

Orcs!

An adventure to follow *The Red Swamp*

There is nothing too horribly challenging in terms of roleplaying or problem solving here, but the challenge militarily speaking could be quite large. Intelligence will be called for on the part of the PC's, or they'll get mowed down by a large body of orcs.

These are just notes from which I will play the session. I'm not sure this particular adventure is worthy of a full write-up, but I may get around to that someday. Until then, this sketch will have to suffice.

The Story

An orc Wild Card has begun to unite a couple of the mountain tribes. Key to his ability to bring them together was his discovery -- in an old cave in which he was hiding from a rival tribe's war party -- of a dwarven magical shield. The shield has been enough to allow him to rise to greatness among the orcs.



Grabroot Jawcrunch

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 11, **Toughness:** 8

Gear: Leather Armor (+1), Short Sword (Str+2), The Shield of Sagrul Barak (see below)

Special Abilities:

- **Frenzy:** Jawcrunch can make an extra attack at -2
- **Nerves of Steel:** Jawcrunch can ignore 1 level of Wound penalties
- **Yellow:** -2 to Guts checks
- **Size:** +1

The Shield of Sagrul Barak

Description: The Shield of Sagrul Barak is a magic shield crafted nearly a century ago. It is unmarked, in spite of its age. It has runic figures inscribed around the edge. The Shield will aid any who wield it, though it would prefer those of a noble spirit.

Abilities:

- **Protection:** +4 Parry
- **Aura of Fortitude:** grants Hold the Line favor (+1 Toughness to followers w/in 8")
- **Courage:** negates his Yellow hindrance

Grabroot is faced by challenges internally. Initially, these were from orcs who wanted to wrest control by engaging him in combat and killing him. Now, since those orcs are all dead, the challenges are coming from orcs who want to force him into demonstrating his leadership by ever more reckless acts which will eventually bring him to the attention of any local heroes, who will subsequently kill him and rid them of the problem. They will then break back up into their component tribes begin scheming against whomever happens to avail themselves.

The first act that really gets any attention at all is an attack against a farm community high in a mountain

meadow. This community was not large, and was sorely outnumbered by the dozens of attacking orcs. Not all residents were killed, as some escaped into the woods while others hid in their homes, but the devastation was severe. The orcs drove the farmers' herds of cattle and sheep with them into the mountains, providing an easy trail to follow for at least a week.

The Players' Role

Lord Gerald Redspar will call the players to him and send them into the mountains at the head of an armed body of soldiers to deal with the orcs. He heard about the attack from a messenger sent by the survivors. He knows only that there are orcs causing trouble where they have normally been fighting among themselves. He suggests that the PC's first talk to the farmers who remain, as they may have some clue as to the reasons for the attack. The PC's should be given 22 foot soldiers, -2 for each PC. (For example, 4 PC's would be given 14 soldiers.) None of the soldiers are Wild Cards. The PC's may choose to take melee troops (long sword and shield) or archers (short bow and short sword) in any combination. One scout may be taken as a replacement for another soldier.

These troops are good, loyal troops of Redspar's holdings. They are well trained and well disciplined. They will obey the PC's as long as the PC's aren't too foolish in their decisions.

The farmers do, of course, have information. First, there is the path to the orc camp which can be easily followed. Second, there is a harmless, old, orc hermit living in the woods above the farms that might know something about this, as he is, after all, an orc. Talking to him is nearly impossible, but if they can achieve it, the PC's will know the basics of Jawcrush's story (not that the shield is the key to his success, though, only that he has a shiny, new shield), including the speculation that he is being driven to the actions by internal, orcish politics. At the very least, he'll tell them Jawcrush is a formidable warrior. Have him also make some cryptic comment about being protected by a dwarf.

The orcs are planning an attack against a larger village on another nearby mountain, at the urging of Jawcrush's enemies. The PC's can discover this if they observe the orc encampment from hiding, or maybe by implication after talking with the hermit. Your call, GM. The orcish camp includes a large number of non-combatants, about 60 in all.

The PC's should encounter an orc patrol at some point. This patrol should be 10 strong, and include archers. At a later time, once the orcs have an idea the human force is there, there should be an ambush by 12 archers. Each group will escape after 25% casualties. Any who are killed will decrease the numbers to be defeated later. There are a total of 50 fighting orcs, 20 non-coms that will fight if attacked, and 40 orcs that cannot fight at all due to age or feebleness.

Options for saving the village:

- Attack the orcs in their camp; fight and defeat 50 orc warriors and the 20 non-coms that take part (reduce orc stats by 1 level for these, except Vigor).
- Fight them at the village; defeat 40 orcs with aid of 10 allied village militia (no fortifications).
- Ambush them along the way; defeat 40 orcs in the forest somewhere.
- Allow some to escape the initial encounters, and draw the orcs into an attack at a location of the PC's choosing. Pick the number, but Jawcrush will always leave at least 10 warriors in camp.
- Enter the camp and defeat Jawcrush in single combat. Many of the rival orcs will make this possible with their derision of Jawcrush and desire to see him defeated.

Other solutions may suggest themselves. Again, all of this is up to you, the GM. I'm currently

envisioning this as a race-to-save-the-village, but that may not be the way I end up playing it. Be sure that you include the casualties from the first two fights in anything that follows. The players will be outnumbered badly enough as it is!

Allies

Militia

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Spear (Str+2, Parry+1, Reach 1), Leather (+1)

Foot Soldier

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Shooting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (major: service to Redspar)

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 7, **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Longsword (Str+3), Small Shield (Parry+1), Leather (+1)

Archer

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (major: service to Redspar)

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Short Sword (Str+2), Bow (12/24/48, 2d6), 24 arrows, Leather (+1)

Scout

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Tracking d4

Edges: Alertness

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (major: service to Redspar)

Pace: 6, **Parry:** 5, **Toughness:** 6

Gear: Short Sword (Str+2), Bow (12/24/48, 2d6), 24 arrows, Leather (+1)

Conclusion

Saving the village grants even more regard from Redspar, but the shield must be taken to a dwarven settlement in other, nearby mountains. Watch this space for the sequel to Orcs!: *The Darkness Under Karak Kadûl!*

Savage Worlds and The Red Swamp Copyright © 2002-2003 Pinnacle Entertainment Group, Inc.
All Rights Reserved

Original Material Copyright © 2002-2003 Jason D. Young
All rights reserved