

## Keitar Clans

### Vital Statistics

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Geographical Area: | <i>Shielvik scrublands</i>  |
| Number of Keitari: | 30,400  |
| % of District      |   |
| Population:        | 25%   |
| % of Total Race:   | 2%  |
| Languages:         | <i>Calandian,</i><br><i>+lang. as per standard rules</i>  |
| Ability Score:     | <i>NA</i>   |
| Adjustments        |   |
| Average Life Span: | <i>70 years</i>   |
| Height:            | <i>as per standard rules, +1D4'</i>   |
| Weight:            | <i>as per standard rules, +1D6 lbs</i>  |
| Description:       | <i>dark straight hair,</i><br><i>hazel to brown eyes</i><br><i>fine-boned features</i>                            |
| Armor & Arms:      | <i>spear, horn bow, no armor 60%</i><br><i>sabre, horn bow, leather 25%</i><br><i>sabre, horn bow, splint 15%</i> |

### Keitari

Keitari are the clansmen who live a semi-nomadic life on the shielvik scrublands of the High Fens. With these people originated the profession of keitar, the mounted fighter class described in the following section.

Keitar clans raise horses and cattle throughout the scrublands of this district. They roam the shielvik in large family groups and mobile camps, and winter periodically in numerous small, semi-defensive freeholds. Some of these clansmen live permanently on the Low Plateau Highlands, although most go there only in the summer to graze their herds. Their lifestyle is so nomadic that the only settlements of note among these people are Swifthome in the East Slope, Scout Camp on the Highlands Trail, and Lucan's Station in the South Slope. Moidheri, na'Seidruni, Pallanae, and Ludheimis are the most common clan names in the High Fens District.

### Traits

Generous, daring, and consummate horsemen, the keitar clans represent the epitome of the nomadic tradition in Calandia, virtually unchanged through the generations.

An unusually large percentage of these natural cavalrymen is in the provincial army on a reserve militia status.

### Characters

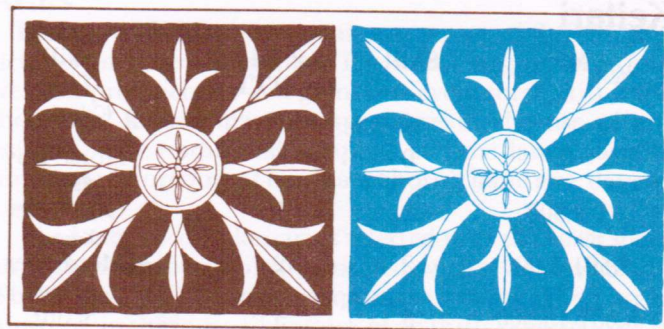
NPC clansmen tend towards Neutral Good or Chaotic Neutral if part of clan na'Seidruni (almost all followers of the goddess Seidrun). Clansmen add 25% skill rolls for riding abilities.

By far the majority (75%) of these proud and honorable people chooses the class of keitar for a profession, a class which complements the keitar's duties as herdsmen. Both Ardruna and Seidrun are popular deities among these people and a number (5%) of clansmen follows careers as clerics. A minority (2%) leaves the province entirely to seek training in the ways of magic.

## New Character Class: The Keitar

Keitar as a form of address may mean Captain, Knight, or Attack Leader. These titles connote roughly equal rank in Calandia. However, Keitar in the sense of a class of mounted fighter implies much more, as explained previously.

The class had its origins in the urgent need for scouts and raiders during the Great Misery, when nomadic tribes wandered extensively and came into conflict with almost



everyone they encountered. The keitar today is the most honored and respected of all the fighting classes of Calandia.

A keitar trains from youth to become one with his/her mount (80% of which are horses). S/He is skilled in all manners of riding maneuvers, including acrobatics, troop formations, and mounted combat. It is said of a keitar that s/he will never walk if s/he can ride, and never dismount if s/he can accomplish the task while mounted. Keitari control mounts easily, the result of tireless training and a natural rapport with these animals. (Some are even capable of controlling a mount without the use of reins, bridle, or headstall.)

The keitar of olden times wore little or no armor in order to remain agile and unencumbered and to enable the warrior to move silently when dismounted. Modern warfare against well-armed and -armored opponents has forced the development of an armored keitar resembling in some ways the cavalier-type fighter come to Calandia from alien worlds. Nevertheless, a minority (15%) of keitari fight in heavy armor and even fewer (10%) in plate.

Lance combat, although mastered by every keitar, has never become the stylized fighting form it has among cavaliers. Keitari have their own ironclad code of honor and aspire to the ideal and tradition of the ancient nomadic warrior (see following).

### Qualifications

Any person, male or female, may attempt to become a keitar. Although uncommon, it is even possible for an individual with a physical infirmity, such as a lame leg, to be accepted for training. Persons born of distinguished parentage (i.e. related to clan or military leaders) are considered before those of more common birth, but birth rank alone does not guarantee acceptance or success in the apprenticeship. (GMs may wish to make a reaction roll for the Horse Master, modified by a PC's APL, to determine if a PC is accepted for keitar training or not. At the GM's discretion, the roll may be further modified by factors such as birth rank or general ability scores.)

There are no minimum ability scores required for a Player Character who wishes to become a keitar. Poor scores simply reduce the chances of success in training and increase the likelihood that s/he will suffer a mishap that may injure or handicap him/her in some way. This training process is described following.

The keitar is a single-classed profession limited to Characters capable of riding a mount under extreme conditions: nagas, pixies, minotaurs, demitrolls, dwarves, gnomes, and shirelings are excluded from the class. A centaur may become a keitar, but learns only combat and other skills not related to horseback riding. There is no alignment restriction on keitari. These Characters make all saving throws as a fighter, but use the HTK and the experience point spread as given in the table entitled Keitar.



## Keitari

| XP                | Skill | # of D10<br>for HTK | Skill<br>Title<br>(Calandian) |
|-------------------|-------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0                 | 0     | 1/2                 | Horse-Boy<br>(Eimlis)         |
| 1-2,500           | 1     | 1                   | Out-Rider<br>(Keiseng)        |
| 2,501-5,000       | 2     | 2                   | Messenger<br>(Lugai)          |
| 5,001-10,000      | 3     | 3                   | Scout<br>(Pallan)             |
| 10,001-20,000     | 4     | 4                   | Raider<br>(Ludheimis)         |
| 20,001-40,000     | 5     | 5                   | Senior Raider<br>(Den-Keitar) |
| 40,001-85,000     | 6     | 6                   | Horsemen<br>(Morlis)          |
| 85,001-150,000    | 7     | 7                   | Senior Horsemen<br>(Obreimar) |
| 150,001-230,000   | 8     | 8                   | Attack Leader<br>(Keitar)     |
| 230,001-300,000   | 9     | 9                   | Battle Leader<br>(Keisemar)   |
| 300,001-600,000   | 10    | 10                  | Horse-Master<br>(Keirodhar)   |
| 600,001-900,000   | 11    | 10+2                | Horse-Master<br>(Keirodhar)   |
| 900,001-1,200,000 | 12    | 10+4                | Horse-Master<br>(Keirodhar)   |

### Application for Apprenticeship

A person wishing to train as a keitar goes first to a Horse Master of good reputation. This may be the Master of one's own clan, a different (allied) clan, or of a nearby estate. Applicants are presented to the Horse Master after the spring foaling. This is done at the traditional age of ten, but apprentices of any age may be accepted at the Horse Master's discretion. The Horse Master, always a keitar him-/herself, has sole say over who is accepted or rejected as an apprentice. The apprenticeship resembles a contract of fosterage, forgoing ties of alliance between families. There are generally no more than four apprentices accepted per Horse Master, or two per Horseman (the Master's junior assistant). There is fierce competition among clan leaders and estate holders to attract and retain Horse Masters of repute.

### First-Year Training

The keitar apprentice, called a Horse-boy/-girl, is matched with a foal and given complete responsibility for it. This is the horse/mount that will train with him/her and carry him/her later when it is full-grown. The youth is taught how to care for his/her mount, but the true test comes at the end of the first year, when the apprentice is expected to demonstrate that s/he can ride his/her yearling. This must be accomplished with no help by experienced riders or trainers, and the apprentice may not treat his/her mount roughly at any time. Surprisingly, the majority (60%) of Horse-boys/-girls pass this test at the end of their first year.

The mounts whose riders have failed the test are given to the more promising apprentices, who become responsible for two mounts instead of one. The failed Horse-boys/-girls are dismissed, and a formal program of training and instruction begins for those who remain.

Player Characters who go through this process have a base 60% chance of success, modified by the factors on the

list following. A Player must roll 60 or less on D% to pass this part of his/her Character's training successfully. If the modified roll is 95 or greater, roll on the table Mishaps, following. A Character who fails this first test of keitar training is free to pursue any other class training but adds one year to his/her age when dismissed.

### First Year Training Modifiers

#### Attribute Rating

|      |                   |
|------|-------------------|
| STR: | per point over 12 |
| STR: | per point under 8 |
| INT: | per point over 15 |
| INT: | per point under 6 |
| INS: | per point over 15 |
| INS: | per point under 6 |
| STA: | per point over 16 |
| STA: | per point under 5 |
| DEX: | per point over 12 |
| DEX: | per point under 8 |
| APL: | per point over 16 |
| APL: | per point under 5 |

#### Roll Modifiers

|    |
|----|
| -2 |
| +3 |
| -2 |
| +3 |
| -2 |
| +3 |
| +1 |
| -2 |
| -2 |
| +3 |
| -2 |
| +3 |

### Mishaps

#### Roll (1D8)

|     |
|-----|
| 1-2 |
| 3-4 |
| 5   |
| 6   |
| 7   |
| 8   |

#### Results

Embarassing fall from horse (constitutes failure).  
Horse sidles and shies away. PC unable to mount horse (constitutes failure).  
Horse nips rider in calf. Deemed as PC mistreatment (constitutes failure).  
PC is thrown from horse. PC suffers a sprain. (constitutes failure).  
PC is thrown from horse. save against DEX or suffer broken wrist\*. (constitutes failure).  
Bucking horse ejects PC. Hooves strike PC. PC breaks knee\*. (constitutes failure).

\* PCs suffering from a broken wrist sustain 1D4 HTK of damage, have -4 modifier on "to hit" and damage rolls with daggers/ dagger-sized weapons, cannot use weapons larger than daggers, and are unable to cast spells requiring somatic components.

\* PCs suffering from a broken knee sustain 1D8 HTK of damage, move at 1/4 of normal movement, attack at -2 on "to hit" rolls, and carry only 1/4 of weight allowance.

### Subsequent Training

A Horse-boy/-girl trains until s/he masters everything a keitar must know and is judged fit by the Horse-Master to become a keitar. Such training requires eight to ten years; the average apprentice becomes a keitar at the age of nineteen.

Throughout his/her adventuring career, it is possible for a keitar to improve personal attributes through his/her untiring work with mount and arms. Upon becoming a Skill 1 Keitar, D% are rolled and the total added to the PC's scores for STR, DEX, and STA. For each Skill that the keitar advances, 3D6 are rolled and added to these percentiles. When a percentile passes 100, the ability score is



raised to the next whole number, and the PC's stats adjusted accordingly (e.g. a keitar with a STR of 14/87 rolls 3D6 (the result of which is a 15) upon reaching Skill 2. STR now becomes 15/02, but is still treated as a score of 15.)

The skills mastered by a keitar are described as follows:

●Mounts:

A keitar learns to distinguish good mounts (the type s/he rides) from poor (90% accurate); can judge a mount for stamina, speed, and temperament; can estimate its worth; and can administer basic medical treatment, from stitching cuts to treating colic, founder, and parasites. S/He can rough-break or gentle-break a mount and teach it to respond to voice and body signals, using the latter to control it in combat (75% chance). A keitar's steed will have from +1 to +3 HTK per HTK die, upto the maximum possible (GM discretion).

●Riding:

A keitar can keep his/her seat 90% of the time; if the mount falls, a keitar will be 80% likely to leap clear and spring back into the seat when the horse arises. These chances are reduced to half if the keitar is riding a mount other than the type he trained with. Keitari know how to pace an animal for extended periods of endurance riding to cover great distances without undue exhaustion of mount and rider. It is possible for a grain-fed horse to travel over 100 miles in one day in this manner.

As the keitar increases in skill, s/he gains the following abilities:

## Keitar Abilities

### Skill:

### New Abilities

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 | Can maintain seat (see previous). PC has same chance of maintaining seat when on a jumping mount.<br>Can vault into saddle if wearing leather or lighter armor. Mounted attacks are made as if PC was one skill higher. |
| 2 | Can jump mount over obstacles (GM discretion) with a 1% chance of being unseated.   |
| 4 | Can vault into saddle in armor as encumbering as chain mail.  |
| 6 | Can urge steed to greater than normal speeds, adding 2" of movement (for 2 hours). Steed must then rest for the steed's HTK in turns.   |

## Acrobatics

A keitar wearing leather armor or less can perform a number of acrobatic stunts which are useful in combat. These can be accomplished simply by stating the intent, but the GM may wish to have the PC save against his/her DEX in dangerous circumstances.

A keitar can snatch things from the ground while mounted and moving at full gallop. S/He can change mounts without dismounting and can leap to or from the saddle of a moving steed without injury to him-/herself. Whether riding with saddle or bareback, a keitar can shield him-/herself behind his/her mount's body.

## Arms

Keitari traditional weapons are mastered before proficiency in others is gained. The keitar begins with four weapon proficiencies and gains one every three skill levels thereafter. Keitari may not specialize in the use of any weapon. The traditional weapons are: the lance, javelin, horn bow (short bow of laminated horn), hand axe, dagger, and sabre.

The lance used by keitari is referred to as the keitar spear, an eight-foot-long polearm tipped with a narrow blade. This is strictly a thrusting weapon, equally suited for use in hunting, in the joust-like attack of an initial charge, and in melee.

The javelin favored by keitari is an abbreviated, four-foot long spear, made of a slim, ash shaft balanced for throwing. This javelin remains popular, especially among keitari whose clans do not use the bow for a missile weapon.

The keitar's sabre is less curved than a scimitar but more curved than a straight-bladed sword. It is made of the finest quality steel available, multi-layered with a visible temper pattern, and is a family heirloom. Many are several hundred years old, and are often ornately engraved and ornamented. (Sabre stats are the same as a scimitar.)

The horn bow is the preferred missile weapon of most keitari, but can only be pulled by a keitar with a STR of 15 or greater.

Keitari are skilled, mounted bowmen. Therefore, only when a mount is galloping or trotting does a keitar have a negative modifier of 1 (-1) applied to his/her "to hit" roll; no other gait affects the keitar's missile fire.

## Horn Bow Ranges

### RANGES

### DISTANCES

|        |                |
|--------|----------------|
| Short  | 0 to 60 yds    |
| Medium | 61 to 120 yds  |
| Long   | 121 to 200 yds |

An arrow shot from a horn bow inflicts 1D6 HTK of damage plus an amount based on the wielder's STR, as per the standard rule book.

As the keitar advances in skill, the proficiency with his/her weapons of choice also advances. These advances are covered in the following table.

## Proficiency Advances

### Skill Level

### Advances

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | +1 "to hit" with keitar lance (mounted only).  |
| 3  | +1 "to hit" with sabre.  |
| 5  | +1 "to hit" with bow or javelin (once specified, this weapon of choice cannot be altered).   |
| 7  | additional +1 "to hit" with keitar lance (mounted only).                                     |
| 9  | additional +1 "to hit" with sabre.   |
| 11 | additional +1 "to hit" with bow or javelin (must be the weapon of choice picked at Skill 5). |
| 13 | additional +1 "to hit" with keitar lance (mounted only).                                     |



The progression continues as listed when the PC reaches higher skills. The pluses "to hit" do not affect damage on creatures hit only by magical weapons.

### Favored Weapon

At first level, the PC must select one weapon of proficiency which will become his/her favored weapon. (The GM may wish to dictate this choice, depending on what weapons are common to the keitar's culture.) The keitar inflicts +1 HTK of damage with his/her favored weapon at Skill 1 and adds +1 HTK of damage every three skills thereafter. That is, Skill 1 adds +1, Skill 4 adds +2, Skill 7 adds +3, etc. These bonuses apply whether the keitar fights while mounted or not.

### Parrying

If a keitar wishes to parry an attack, all of his/her "to hit" bonuses are subtracted from one attacker's roll. This is possible only when the parrying keitar is using his/her weapon of choice and includes all bonuses due to Skill, magic, STR, and use of favored weapon.

### Armor

The traditional keitar wears no armor and uses no shield, trusting to his/her prowess to avoid injury and expecting a fair fight from like-minded enemies. As long as keitar fought keitar, this was mutually acceptable and the warrior's code of honor ensured fair encounters. When keitari fought enemies such as orcs, or when they encountered other opponents who did not adhere to their code of honor — such as farmers and townsfolk during the Great Misery — the keitari were forced to armor themselves. Nevertheless, groups of keitari or duelling individuals almost always fight with no more armor than a shield.

When combatting non-keitar opponents, keitari wear armor that is light and unencumbering. Since lighter armor is preferred, magical leather is highly valued for its protection while leaving the wearer unencumbered. The most sought-after keitar armor are regular riding leathers that have been enchanted, giving the wearer light, magical protection.

A round shield, usually of wood-reinforced leather, is preferred by keitari. Keitari will never wear helms of any kind, for a helm obstructs the vision and is likely to come off if s/he attempts any acrobatic maneuvers.

### Combat Maneuvers

The keitar has several time-honored attack forms that s/he uses whenever possible. First, s/he releases a volley of arrows while closing with the enemy on his/her galloping mount. S/He then secures the bow and readies the lance shortly before closing. If the lance can be used to spear more than one enemy in melee, the keitar does so, often thrusting one-handed while holding the shield with the other hand. If the melee is too close-packed to allow maneuvering, the keitar leaves his/her lance in an opponent's body and continues the fight with his/her sabre.

Combat against well-organized opponents forced keitari to evolve a number of cavalry formations and maneuvers for use on the battle field. Keitari and their mounts are well-trained in standard fighting formations; whenever a group of these mounted warriors fight together, they can quickly and easily form an effective cavalry unit even if they have never before worked in unison. Such formations fall by the wayside when keitari oppose keitari, however, for the loosely-grouped and unformed forces simply charge into each other and fight man-to-man.

### Special Abilities

A keitar has an innate ability similar to the spell Animal Friendship when interacting with equines, resulting in a quick and natural rapport that soothes unruly beasts and brings obedience from calm ones. Equine animals in the presence of a keitar are 75% unlikely to bolt if exposed to magical fear. However, this ability does not let the keitar magically teach a horse any tricks.

### Code of Honor

The code of honor stringently followed by the keitar is based on the following ancient precepts and beliefs:

- † honor, respect, loyalty, and obedience to one's sworn chief.
- † loyalty and faithfulness to one's comrades-in-arms.
- † respect and loving care to one's four-legged comrade (the mount).
- † respect is due the worthy opponent.
- † honor all members of one's clan.
- † no mercy to outlaws, bloodfeud enemies, or those who refuse the fairly-offered opportunity to surrender.
- † personal glory in combat is second only to the will of the war-chief.
- † a keitar's word is his bond.
- † every charge cheerfully accepted, faithfully fulfilled, and defended to the death.
- † death before dishonor.
- † without shrewdness, wit, and cunning, a keitar is no better than a non-intelligent animal.

In addition to this code, there are certain customs and attitudes unique to keitari. One is the belief that it is easy to kill an enemy, but — if the foe is honorable — it is a braver act to spare his/her life. In practice this means that a keitar may land a blow on an enemy to demonstrate that s/he (the keitar) could have slain his/her opponent — but did not. This tactic of counting coup usually only takes place in raids or skirmishes. It requires great skill to accomplish this in the heat of battle, since the keitar must strike and stun his/her enemy with the flat of a sword or handaxe, instead of slaying him/her with the blade. Alternatively, the keitar may strike when the enemy is unable or unprepared to defend him-/herself, as may happen during a raid on a sleeping camp. Such a daring move, in turn, demonstrates great courage, since in doing so the raiders rouse the camp and then must make their escape.

In game terms, the act of stunning the foe with one blow is possible if the PC keitar strikes his/her opponent by rolling a number five greater than the score needed "to hit." That is, if the keitar needs a 12 "to hit" an opponent, s/he can stun him/her (count coup) with one blow on a roll of 17 or better. Intent to strike with the flat and stun must be declared before the attack is made.

This ritualistic manner of defeating an opponent is done only with an honorable enemy, one who is expected to acknowledge that s/he has been bested and who will not then attempt to fight his/her victor — if that keitar or raid party's identity is known a second time. If the enemy does fight his/her vanquisher again, s/he is considered to be without honor and the keitar's code no longer applies in combat against that person.

Another custom among keitari is the the unequivocal word (harbure). This is an offer or a statement delivered to an opposing side in a conflict; the declaration is final and absolute. If the offer is declined or the statement disregarded, there can be no further communications and dire con-