

STAR LOG.EM-007

DUELIST



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DUELIST

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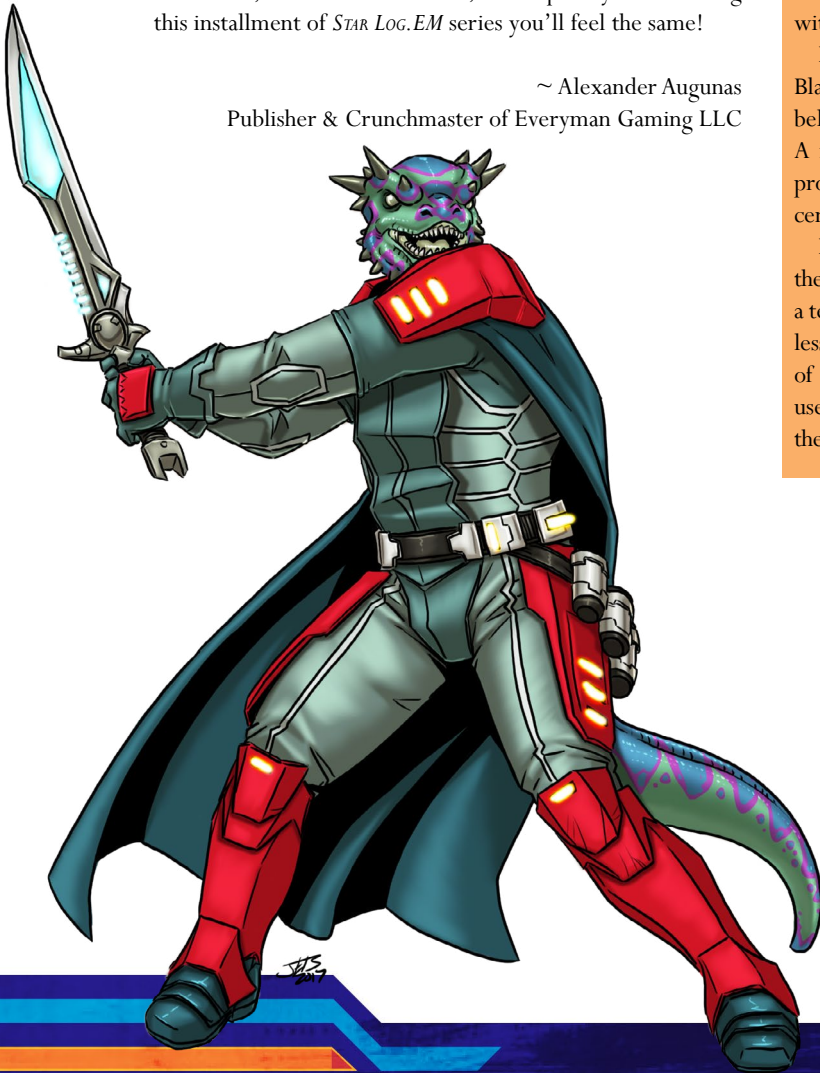
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ACCESSING ARCHIVES QUERY: DUELISTS

Hello, and thank you for purchasing *STAR LOG.EM007: DUELISTS*! Duelists have existed in the Xa-Osoro system for countless centuries, but their fighting styles and martial codes are relatively recent on account of the Regicide, when the star Osoro mysteriously collapsed into a black hole and ushered Blood Space unto the system. Many modern melee techniques are patchworks of old archival records found across the Xa-Osoro System's many worlds and cultures, while others reflect a combination of fighting techniques honed and perfected by the greatest martial minds following the Nova Age. Of particular note during this time are Gropkal the Darter, Henzormu Hightail, Ramel Bladespinner, and Fetet Yellowtail; a cadre of warriors whose talents and tenentes formed Roshava, a customary dueling tradition still used throughout Xa-Osoro today.

Accessing archival description of subjects:

Ramel Bladespinner: A human woman hailing from the cloud-citadels circling Ullo, Ramel was a skilled swordswoman known for her flawless techniques and unmatched chivalry.

Gropkal the Darter: Titled 'the Darter' for his hit-and-run style of fighting, Gropkal was a gripli "gentleman" from Banatosian who specialized in brandishing a variety of modern mechanical melee weapons that helped him stand toe-to-toe with far larger opponents.

Henzormu Hightail: The only member of the original Blademasters still living today, Henzormu is a six-tail kyubi believed to have been born towards the end of the Nova Age. A master of skillful melee techniques, Henzormu is a self-proclaimed rascal whose contributions to Roshava mostly center around guerilla tactics and self-preservation strategies.

Fetet Yellowtail: Perhaps the most important member of the original four Blademasters who founded Roshava, Fetet was a tengu woman well-learned in the ancient ways of her people's less than reputable fighting styles. She took the ancient customs of tengu "dirty brawling" and adapted them for much larger use, while adding in her compatriot's suggestions making her the original author of Roshava as it's known today.

DUELIST

Duelists represent the pinnacle of martial melee traditions, elegant combatants who with unmatched grace as they parry blows and counter attacks with swift, telling swings of their blades. Sometimes considered obsolete in the age of lasers and heavy weapons, duelists incorporate thousands of years of martial tradition and technique into their craft, honed so that even the most skilled gunman struggles to accurately strike them as they charge headfirst into the fray.

This isn't to say that all duelists completely eschew weaponry of the modern era. Many duelists wade into battle with both blade and blaster at their side, striking at foes defensively from afar with small arms as they close the gap before switching to their trusted melee weapons. Duelists prefer to wear light armor for the mobility it provides them, as it allows them to more gracefully dodge blows when engaged in the heat of battle. Of all classes, those that rely on light or melee weapons make the best duelists, especially envoys and operatives. In recent years, however, an increasing number of solarians have begun to walk the path of the duelist, combining ancient warrior techniques with the mysterious knowledge of celestial bodies to create a deadly fighting style few can surpass.

ALTERNATE CLASS FEATURES

The duelist grants alternate class features at 2nd, 6th, 9th, and 12th level.

UNCANNY DEFENSE (EX); 2ND LEVEL

Whenever you fight defensively, you take a -2 penalty on your attack roll instead of the usual -4 penalty. In addition, you increase the AC bonus that you gain from fighting defensively by 1 at 6th level, 12th level, and 18th level. This ability doesn't stack with other class features or alternate class features that adjust the bonuses or penalties for fighting defensively, and you don't gain this AC bonus while wearing heavy armor or powered armor.

PARRY (EX); 6TH LEVEL

You can parry the attacks of other creatures, causing them to miss. Whenever you use a full action to full attack with a melee weapon, you can elect not to take one of your attacks. At any time before your next turn, you can attempt to parry an attack against you or an adjacent ally as a reaction. To parry an attack, you make a melee attack roll with the same bonuses as the attack you chose to forgo during your full attack. If the result of your attack roll exceeds the result of the attacking creature's attack roll, the attack automatically misses. You must declare that you are parrying an attack after the attack is announced, but before the result of the attack is revealed.

You can use this ability to parry melee and ranged attacks made by weapons, spells, and other abilities. You can parry any attack that is made against you, provided your opponent rolls an attack roll to hit you. Abilities that don't require attack rolls (such as a *magic missile* spell) cannot be parried.

RIPOSTE (EX); 9TH LEVEL

Whenever you successfully parry an opponent using the parry alternate class feature, you may immediately make an attack against that opponent as if you were making an attack of opportunity against it. This attack is part of the reaction to use the parry alternate class feature.

CRIPPLING CRITICAL (EX); 12TH LEVEL

You gain a special critical hit effect that you can use whenever you critically hit an opponent with a melee weapon rather than the weapon's typical critical effect. When you confirm a critical hit with a melee weapon, you can inflict one of the following penalties of your choice onto your opponent:

- » Reduce all of the target's speeds by 10 feet (minimum 5 feet) for 1 minute.
- » Deal 1d6 points of bleed damage.
- » Bestow a -4 penalty to attack rolls for 1 minute.
- » Bestow a -4 penalty on saving throws for 1 minute.
- » Bestow a -4 penalty to AC for 1 minute.

DUELIST FEATS

While the following feats compliment the duelist archetype, any character who meets their prerequisites can select them.

PERFECT DEFENSE (COMBAT)

You can enter a defensive stance that allows you to parry enemy attacks more often.

Prerequisites: Bodyguard or parry alternate class feature, character level 7th.

Benefit: As a full action, you can enter a defensive stance that enables you to block multiple attacks. When doing so, whenever you use a reaction to use the parry alternate class feature or the Bodyguard feat, you may use either ability against a total number of attacks made against you or your allies equal to $3 + 1$ for every 4 levels beyond 7th that you possess (four times at 11th, five times at 15th, and so on). This ability also allows you to use your parry alternate class feature against attacks that target allies that are within your reach.

Furthermore, if you have the In Harm's Way feat, you can use that feat whenever you use Bodyguard or the parry alternate class feature to protect an ally from an attack and an attack hits, you may use In Harm's Way to redirect a total number of attacks to you equal to $3 + 1$ for every 4 levels beyond 7th that you possess, even if you've already used In Harm's Way once this round.

During any round that you use this ability, you cannot use Combat Reflexes to make additional attacks of opportunity.

COMBAT REFLEXES (COMBAT)

You can take advantage of lapses in your opponents' defenses more often than most.

Prerequisites: Character level 3rd.

Benefit: Whenever an opponent provokes an attack of opportunity from you, you can spend 1 Resolve Point to make

an attack of opportunity against that opponent, even if you've already taken a reaction during this turn. Spending Resolve Points in this manner doesn't require an action. Additionally, attacks of opportunity you make do not suffer any penalty for having already made a full attack.

DUELISTS OF XA-OSORO

Many of the martial traditions practiced throughout the Xa-Osoro System today are derivative from those practiced throughout its antiquity, some dating back even before the Nova Age. In ancient times long before the advent of interplanetary travel, most of the system's denizens had unique customs and practices for duels, as well as different specifications regarding a combatant's conduct while dueling. Today, those manifold traditions and customs have largely assimilated into a single system-wide dueling system called Roshava, a code of conduct based on a form of Tengu brawling that loosely translates into "code of warfare." Roshava's spoken dialect includes a connotation unique to the Tengu tongue that implies that it is the least devious code amongst a series of codes favored by a race known for its treachery and duplicity when it comes to combat. In wake of the Regicide, Roshava has substantially grown in popularity since the collapse of the Radiant Imperium, and is universally practiced by duelists across the Xa-Osoro System to settle disputes. After all, if the government no longer exists to settle disputes, then one must be able to settle one's own disputes by virtue of their skill-at-arms. Even after the Radiant Imperium reestablished its sovereignty in the years following the Nova Age and outlawed dueling as a means of settling civil disputes, Roshava remains common practice.

Roshava is embodied in a series of eight tenants that act as ideal values for combatants during a duel. They are loosely defined and many are somewhat dubious in practice, but the code's ability to be interpreted on an individual level is part of its broader appeal across the Xa-Osoro System. The eight tenants of Roshava are as follows:

- 1. Honest Words:** True warriors mean what they say and do as they mean. For some, this means practicing honest conduct, but the virtue carries with it the explicit degree that one must never betray one's self under any circumstances and that there is no dishonor in betraying the letter of one's words to stay to true one's meaning.
- 2. Heroes Never Die:** A true warrior is a warrior no longer if one is dead, so one must fight with their entire soul to continue fighting. Neither defeat nor retreat is disgraceful so long as one's life is not lost, as heroism fades with life.
- 3. Honing One's Self:** A warrior must train intensely and provide themselves with all one needs to develop and maintain their personal prowess. To do so, a warrior must be willing to find whatever opportunities and experiences they require to better themselves.
- 4. Respect:** True warriors respect themselves and their abilities, and thus have no need to prove their strength to others. As a result, they need not feel obliged to fight when they have nothing to gain or when victory brings them no joy or personal satisfaction. In this way, the blade is a tool for changing the world to the warrior's whims, not to be squandered frivolously.
- 5. Integrity:** When warriors say they will perform an action, nothing shall stop them from completing what they say they'll do save for the warrior's own conscious. They do not have to promise or give their word—action begets action.
- 6. Honor:** Warriors have but one worthy of judging their character—theirself. Decisions one makes and how these decisions are carried out reflect upon the self, and so long as a warrior judges their actions favorably, so too will their blade swing true.
- 7. Loyalty:** Warriors are loyal to those they defend and responsible for everything they say and do. They must remain fiercely true to their loyalties, whatever they may be.
- 8. Self-Control:** Warriors must always regulate themselves so that they command the ebb and flow of battles and blades. They never allow outside forces that they owe no service the right to chart their course.

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