

Deadlands 1876

PLAINS INDIAN RULES

New Skills

These new skills are available to Indian characters and NPCs.

Counting Coup

This skill allows an Indian brave to touch his enemy in battle, usually with a “coup stick” carried along for such a purpose. The skill is rolled against his opponent’s Parry, and counts as an Action. If successful, the warrior receives one extra Wound Level for the duration of the battle (an “Extra” goes to S/W/I instead of S/I) and is allowed bragging rights according to the customs of his tribe.

Language (Sign Talk)

This skill is automatically known to all Indian characters and NPCs, and is inherently connected to Smarts. The Plains Indians have evolved an elaborate sign language that permits them to convey meaning through gestures. Additionally, a pidgin form of this “sign talk” is used to communicate between tribes that use different languages. Whites are free to acquire this skill, and many have found it useful to communicate, trade, or negotiate with Indians.

New Edges

These Edges are available to Indian characters and NPCs.

Born on Horseback

Combat Edge. Requirement: Seasoned, Riding d8+

As described in the *Ghost Dancers* sourcebook, this Edge eliminates the –2 mounted combat penalty for Indian warriors. Additionally, the warrior has learned to use his horse as cover, and may swing to either side of his mount to offer himself +2 Cover during battle. This requires a Riding roll to accomplish; a critical failure results in being flung from the horse. A rider taking cover in this way may still engage in Shooting or Archery from this position, but at the traditional –2 Penalty.

Improved Born on Horseback

Combat Edge. Requirement: Veteran, Born on Horseback, Riding d10+

As above, but the penalty to Shooting and Archery when in cover are removed.

Frenzied Archer

Combat Edge. Requirement: Veteran, Agility d8+, Archery d8+

The warrior has mastered his bow, and can draw, nock, and release two arrows in a single combat round. Both arrows are fired on the same initiative card, and each incurs a –2 penalty on the Archery roll. If the arrows are to be fired at different targets, the penalty is increased to –4 per arrow.

Improved Frenzied Archer

Combat Edge. Requirement: Heroic, Frenzied Archer, Agility d10+, Archery d12+
The warrior has an almost preternatural mastery over his bow, and can draw, nock, and release three arrows in a single combat round. All three arrows are fired on the same initiative card, and each incurs a -2 penalty on the Archery roll. If the arrows are to be fired at different targets, the penalty is increased to -4 per arrow.

Staked Down

Combat Edge. Requirement: Veteran, Fighting d8+

The warrior may demonstrate his bravery by vowing to fight to the death without retreating. This is done by tethering himself to the ground with a “stake-down sash,” pinning him into position and disallowing retreat from melee. When staked down, a warrior gains a +1 on all his Fighting rolls; but he must remain in place until victorious, incapacitated, or “released” from his vow by an ally who also possesses the Staked Down Edge. Needless to say, being staked down limits the warrior’s range, and does not entitle him to cover. If the warrior breaks his vow, the resulting disgrace has implications beyond the social—he permanently loses one die of Spirit!

New Knacks

Each counting as a Weird Edge, these are available to Indian characters and NPCs.

Medicine Bundle

Knack. Requirement: Seasoned, Sprit d8+

By spending six hours preparing a special “medicine bundle,” the warrior is granted a single-use Fate Chip that may be deployed as a free Soak roll. Once expended, the medicine bundle must be “recharged” by another six hours of preparation.

Improved Medicine Bundle

Knack. Requirement: Veteran, Medicine Bundle, Sprit d10+

This Edge improves the power of the medicine bundle, allowing the warrior to have two free Soak rolls before its power is expended.

Medicine Shield

Knack. Requirement: Seasoned, Sprit d8+

A “medicine shield” is a traditional Indian shield made of wood and rawhide, carefully decorated with a various fetishes and usually sporting some form of totemic image. A warrior possessing this Knack may enchant his shield to absorb physical damage. This ritual requires at least ten non-consecutive hours of singing, burning herbs, and praying to the spirits. If the warrior makes a Spirit roll vs. TN-4, the medicine shield is empowered to absorb two Spirit dice worth of damage (2dSPT) from a successful attack against the warrior. (For instance, a warrior with Spirit d8 may absorb 2d8 DAM.) This damage is absorbed *before* Toughness is applied, but once these points are depleted, the shield must be recharged by another ten hours of ritual.

Improved Medicine Shield

Knack. Requirement: Veteran, Medicine Shield, Sprit d10+

This Knack improves the power of the medicine shield, allowing the shield to absorb 4dSPT of damage before depleting. (For instance, a warrior with Spirit d10 may absorb 4d10 DAM.)

Sun Dance/ Buffalo Hunt

Additional systems covering the Sun Dance and buffalo hunting are detailed in their own separate documents.

Author: A. Buell Ruch

Last Modified: 2016 December 4

Email: quail (at) shipwrecklibrary (dot) com