

Ergothian Cavaliers

Ackal Ergot was nothing more than a powerful barbarian warlord who was able to subjugate several other barbarian tribes to his will, thus founding the Empire of Ergoth. The nation slowly grew out of its barbarism and into a true empire with all of the trappings: nobles, courtly intrigue, political maneuvering, and an army that dominated the field of battle. The core of this army was the mounted warrior.

Before they were called Cavaliers, mounted warriors of Ergoth were known as Riders of the Horde. This name went back to the time of Ackal Ergot when they were in truth little more than a horde of barbarians on horses riding down their enemies. Many Riders were also landed or titular nobility and ruled parts of the Empire in the Emperor's name. In fact, all lords of the Ergothian Hundreds were Riders of the Horde.

Time passed and Ergoth's rulers and nobility became further removed from their barbaric roots. The influence of men like Tolandruth of Juramona brought discipline, eventually, to Ergoth's fighting forces. Technology advanced, and those rich enough, usually nobility or rich merchants, could purchase steel weapons and armor from the dwarves. The mix of these things led to a quiet evolution in the Ergothian military. No longer were the Emperor's mounted warriors rampaging hordes of barbarians on horseback. They were now well armed and armored men and women who brought ferocity tempered with discipline to the battlefield. Early in the reign of the Quevalin dynasty, the Emperor declared that his armies would cease to be called the Horde. From then on, his mounted warriors would be called cavalry, and they would be led by knights—a new rank of lower nobility given to proven warriors—and lords called Cavaliers. The Ergothian Cavaliers became the first order of knights on Ansalon.

Oddly enough, the most famous Ergothian Cavalier is not known for being a Cavalier. Vinas Solamnus is known as the founder of both the nation of Solamnia and the Knights of Solamnia but, prior to the Rose Rebellion, he was a Cavalier. His early days were spent riding to war in the name of the Emperor Emann Quisling. He once saved the Emperor's life and was promoted to the rank of Praetor, general of the Imperial armies of Ergoth. He served the Empire faithfully until sent to quash the Vingaard Rebellion, where he turned against the Emperor, joining the rebels, and established a country free of the Emperor's rule.

After the Rose Rebellion, the Empire of Ergoth began to decline. It lost much of its land to Solamnus and his rebel lords. The Ergothian Cavaliers, once the most renowned fighting force on Ansalon, declined with their Empire. While still effective on the battlefield, they were overshadowed by the Knights of Solamnia. As it did to the rest of Ansalon, the Cataclysm broke the Empire and reduced the number of Cavaliers to just a handful.

In the current time it is rare to find a Cavalier outside of the island of Northern Ergoth, but their numbers

have been growing since the Chaos War. Some youths of displaced Solamnian families have even elected service to their new home as opposed to a home to which they have never been.

ATTITUDE

The Cavaliers of Ergoth are the oldest order of knights on Ansalon and are very proud of this. However, they also understand that their current standing in the world at large is still fairly small. With the re-emergence of the Empire as a player on the Ansalonian political scene, however, this is beginning to change. Ever since the end of the Chaos War, Ergoth's importance has been growing, and with it the importance of the Cavaliers. Most Cavaliers are very aware of this and it is beginning to show in their words and actions.

Within the Ergothian Empire, Cavaliers command the respect of most of the people and are generally well regarded these days. Some of the knights take this for granted and try to demand that everyone, even those outside of Ergoth, give them the same respect. They have a long way to go until they reach that level, and this has caused some trouble recently, especially when the Cavaliers have a reason to travel outside of the Ergothian islands.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION


Ergothian Cavaliers are not an order of knights like the Knights of Solamnia or the Dark Knights. They are part of the social structure of the Empire itself. Everyone who is dubbed a Cavalier of Ergoth is a noble of the Empire, regardless of social origin. However, not all nobles are Cavaliers. Some nobles are never called to military service and never train to be Cavaliers.

All Cavaliers owe fealty to Emperor Mercador Redic VI and he is their ultimate commander. However, the Emperor leaves military matters to the Praetor of the Imperial Armies, who is almost always a Cavalier himself. Lord Uthred Ker-Kanvovas is the current Praetor of the Imperial Army, which means he is also the lord of the Ergothian Cavaliers. Beneath him are the lords of the Empire. Their rank on the battlefield and as Cavaliers depends largely on their noble rank. Below the various lords are the knights of the realm. Some of these knights are landed and command other knights, much as the lords command them. The rest serve another knight or lord and are part of that noble's household.

Lord Praetor Uthred has the authority to command the dukes, counts, and barons of the Empire, many of whom are Cavaliers, in all military matters. Each of these nobles in turn commands his own force of Knight Cavaliers and soldiers. The Knight Cavaliers under these lords each hold various levels of command, depending on what their lord wishes.

Lord Praetor Uthred Ker-Kanvovas (LN male civilized human noble 1 [armiger 1]/fighter 6/Ergothian Cavalier 5): Uthred Ker-Kanvovas is nobly born, but just barely. His father was a Knight Cavalier of low standing with no land to call his own. Uthred spent his childhood as one of many





pages in the household of Duke Standril Mar-Levronos. It wasn't until his time as a squire that he began to truly show his potential. Far exceeding all expectations, Uthred was knighted as a Cavalier on his seventeenth birthday. His amazing grasp of military strategy and excellence in mounted combat brought him to the notice of Lord Praetor Osric Kel-Kinert while in his mid-twenties. The Praetor made Uthred a part of his staff and eventually made him Decurion, the Praetor's chief of staff. In this manner, Uthred was hand-picked by Praetor Kel-Kinert to succeed him. Uthred has served the Empire as Praetor for nearly twenty years.

Lord Cavalier Stardra Mar-Levronos (LE female civilized human noble 8/Ergothian Cavalier 2): Lord Cavalier Stardra Mar-Levronos is the Praetor's current Decurion. She is also known as the Duchess Mar-Levronos, as she is the only surviving child of Duke Standril Mar-Levronos. A rare woman Cavalier, Stardra bucked tradition in her father's house and made him let her train with his knights. She has more than proven herself over the years, both on the battlefield and in the Imperial Senate. In fact, it is as much her political skills as it is her martial prowess that brought her to her current position as Decurion. Stardra is loyal to Praetor Uthred and the Empire, but she is ruthless when it comes to dealing with those who dare to stand up against her.

Lord Cavalier Sturm uth Andros (LG male civilized human fighter 6/Ergothian Cavalier 3): Sturm uth Andros was born in Gwynned to a noble Solamnic family who had fled from Khellendros early in the Fifth Age. He was raised in Solamnic traditions and even named after one of Solamnia's greatest heroes, but as an adolescent he found that he seemed to have more in common with the Ergothian youth who were his friends. He requested that his father allow him to be a squire to a Cavalier, and his father, thinking that it would be good training for his eventual entry into the Solamnic Knights, agreed. His father was both horrified and furious when a few years later Sturm forsook his family's traditions and swore fealty to the Emperor of Ergoth. Though he tried to explain his reasons to his father, Sturm was disowned and forbidden to have any contact with his family. Instead of lamenting his loss, Sturm threw himself into his role as a Cavalier, quickly moving up the ranks because of his bravery and courage. In return for his years of outstanding service above and beyond what was expected of him, Sturm has recently been awarded with land and given the title of baron, making him the first non-Ergothian Lord Cavalier.

AREAS OF INFLUENCE

At one time, the Cavaliers of Ergoth were the dominant human military force on Ansalon, with influence stretching even beyond the borders of the Empire. These days, their political influence is limited to the island of Northern Ergoth. Culturally, however, their presence is still felt throughout Ansalon, whether from traditions carried on from ancient days or from the current wave of Ergothian scholarship and maritime knowledge that has reached as far as Khur.

Ergoth Proper

The land west of the Sentinel Mountains is known as Ergoth Proper and this is what the Cavaliers call home. This is the area that makes up the core of the current Ergothian Empire. This is where most landed Cavaliers have their estates and where the Empire's capital, Gwynned, is located. This area hasn't been invaded or attacked since the Cataclysm, and the Cavaliers like to claim that it is because their presence scares off any potential enemies.

Saifhum

A number of the seafaring Ackal barbarians rebelled against the Empire just after the Cataclysm and settled the isle of Saifhum in the Blood Sea. For hundreds of years, they wanted nothing to do with the Empire of Ergoth. However, after the Chaos War, Emperor Mercador VI began talking with the leadership of the Ergothians on Saifhum. While they are not willing to bend a knee to the Emperor, the mariners of Saifhum have agreed to certain trade and military alliances. Most of the Empire's subjects on Saifhum belong to the Ergothian Merchant Marine, but the Cavaliers have a few representatives on the island with more arriving regularly.

Solamia

While the Cavaliers have little to no influence over the actual lands of Solamnia, they do have quite a bit of influence over a good portion of the Solamnic youth. Many Solamnic families fled to Ergoth Proper after Khellendros claimed northern Solamnia, and they have lived there since that time. Many of the children of those families have known no home other than Ergoth and have chosen to swear fealty to the Emperor and become Cavaliers. Most Solamnic families and many Ergothian nobles don't like this at all, but the Emperor is allowing it for reasons as yet unseen.

ALLIES

These days, the strongest allies of the Cavaliers are the Knights of Solamnia. Prior to the Chaos War, the ties between the two groups were somewhat strained. However, once the Emperor allowed the Solamnic refugees to settle in Ergoth Proper, the two groups began talking in earnest out of necessity. After years of coexisting together on Northern Ergoth, they have developed a good working relationship. There are still some minor points that are argued about now and again, but the Praetor of the Cavaliers and the leadership of the Solamnic circles in the Empire realize the importance of the alliance they now have.

The Cavaliers also have a decent relationship with the Legion of Steel. While the Legion does not have any major operations within the Empire, they openly recruit in the larger cities and towns. The Emperor and the Praetor don't have a problem with this, as long as the Legion agrees not to actively recruit squires or Cavaliers. The Legion has also recently uncovered a plot to assassinate the Praetor, which has put them in his good graces.

The kender of Kenderhome have a love-hate relationship with the Empire. The kender, for the most part, love the Empire, and travel freely throughout Ergoth Proper. The Emperor and his lords hate the fact that they live next to a country full of kender. Despite any personal feelings the Emperor or Praetor may have, however, they recognize the value of having a good relationship with their neighbors, whomever they may be.

ENEMIES

The enemies of the Cavaliers are the enemies of the Ergothian Empire. Until recently, the main worry of the Empire was the Dragon Overlord Gellidus, who was dispatched by a daring group of adventurers. Now the Cavaliers watch the actions of the Dark Knights and the minotaurs, but neither group seems to have its attention on Ergoth. The Empire currently has no direct enemies.

JOINING THE ERGOTHIAN CAVALIERS

The easiest route to becoming a Cavalier is to be born into an Ergothian noble house. Those noble children destined for a martial life become pages in a noble household other than their own and are usually squired to a Cavalier in the same house. When the squire's master feels he has proven himself, the squire is knighted as a Cavalier of Ergoth.

Not all Cavaliers are nobly born, however. These men and women must work much harder to prove themselves worthy of knighthood. Saving a noble's life, uncovering a plot against the Empire, or showing uncommon valor in battle are all ways a commoner can be elevated to a position of knighthood and a place in the Cavaliers.

There are other ways of joining the ranks of the Cavaliers of Ergoth (by political appointment, for instance), but these are the most common.

COSTS AND BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

The biggest cost of becoming a Cavalier is swearing fealty to the Empire and a lord. All Cavaliers, even the Praetor, serve a higher lord who may call whenever he needs the Cavalier's service. When a Cavalier's lord calls, he is bound by his oath of fealty to answer his lord's summons, regardless of the time or situation.

The benefit of being a Cavalier is being able to call on one's lord for aid, be it judicial, financial, or martial. While a lord is not bound to grant requests of aid, he often does. Foolish is a lord who does not curry at least some favor with his followers.

ACTING WITHIN THE ERGOTHIAN CAVALIERS

Ergothian Cavaliers follow the command of the Emperor and the Praetor, as well as their immediate lord. Any of these can call a Cavalier to battle, send him on a quest, or simply require him to perform guard duty. The life of a Cavalier is often subject to the whims of those with a greater noble title than his own.

ACTING OUTSIDE THE ERGOTHIAN CAVALIERS

When not under specific orders from a higher authority, Cavaliers can live their lives and conduct business in almost any manner they see fit, as long as it falls within the rules and laws of the Empire. This includes going on adventures, running an estate, getting married, or anything else not forbidden by the word of their lord, the Praetor, or the Emperor.

CLASSES

A great many Cavaliers are fighters of some type. They all receive martial training and are expected to be able to perform on the field of battle. While some Ergothian nobles are wizards or sorcerers, they are typically not suited to, nor do they wish to take part in, the life of a Cavalier.

Noble: Almost all Cavaliers have at least one level of noble or armiger, the noble substitution level. This represents the fact that all Cavaliers are nobles of the Ergothian Empire.

Cleric or Mystic: While rare, both clerics and mystics have been known to join the ranks of the Cavaliers. They are usually scions of a noble family who have decided, or been forced, to play a more martial role in the affairs of the Empire.

Ergothian Cavalier Prestige Class

Cavaliers are the knights of the Empire of Ergoth. They are the oldest known knighthood on Ansalon, and many of the traditions of other knightly orders come from Cavalier traditions. They are masters of mounted combat whose role on the battlefield is to ride roughshod over all who oppose them.

BECOMING AN ERGOTHIAN CAVALIER

Fighters, nobles, and rangers are the most likely of the classes to become Ergothian Cavaliers. There are a few clerics, mystics, and paladins who have also been knighted, but these are much rarer.





PLAYING AN ERGOTHIAN CAVALIER

You are a noble of Ergoth who has sworn your allegiance to the Empire. Whether landed or not, it is your duty to protect the Empire from all enemies, foreign and domestic. When the Emperor, Praetor, or your lord calls you to battle, you are honor-bound to answer the summons and fight for the glory of Ergoth.

Combat

You are an expert in mounted combat, with bonuses to your Ride skill and the ability to excel with certain weapons while mounted. As you advance in levels, you become even more of a threat while riding; you are also able to channel your sense of duty to the Empire to help you defeat her foes. At the pinnacle of Cavalier advancement, you become resistant to those who would seek to dominate or affect your thinking through magic, while becoming an even more deadly defender of the Empire.

Advancement

When you first take the Cavalier prestige class, you have likely been a knight of the Empire for at least a little while already. Being a noble, you have certain duties that you must attend to outside of your martial ones. Becoming a Cavalier can help increase your understanding for your role as an Imperial noble.

It is in the realm of mounted combat, however, that you truly begin to shine. Already formidable while riding in combat, you will become even more dangerous. You will learn to use certain weapons more effectively while mounted, as well as how to push yourself and your mount to achieve amazing feats of martial prowess. Woe betide the foe who becomes your target on the battlefield.

Resources

As a noble of the Empire, you will most likely already have a good horse, good armor, and good weapons. However, you should always be on the lookout for ways to improve your mount or equipment. Things like axiomatic weapons, trinkets that help you resist the effects of magic, and special barding for your mount can all help to improve your chance on the field of battle.

Another perk of being a Cavalier of Ergoth is being able to call on those above and beneath you for aid. If you need new armor or a horse and cannot afford it, you may ask for a boon from your lord. If bandits are attacking your estates, you may request assistance from your lord or from any Cavaliers who may owe fealty to you. In extreme cases, you may request a favor of the Emperor, though this is rare for lower ranking nobles.

ERGOTHIAN CAVALIERS IN THE WORLD

For the most part, Cavaliers are only encountered in Ergoth Proper or a place where the Empire has an official presence. It is possible, however, for a Cavalier to be encountered anywhere on Ansalon, whether on a mission for the Empire or adventuring for personal reasons.

Organization

Ultimately, all Cavaliers owe fealty to the Emperor of Ergoth. It is the Lord Praetor, however, who commands the Imperial army and all of the Cavaliers. Below the Praetor are the various ranks of nobles. The higher the noble's rank, the more Cavaliers and soldiers he commands. In all cases, unless otherwise ordered by the Emperor or Praetor, the Cavalier of the highest noble standing is in command of a group made up of other Cavaliers.

NPC Reactions

Outside of Ergoth Proper and current or former Ergothian colonies, most common folk, if they have heard of the Cavaliers at all, have only heard of them in stories. So when a Cavalier encounters someone who is not Ergothian, it is rare for that person to have any respect for or understanding of a Cavalier's position.

The exception to this is with members of many of the other military and knightly orders of Ansalon. Almost all of the Knights of Solamnia know of, and react favorably to, the Cavaliers. Members of the other orders may or may not know of the Cavaliers, depending on how much they know of military history and the current military make-up of the different countries and regions of the continent. Their reaction to the Cavaliers depends on how their order or feels about the Empire of Ergoth and her nobles.

ERGOTHIAN CAVALIER LORE

Much of this information would be known to someone who is from Ergoth Proper, but others need to make a Knowledge (nobility and royalty) or Knowledge (history) check.

DC 10: Ergothian Cavaliers are some of the finest cavalry on all of Ansalon, and every Cavalier is a noble of the Empire of Ergoth.

DC 15: The Cavaliers of Ergoth were the first true knighthood on Ansalon. All other knighthoods and most other military orders can trace their roots, or at the very least some of their traditions, back to the Cavaliers.

DC 20: Vinas Solamnus, founder of the Knights of Solamnia and the country of the same name, was a Cavalier long before he founded the knighthood that bears his name.

DC 30: The current Praetor, Uthred Ker-Kanvovas, and his Decurion, Duchess Stardra Mar-Levronos, are secretly lovers, despite the vast difference in age.

ERGOTHIAN CAVALIERS IN THE GAME

Ergothian Cavaliers are most likely to be found in games that feature, or at least touch on, the Empire of Ergoth or one of her current or former colonies. It is possible for Cavaliers to show up in games concentrating on other areas, but they will need a good reason to be outside of the Empire.

Adaptation

With a few changes to terms and requirements, this class can be adapted to represent another organization of heavy cavalry that has traditions of scholarship and political

awareness. For instance, DMs with an elven-focused game could modify this class to represent a unit of Silvanesti cavalry of House Protector, sworn to defend the nobles of House Royal.

Encounters

Adventurers plying their trade within Ergoth Proper will definitely run into one or more Cavaliers, especially if they need to deal with any nobility. Outside of Ergoth Proper, it is possible to encounter a Cavalier who is adventuring or on a quest given by another Ergothian noble or the Emperor.

Hit Die: d10

Entry Requirements

Race: Human or half-elf.

Alignment: Any nonchaotic.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Feats: Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Tremendous Charge.

Skills: Handle Animal 4 ranks, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) 4 ranks, Ride 6 ranks.

Special: Must have been knighted by the Emperor of Ergoth, the Praetor of the Ergothian Cavaliers, or a Lord of the Ergothian Empire.

Class Skills

The Ergothian Cavalier's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Ride (Dex). See Chapter 4: Skills in the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skills Points at Each Level: 2+ Int modifier.

Class Features

As a member of the Ergothian Cavaliers, you are part of an organization that promotes mastery of mounted warfare, skill at arms, courtly etiquette, and an understanding of your place in the Empire's equestrian class. All of your class abilities focus on these areas, improving at a steady rate. You earn a reputation with your chosen weapon, wielding it for the glory of Ergoth.

Courtly Knowledge (Ex): You add your class level to your Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks as a competence bonus.

Ride Bonus (Ex): You gain a competence bonus on Ride checks. This bonus starts out at +1 and improves to +2 at 3rd level and +3 at 5th level.

Weapon of Choice (Ex): At 1st level, you must choose a one-handed melee weapon from the following list: flail, heavy mace, heavy pick, longsword, lance, or morningstar. You gain a +1 competence bonus on attacks and a +1 morale bonus on Intimidate checks when using this weapon while mounted. At 3rd level and again at 5th level you must choose another weapon from the list. Each time you choose a weapon, your bonus from your previous weapon or weapons increases by +1, so that by 5th level you will have a +3 bonus on attacks and Intimidate checks with your first weapon, a +2 bonus with your second weapon, and a +1 bonus with your third weapon.

Deadly Charge (Ex): When mounted and using the charge action, you may declare a deadly charge before you make your attack roll (thus, a failed attack ruins the attempt). If you hit, you deal triple damage (quadruple damage with a lance). This ability does not stack with the benefit of the Spirited Charge feat. You may attempt a deadly charge once a day at 2nd level and twice a day at 4th level.

Ergoth's Defender (Ex): As an Ergothian Cavalier, you have a duty to protect and guard the people of the Empire and its rulers. Beginning at 2nd level, you gain a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against any opponent who is currently threatening an Ergothian civilian or noble in melee (i.e., is able to make an attack upon the target). Other Ergothian Cavaliers, soldiers, and martial individuals do not count for the purposes of this ability.

Burst of Speed (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, you may urge your mount to greater than normal speed when charging. This ability doubles the maximum distance the mount can travel when making a charge, up to four times its speed. This ability can be used once a day without penalty to the mount. Each additional use of the ability in a single day requires the mount to make a DC 20 Will save immediately after the conclusion to the charge; failure results in the mount taking 2d6 points of damage.

Full Mounted Attack (Ex): At 4th level, you can make a full attack when your mount moves more than 5 feet but no farther than a single move action would carry it. You cannot combine this full attack with a charge.

TABLE 5-1: ERGOTHIAN CAVALIER

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Courtly knowledge, Ride bonus +1, 1st weapon of choice
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Deadly charge 1/day, Ergoth's defender
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Burst of speed, Ride bonus +2, 2nd weapon of choice
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Deadly charge 2/day, full mounted attack
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Ergoth's champion, Ride bonus +3, 3rd weapon of choice



Ergoth's Champion (Ex): By the time you have reached 5th level, your duty to Ergoth has made you stronger and more confident. You gain a +4 morale bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting spells and spell-like effects, and your morale bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with the Ergoth's Defender ability increases to +4.

HALIG MER-KENSTAL CR 8

Male civilized human noble 1/fighter 6/Ergothian

Cavalier 1

LN Medium humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +0, Spot +0

Languages Common, Elven, Ergot

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18

hp 59 (8 HD) **Fort** +10, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

Spd 20 ft.

Melee* +1 heavy pick +9/+4 (1d6+7/x4) or

* includes adjustments for a 2-point Power Attack

Melee mwk short sword +10/+5 (1d6+2/19-20)

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +9

Atk Options Power Attack, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Tremendous Charge, weapon of choice +1 (heavy pick)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 9, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ bonus class skill (Forgery), courtly knowledge +1, favor +1, ride bonus +1

Feats Improved Initiative, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-By Attack^B, Spirited Charge^B, Tremendous Charge, Weapon Focus (heavy pick)^B, Weapon Specialization (heavy pick)^B

Skills Appraise +6, Bluff +5, Climb +4, Diplomacy +6, Forgery +6, Gather Information +5, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +7, Jump +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Ride +13, Sense Motive +4

Possessions +1 breastplate, +1 light steel shield, +1 heavy pick, mwk short sword, ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +1

Courtly Knowledge (Ex): Halig adds +1 to his Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks as a competence bonus.

Favor (Ex): By making a favor check (d20+1/week), Halig can call upon contacts to gain important information without going through the time and trouble of a Gather Information check. Favors can also be used to acquire the loan of equipment or documents from influential acquaintances.

Weapon of Choice (Ex): Halig gains a +1 competence bonus on attacks and a +1 morale bonus on Intimidate checks when using his heavy pick while mounted.

Sir Halig Mer-Kenstal is the hot young wolf amongst the junior nobility of Ergoth. He has proven that he is more than capable as a knight. This, combined with a natural charm, seems to immediately win over everyone he meets—especially the ladies. Halig seems destined to rise high in the ranks of Ergothian nobility. His only dark spot is that no one seems to know exactly where he's from, and he refuses to talk about it.

KERSTAIN MAR-LEOF CR 15

Male civilized human noble 5/fighter 5/Ergothian

Cavalier 5

NG Medium humanoid

Init -1; **Senses** Listen +11, Spot +11

Languages Common, Ergot

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18

hp 89 (15 HD)

Resist Ergothian's champion, Honor-bound

Fort +12, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9 (+13 against mind-affecting spells and effects)

Spd 20 ft.

Melee +2 lance +19/+14/+9 (1d8+5/x3) or

Melee +2 heavy mace +19/+14/+9 (1d8+5/20) or

Melee +1 longsword +17/+12/+7 (1d8+4/19-20)

Base Atk +13; **Grp** +17

Atk Options burst of speed, deadly charge 2/day, Ergoth's defender +4, full mounted attack, inspire confidence 1/day, weapon of choice +3 (lance), weapon of choice +2 (heavy mace), weapon of choice +1 (longsword)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds* (3)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 16

SQ bonus class skill (Spot), coordinate +1, courtly knowledge +5, favor +2, ride bonus +3

Feats Alertness, Honor-bound^B, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Negotiator, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge^B, Tremendous Charge, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)^B, Weapon Focus (lance)^B

Skills Diplomacy +18, Handle Animal +17, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Listen +11, Ride +18, Sense Motive +7, Spot +11

Possessions combat gear plus +3 banded mail, +2 heavy mace, +2 lance, +1 longsword, belt of giant Strength +4, cloak of resistance +2, periapt of Wisdom +2

Burst of Speed (Ex): Kerstain may urge his mount to greater than normal speed when charging. This ability doubles the maximum distance the mount can travel when making a charge, up to four times its speed. This ability can be used once a day without penalty to the mount. Each additional use of the ability in a single day requires the mount to make a DC 20 Will save immediately after the conclusion to the charge; failure results in the mount taking 2d6 points of damage.

Coordinate (Ex): When Kerstain can aid others and give directions, his aid another bonus increases to +3.

Courtly Knowledge (Ex): Kerstain adds +5 to his Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks as a competence bonus.

Deadly Charge (Ex): When mounted and using the charge action, Kerstain may declare a deadly charge before he makes his attack roll (thus, a failed attack ruins the attempt). If he hits, he deals triple damage (quadruple damage with a lance). This ability does not stack with the benefit of the Spirited Charge feat.

Ergoth's Champion (Ex): Kerstain gains a +4 morale bonus on all saving throws against mind-affecting spells and spell-like effects, and his morale bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with the Ergoth's Defender ability increases to +4.

Ergoth's Defender (Ex): Kerstain gains a +4 (from Ergoth's Champion) morale bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against any opponent who is currently threatening an Ergothian civilian or noble in melee (i.e. is able to make an attack upon the target). Other Ergothian Cavaliers, soldiers, and martial individuals do not count for the purposes of this ability.

Inspire Confidence (Ex): Kerstain can use oratory to inspire confidence in allies, bolstering them and improving their chances of success. An ally must listen to and observe the noble for a full round for the inspiration to take hold. The effects last for 5 rounds. Kerstain can inspire 3 allies. An ally inspired with confidence gains a +2 morale bonus on saving throws and a +1 morale bonus on attack and weapon damage rolls. Kerstain cannot inspire confidence in himself.

Favor (Ex): By making a favor check (d20+2 2/week), Kerstain can call upon contacts to gain important information without going through the time and trouble of a Gather Information check. Favors can also be used to acquire the loan of equipment or documents from influential acquaintances.

Full Mounted Attack (Ex): Kerstain can make a full attack when his mount moves more than 5 feet but no farther than a single move action would carry it. He cannot combine this full attack with a charge.

Weapon of Choice (Ex): Kerstain gains a +3 competence bonus on attacks and a +3 morale bonus on Intimidate checks when using his lance while mounted. He gains a +2 competence bonus on attacks and a +2 morale bonus on Intimidate checks when using his heavy mace while mounted. He gains a +1 competence bonus on attacks and a +1 morale bonus on Intimidate checks when using his longsword while mounted.

Lord Kerstain Mar-Leof is the Baron of Hillfort, a fort on the border of the goblin nation of Sikk'et Hul. He has been charged with keeping the border with Sikk'et Hul secure. Though the goblins there profess to be unlike their more malicious cousins, Lord Kerstain and the Cavaliers and soldiers he commands keep the security on the border tight, not fully trusting the goblins. The Baron is nearly seventy years old, but he continues to ride patrol with the other knights under his command.



