Reflex; 1d6+5 damage

Ⓡ **Double Dagger** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

+28 vs. AC; 2d6+8 damage

Secondary Attack: +26 vs. Reflex; 1d6+5 damage

✳ **Exploding Arrow** (standard; recharge ☹️) • **Weapon**

Area burst 1 within 10 squares; +26 vs. Reflex; 3d8+14 damage and the target is blinded until the end of its next turn

✳ **Blade Fury** (immediate reaction, when reduced to 0 hp; encounter) • **Weapon**

Tsozegg makes a double attack with *double dagger* against the nearest foe with a -4 penalty and a +4 bonus to damage.

Blades' Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

Tsozegg shifts 1 square.

Combat Advantage

Once per round, Tsozegg inflicts an additional 3d6 damage with a successful attack to a foe against whom he has combat advantage.

First Strike

Tsozegg has combat advantage against any enemy that has not acted in the encounter.

Unaligned **Languages:** Common, Giant, Goblin

Skills Perception +15, Stealth +21, Thievery +21

Str 14 (+12) **Dex** 22 (+16) **Wis** 10 (+10)

Con 8 (+9) **Int** 13 (+11) **Cha** 16 (+13)

Equipment +4 leather armor, +4 dagger (2), longbow, arrows (40), exploding arrows (4)

Tsozegg's Tactics

Tsozegg will use double attack with both of his basic attacks, saving blade vortex until he can hit two or more foes.

Izix
Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 18 Elite Skirmisher
XP 4,000

Initiative +14 **Senses** Perception +9; low-light vision

HP 346; **Bloodied** 173

AC 29, **Fortitude** 31, **Reflex** 25, **Will** 27

Saving Throws +2

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

Action Points 1

⚔ **Dagger** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

+23 vs. AC; 2d6+7 damage

🌀 **Dagger Toss** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

Range 5; +23 vs. AC; 2d6+7 damage

⚔ **Bloodied Slash** (immediate reaction, when bloodied; encounter) • **Weapon**

+21 vs. Will; 3d6+13 damage and Izix shifts 1 square. If the attack is successful, Izix can make a second attack against a different foe: +19 vs. Fortitude; 3d6+13 damage and shift 1 square. If the second attack is successful Izix can make a third attack against a third foe: +17 vs. Reflex; 3d6+13 damage and shift 1 square.

Sliding Bluff (minor; at-will)

+16 vs. Will; Izix gains combat advantage against the foe on the next attack that targets the foe in the same round and shifts 1 square.

Double Slide (minor; at-will)

Izix can shift 2 squares, the first of which can be occupied by an enemy.

Slip Away (move; recharge ☹️, ☹️)

Izix can move his speed away from an adjacent foe without provoking an opportunity attack.

Anticipation

Izix has a +4 bonus to opportunity attacks.

Blades' Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

Izix shifts 1 square.

Unaligned **Languages:** Common, Elven, Goblin

Skills Bluff +16, Endurance +17, Stealth +19, Thievery +19

Str 11 (+13) **Dex** 22 (+19) **Wis** 10 (+9)

Con 19 (+18) **Int** 9 (+12) **Cha** 17 (+11)

Equipment +4 leather armor, +3 dagger, daggers (10)

Izix's Tactics

Izix uses his melee basic attack in conjunction with double shift and sliding bluff until he can use slip away to focus attacks on controllers and ranged strikers.

Minion of Blades

Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 21 Minion
XP 800

Initiative +10 **Senses** Perception +9; low-light vision

HP 1; a missed attack never damages a minion

AC 30, **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 28, **Will** 28

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

⊕ **Chain Dagger** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

+26 vs. AC; 8 damage and the minion of Blades can make a secondary attack against a foe that is adjacent to the minion of Blades and within 1 square of the minion of Blades: +19 vs. Reflex; 4 damage

Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

The minion of Blades shifts 1 square.

Blade Training

A minion of Blades with at least two other minions of Blades adjacent to the target does additional 3 damage with a successful dagger attack. The minion of Blades can also shift 1 square as a free action following the successful attack.

Unaligned **Languages:** Goblin

Str 14 (+12) **Dex** 21 (+15) **Wis** 8 (+9)

Con 13 (+11) **Int** 8 (+9) **Cha** 16 (+13)

Equipment leather armor, chain dagger

Minion of Blades' Tactics

Fiercely loyal to Blades, minions of Blades tend to swarm their foes in order to maximize their blade training.

Guard Blade

Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 16 Soldier
XP 1,400

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +11; low-light vision

HP 156; **Bloodied** 78

AC 28, **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 24

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

⬇ **Longsword** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

+23 vs. AC; 2d8+8 damage. See *blade line* below.

⬇ **Triple Blade Rally** (standard; recharge Ⓜ) • **Weapon**

The guard blade makes three *longsword* attacks. The guard blade may not shift during this turn.

Combat Advantage

The guard blade inflicts an additional 3d6 damage with a successful attack to a foe against whom he has combat advantage.

Blade Surge (move; encounter)

The blade guard regains 39 hit points and can shift 2 squares.

Blade Line

The guard blade does an extra 5 damage with a successful *longsword* attack if there are at least two other guard blades adjacent to it or the target.

Blades' Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

The guard blade shifts 1 square.

Unaligned **Languages:** Common, Giant, Goblin

Skills Athletics +18, Endurance + 14

Str 20 (+13) **Dex** 14 (+10) **Wis** 16 (+11)

Con 13 (+9) **Int** 9 (+7) **Cha** 8 (+7)

Equipment leather armor, longsword

Guard Blades' Tactics

Guard blades fight in groups of three or more massing on a single foe to exploit the blade line tactic and to try and get combat advantage. They will save blade surge until the last possible moment hoping to demoralize their foes.

Phalanx Blade

Medium natural humanoid (Goblin)

Level 16 Brute
XP 1,400

Initiative +8 **Senses** Perception +11; low-light vision

HP 190; **Bloodied** 95

AC 24 (26 with *blade phalanx*), **Fortitude** 24, **Reflex** 24, **Will** 24

Speed 6; see also *Blades' goblin tactics*

⬇ **Greatsword** (standard; at-will) • **Weapon**

+19 vs. AC; 2d10+10 damage. See blade line below.

⬇ **Phalanx Attack** (standard; recharge Ⓜ) • **Weapon**

Reach 2; +13 vs. Fortitude; 3d10+13 and the target is stunned (save ends). If the phalanx blade is adjacent to another phalanx blade, treat the attack as if the phalanx blade has combat advantage against the target.

Miss: Half-damage and the target is slowed until the end of its next turn.

Phalanx Surge (move; encounter)

The phalanx guard can shift 2 squares, even through an enemy occupied space, and gains +2 to all defenses until the start of its next round.

Deep Breath (standard; encounter)

The phalanx guard regains 47 hit points, is slowed and cannot shift until the end of its next turn. This action requires that at least one phalanx blade be adjacent to the phalanx blade taking the action.

Blade Phalanx

The phalanx blade gains a +2 bonus to AC if at least two other phalanx blades are adjacent to it

Blades' Goblin Tactics (immediate reaction, when missed by an attack; at-will)

The phalanx blade shifts 1 square.

Unaligned **Languages:** Common, Giant, Goblin

Skills Athletics +18, Endurance + 16

Str 20 (+13) **Dex** 14 (+10) **Wis** 14 (+10)

Con 16 (+11) **Int** 10 (+8) **Cha** 8 (+7)

Equipment leather armor, longsword

Phalanx Blades' Tactics

Phalanx blades start combat with phalanx attack to try and use it as often as possible. They tend to fight with one or two fellow phalanx blades adjacent to them to maximize the use of blade phalanx and deep breath. They will save phalanx surge until phalanx attack is recharged.

Encounter Groups

Level 13 Encounter (4,200 XP)

2 phalanx blades (level 16 brutes, 2,800 XP)
4 ogre bludgeoneers see the D&D 4E Monster Manual, level 16 minions, 1,400 XP)

Level 13 Encounter (4,400 XP)

2 guard blades (level 16 soldiers, 2,800 XP)
2 grimlock berserkers (see the D&D 4E Monster Manual, level 13 brutes, 1,600 XP)

Level 17 Encounter (7,600 XP)

Gaxut (level 19 elite controller, 4,800 XP)
2 phalanx blades (level 16 brutes, 2,800 XP)

Level 21 Encounter (16,600 XP)

Blades (level 23 elite skirmisher, 10,200 XP)
Izix (level 18 elite skirmisher, 4,000 XP)
3 minions of Blades (level 21 minions, 2,400 XP)

Level 24 Encounter (31,600 XP)

Blades (level 23 elite skirmisher, 10,200 XP)
Tsozegg (level 20 elite artillery, 5,600 XP)
Gaxut (level 19 elite controller, 4,800 XP)
5 minions of Blades (level 21 minions, 4,000 XP)
3 phalanx blades (level 16 brutes, 4,200 XP)
2 guard blades (level 16 soldiers, 2,800 XP)

New Equipment

Superior Melee Weapon

Name	Damage	Prof.	Properties
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Chain dagger	1d4	+2	Second target, One-handed
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A chain dagger looks like a standard dagger with a length of chain attached at the tip. The 18-inch length of chain ends in a small double-sided blade.

With a successful attack the wielder makes a secondary attack with a -4 penalty as a basic melee attack and does 1d2 + Strength modifier damage.

This second attack must target an enemy that is adjacent to both the wielder and the primary target.

New Weapon Property: Second Target

Weapons with the second target property allow the wielder to make a basic melee attack against a foe that is both adjacent to the wielder and the primary target. The wielder takes a -4 penalty to the attack and the damage of the second attack is determined by the specific weapons, but is typically two-die less in value.

Aura Blade

Level 17+

Your light blade is surrounded by a cloud of smaller versions of itself that fly around you when you attack.

Lvl 17 +4 65,000 gp

Lvl 27 +6 1,625,000 gp

Lvl 22 +5 325,000 gp

Weapon: Light blade

Enhancement: Attack and damage rolls

Critical: +2d4 damage per plus

Power (Daily): Free action. After a successful attack with this weapon you make a melee basic attack against any foe adjacent to you or the primary target. The primary target must be medium or smaller in order to make the second attack.

*Combat Advantage is a series of free supplemental material for the
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