

# DCC: World of Iriolis

## Our Group

Player	Character	Description	Class
Bruce	Gallfred Weasel	Guild Beggar	Thief
Chris	Old Man Fish	Locksmith	Ranger
Ernest	Hemp	Weaver	Warrior
Matt	Mordecai	Gravedigger	Wizard
Patrick	Podrick	Squire	Warrior
Tim	Ned Wimbley	Beekeeper	Wizard

We are off to a late start today, for a host of reasons. *Bruce* is in an unfamiliar place (the front room), mostly because he wants to be able to keep careful eye upon *Kaylee*, currently lounging in her second-favorite location underneath the coffee table. With luck, she will eat something and then migrate to her favorite place on the couch soon. Either way, there is a *Handsome Nature* squirrel and bird video up on the TV for her to watch.

*Chris* calls in to report that he's doing okay, and so is *Patrick*. *Patrick* admits that he's reading *American Psycho*, playing video games, and sleeping a lot. It's not much of a life, but it is satisfying. *Paul* has nothing to say on this. *Tim* responds by holding a cat up to the screen. For her part, the cat meows. She has no interest in being part of the proceedings. When the conversation turns to the various uses squirrels can put their huge testicles to, she wants even less to do with things.

By the time *Matt* shows up half the group is talking about ways to add large-testicled flying squirrels into the movie *Tampopo*. Or into Studio Ghibli cartoons. *Matt* seriously re-evaluates his life choices, but for some reason he sticks around.

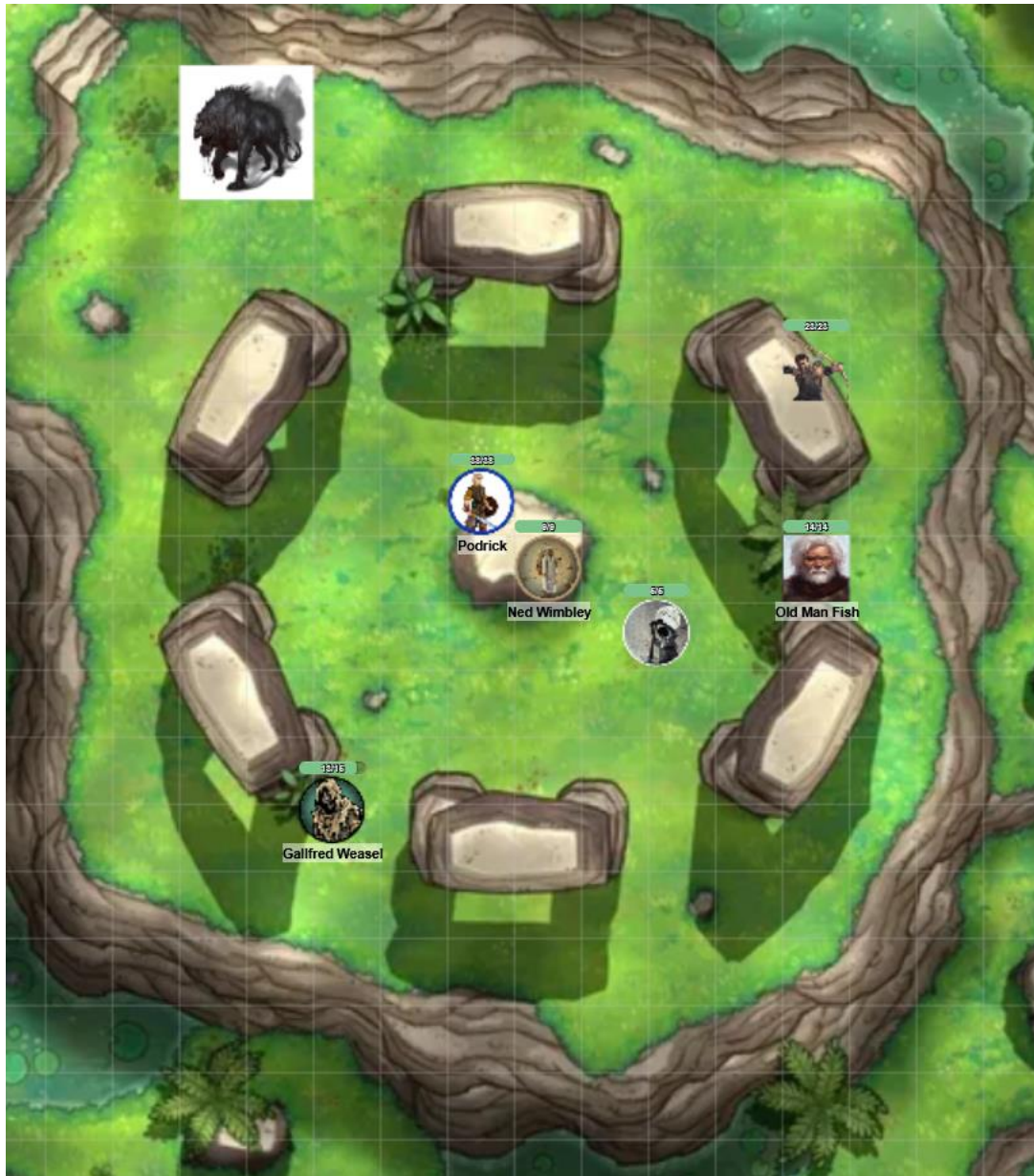
*Paul* spends some valuable gossiping time to work out an *invoke patron* table for *Tim*'s character. He assures *Tim* that rolling 32+ would be really worthwhile, though it's not entirely clear who would ultimately benefit.

*Ernest* has other things going on, so he shows up somewhat later.

## A Gore-Covered Stone

The characters take in the gruesome sight of the sacrificial stone. Three ravens tear at bits of blood and viscera at the top of a standing stone. The altar-stones are clearly vestiges of an ancient sacrificial tradition that had not been used for centuries, until the people of Weebrook started chaining people there for the Hound starting a month ago. The characters free *Guttard the Butcher's Son*, who had been tied up as a sacrifice. He is pleased to no longer be tied down, though he's not entirely sure of the characters' motivations.

Note for later: who in Weebrook came up with the idea of restarting the sacrifice program?



*Podrick* tells the others, "Time to get into tactical positions!"

*Hemp* reminds everyone, "Only magical weapons work on this thing. And they don't even kill it, they just send it away for a while. And then we can find the Yoda-hole!"

*Gallfred* is confused, "What are you referring to as a Yoda-hole?"

*Ned Wimbley* is also confused about this.

*Hemp* explains, "It's supposed to come from some mucky cave out in the swamp. And we're not looking for it directly there because we are structurally bound to meeting hard challenges straight on, rather

than looking for tactical advantage.” There’s no chance that Gallfred is deliberately misinterpreting Hemp’s otherwise sensible advice for his own purposes.

Everyone agrees that Podrick’s plan to just stand on the altar is pretty good, at least compared to a variety of other terrible plans. Ned proposes enhancing Podrick’s stance by feeding him one of his last *Palymdybis* silver potions. It’s not clear how this would help Podrick, though it would definitely help Ned expand the influence of his patron.

Hemp talks a bit to Guttard, trying to establish if he is a shooty guy or a slashy guy. Guttard (as a butcher’s son) turns out to be more of a choppy guy, but Hemp doesn’t want to hear it. He does provide Guttard with a rental short sword, just in case things go particularly badly.

Everyone places themselves around the stones. Mostly hidden, because that’s sensible. Except for Podrick, who disguises himself with a poncho. Gallfred notes that this just won’t do, so he uses his skills to *disguise* him to look like a Monty Python player dressed in drag. Hemp notes that Podrick ends up looking surprisingly attractive. Old Man Fish suspects that this says more about Hemp than it does about either Gallfred or Podrick.

## The Hound Approaches

The *Hound of Hirot* shows up shortly after dusk, expecting to find a nearly-defenseless peasant. It approaches without fear or concern. Podrick is able to feel it’s cauldron-smoke breath upon him. And then Hemp shoots it with the *blazing bow of Aphiael*. The Hound is enraged. It rushes towards Hemp, leaping into the air as it goes (it can fly!). Podrick stabs with the *wolf-spear*, but he is too slow (or the Hound is too swift) and the strike does not hit home, but it does spoil the Hound’s attack against Hemp.

Podrick steps up and slashes at the creature. He finds that it is surprisingly evasive.

Ned Wimbley does not care how evasive the Hound is. He casts *enlarge person* on Podrick, transforming him into a colossal armored warrior. He doesn’t notice that his spell also causes him to move like a zoetrope, though everyone else does.

Hemp tries to leap on the back of the Hound to bear it to the ground, but it shakes him free, and he falls the distance, breaking a rib (-1 STR lost). Then the Hound turns on Podrick. It rakes a claw across his helm (half damage on a crit strike), and another claw across his chest. Podrick steps back, braces, and jabs upwards with the *wolf-spear*. Again, the Hound evades away.

Hemp shoots up at the Hound with the *blazefire bow*, but his shots go wide. Fortunately, they don’t hit Podrick. The Hound again tears ineffectively at Podrick, who responds by spearing it through.

Old Man Fish calls on divine powers to heal Hemp’s broken rib (and his hit point loss as well).

Gallfred Weasel realizes that the Hound is pinned and within his reach. He slips out of the shadows to stab the creature in the side, burying his blade deep. The Hound is critically injured! But this doesn’t stop it from biting and clawing at Podrick and delivering a raw scrape upon Podrick’s arm. For his part, Podrick keeps the creature pinned. And Gallfred fades into the darkness. Because of course he does.

Ned Wimbley decides that the situation demands calling upon his patron. Palymdybis sends a tentacle from the earth to hit the Hound. This annoys the Hound. Mordecai (enhanced to be 10% larger thanks to Ned's magic) strikes at the Hound. This perplexes the Hound. But Podrick still has it pinned, so it bites at him. This doesn't do a lot of damage but does make Podrick recoil enough that the Hound is able to slip free.

Then Gallfred comes out of nowhere and stabs the Hound to death. The Hound changes into a shadowy, billowing form that flows away across the landscape. It moves too fast to follow, but the characters are able to see the path it takes towards the swamp.

## The Chase Is Afoot!

The characters head towards the swamp with all due speed. The terrain is a high, marshy moor with a thick, black mud that sucks and pulls at the characters' feet. The darkness is deepened by a heavy mist that obscures all vision. Creepy, skeletal trees loom out of the shadows.

Everyone relies upon Old Man Fish to guide the way. This is a tremendous leap of faith, because he is still afflicted with periodic madness and might do something crazy about 10% of the time. He leads them to the edge of a wooded area. After an hour, he realizes that there is a pack of *swamp jackals* trailing the group. Ned objects, "I know we don't like people from St. George, but calling them swamp jackals is just unkind." Old Man Fish notes that the creatures are actual jackals.

Gallfred very optimistically asks, "Are they goblinoids?"

No, they are not goblinoids.

The group reaches an area of deeper water. Old Man Fish leads the group along the shore, all the while ignoring Hemp's questions about, "Does this count as a Yoda hole?" He decides that the best thing to do is to reverse course and survey a new area. That turns out to be unhelpful, so the group returns to the streambank and traces it, then wades straight in. The others follow, reluctantly.

After fording another stretch of dark, oily water Old Man Fish realizes that there is slow current leading to the Northeast. He follows it to find the Heart of the Foul Fens. A heavy oppression and the scent of sulfur hangs in the air. Before the characters is the mouth of a sinkhole some 20 feet across. There is a cavern below, and the swamp water trickles into it.

## Heart of the Foul Fens

Gallfred has a grappling hook. Hemp has rope. And Mordecai has rope. Gallfred sets the hook on a large tree and heads down. Ned Wimbley shows him the what-for by casting *feather fall* and just drifting past him just like Sardaukar. Mordecai *also* has *feather fall* and does the same thing. Everyone else just uses the rope. It's important that two people have rope, because the base of the sinkhole is some 75' below the surface. Also, the climb is unpleasant because the climbers are doused with foul swamp water that flows past them.

The bottom of the cave is slick rocks sloping down into a foul pool. The floor is littered with broken bones and bits of shattered metal. A warm, fetid odor rises from the pool. The liquid reflects no light.

At the bottom, Ned Wimbley decides to cast *summon animal*. Whatever he's summoning takes one look at the environment and just says "nope!"

Hemp takes a hit from the *horn of Kings* to boost his Fortitude.

Mordecai suggests that the Hound of Hirot is probably a demon, with all of the standard demon properties. He also thinks that the pool is very magical. Old Man Fish (who is connected to nature magic) agrees: the pool does not belong in this world. Ned tries spending an hour meditating upon the pool. He decides that it would be a really good idea to drown himself in the pool. Gallfred and Hemp manage to drag him back over the slick stones before he can fully implement this plan.

Then Mordecai finishes his own contemplation. He communes with the pool. A glistening black orb emerges from the pool. Mordecai finds that he can control its size, from marble to bowling ball. He finds that it improves his spellcasting, though maybe with some weird shadow side effects if and when things go wrong.

Gallfred remembers that there is shattered metal around the pool. He searches for valuable items. He comes up with a few trinkets and oddments. And then he finds a strange cloak that appears to be made entirely out of dust and shadows. It is:

- The *cloak of Cheret the Lost*.

Even though he almost forgets his own name when wearing it, he is drawn to it. He puts it on and continues searching, locating:

- 46 bits of swamp jewelry, worth 148 gp in aggregate.

Uncharacteristically, he turns it all over to Hemp and Old Man Fish.

Podrick finds a great helm, sculpted in the shape of a dragon. It is quite ferocious:

- Warlord's Great Helm: A great helm sculpted in the shape of a dragon; once the helm of a savage warlord, the helm imposes a -1 penalty on the morale check of foes of 3 HD or less.

And Hemp finds:

- A serpentine ceremonial blade inlaid with silver (worth 15 gp, dmg 1d5).
- A great bronze torque decorated with gold wire (worth 35 gp).

Mordecai locates a buckler, perhaps once shiny but not badly in need of polishing.

Old Man Fish has more practical concerns. He sets up a camp. Ned has more health-oriented concerns. He rests to recover from his attempted self-drowning. Then most of the rest of the group sleep through

the night. When the sunlight touches the bottom of the sinkhole (later in the day), the others find that they are suddenly able to see Gallfred Weasel again.

Ned decides he wants to know if the pool liquid is flammable. He mentions, "I'd like a torch." Out of nowhere, Gallfred hands him one. This is disorienting, because Ned had forgotten that Gallfred was there. He lights the torch and flings it into the pool. He finds that the pool liquid is not flammable.

## The Hound Returns

As sundown approaches everyone positions themselves for the reappearance of the Hound of Hirot. Gallfred finds some rocks and hides. Ned recognizes that though he doesn't know how to hide, Gallfred does so he'll do what Gallfred does... wait, where did Gallfred go? Podrick simply finds a place to stand ready. The others take up position to support Podrick.

At sundown, the pool ceases to boil and the Hound of Hirot emerges.

Hemp shoots a flaming arrow into the Hound's heart. So far, things are starting exactly the same way as before.

Then Ned Wimbley conjures up a single massive *magic missile*, a vicious hornet made from brilliant light, that blows a hole clean through the Hound's flank. The Hound is critically injured!

Oh, and Ned's second face casts *enlarge person* on Podrick.

The Hound attempts to trample Podrick, who stands firm and drives *Ulfheonar's wolf-spear* straight through its body. It is unable to escape! As the demon dies, part of its powers are absorbed by the spear which gains the ability +2 vs. *Chaos*.

## The End of the Session

The characters have killed the Hound of Hirot! Each character gains 5 EXP. Hemp goes up to 3<sup>rd</sup> level!