

HONORBOUND

Converted from the Savage Coast Campaign Setting – 2nd Edition

The honorbound is a warrior who follows a strict code of honor, known as the Warrior's Honor. Honorbound generally belong to special companies that have long-standing traditions (an honorbound without a company is considered a "company of one"). Some groups of honorbound owe allegiance to a particular government, while others work as elite mercenaries; some are professional duelists, and others are wanderers who fight for what they believe is right or simply for the sake of fighting.

The tradition of the honorbound originally began a thousand years ago among the elves and rakasta in honor of Jaeger's sacrifice during the Divinity War. The gray elves of the Great Forest developed one branch of the tradition, while the rakasta from Southern Harqual carried on a second branch. The Warrior's Honor, while a thousand years old, has changed little over the decades, so that recently when the rakasta started appearing in the north again, the two traditions were still almost identical.

The gray elves of the north spread the traditions of the honorbound to their silver elf kin who then taught the tradition to the dwarves of the Greystone Mountains, while the gnomes of the Heverkent Forest in the South learned it from the rakasta. The silver elves of the north also exposed the humans of the Eastern Shores and to a lesser extent the humans of the Wild Plains Region to the teachings of the honorbound. These traditions have spread as far south as the city-state of Avion and as far north as the Kingdom of MaShir.

As a result, the honorbound are easily recognized and highly respected by almost every culture of Harqual.

Honorbound are compelled by centuries of tradition to follow particular rules of behavior. Because of this, they are correctly considered trustworthy, and they work hard to maintain their integrity. The Honorbound honestly enjoy combat as a way to find self-enlightenment, prove oneself, test honor and devotion, and pay homage to the fallen god Jaeger. Within the parameters of the Warrior's Honor, they can have any personality from dour to humorous, sedate to bloodthirsty.

Armies often seek the honorbound because they are reliable as leaders and soldiers. An honorbound can stay with an army as long as that organization does not require the honorbound to break any portion of the Warrior's Honor. Honorbound are sometimes granted land to govern, and they make effective administrators. The characters are also sometimes sought by adventuring groups because they make fine allies. Honorbound join such groups to see more of the world, embark on a specific quest, or spread teachings of the Warrior's Honor and the legends of the Pantheon of the North.

In any group, an honorbound is tolerant of others. The character does not expect others to adhere to the Warrior's Honor and is seldom surprised (though occasionally disappointed) when they do not. An honorbound realizes that others must come to the Warrior's Honor themselves and does not force it on anyone. As long as companions do not try to make the honorbound forget the Warrior's Honor, the character can stay with the group.

Honorbound characters benefit from the company to which they belong. The company provides a support network and instant allies if an honorbound gets into trouble. An honorbound who is a company-of-one enjoys independence instead. An honorbound of a national company, like those in the Kingdoms of the Eastern Shores, gains the network of allies but does not have to follow company orders (though they must still defend their country in times of trouble).

An honorbound who belongs to a company must follow the regulations of that company and the orders of the company's leaders. An honorbound who belongs to a national company must defend that nation and obey edicts of its leaders (defending the nation takes precedence). The honorbound must also follow the Precepts and Protocols of the Warrior's Honor or be declared a Betrayer, subject to capture and execution by other honorbound.

In addition, almost everyone on Harqual recognizes an honorbound as a heroic individual, which can cause a few problems. Honorbound of other companies and warriors might want to test their combat prowess against a recognized professional. If asked, the honorbound is also bound to mediate duels between other characters.

Some unsavory individuals, like the followers of the Sword gods, try to catch honorbound on points of honor. For instance, a person might be able to extract a promise of protection, or an invitation

from an honorbound host, thereby gaining protection from enemies bent on murder. The honorbound must keep the promise and uphold the Protocol of Host and Guest, even when he agrees with the guest's enemies.

Requirements

To become a Honorbound, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any lawful

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Diplomacy – rank 5, Knowledge (local) – rank 5, Knowledge (religion) – rank 5

Feats: Armor proficiency (light) and simple weapon proficiency.

Special: While an honorbound can be from any social class, they renounce such things when joining one of the companies or otherwise starting a career as an honorbound. Followers of the Pantheon of Swords cannot become honorbound unless they abandon their former way of life and make atonement under the supervision of a North God priest.

The Warrior's Honor is split into two sets of governing regulations: Precepts and Protocols.

Precepts are simple rules, generally phrased as things to do (or avoid) or as beliefs. Protocols are procedures to be followed in certain situations. Note that all honorbound, of any alignment, follow the Precepts and Protocols of the Warrior's Honor.

Precepts

The basic Precepts are as follows:

- Honor is more important than life.
- Fear is acceptable; cowardice is not.
- Live to fight, and fight to live.
- Respect your enemy.
- Do not attack the defenseless, the weak, or the innocent.
- Do not threaten the defenseless, the weak, or the innocent to exert control over an enemy (do not take hostages).
- Do not involve yourself in the dishonorable actions of others.
- Missile weapons are suitable for hunting, but not for war (the honorbound can attack unintelligent beasts, undead, or otherwise unnatural beings with missile weapons but cannot use missile weapons against intelligent enemies).
- Mind control (including charms, possession, and psionics) is not to be used or tolerated.
- Obey the leaders of your company and those to whom you or the company owe allegiance.
- Avenge dishonor to company, mentors, allies, and self in that order.
- Seek glory for the honorbound, never for yourself.
- If you are responsible for the death of a friend, companion, or follower, assume the obligations of that individual.
- Honor those you care for by remembering them, even after their deaths.
- Be tolerant of the beliefs and actions of others.
- Spread the code by example, not by force.
- Keep all promises.
- Fulfill all duties.
- Repay all debts.

Protocols

The most important Protocols are summarized in the following text.

The Protocol of Adulthood states that a warrior reaches adulthood when he defeats an enemy under honorable circumstances. Upon reaching adulthood, a warrior can choose to become an honorbound by espousing the Warrior's Honor by oath and actions.

The Protocol of Host and Guest demands that hosts protect their guests from mortal harm and that a guest respect the rules put forth by a host. Neither host nor guest can make unreasonable requests of the other. Note that a host usually invites a guest for a specific period of time, after which the guest is no longer welcome and must leave unless the invitation is renewed. Only the actions of a guest can prematurely end the period of invitation.

The Protocol of Challenge and Fair Combat tells an honorbound to inform enemies of an impending attack. For individual combat, the honorbound issues a challenge, and the honorbound's enemy must have time to respond. Thus, an Honorbound cannot attack an unprepared enemy, nor attack from behind. However, an enemy who is engaged in an attack on a friend or ally is considered prepared. For large-scale combat, a declaration of war is necessary; once this has been done, the armies of the enemy are considered prepared, and surprise attacks are allowable. An honorbound can never participate in an ambush except against enemies in a declared war.

The Protocol of Dueling demands that an honorbound learn and remember the informal dueling rules of the many lands and city-states across Harqual.

The Protocol of Respect for an Honored Enemy states that an honored enemy, usually a leader of an opposing force, is accorded certain privileges. It is considered honorable to touch an honored enemy, without harming him, during melee. An honored enemy should be felled only in single combat. If captured, an honored enemy is treated as a guest. If called for, a captured honored enemy can be executed, but only in a formal ceremony. Honored enemies can be returned to their people in return for material or other concessions.

The Protocol of Negotiation declares that negotiations are sacred. They are a cause for a truce, and a truce should not be broken. To insure this, opposing forces exchange hostages during negotiations. These hostages are warriors who understand that their lives are held as proof of their force's honor. If the truce is broken on one side of the dispute, the lives of the hostages from that side are forfeit.

The Protocol of Betrayers refers to those who break the oaths of the honorbound. An honorbound who abandons the Precepts or the Protocols is declared a Betrayer and is subject to a hunt and eventual death. Any honorbound can administer such justice. Betrayers besmirch the honor of all honorbound, and cleansing is possible only if an honorbound kills the Betrayer. However, to retain honor, individual honorbound must ascertain the proof of betrayal for themselves. Even if orders have come down from the leader of an honorbound's company, individual honorbound must determine the truth when the suspected Betrayer is caught. If the captor cannot determine the truth, the suspected Betrayer must be brought before a group of at least six honorbound, where the truth of the matter is decided and sentence is carried out.

Additional Regulations

Individual companies of honorbound sometimes have additional regulations, but these are not considered on the same level with Precepts and Protocols. Company regulations are sometimes specifications of the Precepts and Protocols; they also include special weapons, duties, allegiances, and symbols. Each company has at least a special weapon and a symbol.

Every honorbound (whether a member of a company or not) wears a white sash around the waist; this symbolizes the purity of honor for which the character strives. In addition, the honorbound must wear a red circle emblem, symbolizing the blood shed by warriors.

An honorbound's race usually determines the form and placement of the red circle. Elves, dwarves, humans, and halflings wear red circle markings on their face (such as on the forehead), on one cheek (never both), or on the back of a hand. A rakasta honorbound wears a circular, red-painted, ceramic pendant on a thong or chain around the neck. Whatever the method, the red circle must always be shown and worn, never simply carried.

Each company also has an emblem, which is usually worn, in the center of the red circle. An individual not allied with a company might have a personal emblem. The emblems of the Honorbound are

considered private property, and their unauthorized use by others is a great offense. Each company of honorbound also has a declared enemy.

TABLE 1HB: THE HONORBOUND (Hit Die: d8)					
LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL ABILITIES
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Weapon of Honor, Leadership
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Declared Enemy +1
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Honored of Jaeger +1
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Skill Focus
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Declared Enemy +2
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	Honored of Jaeger +2
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	Skill Focus
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+6	Declared Enemy +3
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+6	Honored of Jaeger +3
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+7	Gather Company, Skill Focus

Class Skills (4 + Int modifier per level): Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (architecture and engineering) (Int), Knowledge (astrology and astronomy) (Int) *, Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Perform (weapon drill) (Cha) **, Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (NA), Stamina (Con) *.

* A new skill for World of Kulan.

** A skilled described in *De&D Complete Warrior*.

Class Features

All of the following are the class features of the Honorbound prestige class.

Weapon of Honor: The honorbound gains an Exotic Weapon Proficiency with their companies preferred weapon of choice (or picks one if a company-of-one). If the character already has the feat needed then nothing else is gained.

Leadership: The honorbound gains the Leadership feat at 1st level. If the character has already acquired the Leadership feat before becoming an honorbound then nothing else is gained.

Declared Enemy: Honorbound gain a bonus on attack rolls against a declared type of enemy. Honorbound who belong to a company have this enemy type chosen for them; the company-of-one or a member of a national company is free to choose. The enemy can be a species (like the ranger's chosen foe), the people of a certain enemy nation, the members of an enemy company, or a particular type of creature (like undead or giants). The honorbound can never change the declared enemy unless the entire company decides to change it. A company-of-one can never change his declared enemy.

If the honorbound is a ranger, this chosen enemy replaces the ranger's species enemy; the bonuses are not cumulative, and the ranger still incurs the reaction penalty for the species enemy and prefers to fight the chosen foe before all others. Other honorbound can make a conscious choice about whether or not to fight the chosen foe.

Honored of Jaeger: The Warrior's Honor demands that honorbound treat each other a certain way. In addition, the Warrior's Honor (and the special symbols of the Honorbound) insures that others recognize the character as honorable. Honorbound receive a bonus to Charisma-based skills and checks. Even those honorbound that are recognized as an enemy receive the bonus, due to the respect that others feel for the character.

Skill Focus: The honorbound gains a bonus Skill Focus feat to any class skill that the character already possesses.

Gather Company: The honorbound is so well recognized by his peers and the public that he can put together his own company of honorbound as either a branch of the company he started out in or a brand new company if he started out as a company-of-one.