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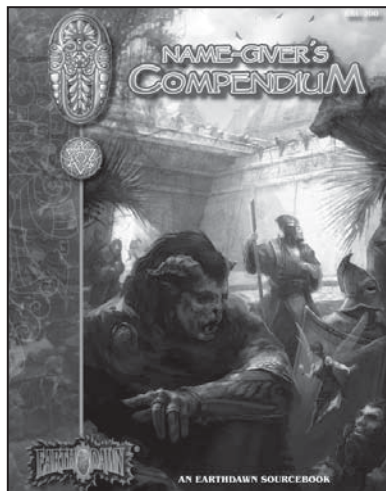
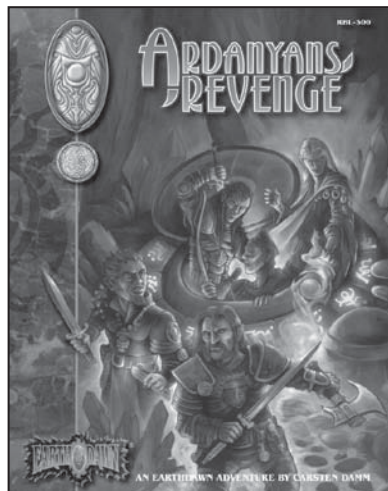


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TOURNAMENT TROUBLES

And the winner is...

• **Jellik Martok, Tournament Barker** •



Tournament Troubles is an **Earthdawn** adventure for three to five Journeyman (Circle 5–8) adepts of any Discipline. The characters are hired as champions to take part in the annual tournament that decides Travar's political fate in the coming year. The group become involved in a major intrigue concerning their employer and his former companions, and soon realize that their actions in the tournament will have greater consequences than they could ever imagine...

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

Tournament Troubles is presented as a series of events. Each is described for the gamemaster, who should use the information given to run the event. There is little text to be read aloud to the players, meaning the gamemaster will need to describe many of the scenes to the characters as he sees fit. Where possible, the text describes the terrain and areas the characters encounter, but much of the detail is left to the gamemaster to devise. Running the Foundation requires some preparation, as outlined on p. 24, **Customizing the Tournament**.

One or more player characters should have achieved a **Legendary Status** of at least Level 2 (see **Legendary Status** on p. 430 of the **Player's Compendium**), or have otherwise gathered some renown in Travar (this would be the case if the characters have played through the adventure **Terror in the Skies** (see p. 80 of the **Adventure Compendium**).

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Before the Therans returned to Barsaive, three merchants from Travar shared trade agreements with three t'skrang *aropagoi*—namely House K'tenshin, House Ishkarat, and House Syrtis—to export goods to the faraway reaches of the mighty Serpent River. Their business flourished, but when the Therans landed their behemoth, these contracts became useless due to the blockade near Lake

Ban (see **The Theran Behemoth** on p. 31 of the **Player's Compendium**). The merchants—Galmear, Kôl, and Brelnar, by Name—lost a lot of money and soon broke up in dispute.

The political situation in Barsaive changed considerably in the aftermath of Triumph's arrival, and the fortress' presence has influenced the trade in Travar. As a city-state, Travar is independent from the rest of Barsaive, and its wealth and location make the city of interest to the major powers in the province. Seizing the city would be devastating to the flow of goods and money, but having a say in the composition of Travar's magistrate is something to be desired for the major forces vying for control in Barsaive: the Kingdom of Throal, the Denairastas clan of Iopos, and the Theran Empire.

As citizens of Travar, each of the three merchants possess the right to run for the position of magistrate during the Founding (see p. 30 of the **Gamemaster's Compendium** for more information). Not surprisingly, two of them have received interesting offers from their new trading partners: through his contacts in House Ishkarat, Galmear is funded by the Denairastas of Iopos; House K'tenshin funds Brelnar on behalf of its Theran allies. Kôl has recently found out that powerful forces stand behind his former companions. He fears that Travar's existing alliance to Throal could be threatened if either of his opponents succeeds in the Founding, which would lay the groundwork for a political alliance with Thera or Iopos—who would certainly make good use of a puppet Travian magistrate...

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The adventure assumes that the characters have arrived in Travar already, probably because they want to enjoy the festivities of the annual tournament known as the Founding. A wealthy elven merchant Named Galmear, who wants them to act as his champions, hires them. Galmear, whose secret patrons are the Denairastas, seems late with his decision to become a candidate, as preparations for the tournament started months ago. The elf doesn't seem to

ON THE MAGISTRATE

Lord Alderac Windspear is a pragmatic human who has won his seat in the Magistrate last year. Like Niss Reeves (see below), Windspear is an adept, a Swordmaster, who has combined his adventuring contacts with his fortune to gain his office. He is a natural mediator and shrewd negotiator. His title is not Travarian; his family claims descent from the nobles of Landis. A surprisingly mellow ork, **Xoros Honeyed-tongue** made his fortune producing arms. Controlling a large number of smithies, Xoros holds the charter for the largest fire cannon industry in the province. He won his seat in the Magistrate two years ago, and many of his more powerful clients have since left for Cara Fahd. While his position is safe for now, he is worried about next year's Founding.

Niss Reeves (commonly known as "Sparkling

Niss") is an extravagant troll Weaponsmith who has become one of the most successful jewelers in Barsaive. Despite a public loathing for the Therans, Niss knows better than most how much their trade and magic have benefited Travar. For more information on Niss Reeves, see **Nations of Barsaive, Volume One**, p. 256. Niss has won his magistrate position for four consecutive terms, a remarkable total of twelve years. She originally intended not to run any champions in this year's Founding, sponsoring the dwarf merchant Tovak Byranicus instead—a close friend sharing Niss' close ties to the Dwarf Kingdom. Due to Byranicus' unfortunate and accidental death, however, the troll has changed his mind and taken over Tovak's group of champions to enter the Founding once again.

care about the opposition, however, and is confident that the group is capable of winning.

The Body of Five, a group of magicians responsible for devising the difficult and subtle tests that make up the Founding, keep the plans for this year's tournament in its stronghold—well away from the public and the contestants—and defended by a number of magical traps and other devices. No one can predict from year to year what skills and abilities will be needed to succeed. Several groups taking part in the Founding find it tempting to try and take a look at the plans before the tournament starts. When the characters find out that their rivals might succeed in doing so, the stakes in the upcoming contests are raised.

As the characters prepare for the tournament and gather information about their rivals, Kôl, who has recently found out why his former partners suddenly want to become magistrate and where their money comes from, contacts them. Kôl witnessed how the assassin Bigosh pushed his master Tovak Byranicus from his balcony (see **On the Magistrate**, above, for more information), an incident he almost paid for with his life. While the assassin took great care to make it look like an accident, Kôl is the only one who knows the truth. Bigosh is still looking for Kôl, so the characters are his last chance; he contacts them during the tournament and asks for their help. What the characters do about Kôl's plea is left up to them, but their actions might have a stronger impact on the future of Travar than they initially thought.

The Founding forms the last part of this adventure, where the group is faced with a series of contests. Will they break their oath and betray their loyalty to Galmear? Will they persuade their opponents into betraying their patrons, or even sabotage their equipment to make them lose? Will they ignore Kôl's request and try to win the tournament?

BEFORE THE FESTIVAL

The spectacular tournament known as the Founding involves magic, wild beasts, puzzles, and traps; it is a huge affair lasting more than two weeks. While the tournament is still a few days away, preparations for the contest have begun months ago, and the festivities have already started; the streets of Travar are filled with people and visitors. A few days before the tournament's official beginning, most of the candidates and their champions travel the taverns and inns of the city to win fans and gather support. The taverns and inns are overcrowded and full of music, legends, and the occasional free ale.

MEETING GALMEAR

Whether the characters are in Travar to witness the Founding or because of other business is unimportant for this story, as long as they haven't contracted themselves as champions to another contestant already. On one evening, probably while partying away in one of Travar's taverns, the group is approached by a slender elf with short black hair and clothed like a merchant. The man introduces himself as Galmear, and he seems to have heard about the group's past exploits. He is interested in the group's services and would love to talk to the characters in private. If the characters agree, he invites them for dinner at the Gilded Lizard, a luxurious tavern near the riverside. During the meal, Galmear makes his offer:

"My friends, I want to request your services. I have decided to apply for the position of magistrate in this city; my time has come to get a hand in the politics of Travar. You seem to be capable of solving problems of all kinds, and I am impressed by your past deeds. Of course, my decision comes a bit late, but you can still register to enter the Found-

ing as my champions—if you want to. Don't be fooled by all those other champions that have trained for several months now; it is tradition that the details of the contest will not be revealed until the contest begins, so they have a tendency to train for every possible contingency. Tell me, what good is month-long training if you don't know what challenge the Body of Five has dreamed up this year? I count on your abilities to improve to win this tournament in my Name.

Anyway, I'd be very grateful if you took my offer and promise to support me as a candidate. There are enough funds in my coffers to supply you with the best equipment and I would be grateful to pay you for your generous services. I want you to win, of course, so I will do all I can to see that you remain in good shape.

What do you think? Do you want to witness the tournament from within the arena or do you want to try your luck in first finding and then paying a horrendous price for a ticket?"



GALMEAR, ELVEN MERCHANT

Attributes

Dexterity (13): 6/D10
Toughness (8): 4/D6
Willpower (11): 5/D8

Strength (10): 5/D8
Perception (13): 6/D10
Charisma (13): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7

Initiative: 5/D8
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 28
Wound Threshold: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: 19

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5/D8

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56

Skills

Artisan:
Robe Embroidery (2): 8/2D6

Knowledge:

Blood Magic Oaths (4): 10/D10+D6
Serpent River Trade Routes (5): 11/D10+D8
Travar Politics (2): 8/2D6
T'skrang Politics (2): 8/2D6

General:

Conversation (5): 11/D10+D8
Evaluate (5): 11/D10+D8
Haggle (5): 11/D10+D8
Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (2): 8/2D6
—Dwarf (Throalic), *Sperethiel*
Speak Language (8): 14/D20+D4
—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, Obsidiman, *Or'zet*, *Sperethiel*, Troll, T'skrang, Windling
Trading (5): 11/D10+D8

Equipment

Leather (Phys 3)

Dagger (Damage 7/D12;
Range 9–15–18)
Short Sword (Damage 9/D8+D6;
w/scabbard)

Embroidered Robes
Embroidery Tools
Quiet Pouch
Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot

5 gold pieces, 50 silver pieces,
50 copper pieces

Legend Points

100 Legend Points

Notes

Galmear possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

The Oath

If the characters agree to the elf's basic terms, he continues:

"One thing I have to ask of you is a pledge of loyalty, traditionally sealed with blood. You can't promise to win the contest of course, but you can at least promise that you will do your best to achieve victory."

If the players are reluctant to swear the promise, Galmear says:

"Look, we've just met each other. I do believe in your abilities and I am confident that you're good folk. Based on what I've heard, I offer you my wealth and my hospitality, so I can't see why you shouldn't be willing to seal the deal with blood? Consider that my blood is part of the promise as well."

Galmear is willing to negotiate the content of the blood oath, but insists on sealing it. The oath must include that the character(s) will remain loyal to Galmear and that they will try to achieve victory in the Founding. Here is Galmear's initial suggestion:

"I, [Character Name and Discipline], *promise to enter the Founding as champion. I pledge my loyalty to Galmear and shall try to win the tournament by any means necessary.*"

In addition to the above, each character can specify a talent which he will use to fulfill that promise, gaining a bonus while using it in return, as outlined on p. 261 of the **Player's Compendium**. Galmear swears the following oath in return:

"I, Galmear, elven merchant of Travar, *promise to enter the Founding as contestant. I pledge my loyalty to my champions and will provide them with proper training, lodging, and equipment.*"

The elf doesn't specify any talents or skills, so he won't get any bonuses. His promise to pay for everything should suffice in this case, however.

Once the characters have pledged their loyalty, Galmear hands them a number of copper pieces—one per character. These pennies (as he calls them) allow the characters to meet Bel-Tok, a man who is supposed to supply them with everything they need. Bel-Tok is a regular in the Broken Cutlass tavern.

Refusing Galmear's Offer

The group can refuse Galmear's offer, but that may very well end their lives. If so, Galmear leaves and then has the characters at the mercy of his trusted assassin, Bigosh.

BIGOSH THE SNIPER, ELVEN ARCHER

Attributes

Dexterity (20): 8/2D6

Toughness (12): 5/D8

Willpower (17): 7/D12

Strength (16): 7/D12

Perception (19): 8/2D6

Charisma (15): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 14

Spell Defense: 12

Social Defense: 10

Initiative: 8/2D6

Physical Armor: 7

Mystic Armor: 6

Death Rating: 34 (94)

Wound Threshold: 9

Unconsciousness Rating: 26 (76)

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 7/D12*

* Bigosh knows the Wound Balance talent

Combat Movement: 43

Full Movement: 86

Karma Points: 25

Karma Step: 4/D6

Talents (Knacks)

Avoid Blow (10): 18/D20+D12

Bank Shot^D (9): 17/D20+D10 (Backbiter)

Call Arrow^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Direction Arrow^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Durability (6/5) (10): 10

Eagle Eye^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Flame Arrow^D (9): 16/D20+D8 (Spirit Flame)

Karma Ritual (9): 9

Melee Weapons (9): 17/D20+D10

Missile Weapons^D (10): 18/D20+D12 (Placed Shot)

Mystic Aim^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Silent Walk (9): 17/D20+D10

Sprint (9): 17/D20+D10

Stopping Aim^D (9): 15/D20+D6

Thread Weaving (Arrow Weaving)^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Throwing Weapons^D (9): 17/D20+D10

Trace Missile^D (9): 17/D20+D10

True Shot (9): 17/D20+D10

Wound Balance (9): 16/D20+D8

^D Indicates a Discipline talent.
Italicized talents require Karma.

Skills

Artisan:

Craftsman; Tailor (5): 13/D12+D10

Knowledge:

Alchemy and Potions (5): 13/D12+D10

Camouflage (5): 13/D12+D10

Iopos History (5): 13/D12+D10

Travar History (2): 10/D10+D6

General:

Alchemy (5): 13/D12+D10

Conceal Weapon (4): 12/2D10

Hunting (2): 10/D10+D6

Physician (5): 13/D12+D10

Read and Write Language (3): 11/D10+D8

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, *Sperethiel*

Resist Faunt (5): 12/2D10

Speak Language (4): 12/2D10

—Dwarf (Throalic), Human, *Sperethiel*, T'skrang

Streetwise (5): 13/D12+D10

Surprise Strike (5): 12/2D10

Tracking (5): 13/D12+D10

Wilderness Survival (2): 10/D10+D6

Equipment

Thread Leather (Rank 4; Phys 5; Myst 3)

Broadsword (Forged +3; Damage 15/D20+D6; Poisoned with shadowmant venom [SD 8; Damage 9/D8+D6]; w/scabbard)

2 × Daggers (Forged +1; Damage 10/D10+D6; Poisoned with black brine [SD 6; Debilitation 9/D8+D6]; Range 9–15–18)

2 × Hawk Hatchets (Damage 11/D10+D8; Range 24–40–48)

Thread Longbow (Rank 3; Damage 14/D20+D4; Range 70–140–280)



Quiver (w/40 longbow arrows; Poisoned with black brine [SD 6; Debilitation 9/D8+D6])

Thread Boots (Rank 4; PhysDef +3; Climbing rank +1; Climbing (1): 9/D8+D6)

Thread Cloak (Rank 4; Phys 2; SocDef +2; SpellDef +1)

Adventurer's Kit

3 × Booster Potions

3 × Vials of Black Brine Poison (SD 6; Debilitation 9/D8+D6)

Climbing Tools

2 × Craftsman Tools

Healing Kit (3 uses)

3 × Kelia's Antidotes; Black Brine

Kelia's Antidote

Kelix's Poultice

Quiet Pouch

Physician Kit (3 uses)

Vial of Shadowmant Venom (SD 8; Damage 9/D8+D6)

Trail Ration (1 week)

Traveler's Garb

Alchemy Kit (at Galmear's shop)

Loot

55 gold pieces

Legend Points

2,025 Legend Points

Notes

Bigosh possesses the elf racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Fourth Circle: Karma on Dexterity-only Tests

Fifth Circle: Karma on Perception-only Tests

Sixth Circle: +1 Physical Defense

Seventh Circle: Karma on missile weapons Damage Tests

Eighth Circle: +1 Spell Defense

Ninth Circle: Karma on Recovery Tests; +1 Recovery Test/day

Commentary

Bigosh is usually dressed in inconspicuous colors, which are dependent on his current surroundings. As a master assassin, he has achieved Ninth Circle in his Discipline, and has fallen to the sniper's way (see p. 74 of the **Player's Compendium**). Bigosh has accumulated 9 Temptation Points as a sniper. He is loyal to Iopos and has been sent to take care of Galmear's dirty laundry. The assassin will watch the characters' every step, and will report to Galmear frequently. Bigosh also has an eye out for Kôl, and will kill him if he gets a chance; the human escaped him once, but he certainly won't do so again ...

Investigating Galmear

If the characters decide to investigate the background of their employer, they find out about the business relationship he had with the human merchants Kôl and Brelnar, who turn out to be candidates in this year's Founding as well. If asked, everyone the characters meet doubts Galmear has dirty laundry. He and his colleagues dealt with the t'skrang

aropagoi of the Serpent River (although no one is sure which House), and their reputations seem to be solid.

If the characters seek further information on Kôl, they find out that he worked for a dwarf merchant Named Tovak Byranicus before he vanished. Tovak fell to his death from his balcony a couple of days ago, and some people suspect Kôl might have murdered him since he hasn't been seen since the murder—although no one could fathom why. The characters also learn that the investigators of Travar's city guard are looking for Kôl (of course, the official investigators might raise an eyebrow about the group's inquiries).

Collecting further information on Brelnar may attract the attention of the Theran agents working to protect him. As with Galmear, everyone the characters meet will mention his good reputation, although someone might remember that Brelnar also worked as ambassador for House K'tenshin before they allied with the Therans. If the characters find out about the connection, the Theran agents may get wind of this and intervene—by poisoning the informant the characters spoke to and attacking the characters in a dark alley. The following statistics represent human non-adept Theran agents.

THERAN AGENTS

Attributes

Dexterity (14): 6/D10

Toughness (15): 6/D10

Willpower (11): 5/D8

Strength (16): 7/D12

Perception (14): 6/D10

Charisma (14): 6/D10

Characteristics

Physical Defense: 8

Spell Defense: 8

Social Defense: 8

Initiative: 6/D10

Physical Armor: 5

Mystic Armor: 1

Death Rating: 38

Wound Threshold: 10

Unconsciousness Rating: 30

Recovery Tests: 3

Knockdown: 7/D12

Combat Movement: 28 **Full Movement:** 56

Skills

Artisan:

Acting (5): 11/D10+D8

