

BLOOD AND FISTS

MODERN MARTIAL ARTS
TRUE 20 EDITION

REQUIRES
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INTRODUCTION

The men were laughing.

"Look, sweetness, you want no part of this. This isn't daddy's dojo in Fresno. Got it?"

Brianna brought her knees up to her chest one at a time, then, while each knee was still against her chest that leg went straight up into the air. Both feet on the ground, she doubled over backward, placing her hands flat on the ground. After holding this position for a few seconds, during which time her back popped—out of shape, too much time over a typewriter at the paper—she brought her legs up, held the handstand for a few seconds, then went over the rest of the way. She moved her head from side to side, momentarily resting an ear on each shoulder—and causing her neck to pop both times—then tied her long chestnut hair back into a ponytail and stepped out of her shoes.

The men were no longer laughing.

"Look, is this a date, or what? I made all the right 'contributions' to the old folks' home. I thought you boys liked to party."

The men formed a circle around her.

One stepped forward, his sadistic grin showing the teeth he had lost in previous streetfighting. "All right, Cutie. I promise to be gentle."

Brianna smiled. "That doesn't work for me, sugar."

The punk never saw the snap-kick—or the circle kick that robbed his smile of another tooth—but he managed to throw himself out of the way of the jump kick that would have snapped his head back into oblivion. The men surrounding them starting screaming as if on cue, with the men in the back—the hard-looking Japanese men with the bulges in their jackets, the men she was actually here to meet—taking bets.

"What the fuck was that?!?"

Brianna smiled again, her sweet southern drawl mocking the man on the ground. "That's Hapkido, darlin'. Did you miss the lecture on Korean history at the museum last week?" She moved in a slow

circle around him, keeping her eyes on the throng surrounding her to make sure no one wanted to join the "party."

The man sprang to his feet, spitting out a mouthful of blood, which caught one of the spectators right in the face. The man growled and surged forward, but a voice in the back hissed something, and he froze in his tracks.

Good. This might be the Hanmei after all.

Five hours later, back in her hotel room, Brianna slipped into a long-overdue hot bath, working out strain in muscles long left unused. Before surrendering altogether to the hot water, she picked up her cell phone and hit the speed dial. "Constitution. Do you know the extension of the party you're trying to reach?"

Brianna's mind was already fogging over, but she managed to mumble "868."

"Hello, this is Foreign Affairs Editor Jim Philby. I'm not at my desk right now, but leave me a message, and I'll return your call as soon as time permits."

"Jim. Bri. I'm in."

Hanging up the phone, Brianna sank down into the tub, letting the water cover her completely.

Welcome to the True20 edition of Blood and Fists. This is the third one of these introductions I've written for this book so I should be getting pretty good at it right? But enough about that, we're here to talk about martial arts.

Not the generic kind where you use "Hard Martial Arts" which is a feat that grants you a damage bonus and not much else. Nor the kind where you use "Kick Attack A" and hope your opponent doesn't counter with "Blocking Defense C" and you realize you've just turned your weekly RPG into a rock-paper-scissors tournament.

No, this book is about the legendary fists that have thrilled Hong Kong and American movie-goers in the 70's when some guys named Bruce and Chuck became legends. Of late, this same genre of movies have enjoyed a resurgence of popularity, this time

because of the flash and charisma of guys named Jackie and Jet. These movies were about more than kicking and punching. Not a lot more, granted, but they did introduce audiences to the styles, the histories and the philosophies of authentic martial arts.

This is the world Blood and Fists tries to bring into your weekly True20 game. Here, while attack and defense strategies are certainly a part of the game, a martial arts style becomes as much of a role-playing choice as anything else. Tae Kwon Do and Savate might be mechanically similar, but a character who spent years training to be a master of one will have a different mindset than a character who has become a master of the other.

But enough of my musings. Let's get started with the kicking shall we? Welcome to Blood and Fists, I hope you have an much fun playing with these rules as I did writing them.

- Chuck



CHAPTER 1: MARTIAL ARTS ARCHETYPES



CHAPTER 1: MARTIAL ARTS ARCHETYPES

This section presents the archetypes commonly found in martial arts fiction, including movies, comics and novels.

BRAWLER

Max watched the two fighting men, then turned away in disgust. As he walked over to his beat-up truck, he glanced at the little Japanese twerps that ran these “qualifiers.” He could feel their eyes on him as he reached in through the passenger window and pulled out a beer. Grinning at the closest one, Max stared right into his eyes as he opened the bottle with his teeth.

“Mr. Riggs, that might not be the best idea. You only get one attempt to qualify.”

Max spit out the cap and took a long swig of his beer. “What, you think I need to be sober to beat those guys?”

Suddenly the crowd split open, and one of the two men was on the ground. The other, the big bald asshole with the Nazi tattoos all over his chest, was glaring at Max. “Don’t ever talk about me, hick.”

Max growled, the veins of his thick neck bulging as he surged forward. The Japanese handlers were yelling. Max smashed the huge man right across the face with the bottle, ignoring the spray of beer and blood that showered him as he grabbed the biker’s crotch with one hand and his goatee with the other, upending him and pile-driving him right into the pavement.

As the toughs who enforced the rules tried to drag him away, Max kicked the downed biker with his steel toe. “You listening, you ignorant fuck?!? Good. Don’t ever call me a hick!”

Max spit on the man and walked back toward his truck. The head handler ran over. “No weapons! No Weapons! That one doesn’t count!”

Max laughed, then frowned, seeing that the biker had made him waste his last beer. Taking out his

pack of unfiltereds, he watched as the other toughs tried, without success, to get the biker to stand.

He was about to light a smoke, but he suddenly changed his mind. He tossed the cigarette pack into the truck and barreled towards the action again, grabbing two of the onlookers and smashing their heads together. “All right then, who else’s sorry ass do I have to kick? Huh?”

One of the spectators had gone down, and Max drew back to kick him like he had the biker, when the handlers grabbed him again. “All right! All right! You win! You win!”

Max shrugged his shoulders, simultaneously dislodging the thugs.

“Whatever. Look, is there a secret handshake or something? I’m thirsty.”

One of the Japanese men, the one who spoke English, stepped forward and handed him a card. It had two numbers on it.

“What the hell is this, your phone number? I don’t want a date, Hop Sing.”

“It is a time and a flight number. The next stage of the Hanmei takes place in Hong Kong.

The Brawler character is a baaaaaaaad man. He’s the kind of guy who rides the subway at night because it’s soothing. He has usually not been formally trained in any fighting style, but not too many people are willing to tell him that.

Recommended Role: Expert

Recommended Feats (*feats in italics are new feats described below*): All-Out Attack, Attack Focus, Banter, *Body Blow*, *Box Ears*, Crippling Strike, Defensive Roll, *Elbow Slam*, *Eye Gouge*, Improved Critical, Improved Grab, Improved Strike, Improved Trip, Inspire (Fear), *Parry Focus*, Sneak Attack, Startle, Stunning Attack

Recommended Martial Arts Styles (*note that styles are still feats, they are listed separately for convenience*): Bear, Boar, Boxing, Brazilian Jiu

Jitsu, Burmese Boxing, Capoeira, Kajukenbo, Knife Fighting, Professional Wrestling, School of Hard Knocks

Recommended Skills: Drive, Intimidate, Knowledge (streetwise), Sense Motive

CONTEMPLATIVE MASTER

The spectators whispered, wondering what the two men were saying. Usually these little affairs were fun, like something out of a movie. Instead, the old man was talking to the handlers in Japanese, and—unusual for them—they appeared to be showing him a great deal of deference. Finally, however, the head handler, with apparent reluctance, shook his head in a firm “No.”

The ring of onlookers rippled and parted as a young man in Air Force fatigues pushed through. “Look, old man,” he said in disgust, “some of us have business to attend to here, you know?”

The old man turned, looking up at the much larger American. “I am not here to fight. I am looking for my daughter. I heard she was here.”

The young soldier coughed, grinning. “I know a lot of Japanese girls. Maybe I know her.”

The old man turned his back on the soldier, again speaking to the handlers in low tones, their Japanese unintelligible. The men again began shaking their heads, almost sadly.

“Hey, old man, don’t turn your back on me.”

The soldier grabbed the old man by the shoulder, intending to spin him around, but the old man reached up and grabbed his hand, in the center, with only two fingers. Suddenly the soldier was on his knees, writhing in agony. The old man twisted his arm behind his back, placed one foot on it, and casually pinned the large man to the ground. Penetrating gray eyes raked the crowd as the first hint of impatience entered the old man’s voice.

CHAPTER 2: MARTIAL ARTS



Kimmy was staring at the ceiling. Suddenly, she surged up.

Where was she? How did she get here?

"Stay still. You have a

concussion."

"Where...?"

"Shh! It's a good thing I was there, young lady. The 'etiquette' of these street brawls is to call an ambulance and scatter. I am Ishinomori Katsumoto. What is your name, girl."

"Kimmy. Did I... owwwwwww!"

"Do not move! And what kind of name is 'Kimmy'?"

"K-Kimiko, Sensei." God, I hate Japanese men.

"Now listen to me, Kimiko. The men consider your match to be a tie, but you should go home. No doubt there are people who are worried about you, and this episode should have acquainted you with the barbarism of..."

Kimmy smiled, slipping back into welcome oblivion. "I won..."

Katsumoto looked down at her, frowning. Where are you, Bri?

No one is going to believe this.

They were in a Hong Kong warehouse for "Stage Two," as the handlers had called it. Brianna watched the match in progress. Classical Shao-Lin Dragon against... ROSS? Krav Maga? It was hard to say. Definitely Special Forces, though.

Jim will think I took a vacation and made this up.

She looked pensively at her gym bag. If anyone found out she was taping this, she wouldn't have to wonder about being believed. These guys were serious. And she still wasn't even sure who they were. Yakuza? Tong? Private businessmen just looking for a cheap thrill?

Again, it was hard to say.

"Hello, sweet cheeks."

Brianna froze. She knew that voice... Oh, hell.

"What are you doing here, Max?"

"I'm here to fight, darlin'. The thrill of victory, the agony of defeat. That's me."

Brianna turned and looked up at him. God, I hate this redneck. Why did I ever...?

"Actually, it was your father's idea. He asked me to help him find you. I figure once we get this little business settled, and you and me get married, I'll call him 'Dad' too."

"My father is..."

"No, he isn't here. Okinawa. Seems like they got these little parties goin' all over the place. Gives me and you a chance to get reacquainted, though."

Max just laughed as she stomped away. She loves me.

"Oto... Oto..."

Katsumoto frowned. The match ended suddenly, when "OtoOto," actually Otomo Otojiro, a somewhat famous Sumo Wrestler as he recalled, grabbed his opponent and slammed him down onto the mat.

The chanting got even louder, and Oto ran a victory lap around the mat, even signing some autographs as the cheers washed over him.

"You disapprove, Sensei?"

Katsumoto stiffened. He recognized that voice. "I thought I told you to go home, Kimiko."

"It's Kimmy, and you don't own me or know any more about me than my father. If he doesn't miss me, why should you?"

"I'll bet he misses you quite a bit, little one. You seek to prove yourself to your father, prove that you are as much a warrior as any son he could have had. This is not the place for that. This is not the way of the warrior."

Kimmy's face was red as she pushed past him onto the mat. "You don't know a thing about me, old man."

Lucky guess.

These are normal feats. In addition to the normal information for feats, many of these feats are listed for a certain type of

attack (punch, kick or weapon). This information is provided so that if a character has an improved feat (discussed later in this section under Martial Arts Styles) the character will know whether or not an improved Attack Focus or Attack Specialization applies to the feat in question. For example a character with the Capoeira martial arts style can take Attack Focus: Kick as an improved feat. The character could gain this bonus with any feat below listed as a kick, in addition to using the feat with generic unarmed strikes (which can be assumed to be punches or kicks as the character desires it).

BANTER (GENERAL)

You are adept at making witty (read: annoying) comments that distract your opponent in combat. When unarmored and unencumbered you add your Charisma modifier as a dodge bonus to your Defense. This bonus is in addition to the standard dodge bonus granted by Dexterity. You lose your Banter bonus if you are wearing armor or carrying more than a light load.

Special: The dodge bonus granted by this feat does not stack with the one granted by the Canny Dodge feat.

BODY BLOW (WARRIOR/EXPERT)

Punch, kick or blunt weapon

You can attack your target's midsection repeatedly, gradually tiring her out.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Effect: When you make an unarmed attack you may choose not to inflict normal damage. Instead, the target makes a Fortitude save against a difficulty of 10 plus your unarmed damage bonus. A successful save results in no effect. A failed save means the target is Winded for the remainder of the encounter (as soon as combat ends and the target

CHAPTER 2: MARTIAL ARTS

gets a few minutes to catch her breath, she will recover). Repeated uses (and failed saves) from this maneuver within the same encounter can result in increasing levels of fatigue normally.

Special: Characters with the Endurance feat gain a +4 to their saving throws against this maneuver's effect. Characters with the Tireless feat suffer no penalties from this feat, though they can be rendered unconscious by it.

BOX EARS (EXPERT)

Punch

With this dirty tactic, you slap your target's ears, causing damage by forcing air into the fragile inner ear.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Effect: When you make an unarmed attack you may choose not to inflict normal damage. Instead, the target makes a Fortitude save against a difficulty of 10 plus your unarmed damage bonus. A successful save results in no effect. A failed save means the target is deafened for 1 round plus a number of rounds equal to your Strength. Failure by 5 or more means the target is deafened for 1 hour plus a number of hours equal to your Strength. Failure by 10 or more means the target is deafened for 1 day plus a number of days equal to your Strength.

When a target fails a save against this feat after combat begins, his Initiative is decreased by -4.

CLOAK TRAINING (GENERAL)

A specialized form of self-defense, the cloak was taught by some masters of defense. You may attack with a cloak (or other similar long, heavy cloth), gaining a +1 attack bonus to trip, disarm or grapple attacks. You may instead opt to defend yourself with your cloak, gaining a +1 Parry bonus.

COUNTERSTRIKE (WARRIOR)

Punch, kick or any weapon

You are trained to use a moment of weakness during an attack to launch a counterattack.

Prerequisite: Dexterity +1, Parry Focus

Effect: If you are using a parry defense and an opponent misses you with a melee attack, you may make a melee attack as a free action. You may not gain more than one free attack each round through this feat. If you are armed with a melee weapon, you may use this feat against an armed opponent. If you are unarmed you may only use this feat against an unarmed opponent.

ELBOW SLAM (WARRIOR/EXPERT)

Punch

You can drive your elbow into your target with your full weight behind it for a devastating attack.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Effect: When you make an unarmed attack against a prone opponent, you gain a +3 damage bonus. Attacking with this feat renders you prone (whether you hit or miss). This feat does not stack with the heel kick feat.

EYE GOUGE (EXPERT)

Punch

You go after your target's eyes.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Effect: When you make an unarmed attack you may choose not to inflict normal damage. Instead, the target makes a Fortitude save against a difficulty of 10 plus your unarmed damage bonus. A successful save results in no effect. A failed save means the target is blinded for 1 round. Failure by 5 or more means the target is blinded for 1-4 rounds. Failure by 10 or more means the target is blinded for the rest of the encounter.

FLYING KICK (WARRIOR)

Kick

You can make one of the most spectacular, and lethal, martial arts attacks.

Prerequisite: Jump 5 ranks, Improved Strike

Effect: This maneuver may only be used in conjunction with a charge. If you move between 10 feet (the minimum distance for a charge) and your speed, you gain a +1 damage bonus on an unarmed attack made in conjunction with a charge. If you move more than your speed (up to the normal maximum of twice your speed) you gain a +2 damage bonus. This damage bonus is in addition to the normal +2 attack bonus and -2 defense bonus of a charge attack. You must stop when you reach your target (you cannot move by your target and return in order to move sufficient distance to gain a higher damage bonus).

HAYMAKER (WARRIOR)

Punch

You make a dangerous but reckless unarmed attack.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike, All-Out Attack

Effect: You must state you are using this maneuver before you roll your next unarmed attack. You may not use the Accurate Attack or Defensive Attack feats in conjunction with any unarmed attack that will benefit from the Haymaker feat though you may use the All-Out Attack feat in conjunction with this feat. If this unarmed attack hits, you gain a +1 damage bonus and your Strength bonus is increased by 1.5 (rounded down) for the purposes of determining your Strength's effect on unarmed damage.

If this attack misses, you suffer a -2 penalty to Defense for the remainder of this round and all of the next round. If you used the All-Out Attack feat in conjunction with this feat and miss you also suffer the Defense penalty from that feat for all of the next round.

CHAPTER 2: MARTIAL ARTS

“Those who seek competition are making a grave mistake. To smash, injure or destroy is the worst sin a human being can commit. The real way of a warrior is to prevent slaughter—it is the art of peace, the power of love.” –Morihei Ueshiba, 1942.

Prerequisite: Canny Dodge (Wisdom)

Basic Training: Acrobatics +1

Advanced Training: Defensive Attack (+3 to defense for every -2 attack, rounded down), Improved Disarm (+3 bonus when attempting to disarm an opponent)

Internal/External: Internal

ANIMAL-IMITATING CHUAN FA

Martial Arts Style

Since the earliest days of the Shao-Lin temple the monks imitated the fighting styles of animals, studying them closely to discover new ways to move and fight.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Basic Training: Any two of the following (all at +1): Acrobatics, Climb, Escape Artist and Stealth

Advanced Training: Any two of the following: Dodge Focus (+3 Dodge bonus for every two feats taken, rounded down—so +1 for one feat, +3 for two, +4 for three, +6 for four and so forth), Improved Speed (+15 feet movement), Improved Grab (+2 on free grapple check following a successful unarmed attack), Uncanny Dodge (you retain your Dodge bonus even against martial arts maneuvers that normally bypass Uncanny Dodge)

Internal/External: External

ARNIS

(Escrima or Kali)

Weapon Style

Arnis was developed by the settlers of the Philippine Islands, many of them from China, India, Indonesia, and Southwest Asia. When the Spanish

invaded the islands, they dubbed the fierce stick-fighting style of the natives “Escrima,” which means “skirmish.” After conquering the island, the Spanish outlawed the style, and it was forced underground. The style was preserved through dances and mock battles, in which the natives played the role of Spaniards, wearing the “arnes,” or medieval armor. These plays used the same footwork as Escrima and kept the techniques alive.

Remy Amador Presas, who incorporated empty-hand techniques, such as kicks and throws, into the style to make it more rounded, and who blended more than 7,000 regional styles into one national style, is considered the founder of Modern Arnis. This updated style also has a mystical side—dubbed “The Flow” by Presas himself—which encourages each student to tailor the style to his body and natural movements rather than conform himself to the style. Arnis stylists refer to their greatest practitioners as “Grand Masters.”

Prerequisite: Attack Focus (Club)

Basic Training: Intimidate +1, Sleight of Hand +1

Advanced Training: Two-Weapon Fighting (your attack penalties are reduced to +0 and -4 when attacking with two weapons), Two-Weapon Defense (+2 Parry when armed with two weapons, +3 when using the total defense action).

Internal/External: External

BANSHAY

Weapon Style

Banshay is a Burmese weapon art specializing in the sword, although spear and staff are also taught by the style. Like many Burmese martial arts, both Chinese and Indian martial combat forms heavily influenced Banshay’s development.

Banshay teaches the student never to unsheathe his weapon unless absolutely necessary. Students of this style are taught to attempt to disarm an opponent and to use the sheathed blade unless a dire situation presents itself. Only then is the student to resort to live steel.

Note: The sword used by Banshay practitioners is lighter than a traditional longsword. Use the statistics for the machete found in the d20 Modern core rules to simulate the Banshay sword.

Prerequisite: Weapon Training

Basic Training: Acrobatics +1, Sense Motive +1

Advanced Training: Attack Focus: Sword (+2 attack bonus), Attack Specialization: Sword (+2 damage)

Internal/External: External

BEAR

Animal Style

You fight like the bear, using long strikes, fierce punches, and devastating grapples to defeat any opponent. This style is one of the Kung Fu animal forms, thought to have originated at the Shao Lin monastery.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Basic Training: Climb +1, Intimidate +1

Advanced Training: Improved Grab (+2 on free grapple check following a successful unarmed attack), Startle (+2 bonus on Intimidate checks to feint in combat)

Internal/External: External

BOAR

Animal Style

You have trained to imitate the vicious, close-in fighting style of the Boar.

Prerequisite: Improved Strike

Basic Training: Intimidate +2

Advanced Training: All-Out Attack (+3 attack rolls for every -2 Defense, rounded down), Startle (+2 bonus on Intimidate checks to feint in combat)

Internal/External: External

BOXING

Martial Arts Style

Boxing can be definitively traced to the Ancient Olympic games as far back as 688 BCE, although its origins are doubtless much older.

CHAPTER 3: MARTIAL ARTS WEAPONS

often dual-wielded—a technique known as Shang Fu—it is smaller than similar battle axes from other cultures.

FUKIYA

The Fukiya, or blowgun, was a favored Ninja weapon. Typically, the small darts used were poisoned, but Ninja also used them as a distraction (this grants a +2 bonus on Bluff checks to create a diversion to hide). The Ninja also liked this item because it could double as a snorkel, helping the Ninja foster the legend that they could hold their breath for hours if necessary.

GOU

The Gou is a Chinese hook sword. These weapons were curved into a hook at the end, and thus were useless for thrusting attacks. However, the curved end of the Gou is ideal for catching an opponent's weapon. The hilt of the Gou is protected and is also hook shaped, increasing the weapon's ability to both block and disarm.

Advanced Qualities: +1 to Disarm (Attack Focus), +1 Parry bonus (Greater Attack Focus)

GURJ

The Gurj, an Indian Mace, can be found in a wide variety of sizes, shapes, and configurations. Many of these weapons have guarded hilts to protect the hand from being struck, and some of the more exotic varieties have holes in the head so they whistle as they rain blows down on the enemy.

JUTTE

The Jutte was a weapon used by the both Samurai and feudal police forces of Japan. The Jutte is a baton with one curved hook projecting just above the handle. This makes the Jutte useful for blocking, disarming, and pinning an opponent's hand.

Advanced Qualities: +1 Parry bonus (Attack Focus), +1 to Disarm rolls (Greater Attack Focus)

KAMA

A farming sickle adapted to warfare, these weapons are traditionally used in pairs. The inner hook of the Kama is typically grooved, allowing the wielder

to better catch an opponent's weapon and disarm her.

Advanced Qualities: +1 equipment bonus on opposed attack rolls to disarm an opponent.

KAMAN

The Indian compound bow was recurved and could be made of as many as nine layers of wood and horn.

KATANA

The soul of the Samurai, this weapon is to this day synonymous with Japan's warrior elite, and it is still a symbol of great importance to the Japanese people.

Traditionally, Katanas were all Masterwork weapons, but today, average and even low-quality versions are available in stores and magazine mail-order catalogues. A character

with the Weapon Training feat can use a Katana two-handed. Only a character with *Exotic Weapon Training: Katana* can use this weapon one-handed or with two-weapon fighting.

KATAR

The famed Indian "punch-dagger" was useful both for close-quarters fighting, where a sword or axe would be impractical, and for fighting heavily-armored opponents, because of its excellent armor-piercing capabilities.

KARAMBIT

(also called the *Kerambit*)

The Karambit, or "tiger claw," is a weapon most commonly associated with the Tiger substyles of Pentjak Silat. It is much like the Kujang, only with the blade curving out toward the target rather than back toward the wielder. It is wielded in much the same fashion as the Kujang, with the wielder slashing the arms and wrists of an attacker as he thrusts with a fist or weapon.

Advanced Qualities: The +1 damage listed for the weapon adds to the character's unarmed strike damage when using the Tiger or Pentjak Silat styles.

KRIS

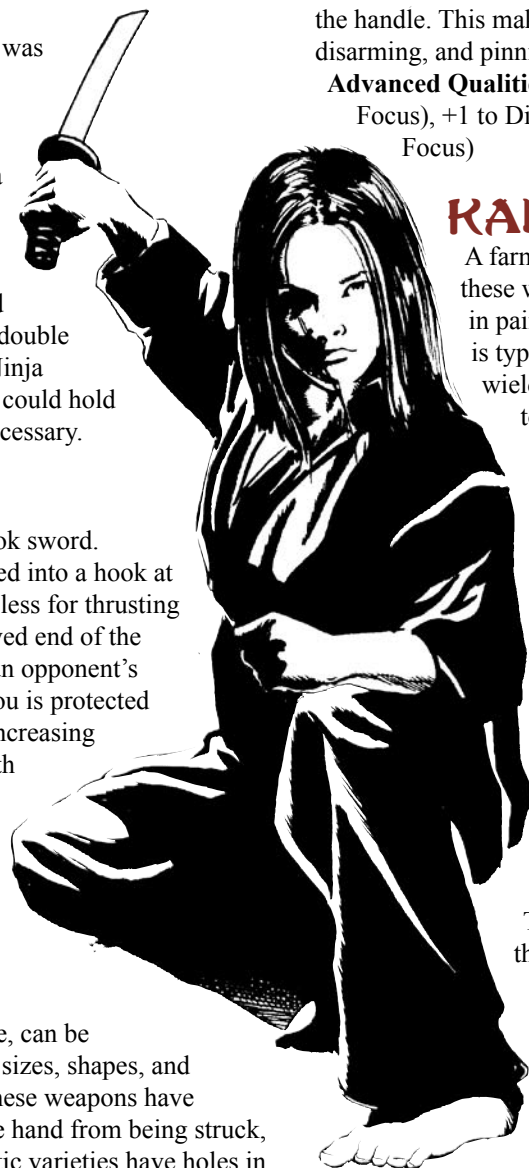
(also called the *Keris*)

The famed "wavy blade" weapon of Indonesia is a stabbing weapon rather than a slashing one. As the blade enters the body, the waves on the blade increase the damage tremendously. Kris blades come in sizes ranging from small knives to swords. The version represented by the statistics above would be a medium-sized Kris, akin to a short sword. For smaller weapons, use the statistics for the Kujang.

KUJANG

(also called the *Kucang*)

This Indonesian weapon is a highly curved knife, sometimes so curved that it would be more



CHAPTER 4: MARTIAL ARTS CAMPAIGNS

occasionally enjoy playing characters they know are doomed to die at the completion of their missions, but in general this campaign theme is best left in the “accidental” category.

Japanese film has explored this dramatic genre more thoroughly than anyone this side of Shakespeare.

RIVAL SCHOOL

In this campaign theme, the Heroes have rivals from another martial arts school. Their Masters, teachers of philosophically different styles, have been rivals for many years and now fight through their students. This campaign theme blends well with a number of the other themes discussed elsewhere in this section. In the case of the Bad Seed, the character’s rival might start out studying alongside him, and when it becomes clear that the character will be the “chosen one,” the rival defects to the “other side.” If the Narrator wishes to blend this theme with the Legendary Master, the character can discover, when he is finally accepted into the Master’s tutelage, that there is a rival master with a rival school. *The Karate Kid* is an excellent example of how these elements can blend together.

Common Skills and Abilities: Often, the rivals are much lower level than the Hero but come at him in waves. See *The Chinese Connection* for an example of this theme at its finest. If the characters and their rivals are to be the same level, then *Know Your Enemy* and *Knowledge is Power* would be appropriate feats for both sides.



CHAPTER 5: THE HANMEI

Max looked at the final order and laughed. “Looks like it’s boys vs. girls in round one, hmm? This is like intramurals in school.”

Katsumoto looked critically at the board, noting that he was to fight Max first, and then Kimmy and Brianna would fight. “But why isn’t Mister Bontecou on the list?”

Max looked at the Frenchman, then down to the bandage on his knee. “Looks like he didn’t fare as well against the fat-boy as you, old man.”

Max and Marcel exchanged a look, then Max turned to where Kimmy was chattering with Bri. “Well, since this place seems to be turning into a sorority party anyway, I’m going to go outside and have a smoke.”

Only Katsumoto noticed Marcel follow Max out into the garden.

Max reached into his pocket as he watched the Frenchman approach. “Looks like that limp is getting better by the minute. Sure you couldn’t fight if you had to?”

“Mr. Qi thought it best for me to sit this one out. He has offered me a place in his employ. And you, too, Max. Seems he likes men with a military background.”

Max smiled and flipped his cigarette down onto the ground, crushing it beneath the heel of his boot. “And what do I have to do to get this job?”

Marcel’s face split in a devilish grin. “Kill the old man during your match tomorrow.”

“See, Frenchie, that’s a problem. The girl, the old man’s daughter...”

Marcel nodded. “She used to be your woman. Is that a problem?”

“The fact is that she’s a reporter who’s been taping all these matches. That’s the problem.”

Marcel’s smile broadened. “Don’t worry my friend. Mr. Qi has known that since a long time before she set foot on this island. It’s all been arranged. You kill the old man, the girls are never seen again, and

you and I are set for life.”

Max took a long drag off his cigarette, deep in thought.

“All right, Frenchie. I’m in.”

ORIGINS

Hanmei is Japanese for “the Proving.” The origins of this full-contact competition are shrouded in the mists of the tournament’s Yakuza past. Ancient documents obtained by a raid on a Hong Kong warehouse by Communist Chinese Internal Security forces suggest that, in medieval Japan, this kind of tournament was a way of choosing the warriors most worthy of being the Oyabun’s personal guard. However, some Japanese scholars dispute the original interpretation of these documents, which have since disappeared.

MODERN HISTORY

Whatever the origins of this tournament, its more recent history can be brought into slightly sharper focus. The following information comes from British Intelligence, by way of a source in the Hong Kong police, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The Hanmei is held in three stages. The first stage is held in the backstreets of Japan and (in recent years) the West Coast of America, the second stage is held in secret locations in Hong Kong and Okinawa, and the final stage is held in the same location every year, but that location remains unknown at the present time.

STAGE I: STREET LEVEL

Entry into the Hanmei requires both money and knowledge. A Wealth check (DC 20) is required to enter the tournament. However, a Gather Information check (DC 15) is required to get that money into the right hands. Many people claim to have knowledge of the

CHAPTER 5: THE HANMEI

to entice a Contemplative Master into joining the tournament. This theme can also be reversed, with the character joining the tournament, only to find that a loved has joined to seek her out.

THE BAD SEED

The Hanmei is an excellent way for GMs to include this theme into their campaigns. The character's rival hears that he has joined the tournament and cannot abide the idea that he might win. So the rival joins as well.

MIRROR, MIRROR

In this variation on the Bad Seed, the character joins the tournament for any of the reasons presented here, but she also wants to find out how good she really is. Then, at a dramatic moment in the tournament (the final round of Stage 2 makes a good moment for this little surprise), the character will fight: herself! This is a great way to spring the Bad Seed on a character, giving her a twin she never knew she had.

GAMES OF DECEIT AND DEATH

In this campaign theme, the character will be asked to infiltrate the Hanmei. An agent of the FBI with a martial arts background might be asked to assist the Chinese authorities in locating the mysterious figure at the heart of this competition. This makes an excellent segue from an espionage campaign into a martial arts campaign (at least for a while).

REVENGE

In this campaign theme, the character tracks down the target of his revenge, only to learn his nemesis has embarked on a mysterious trip to Hong Kong to compete in "some tournament." The character has never been this close to his quarry, and if he doesn't join the Hanmei, he will lose the trail of the one he has been hunting for so long.

RIVAL SCHOOL

Here, the characters (quite possibly the entire group) enter the tournament en masse to prevent their rival school from walking away with the top honors. This is an exciting option, as the characters might fight members of their rival school, or each other, several times during the course of the tournament.

THE PROVEN

The legends about the Hanmei are partially right. The tournament is a way to locate the worthiest martial artists in the entire world. However, the purpose of the Hanmei is not to find bodyguards

(Lin Qi would never allow someone so dangerous to get so close to him). Rather, the tournament allows Lin Qi to locate something even more valuable: assassins.

Lin Qi's enemies, rival Oyabun's, are known for their paranoia, and an assassin who needed a gun to kill would never get close to any of them. A character who seems bloodthirsty or ruthless enough to meet Lin Qi's needs will be quietly approached on the eve of the final Stage of the tournament and given an opportunity to come work for the family as an assassin. The Hero must prove himself by killing his first opponent in Stage 3 and making it look like an accident.



HANMEI COMBATANTS

STAGE 1 COMBATANTS

These combatants will be found in the street level of the Hanmei. One of these might be lucky enough to make it to the next round, but in all likelihood the back alleys of California are all these fighters will know of this mysterious tournament.

JOHN LEE: 4TH-LEVEL WARRIOR

Abilities: Strength +2, Dexterity +2, Constitution +2, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +0, Charisma +0

Core Ability: Determination

Skills: Acrobatics 7 (+10), Intimidate 7 (+8), Knowledge (streetwise) 7 (+7), Sleight of Hand 7 (+9)

Feats: Attack Focus: Punch (+2 bonus from Shotokan), Attack Specialization: Punch, Improved Strike, Improved Trip (+3 bonus from Shotokan), Shotokan Karate, Tough, Weapon Training

Combat: Attack (Unarmed Strike/Punch) +8 (+4 Base, +2 Dex, +2 Attack Focus), Damage (Unarmed Strike/Punch) +4 (+2 Str, +1 Improved Strike, +1 Attack Specialization), Dodge 16 (+4 Base, +2 Dex), Parry 16 (+4 Base, +2 Str), Initiative +2 (+2 Dex)

Saves: Toughness +3 (+2 Con, +1 Tough), Fortitude +6 (+4 Base, +2 Con), Reflex +3 (+1 Base, +2 Dex), Will +1 (+1 Base, +0 Wis)

Conviction: 4 **Wealth:** +3 **Reputation:** +1 **Virtue:** Loyal **Vice:** Cocky

Possessions: Street Clothes

Background: Born in San Francisco, John has spent a lot of time on the streets looking for trouble. Generally, he succeeds in finding it. A bully and thug, John sees himself as the answer to the Hanmei's prayers.

Quote: "One in a billion? Suits me fine."

Adventure Hook: John makes an excellent candidate for the "Little One Lost" adventure hook described above. Take an Asian-American PC, and cast John in the role of the rebellious kid brother. You can either change his last name to that of the PC, or for a twist, have John Lee be a name he "cleverly" assumed.

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**TERRY MCMANNIS:
5TH-LEVEL EXPERT**

Abilities: Strength +1, Dexterity +2, Constitution +1, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +0, Charisma +2

Core Ability: Expertise

Skills: Acrobatics 8 (+11), Bluff 8 (+10), Diplomacy 8 (+10), Jump 8 (+10), Knowledge (popular culture) 8 (+8), Notice 8 (+8), Perform (acting) 8 (+10), Sense Motive 8 (+8)

Feats: Attack Focus: Kick (+2 bonus from TaeKwonDo), Attack Specialization: Kick (+2 bonus from TaeKwonDo), Defensive Roll x2, Fascinate (Perform), Flying Kick, Improved Strike, TaeKwonDo

Combat: Attack (Unarmed Strike/Kick) +7 (+3 Base, +2 Dex, +2 Attack Focus), Damage (Unarmed Strike/Kick) +5 (+1 Str, +2 Unarmed Strike, +2 Attack Specialization), Dodge 15 (+3 Base, +2 Dex), Parry 14 (+3 Base, +1 Str), Initiative +2 (+2 Dex)

Saves: Toughness +3 (+1 Con, +2 Defensive Roll), Fortitude +2 (+1 Base, +1 Con), Reflex +6 (+4 Base, +2 Dex), Will +1 (+1 Base, +0 Wis)

Conviction: 5 **Wealth:** +7 **Reputation:** +2 **Virtue:** Honest **Vice:** Gloryhound

Possessions: Expensive Black Silk Gi

Background: Terry parlayed a prime-time television appearance at the Olympic games into a brief career as an action movie star. With his contract over and no new parts being offered him, Terry hopes to win the Hanmei, write a book about the event, and reenergize his movie career.

Quote: “I know. I look just like him don’t I?”

Adventure Hook: “My Bodyguard”: Willie Williamson contacts A Hero of 6th level or higher. As McMannis’ manager, Williamson wants to make sure his client doesn’t get hurt on his “research” trip. Williamson knows where the next Hanmei bout is and is willing to pay the entry fee in return for the Hero looking out for McMannis once they are overseas. This is a form of the “Little One Lost” adventure hook, except here, the Hero is likely to have little love for Terry.

For humor, the Narrator can play this up, making Terry incredibly effete and arrogant.

**“RAPID” ROY WALTRIP:
6TH-LEVEL WARRIOR**

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +2, Constitution +3, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +0, Charisma +2

Core Ability: Determination

Skills: Bluff 9 (+12), Escape Artist 9 (+11), Intimidate 9 (+12), Sense Motive 9 (+9)

Feats: All-Out Attack (+3 attack per -2 Defense from Boxing), Banter, Boxing, Dodge Focus x2 (+3 bonus from Boxing), Improved Strike, Taunt, Tough, Weapon Training

Combat: Attack (Unarmed Strike/Punch) +8 (+6 Base, +2 Dex), Damage (Unarmed Strike/Punch) +3 (+1 Str, +2 Improved Strike), Dodge 23 (+6 Base, +2 Dex, +2 Banter, +3 Dodge Focus), Parry 16 (+6 Base, +0 Str), Initiative +2 (+2 Dex)

Saves: Toughness +4 (+3 Con, +1 Tough), Fortitude +8 (+5 Base, +3 Con), Reflex +4 (+2 Base, +2 Dex), Will +2 (+2 Base, +0 Wis)

Conviction: 5 **Wealth:** +5 **Reputation:** +1 **Virtue:** Friendly **Vice:** Vindictive

Possessions: A golden gloves trophy

Background: Roy feels he never got a “real” shot at boxing. He didn’t kiss the asses of the right promoters, and very few of the big-name fighters wanted to fight the tough, cagey slugger. He was offered jobs as a sparring partner, but Roy finds being a human punching bag boring. He overheard some guys in a bar talking about some organized streetfight, and after knocking them out, showed up at the appointment they paid for.

Quote: “C’mon, boy. I know you can hit harder than that. Hell, I barely felt it.”

Role: Roy is the cagey veteran. He will always be talking, getting the bonus for his Banter feat, and trying to egg his opponent into doing something stupid. Roy can take a lot of punishment and is content to play the waiting game.

**STAGE 2
COMBATANTS**

Combatants at this level likely did fairly well in Stage 1 but probably have little hope of coming home with the prize. Still, these fighters are not to be trifled with, and a Hero looking forward to Stage 3 might find himself on the next plane home from Hong Kong at the hand (or foot) of one of these fighters.

**DURUN CHAKAKIRTI
PASIASINA:
7TH-LEVEL EXPERT**

Abilities: Strength +0, Dexterity +2, Constitution +1, Intelligence +0, Wisdom +4, Charisma +0

Core Ability: Expertise

Skills: Acrobatics 10 (+13), Concentration 10 (+14), Diplomacy 10 (+10), Escape Artist 10 (+12), Jump 10 (+10), Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 10 (+10), Medicine 10 (+14), Sense Motive 10 (+14)

Feats: Attack Focus: Kick (+2 from Pentjak Silat), Canny Dodge (Wis), Defensive Attack, Dodge Focus, Improved Strike, Improved Throw, Improved Trip (+3 from Pentjak Silat), Momentum Throw, Pentjak Silat

Combat: Attack +11 (Unarmed Strike/Kick) (+5 Base, +4 Wis from internal martial arts style, +2 Attack Focus), Damage +2 (+2 Improved Strike), Dodge 22 (+5 Base, +2 Dex, +4 Wis, +1 Dodge Focus), Parry 15 (+5 Base, +0 Str), Initiative +2 (+2 Dex)

Saves: Toughness +1 (+1 Con), Fortitude +3 (+2 Base, +1 Con), Reflex +4 (+2 Base, +2 Dex), Will +9 (+5 Base, +4 Wis)

Conviction: 6 **Wealth:** +1 **Reputation:** +2 **Virtue:** Good-Humored **Vice:** Crazy

Possessions: Threadbare clothes

Background: When he was a young man in Indonesia, Chakakirti was a bully, a thug, and a drunkard. After killing a man in a bar fight, he fled into the night, eventually finding himself on a

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