

THE RED WIND FIGHTING CLUB

In the cities across the shards, there will always be those who seek to take advantage of the weak-willed and desperate of pocket. Whether cults or criminal organizations, wherever there is money to be made—or power to be taken—there is always an evil sort preying upon the downtrodden and innocent.

And so, in defiance of these types, the legendary monk Grandmaster called Wind-over-Water founded the Red Wind Fighting Club.

The club was originally created as an unassuming martial arts school in the backstreets of Zenith's metropolis: Konchog City. It seemed the perfect place to begin a school for those wild souls who refused to conform to the religious ideation of the Zenith Orders. Having completed a circuit of the shards in search of worthy teachers and students, Wind-over-Water returned home to Zenith and Konchog City to establish the roots of her own martial arts lineage.

Over time, many students came to study there. The increased presence of bandit gangs—having slithered down from their mountain holds—had caused a new influx of terrified people, desperate to escape the violence. And Konchog City, ever a destination for the trade of illicit goods, had also seen an encroachment of cartels and syndicates based on Haark. And so dozens flocked to learn a means to defend themselves from those who would oppress, extort, and abuse them. Soon the Red Wind Fighting Club became something much more important than simply a place to learn to punch or wield a sword or a spear.

The club soon took a more aggressive interest in the well-being and safety of the neighborhood where it was situated. Protection rackets, thieving rings, and worse were hacked off at the knees by the heroics of Wind-over-Water and her Red Wind fighters. The crime bosses of Konchog City were becoming frustrated with the increasing difficulty of performing their corrupt business, and they



began to put the screws to the city's magistrates who clearly needed more than just their usual gore-soaked bribes.

Eventually the final judgment came down from the bosses themselves. Wind-over-Water had to die. The bosses and wicked officials worked to find the deadliest assassins that could be sent to eliminate the Grandmaster herself. Agents of the shadow government and the most powerful crime syndicates assembled the nastiest gang of hitmen, poisoners, and death cultists they could manage. The foulest among them, a red-leafed Banyari Skyborn murderer by the name of Logrun the Render, swore he would eat the heart of Wind-over-Water herself.

The first few assassination attempts failed rather catastrophically, with the killers being quickly subdued by the well-trained fighters of the Red Wind. But the assault was relentless, a seeming never-ending tide of bloodthirsty cutthroats slowly leaving many members of the club exhausted, wounded, or dead. Soon, Wind-over-Water found herself with few defenders and was left to stand alone against those who would see her dead. And so she did.

For almost four cycles, she defended the walls of her compound through the magnificence of her legendary martial mastery. In what would be the final conflict, Wind-over-Water called upon her last reserves of spirit, and experienced a revelation of annihilating force—with a perfect understanding of the supernal wisdom of the Overlight, she danced, effortlessly butchering all but the last of the assassins. And it was in the final verses of her enlightened song that even Logrun the Render bent his knee to her glory, becoming the final student that Wind-over-Water would officially accept as a disciple.

Now, Wind-over-Water is the eternal overseer of a new generation of warriors trained to fight the powerful and corrupt. She sits quietly at the center of the courtyard in which her mythic defense had happened. Speaking little, she still murmurs the poetic verses that are said to carry blessings of spirit in every syllable. The basic operations of the club—of which there are now more than a half dozen schools on Zenith, Banyan, Haark, Veil and Pyre—are not left to the Grandmaster's most trusted students. Her personal assistant, Logrun the Benevolent, is always willing to receive guests on her behalf and functions as the commander of the united Red Wing Fighting Club.