

SAVAGE TALES



PLAYERS HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO ANCIENT EUROPIA

But be wary. Europia is a dangerous land, vast and full of corrupt civilizations and savage wilds...

It takes a strong arm and a quick mind to make your way through these lands. The world is a dark and uncaring place, a place of violence and treachery and dark sorceries...

Sounds like fun, don't it?

SAVAGE TALES is the realm of our SAVAGE WORLDS pick-up games. I hate running an established campaign narrative without all involved present, and the reality of reality is that that's not always possible. So I have said, "Let there be darkness," and there is darkness, and it is Good. Or bad. Well, probably mostly bad.

If everyone can't make it, we go to Europia. There, things are gonna be less epic saga, more survival skirmish. Conan could become a king in Europia, but Tolkien'd have his pipe crushed under some furred boot and be set to work the rest of his short life digging stones from cold earth.

There are no hobbit folk in Europia because they were eaten by snake-men aeons ago. The elves are mysterious and dark, and if you see one, it usually changes your life forever. The dwarves may exist or not, but grandpa says they eat human flesh. And the closest thing to an orc you've ever seen is that big ugly fucker down the bar you saw sodomizing an unconscious guardsman the other night.

Want a history for your character? Pick a part of historical Europe and beat it with a stick till it's only partially recognizable. That's where you're from. Europia is a world of narrative pragmatism, and there's lots of room to build, to create, to imagine.

Similarly, don't vex me with consistency issues. The world will always be whatever it needs to be for the story of the moment.

Play-style will be direct and elemental. The universe will be red in tooth and nail, and will not harbor the slow, the distracted, nor the stupid for long.

But remember: **SAVAGE TALES** will be a serious game, not a beer and pretzels joke-fest or gut-full of camp.

Now gird your loins and come on in. The water's fine...even if it does have some twisting, muscular shadowy thing moving under the surface...



CHARACTERS

SAVAGE TALES ain't D&D.

It's not that kind of Tolkien-pastiche. It's rooted in pulp fantasy, dark fantasy, true sword & sorcery.

Warriors and rogues of various sorts will serve best, with big splashes of anti-hero in the mix. Sir Galahad would scream till he dies of thirst at all the corruption around him in this world.

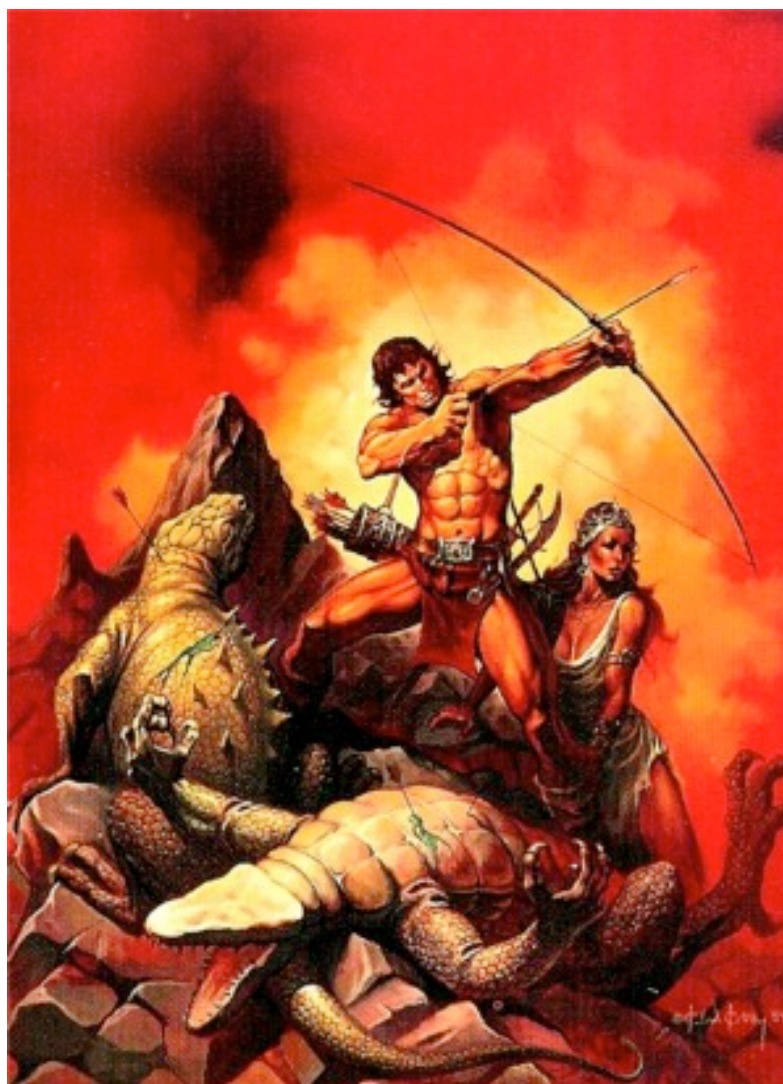
If you're not combat-able, you're not gonna be around long. If you can't use your animal cunning, ditto.



Want inspiration? Read some Robert E. Howard. Read Fritz Leiber's Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser. Read Karl Edward Wagner's Kane stories. At the very least, sacrifice a goat atop a pyre made of *Dragonlance* books.

I encourage you to play something at least somewhat different than your weekly hero. Now, here are the basic character creation rules for **SAVAGE TALES**:

- 1) **RACE:** You're human. You start with one free edge like a human.
- 2) **ATTRIBUTES:** As per usual, you start with d4 in each Attribute and have 5 points to divide up to raise 'em. Maximum of d12.



- 3) **SKILLS:** You have 15 points to spend on skills. Each die type costs 1 point as long as the skill is equal to or less than the linked Attribute. Exceed the Attribute, the cost becomes 2 points per die type. Maximum d12. Note that this will be a low magic game, so Healing skills and Edges will be terribly

important. These skills are *not* available in **SAVAGE TALES**: Driving, Piloting, Faith, Psionics, Weird Science. Spellcasting is a special case detailed in section 6.

- 4) **DERIVED STATS:** *Pace* is 6". *Parry* is $2 + 1/2$ your Fighting (2 if you don't have Fighting, but that'd be moot soon anyway, 'cause you'll be dead), plus bonuses for shields or weapons. *Charisma* is 0 unless modified by Edges or Hindrances. Toughness is $2 + 1/2$ your Vigor, plus Armor.

- 5) **EDGES & HINDRANCES:** You can take 1 Major Hindrance and 2 Minor Hindrances. Major Hindrances are worth 2 points, Minor are worth 1. **For 2 points you can:** Raise an attribute one die type (this can be done before purchasing skills), or choose an Edge. **For 1 point you can:** Gain another skill point, or gain an additional \$500 on your starting funds. The following Hindrances are *not* available: All Thumbs, Enemy, Pacifist, Poverty (all characters are treated as having Poverty except re: starting funds), or Wanted. The following Edges are *not* available: Noble, Rich, Rock & Roll, Rapid Recharge, Ace, Gadgeteer, Mentalist, Mr. Fix It, Wizard, Connections, Power Surge, Followers, Sidekick, or Young. **Special Rule:** To reflect the elemental savagery of this setting's characters, at character creation you may if you wish buy 1 Edge usually not available until you're Seasoned.

- 6) **SORCERY:** There is only one type of sorcery available to player characters: Rune Magic. To use it, you must buy *Arcane Background: Rune Magic* and *Arcane Skill: Rune Magic*. Your **Starting Power Points:** 10, your **Starting Powers:** 2. Rune Magic works exactly as Weird Science does. All items must have Runes carved into them in order to work.

Runic Items work as Gizmos. Rune Mages have access to the following powers: *Armor, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Fear, Light, Obscure, Quickness, Shape Change, Smite, Speed, and Stun*. Runic powers only function if runes are placed upon an object, whether it is a carving on a sword or paint on a warrior.

- 7) GEAR:** Starting funds are \$500 like usual. Use the equipment lists is the main rules, sticking to medieval items.

8) FINAL DETAILS:

History, a picture, your miniature, how your characters

relate as a group, whatever else you need to do to bring your scrapper to life. I'd like the group to be inherently nomadic so I can stick 'em any damn where I want, and it'd be great if they were solidly allied (if not always friendly), like a pledged mercenary band or a family or some such.

