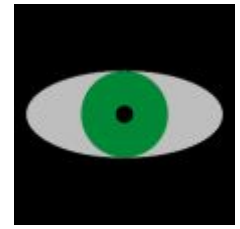


THE DEFENDERS: PATHFINDERS



To our newest Pathfinder,

Congratulations on passing out as a member of the Prince's Pathfinders. You join your colleagues in a deadly game with the enemy, matching your skill, speed and wit against those who seek not only to match similar skills with you, but also those who rely on brute force and ignorance to succeed. You will track them, trace them, find them, and then dance lethal rings around them. You are the intelligence. You are the trailblazer. You are the eyes and the ears. You are the one without whom your cohort stumble around in darkness. Do not let them down.

Oaths

As a Pathfinder, you form the light infantry of the Defenders of the Kingdom, and as such you swear to defend the lives of Kingdom citizens with your own, never to flee combat when it places a citizen in danger, not to burden yourselves with the weight of metal armour or large shields, and to follow the chain of command. If you cannot commit to these, do not sign up.

Skills

The Pathfinders provide advanced training in observational skills, allowing you to identify creatures and tracks with ease. You are also taught the intricacies of finding chinks in the armour with a weapon or a bow, increasing your effectiveness when striking from behind. As a dab hand with magic or divine power, you can also form a very effective secondary caster. A scout who can heal, or mend, or teleport, can (and regularly does) make a decisive difference in a skirmish. You can also focus your studies on a certain type of enemy, learning how they move, how they fight, and therefore how to negate their skills and be particularly effective against them.

A bestiary produced by the Pathfinders is available to new recruits. Reviewing it will provide an excellent grounding for the type of foes you are likely to encounter on patrols.

Organisation

The Pathfinders are a branch of the Defenders, and as such follow their command structure. A Pathfinder starts out as a Private (simply known as 'Pathfinder'), and rises through the ranks of Lance-Corporal, Corporal, Sergeant and upwards when appropriate. Pathfinders so inclined (and with sufficient experience) can also be considered for commission to a Lieutenancy, Captaincy and upwards, a position of authority over the regular soldiers.

See you on the trail, private,

Pathfinder Lieutenant Jusa Natayelle

OOC: Playing a Pathfinder

You can find out the details of being in The Pathfinders on the website:

Player Rules > The Kingdom > Guilds > Defenders > The Pathfinders

The Pathfinders are the light infantry of the Defenders, following the Defender command structure but focusing on scouting and skirmish fighting. Some types of scout are quite good in a fight, but in almost all cases, Pathfinders are most effective leaving the front line fighting to heavy warriors, and skirmishing around the edge of combat where their speed and pinpoint strikes have the most impact. They will also be the party's tracking and creature identification expert, keeping the patrol informed about what they are following, what they are facing, and what threat they are likely to pose. The Pathfinder must also keep their oaths in mind, protecting Kingdom citizens at up to and including the cost of their own life, following the orders of superior officers, and never fleeing combat if it puts Kingdom citizens in danger.

A scout can join the Pathfinders for many reasons, though probably more than any other legitimate guild, it does offer a tremendous breadth of potential characterisation, from the most upstanding to the downright dodgy. Pathfinders can be fine and honourable members of the community, dedicated to the Defenders; they can be outdoorsy types, more at home outdoors than in urban environments; they can be loners, used to self-reliance, who choose to sell their skills to the Kingdom; they could be convicted criminals given the opportunity to redeem themselves by using their cunning, and their daggers, for the 'right side'. As long as they can shoehorn themselves into the military structure, you can play them.

As a Pathfinder you get bonuses and training in light armour, access to the full set of 'telling what a thing is' skills and are the only player Guild with access to all of the nastier 'stabbing in the back' types of skills. This makes a Pathfinder an excellent forward scout and a decent skirmish fighter (especially from behind). Scouts in general also get relatively cheap magic or miracles (depending on race), so can pick up a few low-level surprises that can ably support the main casters.

Pathfinders are excellent jacks of all trades, having relatively cheap magic/miracles along with their knowledge skills. This means that as well as being forward scouts, they can be support casters and fighters, and a very versatile addition to any party, being able to fill in gaps. However, Willpower and Toughness are expensive, and physical durability is in short supply. If they are caught by themselves during a fight, they will be in serious trouble. Their versatility is also their limitation - they can do everything a bit, but they won't be the best at anything.

- The Pathfinders provide accommodation, food, training and kit, and you don't have to tithe them, so you keep all your danger pay.
- The Defenders consist of the Guards, Pathfinders, Wardens and Archers.
- The lowest rank soldiers are referred to simply by their branch (e.g. Warden Smith) or as Private (e.g. Private Smith) or both (e.g. Warden Private Smith).
- The Non-Commissioned Officer ranks are Lance-Corporal, Corporal, Sergeant, Lead Sergeant, and so on.
- Defenders can choose to earn or buy rank as a Commissioned Officer. Their ranks are Lieutenant, Captain, Overcaptain, etc.