



FULL METAL FRIDAYS

We at Privateer Press are very excited that Iron Kingdoms Full Metal Fantasy Roleplaying Game: Kings, Nations, and Gods releases later this year. To celebrate, we're counting down to launch day with free new RPG content every Friday! From now until launch, you'll be able to download new careers, equipment, monsters, and more on Full Metal Fridays. Each month will showcase a different theme and will culminate in an event Game Masters can drop right into games. This month, Full Metal Fridays will examine the role of dueling in the Iron Kingdoms.

Check back every Friday for new Iron Kingdoms RPG content!

INSTALLMENT 5, WEEK 1: HISTORY OF DUELING AND COMMON EQUIPMENT

BY WILLIAM "OZ" SCHOONOVER

Dueling plays different roles in the varied cultures of Immoren and is a prominent part of some societies. In this first week of our look at dueling we'll discuss the history of duels as well as the weapons commonly used by duelists in the human kingdoms of modern western Immoren.

HISTORY OF DUELING

Dueling traditions in the Iron Kingdoms have roots running deep into the region's long history. Early tribal duels to determine primacy of status eventually became a means to address a wide range of disputes. Use of dueling expanded over time to cover issues of law and honor. In the modern era few legal disputes are resolved by dueling, but crossed

blades or drawn pistols are still used to resolve many issues of honor and ego.

During the Warlord Era many conflicts were settled with violence, and the only thing that set duels apart from other skirmishes was the number of participants. The Molgur in particular came to settle many disputes of leadership, property, succession, and hunting rights with singular combat. While most conflicts were resolved as quickly as they arose, duels to settle matters of great importance took place before the whole tribe. A special area was often set aside in the center of each community. This is the origin of the *kuor* dueling platform found in the center of most trollkin villages.

With the rise of civilization, dueling became more structured. During the Thousand Cities Era the people of

the ancient kingdom of Rynyr developed stringent rules for dueling. The Orgoth did little to stamp out the practice of dueling specifically, but any activity that had the potential to threaten the stability of the populace was quickly punished.

Dueling, like many other things in western Immoren, flourished after the Corvis Treaties. The Rynnish traditions in the nation of Llael led to an even more established structure for dueling that was eventually recorded into a set of rules called The Duello. This Llaelese dueling code established rules for many aspects of arranging the duel and the satisfaction of honor, and it became more common for duelists to offer their services for hire, whether temporarily or as a member of a noble's staff. Llael is also home to many prestigious dueling schools and has significantly influenced the dueling cultures of its neighboring nations.

NEW EQUIPMENT

The weapons and equipment associated with dueling have developed over the centuries. When men first began dueling any weapon would do, but in the modern era the rapier has become the favored weapon of many duelists. The items here represent the current state of dueling equipment.

MILITARY DUELS

In addition to the more codified system of civilian dueling, there have been many instances of single combat between two rival leaders deciding the outcome of a battle. While this type of personal combat lacks most of the rules associated with formal dueling, it is commonly allowed to take place without interference from warriors of either side. One of the earliest examples of this is the confrontation between Horfar Grimm and Priest-King Golivant. Twice during their fateful battle beneath the Shield of Thrace they clashed. The tide of battle separated them for a time, but as the Molgur forces began to lose, Grimm sought to end the battle by killing Golivant. More recently, the most significant combat of this nature, between Lord Commander Stryker and Hierarch Voyle, resulted in the cessation of major hostilities between Cygnar and the Protectorate and a change in the leadership of a nation.

Ancient dueling traditions still persist among the wild peoples of Immoren, such as the Tharn. One of the most notable formal duels in all of recorded history saw a confrontation between the traditions of tribal society and a more modern duelist. At the end of the Siege of Midfast, Markus Graza used his knowledge of tribal custom to challenge the fourteen chiefs of the barbarian tribes assailing the city and delay the full brunt of their forces upon the people there. Over the course of seven days he successively defeated each chief in single combat, only succumbing to his wounds after finishing the final duel. With his death he became an ascendant of Morrow, bringing brought an end to the siege.

MELEE WEAPONS

CLOAK, WEIGHTED

Cost: 10 gc

Description: A traditional tool of defense developed in the dueling schools of Llael, the weighted cloak is used by combatants across the Iron Kingdoms. It resembles a common cloak, but a series of weights have been sewn into the bottom hem. A skilled duelist can use the cloak to tangle an enemy's weapon, making it harder for an opponent to strike him.

To use a weighted cloak, a character must spend a quick action to take it up and wrap it around his off hand. A character cannot make attacks with that hand while using the cloak. Anyone in the front arc of a character using a weighted cloak suffers -1 on melee attack rolls targeting that character.

DUELING BUCKLER

Cost: 10 gc

Skill: Hand Weapon

Attack Modifier: -1

POW: 0

Description: The dueling buckler is a small shield gripped in the off hand. Useful in deflecting strikes in a melee, the dueling buckler can also be used as a weapon to deliver jabbing blows with its flat face or rim.

Special Rules: A character armed with a dueling buckler who does not attack with it during his turn can use a quick action to gain +1 ARM against melee attacks originating in his front arc for one round. The dueling buckler cannot be used while also carrying a shield.

DUELING PISTOLS

Cost: 100+ gc per pair

Effective Range: 60 feet (10")

Extreme Range: 300 feet

Ammo: 1 (light round)

Skill: Pistol

Attack Modifier: +1 (firing a custom bullet), 0 (firing a standard light round)

POW: 10

Description: These typically exquisite firearms are sold as a pair in an ornate box along with fine powder horns and a custom gunsmith's kit for casting bullets for the pistols. The design of these weapons has changed little for hundreds of years, as they are intended as instruments for highly ritualized aristocratic duels rather than as weapons of war.

Special Rules: Antiquated as they are, dueling pistols are very difficult to load, taking a full action rather than a standard quick action.

A dueling pistol firing a bullet manufactured with the casting kit that comes with the weapon gains +1 to its attack roll. A dueling pistol firing any other round does not gain this bonus.

TOURNAMENT FOIL

Cost: 10 gc

Skill: Hand Weapon

Attack Modifier: 0

POW: 0

Description: The tournament foil is specifically designed to facilitate sporting duels without risk of major injury. It is capable of causing pain and bruising but cannot cause mortal injury. It is long and slender with unsharpened edges. At the tip of the blade is a three-pronged point designed to catch on an opponent's clothing so touches can easily be seen by a judge.

Special Rules: This weapon cannot reduce any aspect of a character's life spiral to less than 1 vitality.

When using the tournament foil in a non-lethal duel a successful attack roll against an opponent counts as a touch.

PRACTICE EQUIPMENT

The tournament foil and the plastron are recent inventions that owe their existence to a recent growth in organized exhibitions of dueling skill.

Many dueling schools still teach with swords with blunted blades, but some have adopted the tournament foil as a standard weapon.

Professional duelists find it hard to take a fight seriously when these items are employed. Many exiled Llaelese nobles sponsor sporting tournaments specifically for dueling that offer large enough prize purses to make even the proudest duelist lower himself to using non-lethal equipment.

ARMOR**PLASTRON**

Cost: 20 gc

SPD Modifier: 0

DEF Modifier: 0

ARM Modifier: +2

Description: This is a light quilted-leather vest worn by duelists while practicing and during sporting competitions. While it does offer some protection against practice weapons, it does little to protect its wearer in true combat.

Special Rules: None.