

A PATHFINDER RPG ADVENTURE FOR LEVEL 11

BY TIM HITCHCOCK

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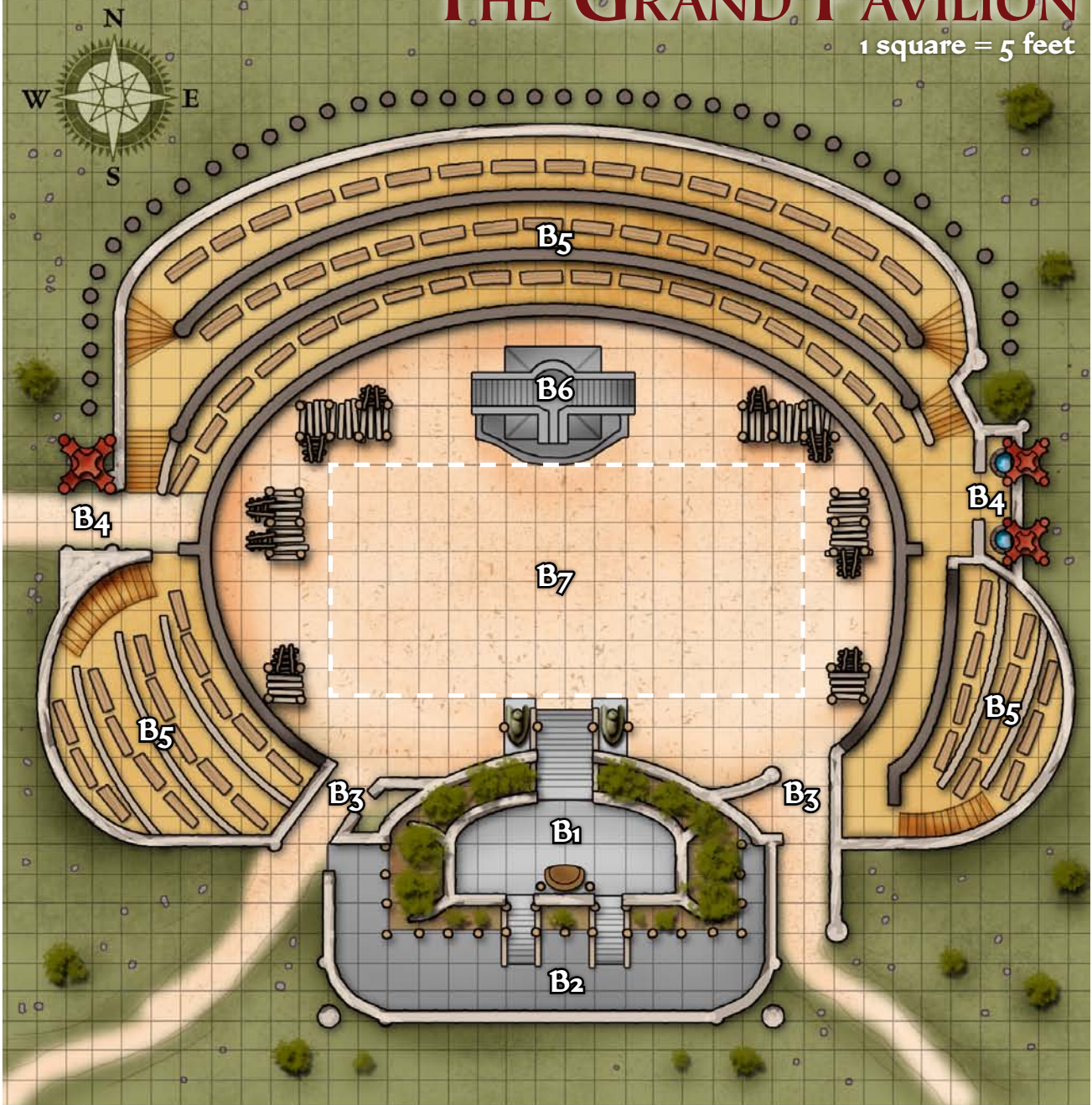


THE RUBY PHOENIX TOURNAMENT

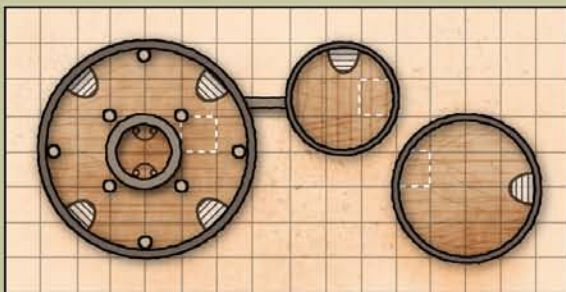


THE GRAND PAVILION

1 square = 5 feet

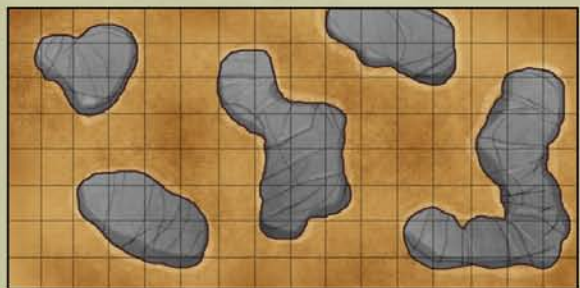


TEST OF THREE TOWERS



1 square = 5 feet

BLOOD AND MUD



1 square = 5 feet

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THE RUBY PHOENIX TOURNAMENT

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The Ruby Phoenix Tournament is a Pathfinder Module designed for four 11th-level characters and uses the medium XP advancement track. This module is designed for play in the Pathfinder campaign setting, but can easily be adapted for use with any world. This module is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and the 3.5 edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game. The OGL can be found on page 32 of this product.

This product makes use of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat*, and *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic*. These rules can be found online as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd.

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THE RUBY PHOENIX TOURNAMENT

The Ruby Phoenix, Hao Jin, is certainly dead. Why else would the collection that so dominated her life—the greatest assembly of wonders Golarion has ever known—be made a prize for the winner of the fighting tournament that now bears her name? I weep at the thought of the Ruby Phoenix in a perpetual state of ash, but from her demise will rise a champion of as much renown as she earned in life, and with his chosen prize, he shall continue her legacy. I will be that champion!

*—Final journal entry of Tan Dae Gun,
failed Ruby Phoenix Tournament contestant, 6901 IC*

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The sorceress Hao Jin left an indelible mark upon the land of Tian Xia. Throughout her centuries-long life, Hao Jin—a devout follower of Abadar, god of contracts, wealth, and order—set out to amass her own First Vault, a collection of those items she deemed most perfect or wondrous in all the world.

Among the many Abadaran pacts and contracts that dictated Hao Jin's life was her carefully contracted agreement with the temple of Abadar in Goka regarding the fate of her collection in the event of her eventual death. Fearful that her treasures would fall into the wrong hands or simply be lost to history, Hao Jin left strict instructions that were she not to set foot within the temple for 10 years and a day, on the 10 year anniversary of that occasion, an epic competition of martial arts was to be held, overseen by the city's Abadaran clergy; the winning team would be allowed to choose a single item as a prize for their victory. Not only would this prevent the collection from immediately being broken up, but it also ensured her life's work would attain its own legendary immortality through the prestige the contest would bring.

During her lifetime, many who knew of her will attempted to end her life prematurely, and many succeeded. But Hao Jin had contingencies in place to such a degree that even her most cunning and careful would-be assassins underestimated her ability to return from the dead. Each time an enemy killed her, she miraculously emerged unscathed days later, her red hair a shade more vibrant than before her death. Her ability to overcome death and the resemblance her hair soon had to an animated, flickering flame earned Hao Jin the nickname Ruby Phoenix, and over the centuries of her life, many believed her to be truly immortal.

Yet in 6891 IC (Imperial Calendar; 4391 AR), a recordkeeper at Goka's Grand Bank of Abadar informed the archbanker that a decade and a day had passed since the Ruby Phoenix last visited the temple. The conditions of her will had been met. As no one had seen nor heard from the sorceress for several years, she was assumed to have finally met her end, and the preparations were made to conduct the first Ruby Phoenix Tournament 10 years later. That tournament also established the office of the Emissary, an Abadaran official appointed for life to run the proceedings.

Each decennial since, the greatest champions from across Golarion have vied for the victors' spot, and most contestants have competed honorably and passionately. A decade ago, however, the Ruby Phoenix Tournament was the subject of a terrible scandal that resulted in the first disqualification of a contestant in over a century.

The shamed competitor was the earth sorceress Wu Dizhen, who was caught callously and repeatedly cheating and had to be ejected from the contest. Among the most

WHERE ON GOLARION?

The Ruby Phoenix Tournament takes place on an island in the wide harbor of Goka, an independent city-state on Tian Xia's western coast. Goka lies at the one break in the nearly impassable Wall of Heaven Mountains, making it a hub of culture and trade between Tian Xia and Casmaron, Vudra, and the lands of the Inner Sea region far to the west. For more information on Goka or the Dragon Empires of Tian Xia, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Dragon Empires Gazetteer*, available at paizo.com and your local game store.



egregious of her crimes were employing her identical twin, Wu Jufeng, as a body double (which allowed her to leave the island for healing and aid), using Wu Jufeng as outside aid during contests, and not sparing foes who forfeited bouts. Wu Dizhen's crimes were discovered only moments prior to her entry into the final round of the contest, and her disqualification resulted in the automatic victory of her competitor, the Iomedean paladin Marthysan the Righteous. Now the twins—conjoined at birth and now distinguishable from one another only by which side of their body bears the scar of their separation—have set their sights on disrupting this year's Ruby Phoenix Tournament and attaining victory over the contest by destroying the centuries-old institution entirely. To aid them in this endeavor, they have allied with the sinister Golden League, an organized crime syndicate based in mainland Goka. For their part, the masters of the Golden League hope that they can use the twins' meddling to ensure their champion wins the contest, guaranteeing that their gambling racket brings in the highest profits possible.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs arrive on Xielan Island to compete in the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, an exclusive martial arts competition held every 10 years to test the world's greatest

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Many of the NPCs in *The Ruby Phoenix Tournament* possess classes, archetypes, feats, and equipment from the Pathfinder RPG sourcebooks *Ultimate Combat* and *Advanced Player's Guide* which are not reprinted in the adventure itself. If you do not own copies of these books, you can find them as affordable PDF downloads at paizo.com, or as part of the free online Pathfinder RPG Reference Document at paizo.com/prd.

warriors. The island is home to a quaint fishing village, but otherwise appears largely abandoned, save for the trappings of the decennial tournament.

Over the course of 5 days, the PCs engage in numerous matches, exhibition fights, and tests of skill seeking to claim the title of Ruby Phoenix Champion, competing with other contestants from around the world.

As the competition progresses, a series of misfortunes befalls the competition, sparking rumors of foul play—the poisoning of competitors, the sabotaging of intricate fight stages, and the kidnapping of the previous tournament's winner. Throughout the tournament, the PCs seek clues to determine who is behind the sabotage. As it turns out, a tenuous alliance between the Golden League crime syndicate, the Aspis Consortium of the Inner Sea, and a pair of formerly conjoined twins disqualified from the previous tournament is to blame.

On the final day of the contest, the PCs find themselves in the championship bout with the Golden League's champion, a hobgoblin bruiser, who the group hopes will win, propelling their gambling racket to new heights of profit. After the PCs defeat him, however, the Sisters Wu attack, hoping to wreak bloody vengeance on the Ruby Phoenix Tournament's newest champions and the tournament itself.

GETTING STARTED

Regardless of how the PCs hear of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, the adventure assumes they have already won one of the prized spots in the competition in a previous qualifier. Most visitors reach the island by boat from the mainland, but the PCs may choose to use other means to travel to the tournament.

If the PCs choose to take the ferry to Xielan Island, they find it little more than a large fishing boat crowded with eager contestants, excited spectators, and the native fishermen who call the island home. A particularly friendly passenger approaches the PCs, tilts back her conical hat and cheerfully introduces herself as Risha. Though dressed in the clothing of a Gokan fisherman, the woman is Avistani, with auburn hair and sharp Chelish features. She carries a large pack that holds her armor and weapons,

and wears nothing that indicates she's a contestant in the upcoming tournament.

Risha Coaltongue represents the Inner Sea organization of cutthroat capitalists known as the Aspis Consortium, which hopes to use the Ruby Phoenix Tournament as a gateway to establish ties between the Consortium and the Golden League. Despite any outward appearance of friendliness, Risha's motivation in greeting the PCs is to size them up before competing against them in the tournament, so she can assess whether they will pose a problem in her team's efforts to throw the competition in the Golden League's favor. Keeping conversation light, she asks questions about their backgrounds and fighting styles. She avoids discussing her own martial styles, and deflects prying questions without telling any outright lies. If the PCs openly show suspicion, she cuts the conversation short, using her Bluff skill to feign sudden panic over a misplaced map. If pressed further, she bluntly dismisses the entire conversation, calmly telling the PCs, "I suppose we'll sort this out when we meet in the arena."

Risha doesn't care for a fight, especially outside the confines of the tournament or before she executes the Aspis Consortium's plot. If faced with violence, she flees, diving into the harbor to escape if need be.

A. New Harbor

As contestants arrive, townsfolk shower them with cherry blossoms and hand out ceramic cups filled with warm, pungent liquor. The crowd forms a reception that leads to the center of town, where a crowded noodle house, Yon Loi's, serves as the hub of all activity in New Harbor. The noodle house is a large, open-air structure centered around a courtyard filled with long, shaded tables for commoners. Smaller round tables fill a roofed balcony surrounding the courtyard, from which wealthier patrons and the tournament elite may look over the establishment. The kitchen sits on the ground floor, behind a short partition.

The townsfolk help in seating and serving the newly arriving contestants. Each receives a complimentary bowl of salty noodle soup containing fish and vegetables; beyond this first bowl, each additional serving costs 5 sp.

Allow the PCs to make this gathering place their own, as it will serve as a central location in the adventure—a communal place of rest and relaxation for contestants between the tournament's 5 days of competition. As the PCs partake in the meal, they should have the opportunity to meet several other contestants. If they didn't encounter Risha Coaltongue on the ferry to Xielan Island, she approaches them casually here, trying to assess their mettle and tactics. Other contestants may also interact with the PCs, at your discretion, challenging them to arm-wrestling competitions and displays of

THE RUBY PHOENIX TOURNAMENT

flexibility and stamina (opposed Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution checks, respectively).

Between their other interactions—or interrupting their meal if they eat in silence—last year’s winner, **Marthysan the Righteous** (LG male half-elf paladin of Iomedae 10), pulls up a chair at their table. The Avistani man, originally from Lastwall, greets them and offers to help acquaint them with the island and the tournament prior to its start the following morning. He can provide any information about the previous tournament from the sidebar on page 7, the story of Hao Jin and the Ruby Phoenix Tournament’s founding in the adventure background, and a general description of the island’s various locations, as outlined on pages 30–31. Marthysan makes no effort to hide the fact that he hopes the PCs will be champions this year, both because he has heard of their martial prowess and thinks they are a likely choice, but also because he respects them and wants to see someone worthy take the title from him. He offers the PCs a room in his suite in the adjacent inn, as the traditional quarters of the previous champion provide more space than he needs for only himself. The paladin suggests the PCs get a full night’s rest before their first challenge in the morning.

Characters exploring the table-filled balcony overlooking the noodle house’s main floor have a chance to meet a fiendish kuwa oni—an evil spirit with a human-like form (see page 208 of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*)—bound to serve the Ruby Phoenix Tournament’s Emissary and the church of Abadar for 100 years. Dressed in fine silk robes, her great black teeth gleaming, **Kiang Zhen** (LE female kuwa oni sorcerer 10) stands at the railing looking down on the amassed crowd, silently observing. The townsfolk keep their distance from her, and she is dismissive of queries from contestants. If addressed, she tells the PCs that they may see a lot of her in the coming days if they choose to partake in extra exhibition fights, but that she’d like to be alone.

One contestant, the tetori monk Chung Po, challenges the PCs to a one-on-one wrestling match to get them in the spirit of the following day’s competition and to entertain the rest of the noodle house’s patrons. If the PCs refuse, Chung Po graciously wishes them well in the tournament and selects another opponent from

the contestants present, whom he defeats handily in under a minute. If the PCs accept, one of them must fight him in a nonlethal grappling contest that lasts until one competitor surrenders or is knocked unconscious. Any PCs watching the fight who succeeds at a DC 15 Sense Motive check notices that Kiang Zhen and Risha pay close attention to the wrestling PC’s skills.

CHUNG PO CR 11

XP 12,800

Male human monk (tetori) 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 61)
LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 monk, +1 Wis)

hp 93 (12d8+36)

Fort +11, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11; +2 vs. enchantment

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** disease, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 70 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +15/+10 (2d6+6 plus grab)

Special Attacks stunning fist (12/day, DC 17)

TACTICS

Before Combat If Chung Po suspects his opponents are dishonorable, he drinks his *potions of barkskin*, *cat’s grace*, and *shield of faith* before entering the fight.

During Combat Chung Po employs his Snapping Turtle Style and grappling feats to quickly pin opponents, both while defending and attacking, using his Stunning Pin and Pinning Knockout feats to disable pinned targets. Under no circumstances does Chung Po use lethal damage against his enemies.

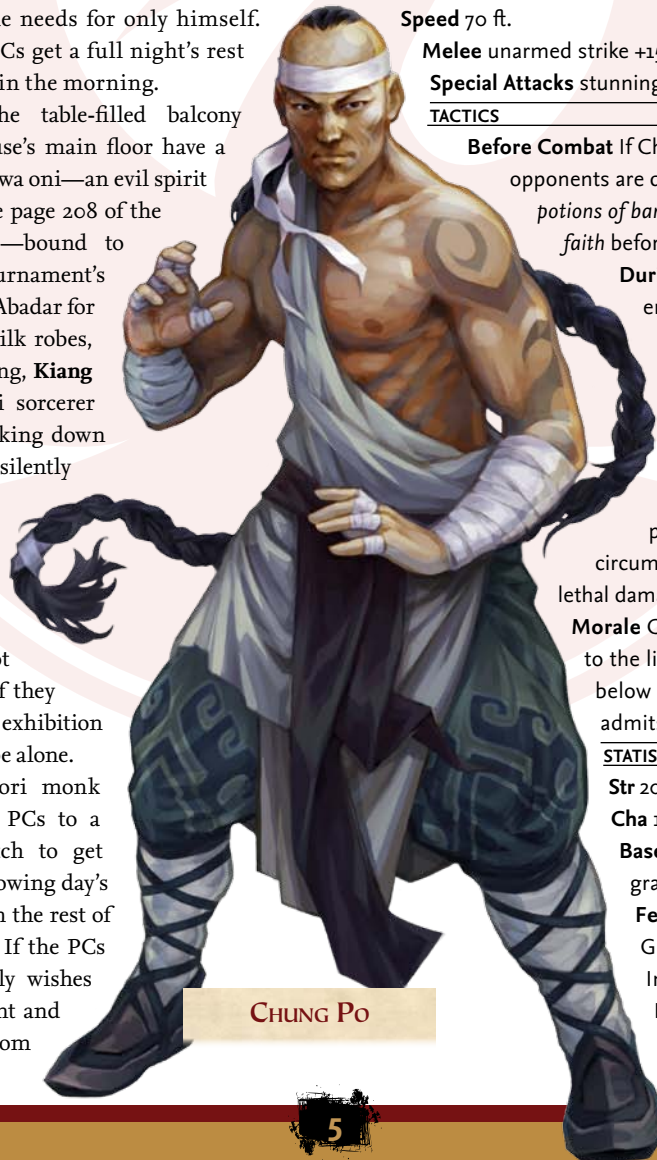
Morale Chung Po pushes himself to the limit, fighting until reduced below 5 hit points, at which point he admits defeat and surrenders.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +17 (+28 grapple); **CMD** 32 (37 vs. grapple)

Feats Dodge, Extra Ki, Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Pinning Knockout*, Rapid Grappler*, Snapping Turtle



CHUNG PO

Clutch*, Snapping Turtle Shell*, Snapping Turtle Style*, Stunning Fist, Stunning Pin*, Toughness
Skills Acrobatics +18 (+34 when jumping), Diplomacy +12, Escape Artist +18, Sense Motive +16

Languages Tien

SQ break free, counter-grapple, diamond body, fast movement, graceful grappler, inescapable grasp, *ki* pool (9 points, lawful, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, still mind, wholeness of body

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin*, *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of shield of faith*; **Other Gear** *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *belt of giant strength* +2, *bracers of armor* +3, *cloak of resistance* +2

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

RUNNING THE TOURNAMENT

During this adventure the PCs participate in combat matches against NPC competitors to win the tournament title and have the opportunity to compete in additional exhibition matches throughout Xielan Island. All mandatory bouts take place at the Grand Pavilion (see page 7), while optional exhibition fights can take place there or elsewhere, depending on the particular challenge. The Emissary judges all matches held at the pavilion, while exhibition matches are judged by trusted Ruby Phoenix Tournament appointees or the bound oni, Kiang Zhen.

Performance Combat: During any combat held in the Grand Pavilion, the PCs (and their opponents) may attempt to gain the support of the crowd by playing to the audience with spectacular shows of martial prowess using the optional performance combat rules described on pages 153–157 of *Ultimate Combat*. Combatants can make performance checks when they perform certain triggering actions, such as dealing maximum damage, scoring a critical hit, or vanquishing an opponent. Success or failure on such a check changes the crowd's attitude and grants potential morale bonuses or penalties on all attack rolls, combat maneuver checks, ability checks, skill checks, and saving throws.

The crowd's starting attitude is indifferent for each round unless the PCs possess at least 3 victory points per member of the team, in which case the crowd begins with an attitude of friendly. A PC failing a performance combat check by 5 or more reduces the crowd's attitude one step.

Crowd	Base DC to Improve Attitude	Bonus/Penalty
Hostile	24	-2
Unfriendly	19	-1
Indifferent	14	0
Friendly	19	+1
Helpful	24	+2

In addition to providing moral support for their favored contestants, the crowd within the Grand Pavilion acts as a mass of hundreds of scrutinizing eyes. If a PC attempts to

cheat, she must make an opposed Bluff or Sleight of Hand check (depending on the nature of the cheating action) against the collective crowd, which makes Perception and Sense Motive checks at a +20 bonus because of its sheer numbers. While the crowd has no power to evict cheaters from the contest, if members notice any combatant breaking the rules of a contest, the DC to improve the crowd's attitude increases by 2 for the duration of the combat, stacking with other penalties from previous cheating attempts.

If the PCs Lose: If the PCs are eliminated early, allow them to continue on a technicality, such as a victorious contestant's forfeit (see Round 5: Seishuku on page 23).

Base Opponents

Throughout the adventure, the PCs will face a number of monks using the following stat block. In some instances, these monks use different weapons or tactics, which are called out in their respective stat blocks. Unless noted otherwise, a Ruby Phoenix Monk has a performance combat check bonus of +1.

RUBY PHOENIX MONK	CR 8
XP 4,800	
Human monk 9	
LN Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +7; Senses Perception +10	
DEFENSE	
AC 20, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 monk, +2 Wis)	
hp 71 (9d8+27)	
Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +10; +2 vs. enchantment	
Defensive Abilities improved evasion; Immune disease	
OFFENSE	
Speed 60 ft.	
Melee unarmed strike +10/+5 (1d10+3) or flurry of blows +10/+10/+5/+5 (1d10+3)	
Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (9/day, DC 16)	
STATISTICS	
Str 16, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8	
Base Atk +6; CMB +12; CMD 27	
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency*, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Mobility, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)*	
Skills Acrobatics +15 (+24 jump), Climb +13, Escape Artist +8, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +10, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +11, Swim +11	
Languages Tien	
SQ fast movement, high jump, <i>ki</i> pool (6 points, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, slow fall 40 ft., still mind, wholeness of body	
Gear <i>bracers of armor</i> +2	
* The weapons selected as part of these feats may be different	

for different instances of this stat block. See individual monks for details.

The Grand Pavilion

Low partition walls of whitewashed brick topped with curved, black clay tiles encircle the Grand Pavilion arena. Within the walls, towering bamboo scaffolds display great banners and flags of bright red and gold silk. All official tournament fights are held at the arena, fought on stages specially designed to challenge the opponents and enhance the spectacle of their combat. Throughout the tournament, dozens of the Emissary's monks work tirelessly to prepare the various stages.

While the features of the arena floor change from battle to battle, the Grand Pavilion has several constant features.

B1. Judge's Box: The judge's box sits ringside, atop a small ziggurat whose terraces bloom with flowering cherry trees and white lotus flowers. During matches, the Emissary sits in a great wooden throne carved with the faces of 1,000 kami. The throne is sheltered by a bright red canopy from which flow dozens of colorful banners. Flanking the stairs to the raised dais are a pair of menacing foo lion statues, powerful guardian spirits that spring to life to defend the Emissary should he ever be threatened.

B2. Emissary's Respite: Behind the throne is a private area used only by the Emissary and his monks. He can shelter here when he needs privacy or safety.

B3. Competitors' Entrances: Competitors use these passages to enter and depart from the arena. Each has a private alcove where contenders can prepare for their upcoming fights.

B4. Common Entrances: Red-lacquered torii gates flank the main entrances into the arena, and are decorated with paper lanterns and prayer chimes.

B5. Grandstands: Great earthen tiers support wooden benches that serve as grandstands for the common spectators. The grandstands are hemmed in by blossoming plum trees and artistically placed boulders.

B6. Water Pyramid: This 15-foot-tall stone pyramid has stairs at either side of a central channel cut down the face that empties into a deep trough of water. During those competitions requiring hydraulic power, lines of monks haul buckets of water up the stairs and dump them into the channel, creating flowing water.

B7. The Fight Stage: The center of the arena serves as the 40-foot-by-80-foot fight stage. Around the fight stage's perimeter stand six wooden scaffolds used to erect and operate fight stages.

A permanent *wall of force*, 6 inches thick and 30 feet tall, surrounds the fight stage, with gaps allowing contestants to enter and exit, providing a barrier that protects the crowd against flying objects and most spell effects. If this wall is ever disintegrated or otherwise destroyed, wizards in

TEN YEARS AGO...

Some PCs may wish to find out more information about the most recent Ruby Phoenix Tournament, held 10 years ago. Marthysan the Righteous can impart any of the following knowledge to them, or the PCs can perform Diplomacy checks or Knowledge (local) checks to attain it from others in New Harbor at any time during the competition.

DC 15: The Ruby Phoenix Tournament celebrated its 30th decennial games in 7201 IC (4701 AR), marking 300 years of the tradition. To honor the occasion, instead of the traditional 64 entrants, an extra round of competition was added, bringing the total number of competing teams to a record 128.

DC 20: In the last Ruby Phoenix Tournament, a sorceress from Lingshen was disqualified just prior to the final round for cheating. She swore vengeance upon her competitor, the de facto victor Marthysan the Righteous. While some believe she may strike soon, the event happened a decade ago, and many believe the sorceress has forgotten about the perceived slight or moved on.

DC 25: More than 30 of the 128 entrants in the thirtieth tournament perished in unrelated accidents, or exhibition combats not covered by the tournament's strictures on ethics, honor, and safety. More than half of these deaths were attributed to the dragon Huyanwo, whose defeat has long been the ambition of Ruby Phoenix contestants hoping to make a name for themselves outside the arena.

DC 30: The 7201 tournament's legacy was further clouded by a surprising number of gambling-related murders in Goka, attributed to a spike in organized criminal activities surrounding the games. Some believe the Golden League, one of the most influential criminal organizations in Tian Xia, has its sights set on ensuring this year's tournament provides it even higher returns on its gambling books.

service to the church of Abadar reconstitute it prior to the next round of the competition.

DAY ONE

When morning arrives, read or paraphrase the following.

It seems as if all of New Harbor wakes before dawn. Even as the dull orange sun creeps slowly over the eastern horizon, the fishermen have already crowded into their boats. They move swiftly, like blackened silhouettes dancing against dawn's watercolor pallet, eerily silent except for the shuffling of ropes and oars, and the caws of their trained cormorants.

If the PCs took Marthysan up on his offer of lodgings, the paladin greets them when they rise and tells them they

need to get going so they won't be late for the opening exhibition. Finding their way to the Grand Pavilion should pose no challenge to the PCs, who find a steady stream of boats carrying contestants and observers who can afford passage across the bay to the seaside arena, while droves of locals follow the coastal path to the pavilion.

The Grand Pavilion and surrounding fairgrounds lie deep within the cove, and feature a massive and elaborate combat arena specifically constructed for the tournament. Scores of colorful tents cram the grounds spreading from the wood almost to the water. A line of spectators stretches from the Grand Pavilion, waiting to enter the arena. Contestants are given priority, and red- and orange-clad monks usher the eclectic collection of warriors and battlemages into the arena to stand before the Emissary.

Before they are allowed to enter the Grand Pavilion, however, the PCs must sign an entrance contract before an Abadaran cleric. On the contract, the PCs must write their team name, and the name of each member of the team. They must also each sign their names to the contests' five simple rules, which are:

- The commands of the Emissary and his agents are to be obeyed at all times, and the Emissary's word is final. None shall take violent action against the Emissary or his agents.
- No contestant may leave Xielan Island until the conclusion of the tournament for any reason.
- Once a round has begun, no contestant may receive any aid, be it magical or mundane, from anyone not participating in the round as a contestant.
- Should any contestant yield to a foe and forfeit the battle, failure of other contestants to honor that forfeit will result in immediate disqualification.
- No contestant shall loot the body of a fallen foe.
- All contestants agree that there shall be no ties; only one team may be named the champions.

Once the PCs sign the entry contract, monks escort them to the fight stage, where they find many other contestants already assembled, each waiting patiently, and watching performer acrobats entertain the growing crowd as the audience files into the grandstands.

Match 1: Monks of the Enduring Spirit (CR 12)

In the grandstands, a tenuous hush falls upon the immense and eager crowd. Moments later, the curtains part, revealing the Emissary flanked by the oni Kiang Zhen and the previous Ruby Phoenix Champion, the half-elf paladin Marthysan the Righteous. Behind the Emissary, like motionless statues, stand no less than

a dozen qinggong monks—his mystic disciples and bodyguards. As all watch rapt, the Emissary rises and addresses the crowd.

“I am Sifu Xho Nuo—Emissary of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament and guardian of the legacy of Hao Jin, the once-immortal sorceress in whose name you are gathered here to battle. To honor the Grandmaster's legacy, I stand before you to carry out her final will: the thirty-first decennial Ruby Phoenix Tournament. Without further delay, we begin our first round of the contest. May the worthiest win!”

Upon his final words, the crowd erupts into clamorous applause, and the contestants scatter for their respective seats or positions throughout the pavilion. The PCs are escorted by a group of silent usher monks and directed to the center of the fight stage to face their first opponents, the most skilled martial artists of the famed Monastery of the Enduring Spirit in Quain.

Creatures: For the opening match, the Emissary pits the PCs against a team of monks equipped with monk's spades, meteor hammers, and seven-branched swords (see *Ultimate Combat* for more information on these eastern weapons).



SIFU XHO NUO

SPADE MONK (2) **CR 8**
XP 4,800 each

hp 71 each (see page 6)
OFFENSE
Melee +1 monk's spade* +11/+6 (1d6+4) or flurry of blows +11/+11/+6/+6 (1d6+4)
STATISTICS
Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (monk's spade), Weapon Focus (monk's spade)
Gear +1 monk's spade*
* See <i>Ultimate Combat</i> .

METEOR MONK **CR 8**
XP 4,800

hp 71 (see page 6)
DEFENSE
AC 21, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 monk, +1 shield, +2 Wis)
OFFENSE
Melee +1 meteor hammer* +11/+6 (1d8+5/19–20)
STATISTICS
Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (meteor hammer), Weapon Focus (meteor hammer)
Gear +1 meteor hammer*
* See <i>Ultimate Combat</i> .

SWORD MONK

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 71 (see page 6)

OFFENSE

Melee +1 seven-branched sword* +11/+6 (1d10+5/x3) or flurry of blows +11/+11/+6/+6 (1d10+5/x3)

STATISTICS

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (seven-branched sword), Weapon Focus (seven-branched sword)

Gear +1 seven-branched sword*

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

Treasure: For besting the Monks of the Enduring Spirit, the Emissary awards the PCs a *stone of luck* under the effects of a *magic aura* spell, making it appear as a mundane stone.

Test 1: Breaking Competition

The Emissary's monks need time to set up the elaborate fight stage between matches. He amuses the crowd during these intermissions by hosting tests of skill, strength, fortitude, and will.

In this challenge, items of various hardnesses are placed on stone pedestals positioned about the arena. Competitors must race about the ring, and using their bare hands, feet, and heads, smash as many of the objects as possible. Objects must be broken with a single attack, and objects that are damaged but not broken are replaced with new materials after each attempt. If a contestant fails to break an object, he takes damage as described on the table below.

Object	Hardness	Hit Points	Break DC	Body Part	Failure Damage
Coconut	5	15	16	hands	1d6
Ice block	0	20	18	arms	1d8
Metal bar	10	30	25	head	2d8
Quarterstaff	5	10	12	feet	1d8
River stone	8	15	21	fingers	1 Dex
Stacked boards	5	15	15	hands	1d4
Stacked bricks	8	30	23	hands	1d6
Stacked clay tiles	8	15	18	hands	1d4

Story Award: PCs earn XP as if they had completed an encounter of the CR equal to the number of different items broken, to a maximum of CR 8.

Treasure: If the PCs manage to break all eight items, the Emissary awards them a CL 15 *potion of stonесkin*.

Exhibition 1: The Headless One (CR 12)

Interspersed with dozens of bouts between the other contestants hoping to move to the next round of the contest, the Emissary offers exhibition matches between randomly chosen combatants and either noncombatants or captured monsters, some in the Grand Pavilion and others hosted

elsewhere. The PCs receive word that they have been selected for one such exhibition, to be held in a small fighting ring a short distance from the Grand Pavilion.

When they arrive, they find Kiang Zhen waiting for them with a large, closed sack at her feet. As several dozen onlookers watch eagerly from the stands, the oni directs them into the center of the ring before chanting something quietly over the sack and motioning in the PCs' direction.

Creature: At Kiang Zhen's gesture, a massive headless form marches into the ring carrying two fearsome axes. This undead giant serves the will of whoever possesses its head—the contents of the oni's sack—and fights the PCs until it is destroyed.

SHENZUZHOU

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 127 (see page 29)

Night: Pavilion Feast

After the day's events—32 official matches as well as many exhibition fights and tests of skill—draw to a close, competitors progressing to the next round are treated to a great feast. Long tables filled with food and wine are set about the pavilion grounds while the crowds are entertained with drumming and dancing. As soon as the sun sets, the Emissary's monks put on an impressive fireworks display over the cove.

The PCs are free to enjoy the celebration or use the time to explore the island, though Marthysan again suggests they get rest before the next day's events. If they partake in the feast, they may fall victim to the first attempt by the Sisters Wu and the Golden League to disrupt the contest—the feast's wine has been poisoned with a compound known as crimson hood. This tasteless and scentless ingested poison is crafted from potent cobra venom, and a single dose can taint an entire cask of wine. Those afflicted get only fitful rest and awake the next morning with aching muscles and joints.

CRIMSON HOOD

Type poison, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 16

Onset 4 hours; **Frequency** 1/hour for 24 hours

Effect 1d2 Dex and 1d2 Str damage; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

Perceptive PCs may notice Risha Coaltongue and her Aspis Consortium allies sitting with an intimidating and scar-covered hobgoblin, all drinking from their own wineskins and turning down offers of food or drink from the monks serving the feast. If the PCs accuse Risha and her allies of foul play, the Aspis agents deny their involvement in anything but the tournament itself, and claim the protection of the tournament rules if the PCs openly threaten them—a claim backed up by the Ruby Phoenix representatives, who forbid conflicts between contestants outside the ring.

The Emissary provides lodging for the 32 remaining teams if they wish to stay at the celebration overnight. Each tent contains comfortable cots and a small central fire beneath a vent at the structure's apex. Most contestants decline the offer and head back to their lodgings on boats in the cove, in New Harbor, or elsewhere on the island.

Story Award: If the PCs discover the tainted wine and alert their fellow contestants to the risks, award them XP as if they had completed a CR 9 encounter.

DAY TWO

Dawn comes, and the Emissary's monks walk from tent to tent with hot tea and bowls of rice porridge sweetened with sticks of sugarcane. New flags fly above the pavilion and the arena is set for the next event. The number of remaining contestants is half the number who began yesterday, but many of those who were eliminated now fill the grandstands, making the crowd seem even more overwhelming.

The PCs do not fight until late morning today, and can spend the morning watching other contestants compete. Between bouts, the PCs may participate in another contest of skill—archery this time—or explore the island.

Test 2: Archery

For this competition, a number of targets have been set up around the arena, and each team is granted a total of 10 arrows to use as they see fit among the three targets designated for their use. The first target is a mundane bull's-eye with five concentric colored rings. The second target has been magically augmented to grant it concealment (20% miss chance), as if it were a creature affected by the *blur* spell. The final target has been further augmented to grant it *displacement*, as per the spell, and a 50% miss chance.

Contestants are not permitted to dispel the magical effects on the second and third targets, but may use magic to negate the miss chance (such as the *true seeing* spell). For each shot, a contestant must declare a target area and make an attack roll, earning a number of points based on the difficulty. An arrow fired at targets 2 or 3 that misses due to concealment earns 0 points. The PCs may select a single archer to represent their team or divide the 10 shots among several party members.

Target Area	Armor Class	Target 1	Target 2	Target 3
White	20	1 point	2 points	4 points
Black	23	2 points	3 points	5 points
Blue	25	3 points	4 points	7 points
Red	27	4 points	5 points	9 points
Yellow	30	5 points	6 points	11 points

Story Award: At the end of this test, award the PCs XP as if they had completed an encounter of a CR equal to 1 per 10 points earned, rounded down.

Treasure: The PCs earn a *slaying arrow* for every 10 points they earn in this contest, to a maximum of five arrows (use

the table on page 476 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* to determine the creature type each arrow is attuned to). If they score 60 or more points, they also receive a pair of *lesser bracers of archery*.

Exhibition 2: The Spider Fight (CR 12)

In the early afternoon, the PCs are instructed to go to the bluff known as the Wall of Seven Winds, a 120-foot vertical cliff between New Harbor and the Grand Pavilion where the winds are known to always be particularly strong. Read the following to set the scene.

The wind whips across the curved, sheer cliff that surrounds the cove, roiling the deep water below into a white-capped froth. Several dozen boats bob on the rough water, their decks crowded with eager spectators focused on the cliff top.

The PCs find Marthysan the Righteous standing before a small crowd atop the bluff. Several dozen boats are anchored in the cove at the base of the cliff, from which a larger gathering of onlookers eagerly watches the top of the wall.

A creature knocked from the face of the Wall of Seven Winds falls into the wind-tossed water below, taking applicable falling damage based on its height up the cliff face. Any creature who is knocked prone while on the cliff face falls. A plummeting creature can attempt a Reflex save to grab hold of the wall and stop its fall. The DC for this save is 15 + 1 for every 10 feet to the water.

Among the visitors on the boats at the cliff's base are two sorcerers whose job is simply to cast *feather fall* on any contestant who falls from the wall. Unfortunately for the combatants, these tournament servants have been bribed by the Golden League and do not cast such aiding spells on the PCs. If confronted for failing their duties, the sorcerers claim they were caught off guard when any PCs fell and make no mention of the Golden League out of fear for their lives, unless magically compelled to do so.

Creatures: Marthysan gives each PC a pair of silk slippers (*slippers of spider climbing*) and instructs them to put them on. Their fight is to take place on the side of the Wall of Seven Winds, where they are to face off against Orometsu Yasi, known as the White Warrior, as well as a band of monks to even the odds. Orometsu is a stoic Tian-Min woman dressed entirely in white, with polished ivory-toned armor and a helm interwoven with the intricate braids of black hair upon her head; she bows nobly at the PCs before walking over the edge of the cliff, climbing down the wall to a height of 60 feet, and stopping to wait for the PCs to engage her. She and her monk allies surrender if reduced to 10 or fewer hit points.

Marthysan makes the PCs aware of the safety precautions in place and asks that they return their slippers after the battle. He also warns that anyone who falls from the wall and does not catch herself is eliminated from this event.

THE RUBY PHOENIX TOURNAMENT

OROMETSU YASI CR 8

XP 4,800

Female human fighter 9
LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)
hp 90 (9d10+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *frost nodachi** +17/+12 (1d10+9/15–20 plus 1d6 cold)

Ranged mwk shortbow +14/+9 (1d6+1/x3)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +2, bows +1)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 26

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (nodachi), Improved Critical (nodachi), Improved Initiative, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (nodachi), Weapon Specialization (nodachi)

Skills Climb +6, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Ride +7

Languages Minkaian, Tien

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of haste;*

Other Gear +1 *kusari gusoku**, +1 *frost nodachi**, *slippers of spider climbing*, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

SHANG GOU MONKS (3) CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 71 (use the stats on page 6)

OFFENSE

Melee +1 *shang gou** +10/+5 (1d4+3) or
flurry of blows +10/+10/+5/+5 (1d4+3)

STATISTICS

CMB +12 (+14 to trip); **CMD** 27 (29 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Trip (replaces Exotic Weapon Proficiency),
Weapon Focus (shang gou)

Gear +1 *shang gou**, *slippers of spider climbing*

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

Treasure: For besting the White Warrior, the PCs receive a prize of a *ring of feather falling*.

Round 2: Test of Three Towers (CR 13)

The roar of the crowd in the Grand Pavilion is deafening, even compared to the tumult yesterday. Where previously the fight stage was bare, it now sports three pillars of wood and iron, each supporting two wooden platforms connected by rope ladders.

Immediately after the completion of the PCs' exhibition round against Orometsu Yasi, the Emissary summons them back to the Grand Pavilion for their official second round match. In the center of the arena stand three tower-shaped scaffolds constructed of wood and metal. Tangles of rope ladders connect two fighting platforms, one 20 feet above the ground and the other 40 feet above it. Both levels of the towers are identical and utilize the same map.

Creatures: The Emissary permits the PCs and their opponent, the Vudrani oracle Ganyavesha, 1 minute to prepare for the battle, whether that is healing from their previous encounter or casting beneficial spells on themselves, though they are kept in isolation for the duration of the minute, only seeing one another when they climb into the towers to begin combat. Ganyavesha is a veteran of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament and other fighting competitions. She uses her minute to cast a number of spells, as outlined in her tactics, then steps, enlarged, into the ring and pulls herself up to the first tier of the largest tower, awaiting her opponents. Ganyavesha has a combat performance check modifier of +6.

GANYAVESHA CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human oracle 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)
LN Large humanoid (human)

Init +9; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 19, flat-footed 18 (+3 armor, +4 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, –1 size)

hp 153 (12d8+96; includes 12 temporary hit points)

Fort +13, **Ref** +13, **Will** +12

DR 10/adamantine or 5/good; **Immune** *protection from fire*

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *kukri of life stealing* +21/+21/+16 (1d6+11/15–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +14 (1d6+5/19–20)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Oracle Spells Known (CL 12th; concentration +16)

6th (3/day)—*greater dispel magic, mass bull's strength, mass inflict moderate wounds* (DC 20)

5th (5/day)—*flame strike* (DC 19), *mass inflict light wounds* (DC 19), *righteous might, spell resistance*

4th (7/day)—*cure critical wounds, divine power, freedom of movement, inflict critical wounds* (DC 18), *wall of fire*

3rd (7/day)—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *inflict serious wounds* (DC 17), *invisibility purge, magic vestment, prayer, protection from energy*

2nd (7/day)—*aid, bear's endurance, cure moderate wounds, fog cloud, inflict moderate wounds* (DC 16), *lesser restoration, silence*

1st (7/day)—*bless, divine favor, enlarge person, entropic shield, inflict light wounds* (DC 15), *obscuring mist, shield of faith*

o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*, *read magic*, *resistance*, *virtue*

Mystery battle

TACTICS

Before Combat In preparation for the battle, Ganyavesha casts the following spells during the minute granted: *shield of faith*, *magic vestment*, *freedom of movement*, *protection from energy* (fire), *bear's endurance*, *mass bull's strength*, *divine power*, and *righteous might*. She then activates her iron skin revelation before stepping into the ring. The effects of these spells have already been factored into her stat block.

During Combat Ganyavesha activates her *ring of blinking* and employs her surprising charge revelation to move about the battlefield and avoid attacks, drinking her *potion of haste* if she has the chance to increase her movement. She hopes to deliver critical hits as often as possible to take advantage of the special abilities of her *kukri of life drinking*.

Morale If reduced below 30 hit points, Ganyavesha uses the strongest healing she has available, then devotes herself fully to taking down the nearest target at all costs, surrendering only when reduced to 5 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 20, **Con** 20, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 35

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Extra Revelation, Greater Weapon Focus (kukri), Improved Critical (kukri), Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Diplomacy +13, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +8

Languages Aklo, Terran, Tien, Vudrani, *tongues* (understand only)

SQ oracle's curse (*tongues*), revelations (battlefield clarity 2/day, iron skin 1/day, surprising charge 2/day, war sight, weapon mastery)

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2), *potion of haste*, *wand of cure light wounds*; **Other Gear** *kukri of life stealing*, masterwork dagger, *belt of incredible dexterity* +6, *cloak of resistance* +4, *ring of blinking*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Well-Funded Ganyavesha has spent her career fighting in tournaments throughout Vudra

and Tian Xia and has amassed more wealth than the average character of her level, increasing her CR by 1.

Traps: Six sections of the platforms are designed to break beneath the weight of Medium-sized contestants, as marked on the map. A contestant who falls through the trap door on the upper level falls onto the corresponding trap door on the lower level, automatically triggering it, and receiving a second Reflex save at a –2 penalty.

HIDDEN TRAP DOOR (6)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Type mechanical; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 20-ft. drop from tower (2d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids

Treasure: If the PCs defeat Ganyavesha, the Emissary awards them a +2 weapon of the GM's choice.

Night: Yon Loi's Noodle House

The third night after the PCs' arrival is marked by less activity than either of the preceding two evenings, as there are neither official ceremonies hosted by the Ruby Phoenix Tournament nor unofficial celebrations conducted by the civilians or competitors on the island. Everyone is exhausted from 2 days of competing, and is taking a much-needed break after the final round of fighting. Despite the lull in stimulus for the PCs, there are still several bits of news they can discover at Yon Loi's noodle house should they go there for dinner or a drink following their bout with Ganyavesha.

As the PCs approach Yon Loi's, they come across a bloodied and bruised Tian-La man huddled on the side of the path to the noodle house door. If the PCs approach him, he shies away from them, muttering something about not knowing what he was getting into. The PCs can calm him with a simple assurance that they mean him no harm, at which point he introduces himself as **Donguma** (N male Tian-La commoner 2). He gladly shares his woes with the PCs, detailing his recent run-in with a gang of Golden League enforcers who came to collect a debt from yesterday's round of competition. When he explained to



the thugs that he would have their money once tomorrow's round was over, they told him he wouldn't be able to place any more bets and would need to pay them back in blood. After beating him, they took the few pieces of silver he had on him and left him lying in the street. Donguma warns the PCs not to get involved in betting on the tournament this year, because he and some of his friends think some of the matches have been rigged, and he notes that he is evidence of what a mess a person can get into backing the wrong contestant.

Whether or not the PCs discovered the poisoned wine at the Grand Pavilion the previous night, word has spread that several contestants have come down with strange maladies from more than just the tainted wine. With a DC 20 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check to gather information, the PCs overhear reports of several contestants collapsing during their exhibition matches, and even one who lost all muscle control while fighting in the arena on a bed of hot coals. In each case, tournament healers diagnosed the problem as poison, though the specific draughts and methods of delivery seem to vary from case to case. To ward off suspicion and keep business flowing, Yon Loi has hired a local cleric of Qi Zhong, god of healing, magic, and medicine, to inspect all the food in the restaurant before it is served.

Finally, PCs may, with a DC 30 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy check to gather information, learn that an entire team of contestants who were set to compete against the hobgoblin champion Gomwai were found dead this evening along the treacherous, abandoned coast known as the Ridge of Graves. The nagaji warriors, known as the Nagas' Children, were known to utilize debilitating, ability-draining attacks, and were favored to win tomorrow's bout. Their bodies were identifiable only by magic, as severe acid wounds had distorted their forms beyond recognition. Rumors circulating around the noodle house indicate that the Nagas' Children had boasted of going to take on the dragon Huyanwo, who is believed to lair near the Ridge of Graves.

DAY THREE

The morning of the third day of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament is dismal and rainy. A steady drizzle lasts well into the afternoon, when the rain lets off, though thick, gray cloud cover remains.

Overnight, the Sisters Wu and a number of Golden League thugs snuck into the Grand Pavilion and sabotaged the three towers so they would collapse during use the following day. During the first match of day three—in which the PCs are not participants—the arranged accident occurs, and all three towers topple on a contestant, killing the unlucky competitor and bringing the day's contests to a sudden halt as the Emissary and his agents investigate the death and clear the ruined towers from the fight stage.

If the PCs are present and observing the fight, allow them a DC 25 Knowledge (engineering) check to suspect foul play and sabotage. Otherwise, they arrive at the Grand Pavilion to find the crowd in a stir over the accident, and the fight stage full of red-robed monks working furiously to remove the last few timbers and twisted metal bars.

Exhibition 3: Boar and Tiger (CR 10)

The PCs are selected for an additional exhibition match because of their increasingly impressive performances thus far in the competition. Kiang Zhen approaches the party and asks them to select one representative to take part in the traditional “boar and tiger” fight, in which two contestants are tethered to wild animals and pitted against one another with the goal of keeping their respective beasts alive. Allow the PCs a moment to choose their champion, and allow another PC to make a coin toss for first pick of animals.

Creatures: In the center of the fight stage stand a tiger and dire boar, each held in place by a *hold animal* spell, 50 feet apart. From each animal's right hind leg extends a 15-foot length of iron chain with a shackle at the other end. Ruby Phoenix monks ensure both contestants are appropriately shackled to their chosen animals (if the PCs don't win the coin toss, Nearidei chooses the dire boar).

For the duration of the match, contestants are not permitted to allow harm to befall their own beasts. Neither can the beasts become unfettered. Contestants win by slaying their opponent's beast. If a combatant wishes to move more than 15 feet from her tethered animal's current location, she must make a drag combat maneuver against the animal, and can use the reposition combat maneuver to move her animal without moving herself (both of these maneuvers can be made at range as if the PC had a 15-foot reach). Both animals are controlled by the GM and always attack the nearest creature, whether that is the PC, Nearidei, or the other animal.

Nearidei, a slender Tian-Dtang druid with chin-length black hair and chestnut eyes, has been selected as the PCs' foe in this match because she excelled in the same contest 10 years ago and the Emissary wants to put on the best show possible. While she has a loyal animal companion of her own (a constrictor snake named Aop), she accepts the animal presented in the contest, and is confident she can win again this year.

NEARIDEI

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female human druid 10

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 22 (+7 armor, +1 deflection, +1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 88 (10d8+40)

Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +11; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects

Defensive Abilities resist nature's lure; **Immune** poison

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., *air walk*

Melee +1 *spear* +9/+4 (1d8+1/x3)

Ranged +1 *spear* +10/+5 (1d8+1/x3)

Special Attacks wild shape 4/day

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 10th; concentration +14)

5th—*animal growth*, *beast shape III^D* (animals only), *wall of thorns*

4th—*air walk*, *flame strike*, *freedom of movement*, *spike stones* (DC 18), *summon nature's ally IV^D* (animals only)

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 17), *cure moderate wounds*, *dominate animal^D* (DC 18), *greater magic fang*, *wind wall*

2nd—*barkskin*, *bear's endurance*, *flame blade*, *flaming sphere* (DC 16), *hold animal^D* (DC 17), *resist energy*

1st—*calm animals^D* (DC 16), *charm animal* (DC 16), *entangle* (DC 15), *faerie fire*, *magic fang*, *obscuring mist*

o (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *virtue*

D Domain spell; **Domain** Animal

TACTICS

Before Combat Prior to the exhibition round, Nearidei casts *air walk*, *barkskin*, and *freedom of movement*.

During Combat Nearidei uses *air walk* to move 15 feet off the ground, out of reach of her tethered animal, and creates a 10-foot-tall *wall of thorns* to shield it from view. On subsequent rounds, she casts *spike stones*, *call lightning*, and *flaming sphere* to restrict her foes' movements and to deal ongoing damage to the opposing animal. If her animal is ever threatened in melee, she casts *animal growth* on it to increase its viability in combat.

Morale Nearidei does whatever she can to protect her animal, including putting herself in harm's way, fighting until knocked unconscious before allowing her animal to go down.

Base Statistics Without *barkskin*, Nearidei's statistics are AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 18.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 18, Cha 14

Base Atk +7; CMB +7; CMD 19

Feats Animal Affinity, Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness, Weapon Focus (spear)

Skills Handle Animal +19, Knowledge (nature) +14, Ride +12, Spellcraft +9, Survival +14

Languages Druidic, Dtang, Tien

SQ animal companion (effective druid level 7), nature bond (Animal domain), nature sense, speak with animals (13 rounds/day), wild empathy +12, woodland stride, trackless step

Gear +3 *hide armor*, +1 *spear*, *ring of protection* +1

DIRE BOAR

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 42 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 36)

TIGER

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 45 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 265)

Story Award: If the PCs' animal is killed, award only the XP for facing Nearidei in combat. If, however, the PCs' champion manages to kill Nearidei's animal, award the party XP for all three creatures plus an additional 800 XP.

Treasure: If the PCs' champion wins the exhibition match, the party earns a *ring of animal friendship* as a reward.

Round 3: Battle of the Embers (CR 12)

Immediately after the PCs complete the boar and tiger fight, Marthysan approaches them in the downtime between matches. The paladin seems concerned and asks if the PCs have encountered anything strange lately or heard any rumors that may not have reached his ears while he was focused on the tournament and other official business. He confirms any suspicions the PCs may have about sabotage of the three towers, and earnestly accepts any further insights they may have from their own investigations. Hearing himself summoned back to the Emissary's side, Marthysan quickly cuts the conversation short and asks the PCs to meet the him at 9 p.m. at Yon Loi's to discuss the situation.

During the PCs' brief conversation with Marthysan, Ruby Phoenix monks carry hundreds of buckets of red-hot coals into the arena and spread them across the floor of the fight stage, noticeably raising the Grand Pavilion's ambient temperature and filling the air with thin goutts of steam as stray raindrops hit the burning ground and vaporize.

The Emissary calls out the PCs' team name, summoning them to fight in the battle of the embers. They are instructed to remove any footwear and stand ready to fight atop the smoldering coals. PCs have the opportunity as they wait to cast spells to preclude fire damage (such as *energy resistance* or *protection from energy*), but the tournament officials warn them that the crowd disapproves of such actions, seeing it as taking the easy way out. Characters who participate in the combat without the benefit of either resistance or immunity to fire make performance combat checks with a +2 circumstance bonus.

Hazards: Any creature walking unshod on the hot coals takes 1d6 points of fire damage per round (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage). A creature that moves at least 15 feet during its turn receives a +2 bonus on this save. Combatants can kick, shovel, hurl, or otherwise throw coals as a ranged touch attack with a range of 10 feet that deals 1d6 points of fire damage. A prone creature takes 2d6 points of fire damage each round at the start of its turn.

Creatures: For this round, the PCs' foes are a chorus of Minatan chanters who have dedicated their lives to studying and protecting the secrets of the so-called sacred

song. Using a strange form of throat singing, the chanters have honed the sound to such a degree that they can use it as a weapon. The tall, dark-skinned bards wear facial tattoos and have brightly colored emblems and runes emblazoned on their armor and shields. The chanters support and complement one another in battle, each employing a different spell or chant than the next to strengthen the party. They attempt to trip the PCs whenever possible, using their weird words performances at range.

CHANTERS OF THE SACRED SONG (4) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

Human bard (sound striker) 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 27)
CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 80 each (9d8+36)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk whip +8/+3 (1d3+1 nonlethal) or
mwk short sword +7/+2 (1d6/19–20)

Ranged mwk shortbow +9/+4 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 23 rounds/day (move action, countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness), weird words, wordstrike

Bard Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +12)

3rd (4/day)—*confusion* (DC 16), *fear* (DC 16), *haste*, *invisibility sphere*

2nd (5/day)—*cat's grace*, *cure moderate wounds*, *heroism*, *hold person* (DC 15)

1st (6/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *comprehend languages*, *expeditious retreat*, *grease*, *hideous laughter* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *light*, *message*, *read magic*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +6 (+8 trip); **CMD** 18 (20 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Trip, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (whip)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Diplomacy +15, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perform (oratory) +15, Perform (sing) +15, Spellcraft +13

Languages Minatan, Tien

SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (oratory, sing)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*; **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, +1 light wooden shield, masterwork short sword, masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, masterwork whip, cloak of resistance +1, headband of alluring charisma +2

Test 3: A Needle in the Bamboo Forest (CR 11)

Shortly after the battle of the embers, the Emissary tasks the PCs with their third test of the competition. He describes to them a scintillating ruby bracelet made of 99 tiny gems, braided together with golden filaments. This bracelet, he explains, is currently in the possession of a guardian named Tsavati in the bamboo forest north of Yun Chumo. He gives them until sundown to locate the bracelet and retrieve it from the guardian, who has been instructed to defend it with deadly force.

The bamboo forest is dense with tall, thin bamboo stalks standing an average of 50 feet from the forest floor. The 8-inch-diameter shoots are bare of any foliage from the ground to a height of approximately 40 feet, where masses of thick leaves create a translucent canopy. Other than the bamboo itself, no other undergrowth exists in the forest. Any creature in the canopy gains cover against creatures on the ground, as well as concealment as though it were in light undergrowth. All normal penalties on movement and on Acrobatics and Stealth checks apply within the canopy, as though it were ground-borne undergrowth. A PC can scale a bamboo shoot with a DC 15 Climb check, and each plant has AC 4, hardness 5, and 20 hit points.

Creatures: The Emissary has tasked Tsavati with guarding the ruby bracelet the PCs seek, and she is watchful for their approach. She wanders the heart of the forest carefully listening for intruders. The PCs can locate her trail with a DC 15 Survival check or may locate her through magical means. If they have not found her with an hour left before sundown, Tsavati begins calling out to them, taunting them to come within range of her attacks.

The nagaji dragon disciple has pale green scales that blend in with the dense bamboo, but the ridges of metallic bronze scales on her bald head clearly mark her among the foliage. An exile from her homeland of Nagajor and the insular monastery where she trained, Tsavati hopes her service to the Ruby Phoenix Tournament will earn her the ability to return to the life she left behind. She fights ferociously to keep the bracelet from the PCs, flying among the bamboo canopy and using rays and ranged spells if possible. If reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, she surrenders the bracelet and admits defeat. Tsavata casts *mage armor* at the start of each day, which has already been incorporated into her stats.

TSAVATI CR 11

XP 12,800

Female nagaji sorcerer 5/dragon disciple 7 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Dragon Empires Gazetteer* 10)

CN Medium humanoid (reptilian)

Init +3; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 103 (12 HD; 5d6+7d12+41)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10; +2 vs. mind-affecting effects and poison

Resist electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d6+3 plus 1d6 electricity), 2 claws +9 (1d6+2 plus 1d6 electricity)

Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, 12d6 electricity, DC 22, 2/day), claws (7 rounds/day), dragon bite

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +16) 1/day—*form of the dragon I*

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 10th; concentration +14)

5th (3/day)—*dominate person* (DC 19), *spell resistance*

4th (6/day)—*dimension door*, *fear*, *greater invisibility*

3rd (7/day)—*fly*, *haste*, *heroism*, *lightning bolt* (DC 17)

2nd (7/day)—*acid arrow*, *protection from arrows*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray*, *touch of idiocy*

1st (7/day)—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15), *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *true strike*

o (at will)—*acid splash*, *bleed* (DC 14), *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Bloodline Draconic (bronze)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Ability Focus (breath weapon), Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Improved Natural Armor, Lightning Reflexes, Point-Blank Shot, Quicken Spell, Toughness, Weapon Focus (ray)

Skills Fly +13, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Perception +2, Spellcraft +10; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Handle Animal against reptiles, +2 Perception

Languages Nagaji, Tien

SQ bloodline arcana (energy spells that match bloodline energy deal +1 damage per die)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*; **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, *ring of protection* +1

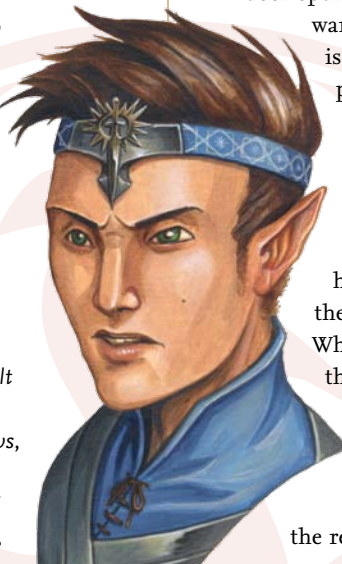
Development: If the PCs fail to retrieve the bracelet by sundown, Tsavati reports back to the Emissary, who announces to the assembled audience in the Grand Pavilion that the PCs have failed. If you are using the performance combat rules from *Ultimate Combat*, the crowd's starting attitude is one step lower the next time the PCs fight in the arena.

Night: Golden League Ambush (CR 11)

Yon Loi's becomes less festive with each passing night, perhaps because each day sees more contestants eliminated from the contest, or because of the uncharacteristically dismal weather. In any case, the PCs find the noodle house largely vacant when they arrive to meet Marthysan. When 9 p.m. rolls around, the paladin is nowhere to be found, and the door opens to a false alarm as a stumbling-drunk local wanders in for a late meal. In truth, Marthysan is simply running late, as the boat that he planned to take from the Grand Pavilion back to New Harbor left without him and he had to travel back on foot. The PCs aren't the only patrons expecting him, however. A Golden League assassination squad lies in wait to eliminate the PCs and Marthysan, hoping to disrupt the tournament and ensure the bets placed in the PCs' favor go unpaid. When the drunk villager makes his loud entry, the attackers make their move against the PCs.

Creatures: Three tattooed thugs—loyal soldiers of the Golden League called “Xun”—jump the PCs while they wait for Marthysan to arrive, one from within the restaurant where he sat hunched over a bowl of soup, and two rappelling from the ceiling on long silken sashes that had, up until earlier in the evening, served simply as decoration. While they had hoped to find Marthysan with the PCs, they happily attempt to dispatch the party, knowing that their superiors will be glad to have one of the most likely teams to face their contestant, the hobgoblin enforcer Gomwai, out of the way.

If captured, the Xun openly admit their allegiance to the Golden League (which the PCs can discover even if all three thugs are killed with a DC 15 Knowledge [local] check to identify their characteristic tattoos) but do not divulge that their assignment targeted Marthysan as well as. Since he wasn't present, they lie and claim that the PCs were their intended target, though they attempt to hide Gomwai's connection to the Golden League for fear the PCs will retaliate against him directly and ruin the bet-rigging plan.



MARTHYSAN THE RIGHTEOUS

GOLDEN LEAGUE XUN (3) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each

Male human fighter 2/rogue (thug) 7 (*Advanced Player's Guide* 135)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 80 each (9 HD; 2d10+7d8+34)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk sansetsukon** +12/+7 (1d10+4) or
mwk dagger +11/+6 (1d4+4/19–20)

Ranged dart +9/+4 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks brutal beating, sneak attack +4d6

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Iron Will, Power Attack,
Stealthy, Toughness, Weapon Focus (sansetsukon), Outflank*

Skills Acrobatics +14, Climb +14, Escape Artist +4, Intimidate +12,
Knowledge (local) +13, Perception +11, Ride +14, Sleight of
Hand +14, Stealth +16, Swim +13

Languages Common, Tien

SQ frightening, rogue talents (fast stealth, resiliency,
offensive defense*)

Combat Gear *potion of bear's endurance*, *potions of cure moderate
wounds* (2), *potion of invisibility*; **Other Gear** +2 studded leather,
masterwork sansetsukon**, masterwork dagger, darts (6),
ring of protection +1, 65 gp

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

** See *Ultimate Combat*.

Development: Marthysan the Righteous arrives at the noodle house only minutes after the conclusion of the fight and assists the PCs with interrogating any Xun they capture. He explains the reason for his tardiness and apologizes for the attack on the PCs, despite not knowing that he was the original intended target. Recognizing the thugs as agents of the Golden League, he cuts the planned meeting with the PCs short in order to report the event to the Emissary, but states before leaving for the Grand Pavilion that this merely confirms his suspicions of the morning. He warns the PCs to be vigilant and cautious and quickly departs to catch a ferry across the bay.

Yon Loi's closes in response to the open violence committed within its walls, both to clean up any mess created during the fray, and as a precaution against future attacks on other patrons. The noodle house remains closed through the following evening, only reopening on the fifth and final day of the contest after the Emissary assigns six of his personal honor guard to patrol New Harbor and the noodle shop to prevent further incidents.

DAY FOUR

By the start of the fourth day of the competition, only eight teams of contestants remain. With fewer exhibitions to entertain the crowds throughout the day, the PCs have more time to explore the island than in previous days, though the Emissary tries to keep them as busy as possible. As such, the penultimate day of the contest

includes an unofficial challenge issued to all contestants that, unlike exhibition matches and tests, they can decline: the chance to face the brine dragon menace of the Ridge of Graves, Huyanwo.

Round 4: Blood and Mud (CR 12)

Overnight, Abadaran clerics and wizards in the Emissary's service employed spells such as *stone shape*, *transmute rock to mud*, and *create water* to fill the fight stage with a pool of watery mud, effectively transforming the ring into a giant swamp. Several islands of dark stone rise 6 inches out of the 4-foot-deep morass. Treat the mud as a deep bog for purposes of movement and concealment (see page 427 of the *Core Rulebook*).

Creatures: The PCs' foe in this quarterfinal round is the eunuch witch Hok Fong. The corpulent Tian-Shu man derives his power equally from his pig familiar Xinai and the very blood that courses through his veins. Introduced to the ways of the bloatmage by a hemotheurge from Kaer Maga who traveled to Goka in search of exotic new sources of blood lore in Tian Xia, Hok Fong now operates a lucrative business procuring such specimens for his Varisian counterparts and arranging their transport over to Avistan. The witch hopes to win the Ruby Phoenix Tournament and choose an item from Hao Jin's collection that will grant him even more hemotheurgic power.

Swimming in the deep mud of the mired fight stage are six leech swarms, which lie stealthily in the mud until a victim falls in, at which point the nearest swarm attacks.

HOK FONG THE EUNUCH

CR 11

XP 12,800

Male human witch 8/bloatmage 4 (*Advanced Player's Guide* 65,
Pathfinder Campaign Setting: City of Strangers 60)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex,
+1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 101 (12d6+59)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +10

Weaknesses hemophilia

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 30 ft. (good)

Melee mwk quarterstaff +6/+1 (1d6–1)

Special Attacks hexes (charm [2 steps, 4 rounds], disguise [8 hours], evil eye [–4, 7 rounds], misfortune [2 rounds], tongues [8 minutes])

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +16)

6th—*cloak of dreams** (DC 23), *slay living* (DC 20)

5th—*dominate person* (DC 22), *feeblemind* (DC 22), *overland flight*

4th—*confusion* (DC 21), *lesser geas* (DC 21), *phantasmal killer* (DC 18), *poison* (DC 18)

- 3rd—*blink*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *dispel magic*, *pain strike** (DC 17), *suggestion* (DC 20)
- 2nd—*alter self*, *false life*, *fester** (DC 16), *invisibility*, *touch of idiocy* (DC 16)
- 1st—*burning hands* (DC 15), *charm person* (DC 18), *cure light wounds*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15)
- o (at will)—*detect poison*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *message*

Patron Deception

TACTICS

Before Combat Hok Fong casts *false life*, *mage armor*, and *overland flight* at the start of each day of the competition, and casts *blink* before the start of his first match in a given day.

During Combat Hok Fong uses his enchantment spells to turn his foes against one another, preferring to use ranged spells and hexes from a distance.

Base Statistics When not under the effects of his pre-combat spells, Hok Fong's statistics are **AC 15**, touch 14, flat-footed 12; **hp 86**; **Skills** Fly +7.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex 14**, **Con 15**, **Int 18**, **Wis 10**, **Cha 14**

Base Atk +6; **CMB +5**; **CMD 19**

Feats Bloatmage Initiate, Combat Casting, Dodge, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Mobility, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness

Skills Bluff +7, Craft (alchemy) +13, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +8, Fly +16, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Linguistics +9, Perception +5, Stealth +11, Survival +5, Use Magic Device +10

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Tien, tongues

SQ bloat (2/day, 2d4), blood pool (4), corpulence, witch's familiar (pig named Xinai)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of heightened hold person* (3rd level), *scroll of heroism*, *wand of lightning bolt* (20 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork quarterstaff, *belt of mighty constitution +2*, *cloak of resistance +2*, *ring of protection +1*, 50 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloat (Ex) Twice per day, Hok Fong can exert himself as a free action to instantly gain 2d4 extra blood points, but doing so puts him at great risk (see blood pool, below).

Blood Pool (Su) Hok Fong can spend a blood point at the time of casting a spell to recall it immediately afterward as if it had not been cast. If Hok Fong ever has more blood points than his bloatmage level but fewer than twice his bloatmage level, he gains the sickened condition until his blood pool falls to or below his bloatmage level. If he ever has twice his bloatmage level or higher in blood points, he immediately flies into a homicidal rage, striking out randomly with his most damaging attacks and abilities at friends and foes alike for 1d6 rounds or until his blood pool is reduced to 0 (whichever comes first). At the end of his rage, his blood pool drops to 0, his hit points drop to -1, and he begins dying.

Corpulence (Ex) Hok Fong's rolls of fatty, blood-laden flesh grant him a +1 natural armor bonus.

Feats Hok Fong's Bloatmage Initiate feat allows him to cast spells of the enchantment school at +1 caster level (his save DCs already incorporate this bonus, but duration and other level-dependent effects do not). His extreme girth, however, means that he is always considered to be carrying a medium load (already included in his stats).

Hemophilia (Ex) Bloatmages are particularly susceptible to bleed effects, and the DC of any Heal check to stop a bleed effect is 5 higher than normal. In addition, anytime a bleeding wound is inflicted on a bloatmage, he loses 1 blood point. This loss of blood points is cumulative for multiple bleed attacks, but not each time he takes damage from the same attack.

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

LEECH SWARM (6)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 39 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 187)

Treasure: If the PCs defeat Hok Fong, the Emissary awards them a *periapt of wound closure*.

Exhibition 4: Slay Huyanwo! (CR 11)

As monks take away the trappings of the previous round and spellcasters get to work setting the fight stage for the next match, the Emissary rises and speaks loudly to the crowd, announcing a challenge for all remaining contestants: the slaying of the brine dragon Huyanwo, who has ravaged the region of the island known as the Ridge of Graves for generations.

Several of the remaining contestants look at one another to see if anyone else is taking the Emissary up on his challenge, but none react visibly in favor or against such a decision. Unless the PCs jump at the chance, the Emissary shrugs dramatically and orders the games to continue, dismissing any competitors who wish to take care of "other business" around the island. Of the remaining contestants, none accept the challenge, each set on winning the tournament and not wishing to gamble on an unnecessary risk.

Should the PCs accept the challenge, they can find Huyanwo at any time before sundown at the Ridge of Graves; he has his lair in a sea cave beneath the waterline of the steep seaside bluff, directly under a salt-swept stone pagoda. If the PCs attempt to find Huyanwo after sundown, the dragon has already left for Old Harbor to help support his newfound allies, the Aspian Consortium.

Creature: Huyanwo is a primal brine dragon who made his home on Xielan Island some 175 years ago. Finding the village now called Old Harbor undefended, he had grand ambitions of ruling the fisherfolk in the town from



a nearby grotto. When the peasants refused to submit to the dragon's demands of tribute, he became enraged and laid waste to the village, furthering superstitions that the island was haunted and uninhabitable. Now, without a sizeable human population left for him to rule, Huyanwo has set his sights on colonies of sahuagin and locathahs in the deeper waters of Xu Hong Bay, far from Xielan Island. During the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, however, he always stays close to his lair in order to protect it from ambitious competitors—and in the hope of gaining human allies he can coerce into helping him establish true dominion over the island. This year, such an opportunity came in the form of the Aspis Consortium, which, along with the Golden League, seeks the dragon's help with its own schemes. As such, if the PCs do not face and defeat Huyanwo during the day, the dragon abandons his lair to assist the Aspis agent in New Harbor during the attempt to kidnap Marthysan later this evening.

Huyanwo utilizes the open air and water surrounding the pagoda to his advantage, strafing the high ridgeline with his breath weapon and then soaring into the skies before unleashing his cold spell attacks upon the PCs. The dragon then turns invisible, hoping to confuse opponents before using his breath weapon again.

HUYANWO **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Adult brine dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 94*)

hp 147

Treasure: Upon defeating the dragon, the PCs may locate his lair in a small grotto under the cliffs on the south side of the Ridge of Graves. The entrance rests 20 feet below the waterline even at low tide, and cannot be seen from the surface. Within lies Huyanwo's hoard, amassed over the last 2 centuries: a +1 *blinding heavy steel shield*, 2 vials of *elixir of vision*, a *gray bag of tricks*, an *incandescent blue sphere ioun stone*, a *lesser silent metamagic rod*, 200 pp, 800 gp, 3,000 sp, and 50,000 cp.

Test 4: Iron Body (CR 9)

Upon great carts, the Emissary's servants wheel in a dozen iron maidens cast in the likenesses of praying monks. While their interiors contain none of the typical spikes or blades of the famed torture devices, the iron sarcophagi nevertheless close and lock in the same manner, creating a claustrophobic space from which few can escape. Locked within the iron skins, each participating contestant is subjected to trials that test her endurance and physical

MANAGING WEALTH

If the PCs defeat Huyanwo and find his hoard beneath the water, it is likely they will end up with much more wealth at the end of this adventure than the average party of their level. This is doubly true if they win the tournament and select an expensive—or even priceless—item as their reward from Hao Jin’s legendary collection of wonders.

If you’re running this adventure as a stand-alone module, this outcome should present no major issues; if, however, *The Ruby Phoenix Tournament* is being used as part of an ongoing campaign, feel free to substitute less expensive items for any of the prizes awarded as part of the competition, in Huyanwo’s hoard, or in Hao Jin’s collection at the module’s conclusion.

fortitude. Specific tests and their effects are listed on the table below. To succeed, an individual must remain conscious until the end of the trial. A single PC may attempt as many trials as she wishes but may only attempt each one once, and should declare which trial she will attempt before the details of each trial are described. If any PC completes a given trial, award the party the reward listed on the table below.

Night: Kidnapped! (CR 12 or CR 13)

After sundown, the Emissary offers another night of festivities at the Grand Pavilion, featuring high-wire acrobatics performances, fireworks, a tengu swordsmanship show, comedy skits, and elaborate puppet shows. Commoners and eliminated contestants join the festivities, but Marthysan is noticeably absent. When the paladin is called forth by the Emissary to participate in a stunt, even the wise Emissary seems surprised at his absence.

As the celebration at the Grand Pavilion commenced, Marthysan returned to his suite to collect a forgotten item, only to be jumped by another group of Golden League Xun. After killing one of his attackers, Marthysan was overwhelmed and taken to the New Harbor docks, where the Aspis Consortium agents participating in the

tournament plan to lead him onto a hired ship for delivery to the Sisters Wu after the contest ends tomorrow night.

Should the PCs investigate, they find the paladin’s quarters in New Harbor have been ransacked and see evidence of a struggle, including the dead body of a Tian woman covered in distinctive Xun tattoos. A search of her body reveals a folded piece of paper with Marthysan’s face sketched on it, the name of the inn, and the words “New Harbor docks, Aspis handoff.”

The docks are currently empty, as the New Harbor locals and docked ships’ crews and passengers are all at the Grand Pavilion participating in tonight’s festivities. The narrow wooden piers of New Harbor form a series of horizontal ladders from the shore to a semicircle of anchored boats. Rising 2 feet off the surface of the water, foot-wide pylons support the network of equally narrow crossbeams, whose waterlogged surfaces require a DC 7 Acrobatics check each round to move along at half speed, and anyone balancing in such a way is considered flat-footed. The water in the harbor is 20 feet deep, with a solid, sandy bottom.

Creatures: Risha Coaltongue, Pirin Agramont, Mol Kor, and Darys Shrike are not just another team of competitors among the four remaining teams, but rather the very team the PCs are to face tomorrow morning in the semifinal round. A seasoned band of Aspis Consortium agents from the Inner Sea, the four fight ruthlessly and know how to play to one another’s strengths. In addition to traveling to Goka to compete in the tournament on behalf of the Consortium, Risha and her comrades were also instructed to establish good relations with the Golden League, forging a connection the Consortium can use to spread its influence into Tian Xia.

Part of the arrangement the team made with the Golden League families in the city was that they would assist in the conspiracy to manipulate the tournament’s outcome, both by throwing the final match in which they were to face the Golden League’s champion Gomwai, but also in working with the Sisters Wu to get revenge on Marthysan. Having kidnapped the paladin, they now wait, spread throughout the harbor, guarding against interference while their ship’s crew readies to depart with their captive.

Iron Body Test

Trial	Description	Risk/Effect	Reward
Drowning Idol	Submerged in water for 4 minutes	Drowning (<i>Core Rulebook</i> 445)	<i>Potion of water breathing</i>
Fiery Idol	Set upon a pyre for 10 minutes	Extreme heat (<i>Core Rulebook</i> 444)	<i>Potion of protection from energy, fire</i>
Pain Idol	Needles shoved into the holes in the idol (2/round for 10 rounds)	1d4 damage/round	<i>Potion of bear’s endurance</i>
Poison Idol	Surrounded by toxic incense for 10 rounds	1 dose of insanity mist, lasting 10 rounds (<i>Core Rulebook</i> 560)	<i>Potion of neutralize poison</i>
Winter Idol	Placed within an ice water bath for 10 minutes	Extreme cold (<i>Core Rulebook</i> 442)	<i>Potion of protection from energy, cold</i>

Each has drunk a *potion of water walk* prior to conducting this operation, so they do not fear falling into the water and don't need to worry about balancing on the narrow piers in combat.

If the PCs did not defeat Huyanwo before sundown, the brine dragon is also here, circling above the anchored ships and keeping watch on the harbor with his newfound allies, whom he hopes to influence and rule once he's earned their trust with what he sees as a simple favor.

RISHA COALTONGUE CR 8

XP 4,800

Female human rogue 9
N Medium humanoid (human)
Init +8; Senses Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 58 (9d8+14)

Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +4

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *short sword* +10/+5 (1d6+1/19–20), +1 *short sword* +10/+5 (1d6+1/19–20)

Ranged mwk shortbow +11/+6 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +5d6

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 19, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 8

Base Atk +6; CMB +6; CMD 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Mobility, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +16, Appraise +11, Bluff +11, Climb +12, Disable Device +14, Escape Artist +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Perception +12, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +16, Stealth +16, Use Magic Device +9

Languages Common, Tien, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (combat trick, resiliency, surprise attack, weapon training), trapfinding +4

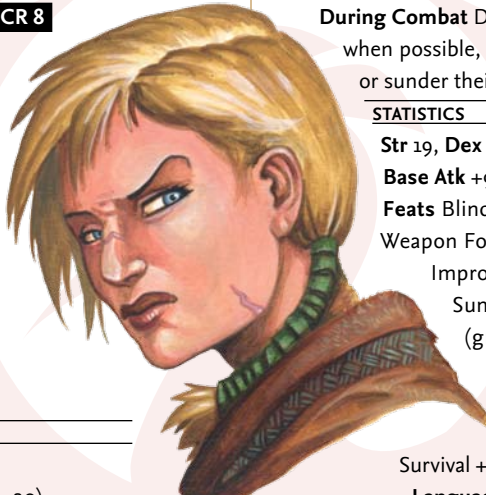
Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2); **Other Gear** +1 *studded leather*, +1 *short swords* (2), masterwork shortbow with 20 arrows, *ring of protection* +1, 425 gp

DARYS SHRIKE CR 8

XP 4,800

Male human fighter 9
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +1



RISHA COALTONGUE

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 81 (9d10+27)

Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +4; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 *greataxe* +19/+14 (1d12+12/19–20/x3)

Ranged mwk throwing axe +15 (1d6+7)

Special Attacks weapon training (axes +2, thrown +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Darys provides flanking support for Risha when possible, and tries to bull rush PCs into the water or sunder their weapons when the opportunity arises.

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +9; CMB +13; CMD 24

Feats Blind-Fight, Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (greataxe), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe), Weapon Focus (throwing axe), Weapon Specialization (greataxe)

Skills Climb +13, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8,

Survival +9

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2

Other Gear +1 *chainmail*, +2 *greataxe*, masterwork throwing axe, 122 gp

MOL KOR CR 8

XP 4,800

Male half-orc cleric of Gorum 9
CN Medium humanoid (orc)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 22 (+11 armor, +1 deflection)

hp 66 (9d8+22)

Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +9

Defensive Abilities orc ferocity

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *greatsword* +11/+6 (2d6+5/19–20) or armor spikes +9/+2 (1d6+3)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 4/day (DC 15 [17 to damage undead], 5d6), weapon master (9 rounds/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +12) 6/day—touch of glory (+4)

6/day—battle rage (+4 damage)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +12)

5th—*breath of life*, *righteous might*^D

4th—*chaos hammer* (DC 17), *divine power*^D, *spell immunity*

3rd—*blindness* (DC 16), *dispel magic*, *invisibility purge*, *magic vestment*^D
 2nd—*aid*, *bull's strength*, *death knell* (DC 15), *shatter* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon*^D
 1st—*bane* (DC 14), *deathwatch*, *doom* (DC 14), *entropic shield*, *magic weapon*^D, *shield of faith*
 o (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *guidance*, *resistance*, *stabilize*
D Domain spell; **Domains** Glory, War

TACTICS

Before Combat If he has time before combat starts, Mol Kor casts *bull's strength* and *spell immunity* (*fireball* and *magic missile*), and activates his touch of glory domain power.

During Combat The cleric begins battle trying to intimidate the most powerful-looking opponent. He then alternates between using spells to weaken magically enhanced foes and charging into battle with his greatsword. Mol Kor channels positive energy to heal his allies as needed, and doesn't shy away from including the PCs in such bursts, as he looks forward to a prolonged battle for the glory of his god.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20

Feats Cleave, Combat Casting, Heavy Armor Proficiency, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Diplomacy +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (religion) +4, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +7; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Intimidate

Languages Common, Orc

SQ aura, divine presence (9 rounds, DC 17), orc blood, weapon familiarity

Gear +2 *spiked full plate*, +1 *greatsword*, *ring of protection* +1

PIRIN AGRAMONT

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female half-elf sorcerer 9

CN Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 70 (9d6+36)

Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments

Resist fire 20

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk sickle +7 (1d6–1) or

mwk dagger +7 (1d4–1/19–20)

Ranged +1 *light crossbow* +7 (1d8+1/19–20)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +13)

7/day—*elemental ray* (1d6+4 fire)

1/day—*elemental blast* (9d6 fire, DC 18)

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +13)

4th (5/day)—*black tentacles*, *elemental body I*, *stoneskin*

3rd (7/day)—*fly*, *hold person* (DC 17), *protection from energy*, *slow* (DC 17)

2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *levitate*, *protection from arrows*, *resist energy*, *scorching ray*

1st (7/day)—*burning hands* (DC 15), *grease*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *protection from good*, *reduce person* (DC 15)

o (at will)—*arcane mark*, *daze* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Bloodline Elemental (fire)

TACTICS

Before Combat Pirin casts *mage armor* at the start of each day.

She casts *protection from arrows* if she has time before the start of combat.

During Combat The sorcerer uses *fly* if it would be advantageous, then resorts to offensive spells such as *black tentacles*, *burning hands*, and her elemental blast bloodline power. If she begins to take significant damage, she casts *stoneskin* and *invisibility*.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Great

Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +16, Fly +10, Intimidate +11, Perception +2, Spellcraft +13, Use Magic Device +16; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal

SQ bloodline arcana, elf blood

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *wand of ray of enfeeblement* (CL 6th, 14 charges); **Other Gear** +1 *light crossbow* with 20 bolts, *masterwork dagger*, *masterwork sickle*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, 97 gp

Development: Marthysan is in the hold of the Aspishired ship, bound and unconscious. The sailors on the ship surrender immediately if confronted, stating that they want no fight and were just doing what they were hired to do. If pressed, they identify Darys and Risha as their employers, and offer to leave the harbor without another word should the PCs wish them to.

The Aspish agents admit to being members of the Consortium if interrogated, and outline their plan to establish contact with the Golden League while here competing in the contest. They deny any involvement in the past sabotage, but can be intimidated or coerced into confirming that they agreed to throw the final match against Gomwai in order to ensure maximum profits for the Golden League's gambling ring. They also admit to working with the dragon Huyanwo if the PCs have already defeated him. Finally, if questioned about their motives for kidnapping Marthysan, they state that it was part of their arrangement with the Golden League, whose allies want the paladin dead and the entire tournament destroyed.

DAY FIVE

The final day of the tournament is bright and sunny, with a clear sky and a crisp breeze on the air. The island is abuzz with talk of the events of last night—the battle on New Harbor's piers and the resulting disqualification of Risha's team (if they survived the encounter). The crowds are larger today than they have been all week, and everyone is excited to see the semifinal and final rounds and the naming of the next Ruby Phoenix Champion.

Despite his ordeal last night, Marthysan sits at the Emissary's side, opposite Kiang Zhen. While he looks worse for the wear, the paladin is smiling and excited to pass his title on to another lucky competitor this afternoon.

Round 5: Seishuku (CR 10)

The fight stage is clear of obstacles, the field of battle left open for a true test of skill unhindered by terrain or other obstructions. The crowd roars in anticipation of the day's battles between the most skilled combatants of the tournament.

In the semifinal round, the PCs were slated to face the Aspis Consortium team responsible for Marthysan's kidnapping last night. Since the competitors are no longer in the running for the championship due to their treachery, the PCs would normally receive a bye, but complex clauses in the articles that dictate tournament procedures indicate that no one can get into the championship round on a technicality. As such, the opponent the Aspis Consortium team beat the previous day in the quarterfinals is reinstated for the bout as if he had won.

Creature: In place of the Aspis Consortium agents, the PCs face Seishuku, the Scarred Ninja. Originally an alchemist from the land of Minkai, Seishuku was terribly scarred in a chemical explosion when a gang of drug-addicted thieves looking for powerful opiates ransacked his laboratory. Unwilling to continue his alchemical experiments, Seishuku instead dedicated his life to training under the guidance of a mysterious ninja master. Though he was eliminated from the competition yesterday, he eagerly returns to the ring to battle the PCs, seeing it as a chance to redeem himself for the dishonor of being defeated.

SEISHUKU

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male human alchemist 3/ninja 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 26, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 13)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +10; **Senses** Perception +13



SEISHUKU

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 17, flat-footed 19 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 83 (11d8+30)

Fort +6, **Ref** +15, **Will** +2; +2 vs. poison

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *kyoketsu shoge** +12/+7 (1d4+4)

Ranged +1 *kyoketsu shoge** +16/+11 (1d4+3)

Special Attacks bomb 6/day (2d6+3 fire, DC 14), sneak attack +4d6

Alchemist Extracts Known (CL 3rd)

1st—*cure light wounds, jump, shield, true strike*

TACTICS

Before Combat Seishuku drinks his mutagen before the round.

During Combat Seishuku alternates between acid bomb attacks and sneak attacks with his *kyoketsu shoge*, using his vanishing trick as a swift action each round until he has expended all his *ki* to ensure his enemies don't see him coming.

Morale If reduced to 15 hit points or fewer, Seishuku believes he has lost the tournament and surrenders, accepting that he was not meant to progress further and hoping to hone his skills and compete again in 10 years.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 22, **Con** 12, **Int** 16, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 28

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Brew Potion, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*kyoketsu shoge*), Extra *Ki*, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Throw Anything, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*kyoketsu shoge*)

Skills Acrobatics +20, Climb +13, Craft (alchemy) +11, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +20, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (local) +17, Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +20, Stealth +20, Use Magic Device +13

Languages Common, Minkaian, Tian

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +3, identify potions), discoveries (acid bomb), *ki* pool (5), light steps, mutagen (+4/−2, +2 natural, 30 minutes), ninja tricks (combat trick, shadow clone, vanishing trick, weapon training), no trace +2, poison use, swift alchemy

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of fly*; **Other Gear** +2 studded leather, +1 *kyoketsu shoge**, ring of protection +1, amulet of natural armor +1, headband of vast intelligence +2

* See *Ultimate Combat*.

Exhibition 5: They of Two Heads (CR 11)

Immediately after the PCs' battle with Seishuku, the second semifinal round occurs. In the battle, the hobgoblin Gomwai

defeats his challenger, an elven samurai from Jinin, earning himself a position in the championship round against the PCs. Each contestant is to be given a chance to heal and prepare before the final competition. But first, a series of exhibitions is held to keep the crowd occupied and to keep the two final competitors warmed up and in the fighting, competitive spirit. The PCs' exhibition round comes first.

Creature: In their final exhibition match before the championship bout, the PCs are pitted against a atamahuta—an oni with a corrupted, twisted body of an ettin. The two-headed abomination roars in rage as it is released into the ring, assuming the form of a normal ettin using its change shape ability in order to throw off its foes. With a successful DC 20 Sense Motive check, PCs observing the oni Kiang Zhen at the Emissary's side notices that she is particularly interested in this fight—a clue that their foe is more than it appears to be.

ATAMAHUTA	CR 11
XP 12,800	
<i>Pathfinder Adventure Path #51 86</i>	
LE Large outsider (giant, native, oni, shapechanger)	
Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +24	
DEFENSE	
AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +8 natural, –1 size)	
hp 147 (14d10+70); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)	
Fort +14, Ref +5, Will +12	
SR 22	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee +2 <i>orc double axe</i> +22/+22/+17/+17/+12/+12 (2d6+12/19–20)	
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.	
Special Attacks double weapon mastery, spellstrike	
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +14)	
Constant— <i>see invisibility</i>	
3/day— <i>chill touch</i> (DC 14), <i>dimension door</i> , <i>fireball</i> (DC 16), <i>haste</i> , <i>rage</i> , <i>shocking grasp</i>	
1/day— <i>black tentacles</i> , <i>stoneskin</i> , <i>wall of fire</i>	
STATISTICS	
Str 25, Dex 12, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 16, Cha 17	
Base Atk +14; CMB +22; CMD 33	
Feats Cleave, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Spell Penetration, Vital Strike	
Skills Bluff +20, Disguise +20, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +24, Sense Motive +20, Spellcraft +18; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception	
Languages Common, Giant, Orc, Tien	
SQ change shape (Large humanoid, <i>alter self</i>), ward off distractions	
Gear banded mail, +2 <i>orc double axe</i>	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Double Weapon Mastery (Ex) An atamahuta fights with an orc double axe. While making a full attack, an atamahuta	

controls its arms with both heads and does not take a penalty on attack or damage rolls for attacking with a double weapon.

Spellstrike (Su) An atamahuta can imbue its weapon with magical properties using its spell-like abilities. Whenever an atamahuta casts a spell with a range of “touch” from its spell-like abilities, it can deliver the spell through any weapon it is holding as part of a free melee attack at its highest base attack bonus as part of casting its spell. If successful, this melee attack deals its normal damage as well as the effects of the spell. This attack uses the weapon's critical threat range, but the spell effect only deals double damage on a successful critical hit, while the weapon damage uses its own critical multiplier. An atamahuta cannot make a full attack during the same round that it uses a spell-like ability unless another effect would allow it to do so.

Ward Off Distractions (Ex) An atamahuta uses one of its heads to defend against attacks while the other is using a spell-like ability, giving it a +4 bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity while casting.

Test 5: Mind Trap (CR 11)

For the PCs' final test, the Emissary assesses their mental capabilities instead of their physical prowess, which has been well tested throughout the Ruby Phoenix Tournament. In this test, a stone pillar is placed in each corner of the fight stage. On each pillar is carved a line from a riddle; the PCs must read all four, place them in order, and solve the riddle to pass the test. Making the task harder, each line of text contains a hidden magical trap, triggered when the words are read. The Emissary grants the PCs 2 minutes to solve the riddle. While the players attempt to find the answer after the riddle is assembled, count every 30 seconds of real-time discussion as 1 round of elapsed game time. If PCs would rather use skills to solve the riddle, allow each PC to make an Intelligence check. The DC starts at 16 and increases by +1 for each line of the riddle they haven't yet read.

Column 1: This column contains a *symbol of stunning* trap, embedded within the following text: “And every one of me you cherish.”

SYMBOL OF STUNNING TRAP	CR 8
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Type magic; **Perception** DC 32; **Disable Device** DC 32

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*symbol of stunning*, stunned for 1d6 rounds, DC 20 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets within 60 ft. of the symbol)

Column 2: This column contains a *symbol of fear* trap, embedded within the following text: “You build more of me each day.”

SYMBOL OF FEAR TRAP CR 7

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*symbol of fear*, panicked for 11 rounds, DC 19 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets within 60 ft. of the symbol)

Column 3: This column contains a *confusion* trap, embedded within the following text: “The oldest are the first to perish.”

CONFUSION TRAP CR 7

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*confusion*, confused for 7 rounds, DC 16 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets within a 15-ft. radius)

Column 4: This column contains a *mind fog* trap, embedded within the following text: “But with age I slip away.”

MIND FOG TRAP CR 7

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; Reset none

Effect spell effect (*mind fog*, –10 penalty on Wisdom checks and Will saves while within a 20-ft. radius of the column and for 2d6 rounds thereafter, DC 17 Will save negates); multiple targets (all targets within 20 ft. of the column)

Development: Once the PCs have gathered all four lines of the poem, they can piece together the following riddle, the answer to which is “memory.”

*You build more of me each day
And every one of me you cherish
But with age I slip away
The oldest are the first to perish*

Story Award: If the PCs solve the riddle, award them experience for a CR 9 encounter on top of the experience for any of the traps they set off in the process of retrieving the clues.

Final Round: Gomwai (CR 13)

The championship round takes place shortly after the PCs’ final test, after they have had a chance to heal and prepare for the bout (but not long enough that they can regain expended spell slots or other limited-use abilities). The PCs may make whatever preparations they want, but there is a 30-second window between their last opportunity to cast preparatory spells in area B3 and the start of the round once they are positioned on the fight stage.

The roar of the crowd and the beat of a dozen large drums fill the air; the energy and excitement in the Grand Pavilion are palpable. The winner of this match will be crowned Ruby Phoenix Champion and gain access to the vaults of the legendary Hao Jin, and in so doing, become legend as well.

Creatures: The Golden League’s champion, the hobgoblin Gomwai, is meant to win this round and the tournament, thus guaranteeing the crime syndicate untold wealth in their gambling racket. The original plan was that the Aspis Consortium team would progress this far as well—through deceit and treachery if need be—in order to throw the final round and ensure Gomwai’s victory. Their disqualification has left the hobgoblin in a precarious position, since the Golden League has no sway over the PCs’ actions. But the Golden League anticipated some plans not coming to fruition perfectly, and they worded Gomwai’s entry into the contest in such a way that he could employ as many as three Xun in any contest as part of his team. He has not yet utilized them, earning his place as a finalist on his own merits (and because of the sabotage performed by his allies).

Gomwai is the most effective of the Golden League’s enforcers and knee-breakers in Goka, and is an expert at dealing nonlethal damage to get his bosses’ message across to his marks. The Xun who accompany him are equally skilled assassins and thugs and work well in tandem, willfully sacrificing themselves to protect Gomwai and ensure Golden League victory.

GOMWAI CR 11

Male hobgoblin monk 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 175*)
LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 22, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 monk, +2 Wis)

hp 121 (11d8+68)

Fort +14, Ref +14, Will +13; +2 vs. enchantment

Defensive Abilities improved evasion; Immune disease, fear, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +17/+12 (2d8+4 plus 1d6 nonlethal) or flurry of blows +17/+17/+12/+12/+7/+7 (2d8+4 plus 1d6 nonlethal)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist (12/day, DC 17)

TACTICS

Before Combat Prior to combat, Wu Jufeng casts *greater heroism* (CL 13) on Gomwai, the effects of which have already been included in his stats. If Gomwai has had the chance to observe the PCs’ past rounds and knows they are likely to hit him often, the hobgoblin drinks his *potion of barkskin* prior to entering the battlefield (not included in his stats).

During Combat Gomwai directs his allies to flank, and coordinates their attacks on a single opponent until that foe is unconscious, using a combination of combat maneuvers, nonlethal damage, and stunning fist to debilitate foes. The hobgoblin prefers to eliminate foes in the following order: healers, arcane casters, ranged combatants, melee combatants.

Morale Knowing this is the final round of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, and that the Golden League's chance of dominance rests with him, Gomwai fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +18 (+20 bull rush, grapple, trip); **CMD** 33 (35 vs. bull rush, grapple, trip)

Feats Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Grapple, Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Intimidating Prowess, Mobility, Power Attack, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Acrobatics +17 (+28 when jumping), Climb +15, Intimidate +16, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +19

Languages Goblin, Tien

SQ diamond body, fast movement, high jump, ki pool (7 points, lawful, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, slow fall 50 ft., still mind, wholeness of body

Combat Gear *potion of barkskin* (CL 9th; +4 natural armor bonus), *potion of cure serious wounds*, *potion of fly*; **Other Gear** *merciful amulet of mighty fists* +1, *belt of physical might* +2 (Str/Con), *bracers of armor* +4, *ring of protection* +3, *monk's robes*, 600 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Backing of the Golden League (Ex)

Because of his connection to the Golden League crime syndicate, Gomwai has significantly more wealth than an average NPC of his level, raising his CR by 1.

GOLDEN LEAGUE XUN (3) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 80 each (use the stats on page 16)

Development: If the PCs defeat Gomwai and his trio of Xun allies, the Grand Pavilion erupts in a cacophony of cheers and exploding firecrackers. The Emissary, Marthysan, and Kiang Zhen step forward to begin the formal ceremony of passing the title of Ruby Phoenix Champion

from the paladin to the new victors. Just as they are set to commence the ceremony, however, the Sisters Wu interrupt the proceedings.

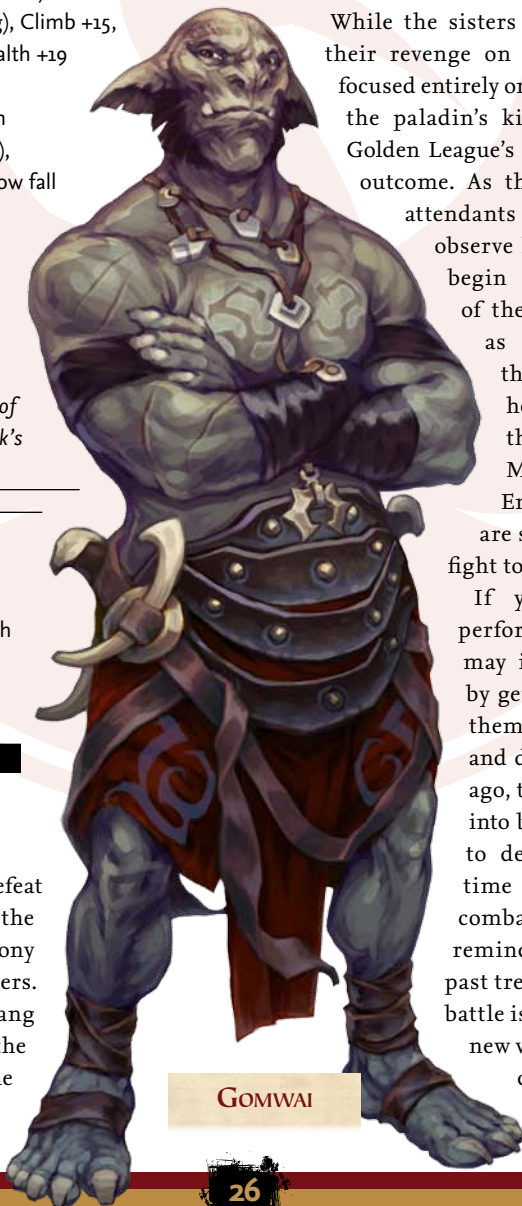
The Twins' Revenge (CR 14)

A clash of thunder bursts overhead in the otherwise clear and cloudless sky. The joyous sounds of celebration cease momentarily as the stunned observers and officials alike look around for the source of the sound. An uneasy hush falls over the masses.

Creatures: The Sisters Wu reveal themselves for the first time in 10 years before the Emissary and the assembled crowd. Twins once conjoined at the torso, the sisters are identical save for the scars from their separation, which mar the otherwise flawless skin on the opposite sides of their bodies.

While the sisters would have preferred to exact their revenge on Marthysan, their rage is now focused entirely on the PCs, who not only prevented the paladin's kidnapping, but also foiled the Golden League's plot to control the tournament's outcome. As the sisters, disguised as simple attendants in Gomwai's side of area B3, observe his battle against the PCs, they begin casting spells in preparation of their impending assault. As soon as Gomwai loses, they reveal themselves and assault the PCs, hoping to eliminate them and then turn their attention upon Marthysan, and if possible, the Emissary himself. The Sisters Wu are single-minded in their rage and fight to the death.

If you are using the optional performance combat rules, the PCs may inflict penalties on the sisters by getting the crowd to rally against them. Since Wu Dizhen was shamed and disqualified for cheating 10 years ago, the crowd can be easily incensed into berating the sisters for returning to defile the tournament a second time with a successful performance combat check. If the audience isn't reminded of the sisters' identities and past treachery, they instead assume the battle is a staged exhibition to show the new victors' prowess a final time, and cheer for whichever side puts on the best show.



GOMWAI

WU DIZHEN

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human earth elemental wizard 8/monk 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 142)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 15, flat-footed 23 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 monk, +1 Wis, +2 natural, +4 shield)

hp 101 (13 HD; 5d8+8d6+47)

Fort +13, **Ref** +13, **Will** +14; +2 vs. enchantment

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** disease

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +13/+8 (1d8+5) or flurry of blows +13/+13/+8 (1d8+5)

Special Attacks acid cloud (1d6+4 acid plus sickened, DC 16 Fort save for half, 5/day), flurry of blows, stunning fist (7/day, DC 17)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +10)

4th—*crushing despair* (DC 16), *detonate** (DC 16), *stone shape*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 15), *greater magic weapon*, *stinking cloud* (DC 15)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *blur*, *bull's strength*, *false life*, *resist energy*

1st—*burning hands* (DC 13), *enlarge person*, *grease*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

o (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*, *resistance*

Opposition School Air

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

TACTICS

Before Combat Wu Dizhen casts *mage armor* at the start of each day. During the PCs' match against Gomwai, she casts *shield* and *greater magic weapon* (both included in her stats), and *false life*, *bull's strength*, and *enlarge person* as time permits.

During Combat Wu Dizhen works with her sister to isolate PCs and debilitate them with magic. Unlike Jufeng, however, Dizhen is unafraid of melee.

Morale Dizhen fights to the death to ensure the new champions of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament are destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12 (+14 bull rush or grapple); **CMD** 25 (27 vs. bull rush or grapple)

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Empower Spell, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Acrobatics +15 (+24 when jumping), Climb +11, Escape Artist +18, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (nature) +18, Linguistics +8, Spellcraft +18, Swim +11

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Terran, Tien
SQ arcane bond (amulet), earth glide (8 rounds), earth supremacy, fast movement, high jump, *ki* pool (3 points, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, slow fall 20 ft., still mind

Combat Gear *potions of cure serious wounds* (2), *scroll of obscuring mist*, *scroll of stonewood*, *scroll of wall of stone*;

Other Gear *amulet of natural armor* +2, *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, *cloak of resistance* +3, *ring of protection* +1, spell component pouch, spellbook, 400 gp

WU JUFENG

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female human air elemental wizard 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 142)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 shield)

hp 87 (13d6+39)

Fort +9, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *adamantine spell storing quarterstaff* +10/+5 (1d6+4)

Special Attacks cyclone (13 rounds), lightning flash (1d6+6 electricity damage plus dazzled, DC 20 Reflex save half, 7/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +17)

At will—*feather fall* (self only), *fly* (self only), *levitate* (self only)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 13th; concentration +17)

7th—*control weather*, *forcecage* (DC 22)

6th—*chain lightning* (DC 21), *greater heroism*, *sirocco** (DC 21)

5th—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *mage's private sanctum*, *suffocation** (DC 19), *teleport*

4th—*ball lightning** (DC 19), *bestow curse* (DC 18),

*detonate** (DC 19), *dragon's breath** (DC 19), *greater invisibility*, *shout* (DC 19)

3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *lightning bolt* (DC 18), *protection from energy*, *slow* (DC 17)

2nd—*fox's cunning*, *gust of wind* (DC 17), *protection from arrows*, *scorching ray*, *see invisibility*, *summon swarm*

1st—*disguise self*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *true strike*

o (at will)—*detect magic*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *resistance*

Opposition School Earth

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

TACTICS

Before Combat Wu Jufeng casts *mage armor* at the start of each day. During the PCs' battle with Gomwai, she casts *protection from energy*, *protection from arrows*, *displacement*, *shield*, and *haste* as time permits, before confronting the PCs and the Emissary.

During Combat Wu Jufeng initiates combat by casting *forcecage* to catch as many PCs as possible in a barred cage. She then targets the trapped enemies with elemental attacks until they free themselves. If threatened by physical attacks, she uses her cyclone elemental school power to drive away attackers.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 19, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (evocation), Toughness, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)

Skills Appraise +13, Craft (alchemy) +15, Disguise +10, Fly +22,

Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (local) +20, Knowledge (planes) +20, Linguistics +9, Spellcraft +20

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Goblinoid, Infernal, Terran, Tien

SQ air supremacy, arcane bond (quarterstaff)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of bear's endurance*, *scroll of gaseous form*, *wand of lightning bolt* (12 charges); **Other Gear** +1 *adamantine spell storing quarterstaff* (contains *shocking grasp*), *ring of protection* +2, *cloak of resistance* +2, 500 gp worth of ruby dust, spell component pouch, spellbook (contains all prepared spells plus additional spells of your choice), 225 gp

CONCLUSION

Upon the defeat of the Sisters Wu, the Emissary formally declares the PCs the champions of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament, and Marthysan ceremoniously passes the title to them by awarding each of them a single phoenix tail feather. In addition to their winnings from past rounds and access to Hao Jin's legendary collection of wonders, the PCs are also invited back to the 30-second Ruby Phoenix Tournament, to be held in 10 years' time on Xielan Island, as it has been for over 300 years.

After a night of celebration, the Emissary and the archbanker of the Grand Bank of Abadar approach the PCs to escort them to Hao Jin's fabled collection. Located in a massive underground vault beneath the Abadaran bank, the legendary collection contains wonders beyond the ability to be catalogued. The PCs are collectively

permitted a single item from the collection, which includes countless artifacts both minor and major, and nonmagical items of incredible beauty and value from throughout history. For the most part, anything the PCs want can be found here, except wholly unique items known to exist elsewhere than in this collection. Feel free to introduce specific relics you feel will inspire your players and propel the campaign forward.

When the excitement of the tournament has run its course, the PCs likely find themselves celebrities in Goka, and even in other major Tian cities. But with fame comes enemies, and the PCs are sure to have made a few in winning the tournament and foiling the plans of the Sisters Wu, the Golden League, and the Aspis Consortium.

Whatever adventures lie in the PCs' future, in 10 years they will have the chance to participate in another Ruby Phoenix Tournament—as judges.



THE SISTERS WU

APPENDIX 1: SHENZUZHO

This hulking headless corpse clutches a massive axe in each fist. A grotesquely skinned face stretches across the creature's chest.

SHENZUZHO

CR 12

XP 19,200

NE Large undead

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifestense; Perception +13

Aura fear (30-ft. radius, DC 22)

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+3 Dex, +15 natural, -1 size)

hp 127 (17d8+51)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, **DR** 5/magic;

Immune undead traits; **SR** 23

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 battleaxe +18/+13/+8 (2d6+10/x3), +1 battleaxe +18/+13 (2d6+10/x3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks festering heads

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11)

At will—*darkness*

1/day—*cloudkill* (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 35

Feats Cleave, Double Slice, Great Cleave, Improved Two-Weapon

Fighting, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Two-Weapon

Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Focus (battleaxe)

Skills Climb +20, Intimidate +18, Perception +13, Stealth +8

Languages Giant (can't speak)

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary

Treasure standard (2 Large +1 battleaxes)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Festering Heads (Su) Once the heads in a shenzuzhou's collection rot out naturally, it can hurl them as a thrown splash weapon (range increment 30 ft.) as a standard action. A thrown head ruptures on impact, releasing noxious gas that produces an effect identical to a *stinking cloud* spell (DC 22). The save is Charisma-based. A typical shenzuzhou carries 1d4 festering heads. The heads do not rupture if thrown by another creature.

Malevolent spirits looking to bolster their armies often look no farther than the burial grounds of giant tribes, where hardy corpses are typically left unguarded and forgotten. After a giant is animated, it is beheaded in a gruesome ritual, the stump of its neck

is cauterized into a blackened lump of scar tissue, and a twisted face manifests across its torso. What was once a fearsome giant is now a shenzushou. It loses the ability to speak and eat and can do nothing but obey the commands of whoever possesses its head—often the necromancer or oni that created it.

Thrall shenzushous are nowhere near as terrible as those shenzushous whose heads have been destroyed or transported to another plane. These latter creatures run aimlessly through the land, ever searching for new heads and the control they believe attaining them will bring over the monsters' damned existences. Seeking to steal their victims' heads for themselves, shenzushous decapitate their kills, keeping grisly collections of heads from the victims they have slain.

Even without their heads, shenzuzhous stand over 8 feet tall. Cords of thick muscle twist beneath the creatures' hairless gray corpse-flesh. Their skin is cold to the touch and their wounds do not bleed. A shenzuzhou carries little else except for its weapons and the heads of its victims, strung together by their hair and hung from its belt.





APPENDIX 2: XIELAN ISLAND

Goka's sizable Xu Hong Bay boasts several islands of varying size and purpose, home to the simple and hardworking fisherfolk who have farmed the harbor's waters for generations, as well as military and monastic outposts, and even a now-abandoned prison. Of all these islands, the one known as Xielan is most recognizable to the outside world.

In ancient times, residents of Goka shunned the isle for a variety of reasons, ranging from stories of strange beasts and malevolent ghosts to those eccentric mystics who claimed that the island's shape was unnatural, or that it disrupted the flow of *ki* in the bay. Nevertheless, its broad shoals and natural inlets boasted some of the finest fisheries along the coast, attracting flocks of fishermen to its bays despite the superstitions of the time. Fearing the warnings of the mystics, these fisherfolk initially never went ashore, but lived on their junks, creating the floating shantytowns for which the isle has since become famous. Still, in the last few centuries the number of people settling ashore has increased, in no small part thanks to the reputation of the Ruby Phoenix Tournament and the adventurers who come and clear the island of dangers every 10 years.

Xielan's economy is based primarily in the small village of New Harbor. Principally a fishing community, New Harbor exports the majority of its catches, and is a major supplier of seafood to the markets of Goka and outlying areas. The predominant methods of fishing consist of using trained cormorants along the shores, ocean trawling from massive fishing barges, and using baited traps to catch eels, squid, lobsters, and octopuses within the cove. Massive junk barges serve as floating fish markets, making it easy for merchant ships to tie onto the flotilla to conduct trades. When the local pinkfish run in the summer, migrating through the bay, the floating markets become so swollen with vessels that some claim to be able to walk across the bays on their decks.

While some farming exists, it is chiefly for subsistence, consisting almost entirely of root plants or sprouts grown in the small kitchen gardens of New Harbor or on floating compost troughs in the seaborne shantytowns. Grain is imported from the mainland, while islanders barter among themselves for tea and dairy products. Fresh water is also somewhat scarce, and villagers make a habit of keeping rain barrels and artistically rigged tarps in every spare bit of space in order to help collect the rain and take advantage of passing downpours.

A. New Harbor

The only current settlement on Xielan Island, New Harbor is inhabited almost exclusively by hardworking fisherfolk and their families. A council of five elders governs the village, but in day-to-day affairs, residents follow the will of the loose union of those who work the sea to protect the town's interests. Businesses are scarce here, as in general the residents find it easier to take the hour-long boat ride to mainland Goka for most of their commercial needs. Yon Loi's noodle shop serves as a much frequented restaurant and general gathering place, though residents often set up makeshift inns, taverns, and shops in their homes or on their boats every 10 years to serve the crowds attracted by the Ruby Phoenix Tournament.

NEW HARBOR

NG village

Corruption -1; **Crime** -1; **Economy** +1; **Law** -3; **Lore** -2;
Society +4

Qualities prosperous, tourist attraction

Danger +0

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 76 (71 humans, 2 half-elves, 1 elf, 1 halfling, 1 tengu)

Notable NPCs

Yon Loi (N male human expert 3)

Headfisher Mak Sheung (LN female human ranger 4)

Elder Han (NG male human cleric of Kofusachi 3)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 780 gp; **Purchase Limit** 3,750 gp; **Spellcasting** 3rd

Minor Items 2d4; **Medium Items** 1d4; **Major Items** —

B. The Grand Pavilion

Constructed and maintained by an army of Abadaran clerics, wizards, and monks, the Grand Pavilion is the largest and grandest structure on Xielan Island. Local legend holds that anyone who enters the arena when the Ruby Phoenix Tournament is not in session falls victim to a terrible curse, and the residents of the island are generally frightened enough by these rumors not to test their veracity.

C. Ridge of Graves

This narrow isthmus stands high above Xielan Bay and Xu Hong Bay, and gains its name not from actual graves but from the number of deaths caused by the ridge's primary inhabitant, the brine dragon Huyanwo (see pages 18–19 for more information).

D. Old Harbor

Once called simply Xielan, this now-abandoned town fell victim to Huyanwo's wrath after the inhabitants

refused to pay tribute to their draconic neighbor. Today little remains but the husks of destroyed wooden huts and sporadic pylons and collapsed piers. The people of New Harbor know the fishing off Old Harbor is far more bountiful than it is elsewhere around the island, but have yet to deal with the dragon for fear of ending up like Old Harbor. Rumors of sahuagin now inhabiting the ruins, as well as droves of waterlogged undead that roam the piers at night, do their own part to encourage people to keep away.

E. Temple of the Rose Shell

The walls of this ancient temple dedicated to Shelyn resemble the spines of a colorful conch shell. Considered a sacred site by even followers of other deities, the temple is protected by a small order of ascetic clerics who live in the surrounding caves. The sacred temple is a neutral zone in which the spilling of blood is forbidden. Entering the Temple of the Rose Shell is strictly prohibited unless one is escorted by a cleric, which they only permit if convinced of the visitor's pure intentions. Anyone who meditates there for 4 hours gains the benefits of the *heroes' feast* spell (caster level 12th). If the meditation is interrupted in any way, the supplicant must start the entire process again before gaining any of the temple's benefits.

F. Shadewood

The dense evergreen forest known as Shadewood gains its name from the lurking shadows—said to be the spirits of ancient criminals brought to the island to be tortured and executed—that terrorize the darkest groves within. In the forest's center lies an abandoned pagoda said to be home to a benevolent kami that has somehow made peace with the malicious undead spirits that surround its home.

G. The Angel's Caldera

Legend speaks of the origin of Yun Chumo—the lone mountain in the center of Xielan Island—as a violent volcano that was tamed by angels to make Goka's harbor safe from spewing ash and lava. In truth, the rock formation contains little to no igneous rock and lacks the caldera of a true volcano, but at the mountain's apex is a small shrine that gives some credence to the old tales. In the stone structure rests a large fountain from which flows a seemingly endless supply of holy water. The source of the sacred spring has long eluded scholars and clerics, but few can deny that it is among the holiest locations on Xielan Island, and pilgrims often venture up Yun Chumo to drink from its blessed waters. This pilgrimage is not without danger, however, as some who venture up the mountain never return.

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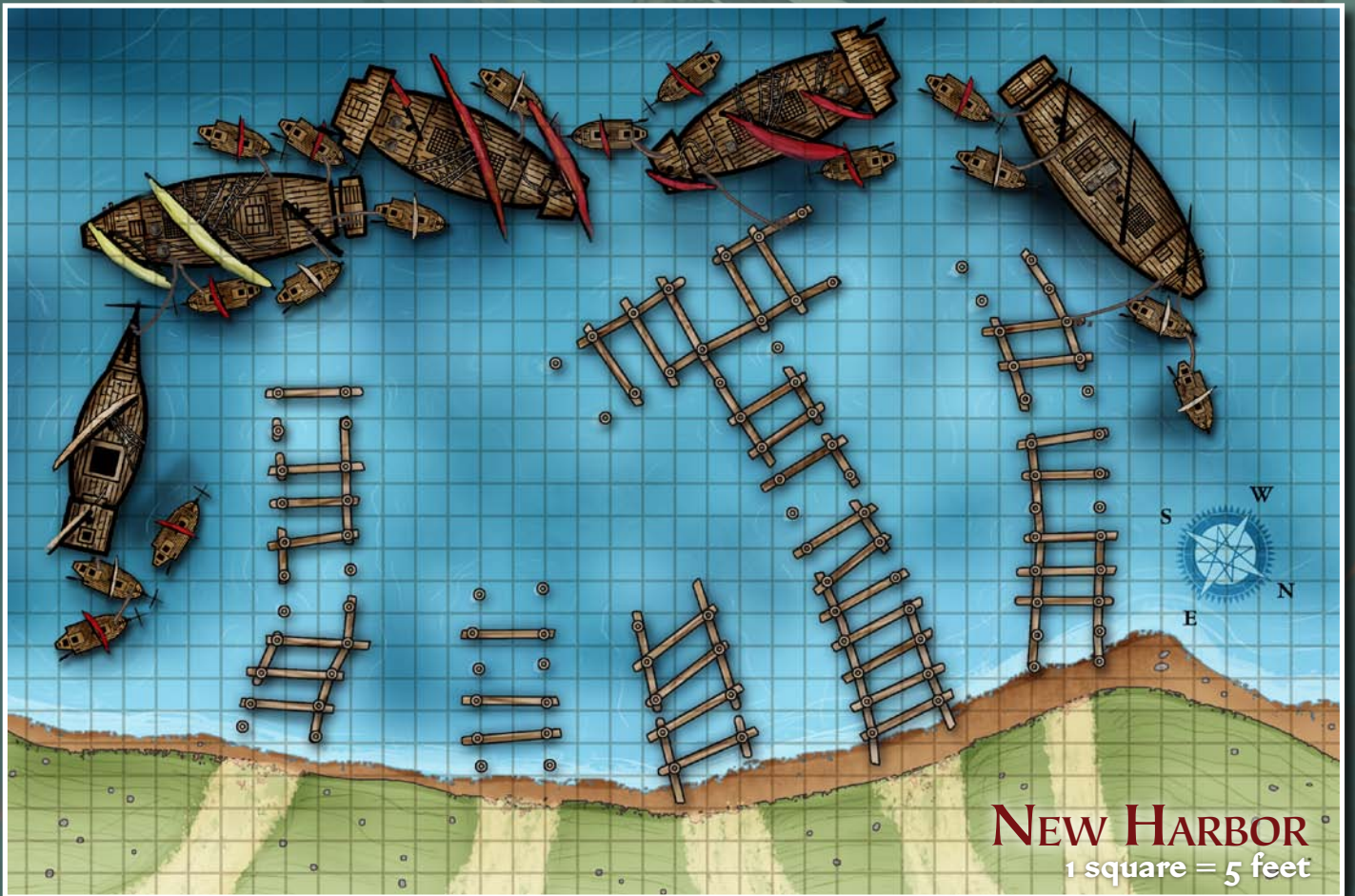
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