

The Order of the Sleeping Fist

by James Dempsey and Dean Bailey

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History and Background

Emmeran Gilish, a human monk from Tusmit, on his search for inner balance, founded the Monastery of the Sleeping Fist in the 530s CY. When passing through Perrenland, he had the opportunity to witness a boxing match in a highland village. Impressed by the display of skill, Emmeran, became a student of Hans Besser, winner of the competition, and soon had blended his traditional skills with those that he was taught by Hans.

During the years that he spent learning his new style, he started to explore the surrounding mountains and about fifteen miles from the village he discovered a small sheltered valley. The valley was less than two hundred yards in length, but it contained a hot spring and an almost pleasant microclimate. Once his training was finished, Emmeran Gilish built a small hut in the valley and prepared to practice his art in solitude.

Many months later, a man who had lost everything visited the valley. In desperation he was looking for some meaning to life and was told that Emmeran had the answer. Emmeran agreed to teach him his style and he helped the man find balance. Soon word spread and Emmeran had gathered over a dozen students to the valley looking for guidance.

As more people came to the valley for teaching, Emmeran Gilish grew concerned with the growing chaos and he decided that order needed to be restored. Work began on the building the monastery and soon the Order of the Sleeping Fist came into being.

Location

Nestled in a small valley high in the Yatils, sits the monastery of the Sleeping Fist. The monastery is located about thirty miles Southwest from Krestible and can be reach by travelling a narrow path that winds it way through the mountains. Travelling to the monastery can be slow and treacherous, generally taking many days on foot.

Style and Philosophy

The style of the Sleeping Fist is a unique blend of the traditional martial arts practiced by many monks, and bare fist boxing that is a common sport in Perrenland's highland villages.

The philosophy of the Sleeping Fist is one of blending the mind and body. The order teaches that during life one must not left their spirit be rule by aggression. During conflict, one must remain calm at all times and not to strike out at the opponent unless all other means have been exhausted. Martial training is important to the order and all monks are trained for combat, although the sleeping fist only awakes when no other option exists. To help a monk on this path, they are given teaching in philosophy and the ethos of Zodal, musical training (to develop discipline, order and timing) and martial training to focus and develop their bodies.

The Monks of the Sleeping Fist

The Monastery of the Sleeping Fist is currently home to twenty-three souls. Eight of the population are junior novices, first level monks who have just started their training (Mnk1, hp 8) and six are senior novices who have completed a years training (Mnk2, hp 13). The monastery is also home to a pair of orphan boys, Cedric (Com1, hp4) and Bertrium (Com1, hp 5) who are being cared for by the monks. As well as the novices and the fosterling, there are seven monks that make the monastery their permanent home and offer instruction and guidance to the novices.

Emmeran Gilish (Male Human Mnk9/Weapon Master4, hp 78, Al LN) is the founder of the monastery. He is elderly human close to 90 years in age but with a mind still sharp. Rarely teaching now, he is sometimes called upon to instruct the student in the philosophy of the order. Lately he has been handing more and more tasks onto his successor, Maria Starbright.

Maria Starbright (Female Half elf Mon7/Weapon Master2, hp 67, Al LN) is the chosen successor of Emmeran Gilish. A female half-elf, she was a foundling left at the gate of the monastery while it was still only a few small huts. Now over 40 years old, she is a highly trained monk who has fully embraced the teachings of her foster father. Hard and unforgiving while training, but kind and compassionate at other times she expects high standards from her students. Maria enjoys the martial aspect of the order, finding pleasure in its movements and discipline.

Engrald Betal (male Human Mnk7, hp 52, Al LG) is the Master of Trials. He has been with the monastery for almost 25 years, joining when he turned 16. He is an earnest man who is a fervent believer in the teachings of Zodal. He takes pride in the successes of the students and hopes the word of the Grandmaster Emmeran will spread throughout Perrenland.

Johan Krendal (Male Human Mnk5, hp 28, Al LG, Profession [Herdsman] Rk 4, Animal handling Rk4, Healing Rk4) is responsible for the care and health of the livestock belonging to the monastery. A kind man he has training as a veterinarian and enjoys working and training animals. He has also taken on the care of the two foundlings Cedric and Bertrium.

Hans Wanderwind (Male Halfling Mnk4, hp 23, Al LN, Profession [Cook] Rk7) is responsible for the kitchen of the Monastery. Joining the order 20 years ago, Hans discovered a sense of purpose and fulfilment that he did not have in his life. While happy and jolly, always ready with a joke, if you enter his kitchen you had better be ready to work. Well skilled in the cooking arts, it is often said by those who sit down to one of his meals that he is one of the few people that can make turnip stew edible.

Fritz Hossinger (Male Human Mnk4, hp 27, Al LG, Craft [Blacksmith] Rk6, Craft [Weaponsmith] Rk4) is the blacksmith of the monastery. A young man in his mid thirties, Fritz joined the order only 10 years ago. Fritz is responsible for keeping all the equipment and tools in the monastery in good working order. He also likes to use the smithing arts to teach discipline to the novices. Many an undisciplined novice found themselves working a double shift in the workshop.

Tomas Berger (Male Human Mnk4, hp 23, AI LN, Profession [Brewer] Rk7, Profession [farmer] Rk5, Profession [Herbalist] Rk3) is a calm and serene man nearing forty summers. A skilled gardener, herbalist and brewer, Tomas is responsible for the monastery's crops and for the cellar. His speciality is a beer made out of beets, and is the most common ales found on the monastery's table.

Sonja Lissinger (Female Human Mon2/Clr4, hp 33, AI LG, Healing Rk7) originally came to the monastery 20 years ago as a young girl of 18. Completing her training as a senior novice, Sonja found that she was called by Zodal. Encouraged to find her path by Emmeran Gilish, she took up the teachings of the God and stayed as the orders religious adviser and instructor. She is also the medic for the monastery and is well known as someone that people can seek if they are in need.

Johann Janilla (male Human Exp2/Mnk2, hp 24, AI LG, Profession [Librarian] Rk 4, Profession [Scribe] Rk 4, Knowledge (History) Rk 3, Appraise Rk 5) was once a member of a family of greedy merchants. He abandoned material pursuits for the ways of Zodal in his thirties. After being injured rescuing a child from an avalanche he became librarian at the monastery. Now in his fifties, he still walks with a limp, although he can sense oncoming storms. He oversees the intellectual development of trainee monks and is considered to be one of the kindest and most selfless of the Masters.

Life of a novice

When an applicant comes to the monastery to seek entrance to the order, they are tested to ensure that they have the desire and dedication to embrace the philosophy and teachings of the Sleeping Fist. Should the applicant be found wanting they are gently sent home, however should they be acceptable, they are assigned a cell and instruction begins. For the first year they have the rank of junior novice.

Their day consists of rising before dawn to help tend the livestock or to work in the kitchen, then after a filling breakfast they begin their assigned chores, either in the kitchen, the workshop, the garden, etc. Around midday they break for lunch and for the next six hours they spend their time at lessons, usually philosophy, music and religion. After the evening meal, an hour is given to leisure and then before bed two hours are spent in meditation and reflection.

As the novices enter the last 4 months of their first year they begin their martial training, their duties may now include stand watch duty and outings to the local villages and settlements on monastery business. This is when most junior initiates adventure to gain experience and knowledge in the world outside the monastery.

When the novices have reached 2nd level, usually during their second or third year, they become Senior Novices. Their day is much the same as when they were junior novices, but now their training is starting to focus on the martial aspect and the philosophy behind the Sleeping Fist.

After their fourth year, usually when they have reached 3rd level, the novices become full initiates into the order. Here they are encouraged to find their path, whether that is to go out into the world, as the majority do, or stay at the monastery to help instruct and teach.