

Putting the Con in Contest

©2023 BrazenWolfe Tabletop, All Rights Reserved, Permission Granted to copy for personal use.



Introduction

A TTRPG adventure compatible with Dungeons and Dragons 5e adventure for a party of level 7 characters.

The games available at the Finchford Festival were varied and all were done in a spectacular way. A test for athletics and acrobatics in which local thieves guild members paid close attention to potential future members. An archery contest for those swift with a bow or crossbow. A jousting and horsemanship competition for those trained with beast and weapon and several others.

However everyone knew that the real draw card was the Contest of Martial Champions. One where the prize was double of the others combined with the potential for long lasting contracts with mercenary guilds or even personal bodyguard positions being offered to participants who can demonstrate their skill.

Surveying the Festival

Setting up the Festival



After the business at Thrall keep had died down, festival fever at Finchford was in full swing. Merchants were sporting new wares both exotic and local craftsmanship. The city was the busiest it had been in years and everyone was going to make the most of it. For adventurers such as the party there were tests of skill, power, strength, cunning

and dexterity a-plenty with hefty rewards and prizes for those who rose above the rest.

It was a time of relaxation and celebration and for those who had uncovered the secrets of Thrall's keep it was a time of expectation of their abilities. In fact, they had set the benchmark high, people and other adventurers looked at them like either worthy opponents or threats to their claim of the prize. Maybe it wouldn't be a relaxing week after all.

NPC's:

- Marie Turnburke

Encounter: N/A

Creature: Social encounter with merchants, festival goers. Random encounter with Pickpockets and thieves.

Map - N/A

Notes on combat. Creature tactics etc.

Guards Warning

As the party moved near the guards post they overheard hushed, yet frustrated chatter from a few guards around a tip off they had received.

With all these people around it was easy to move around unhindered. The joyous shouts of victory, the laughter, the sadness of a crowd favourite falling at the last hurdle. All of it was covered for the biggest score of their life. However despite the ease of how it was going this was not the first time that they had worked together. In fact working together brought the most out of them and they each knew how to play the game.

Keep one hand open for the players to see, a few cards for your allies to see but keep just as many cards hidden from all. That's the way to win the game and they both knew this. The Wolf and the Doe – an effective team of thieves, con artists and if the job called for it they could handle even dirtier work. But today, this blessed week of games and merriment, there were competitions to rig, pockets to dip into and purses to steal.

This meant that the guards would have a very busy day ahead of them

NPC's:

- Contestants: Sue Shawkaft, Tyson Emergel, Randa; Rugfist, Dumbar Ironbrow, Felicia Strongarm
- Marie Turnburke, various merchants and Vendors

The Contest Something Afoot

<image>

The stands were as loud as thunder as they cheered for the combatants that entered the stage. The Contest of Martial Champions was by far the crowd favourite for all the events that they ran at the Finchford Fair and Festival. Each year different cities and towns would submit one warrior amongst their own to contend. In fact each warrior would have to undertake trials and prove their worth to participate. One by one these tried and tested warriors were called to the platform. Heralded by a crier who called out their achievements and praise to the adoration, and dislike, from those in the crowd. Caught up in the masses the party stood by and watched as the stage filled. Those who had not gone through the trials were never allowed to participate.

As the announcer continued on, a hush wafted over the crowd. "And this year we have a late contender. One that has been sponsored in full by a party that wishes to be unknown. This person has travelled many miles, slain countless foes to the good people of this land. In fact they even recently stopped an undead dragon in our very own Thrall Keep. Let's welcome the mighty..." and as the crowd erupted into cheers, heckling and a pang of confusion wafted across the voices one of the party was called to the stage.

Two figures from the crowd watched as the sudden adventurer was called. However they weren't cheering or booing this new contender. Instead they watched and smiled. As they watched the procession and the mixture of emotions spread across those gathered one of the existing participants glanced their way and nodded. The message was given and received in a single gesture that their plan was in action.

NPC's:

- Briefly spot Anton and Imran.

The Rigged Event

The party watched the duel occurring on the main field at the moment. Sue Shawkaft was currently fighting a hulking goliath known only as Butcher. of the white sands. The Goliath was strong but Sue was fast and managed to deflect the mighty blows at any moment. The result of this bout would determine who the member of the party would be against in the next round.

Being late to the arena they managed to get seats close to the gates to where the other entrants would wait and then be called forward to the field. It was at this moment that a familiar voice of Felicia Strongarm, the current crowd favourite to win, came through thick with anger.

"You tell those worms that Feli Strongarm has honour. Their offer to bow out of this tournament is a disgrace and dishonour to my name and to them. I can only hope that they placed their money on me and not Tyson to win this bout or they will be sorely disappointed." her voice ranges with anger and forceful direction. A few muffled words were had before a hasty retreat of feet could be heard in the opposite direction.

"These fools. Threatening me? I am the strongest competitor in this competition. Pah! Their attempt to rattle me has just hardened my resolve." A small pause. "Screw this waiting. I'll get an ale..." and a second set of footprints head off with the jangling of mail.

NPC's:

- Sue Shawkaft
- Marie Turnburke

Encounter: League Escalation

Creature: In order

1. Dumbar Ironbrow
2. Randal Rugfist
3. Sue Shawkaft

Map - [321ThFiAr](#)

The first round is against Dumber Ironbrow, this should be an easy win as Dumber is a pretty low level encounter. Randal is a bit the same but for a level 7 warrior-class then this should be an easy enough encounter.

The third will be harder. Marie is a difficult fighter to crack and will be comparable to the Player Character. But it should still be winnable with tactics.

This encounter writeup (above) takes place after Sue's encounter with the party - but it sets the scene for the next part.

Sue had landed a few solid hits during this discussion. The Butcher was reeling from the blows and despite the blessings that kept everyone alive it did nothing for their fatigue. As the blows came in hard and heavy, so did the strain on the goliath's muscles and stamina. Soon the announcer was calling an end to the bout with Sue being the winner.

Twenty minutes is how long it took to repair the arena, clean up some blood and prepare it for the next bout. Felicia and Tysons'. The air was thick with tension as money was exchanging hands, bets were being made and a clear divide in spectators was being made. Within a few minutes Tyson was striding onto the field, stretching and pacing like a wolf in a cage. "...Felicia Strongarm!!!" the announcer called as the crowd cheered, as they did for Tyson. But minutes passed by and the announcer called officials to go search for Felicia... A few minutes later they came back with no word, sightings or anything of the tournament favourite. The whole time Tyson stared at the party - his eyes spoke of malice and wanted bloodshed. "It's unfortunately my duty to announce that Felicia has by lack of presence forfeited her match. The winner by default is Tyson! Officials please get the next contestant ready."

The party watched as the officials walked directly towards them. "Are you ready to enter the ring?" he asked.

NPC's:

- Sue Shawkaft
- Tyson Emergel

Encounter: Tyson Emergel - Dishonourable warrior

Creature: 1 Tyson

Map - [321ThFiAr](#)

Tyson will wade onto the field towards the party member, but as he gets closer to the stage the judges call to halt the proceeding as the magic wards had been tampered with that prevent contestants from dying. An Observant (Passive Perception 14.. Or perception 14 check) party member notices Tyson looking backwards at two people in the stands who give a signal. But as they start to prep Tyson rushes at the PC and starts fighting. A few smaller fights break out around the arena as the discontent from the crowd builds (and paid trouble makers start fights).

The party then notices two semi-familiar people moving with haste towards the locked room, through the crowd. Standing out only with how remarkably they stand out from the crowd as no one wants to fight them. As Tyson ties up the party with fighting the two figures start fiddling with the locked door to where the prize is kept.

Outcome:

Tyson goes down easily with the party helping - otherwise by himself he is a brute and the exhausted party member may be too fatigued to fight alone.

If the party member can finish combat with Tyson and move through the crowd (150ft) to the locked room within 5 turns they can intercept the Doe and the Wolf - Otherwise they find the room ransacked with a large amount of the reward taken.

If they intercept they both surrender instantly without putting up a fight - they know they will escape custody and would prefer not to fight the party.

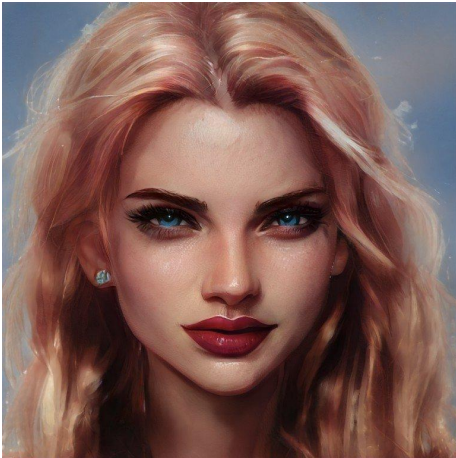
Lore & NPCs

Marie Turnburke



Marie has offered the party another week to stay at the Five Fat Ravens Tavern. After the business with the dragon she was more than accommodating to the heroes who saved not only her reputation but her life in dealing with the renegade lore seeker and mages.

Imran Colderbek

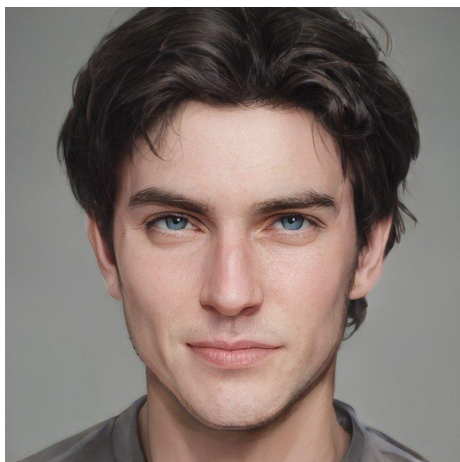


No stranger to people, Imran is about as calculating as they come. Despite getting by with her looks and appearance she houses an intelligence, an animalistic cunning that gives her the nickname "the Wolf". Despite being beautiful by

most races' standards, Imran is also a skilled combatant and has rarely, if ever, found herself an opponent that can measure up to her skill. When she isn't on a job and focusing on the next big win, a rare occurrence, she takes time away from it all. Prone to letting herself into abandoned manors, or using her charm and manipulative nature to make a manor abandoned she can make a home just about anywhere. As long as it's up to her high standards and has at least four bedrooms to choose from.

But her background is anything but the fabulous life she lives now. Born as the lovechild to a maid in a nobleman's household, she was kept a secret for many years. However due to a hereditary birthmark that was revealed when she was playing with her unknown sisters and brothers the infidelity was revealed. Instead of taking ownership of the situation the nobleman had her mother fired and murdered. Imran managed to escape through her grit and determination to survive but the invisible wounds of her fathers betrayal never left her. He was the first one she would target with her wrath. However it wasn't until she met Anton that she had a convincing way to pull off her plan. Together they managed to convince her father to entrust Anton with their fortune before disappearing with it. Imran watched with glee as her father had everything he prided himself on ripped away like he did to her. The loss of a mother was replaced with the loss of an empire.

Anton Purlsun



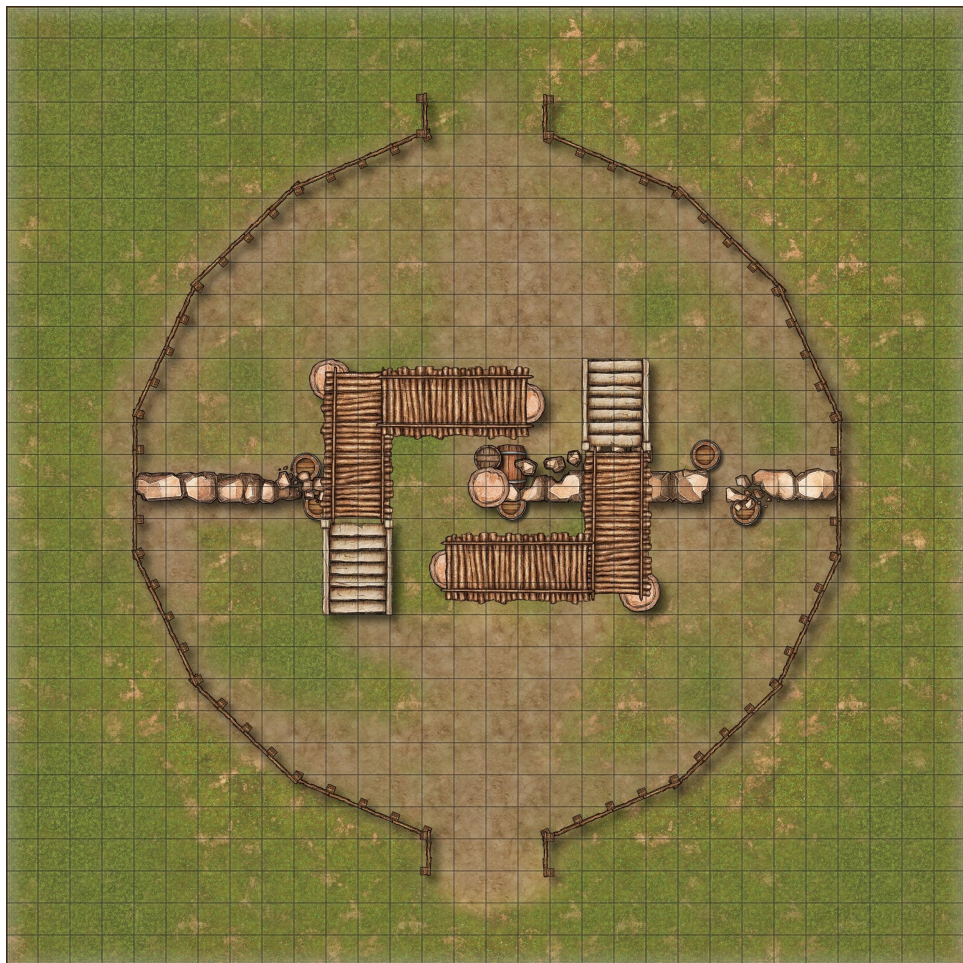
Now not to be confused with his business partner, The Wolf, Anton is the Doe to the deadly Duo. Soft spoken, eloquent and gentle to a fault he will talk his way out of any situation before resulting to violence. Fond of bribery, only to steal it back later, he has one of those faces, voices and personalities that can see him get just about anywhere, anytime and get away with whatever he wants.

His story is a cliché one. Grew up with a loving family in a manor as heir to a large fortune his life was perfect. Well almost perfect. In fact his inquisitive nature and ability to persuade people to trust and believe him led him to discover something. The discovery that his parents weren't his real parents. They were con-artists who were after his fortune and that he wasn't the real heir after all.

Now a teenager when he found out this he made the bold choice to follow on with the ruse, pretending he knew nothing. But slowly he drove his fake parents apart, got them doubting each other's intentions until the fateful day that they murdered each other. Now left an orphan, an incredibly rich orphan, he would inherit the wealth of his false heritage. Except the real heir showed up with undeniable proof that Anton was a fake. Now penniless and worth nothing he struck out by himself only to meet someone else scorned by the higher classes. A Wolf in a Doe's clothing.

Maps

321ThFiAr-Finchford Arena



Now there are steps going up to a raised platform, 20 feet above the arena floor. This gives a quick, nimble combatant an advantage if they can get the high ground early – or for those unaware of their opponents whereabouts a significant disadvantage. This map favours those who can keep track of their opponent as well as utilise the simple terrain.

Monsters

Adventure Encounters

Tyson Emergel

TYSON EMERCEL

Medium humanoid (Tyson Emergel (Tiefling)), lawful evil

Armor Class 18 (breastplate, shield)

Hit Points 102 (12d8 + 48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +5, Con +6

Skills Acrobatics +5, Athletics +5, Intimidation +4

Damage Resistances fire

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Infernal reactions. As a reaction Tyson instead of failing a Dexterity saving throw he can elect to pass.

Unnatural Strength. Tyson has advantage on Athletics checks when used for grappling. Furthermore Tyson can jump twice as far as he could normally (32' Long jump, 12' High jump being capable of reaching 21')

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Tyson makes three melee attacks: two with Chilled Caress and one with its Shield.

Chilled Caress. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage + 3 (1d6) Frost damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw against poison or lose their reaction until the end of their next turn.

Shield. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 + 3) bludgeoning damage.

Randal Rugfist

RANDAL RUGFIST

Medium humanoid (Human), any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 60 (8d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the Randal can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Dumbar IronBrow

DUMBAR IRONBROW

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

Armor Class 16 (scale mail, shield)

Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)

Speed 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Damage Resistances poison

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Dumbar's Resilience. Dumbar has advantage on saving throws against poison, spells, and illusions, as well as to resist being charmed or paralyzed.

ACTIONS

Enlarge (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, Dumbar magically increases in size, along with anything it is wearing or carrying. While enlarged, Dumbar is Large, doubles its damage dice on Strength-based weapon attacks (included in the attacks), and makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage. If Dumbar lacks the room to become Large, it attains the maximum size possible in the space available.

War Pick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, or 11 (2d8 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

Javelin. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, or 9 (2d6 + 2) piercing damage while enlarged.

Sue Shawkaft

SUE SHAWKAFT

Medium humanoid (Half Orc), Chaotic Good

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Orc

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Sue Shawkaft makes three melee attacks: two with her scimitar and one with her dagger. Or Sue makes two ranged attacks with her daggers.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. Sue Shawkaft adds 2 to her AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the Sue must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Random Encounters

For a bit of extra excitement..

PickPocket

PICK POCKET

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Sleight of Hand +3, Stealth +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

Club or knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning or piercing damage.

Street Thief (Bandit)

STREET BANDIT

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

Guard

GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack.