

STEEL PIT FIGHT NIGHT

For millennia, it has raged beneath the pery skin of civilization. Organized by the most powerful and ruthless men in the world, it has gone by many names. Empires, wealth, and human lives all hang in the balance of its bloodsport.

Welcome to the Steel Pit Fellowship.



Managers lead the Fellowship. Criminal overlords, captains of industry, presidents and visionaries, They recruit and train the world's most dangerous warriors to fight in their tournament.

Those fighters are alike only in their will to win. Martial artists, soldiers,

mystics, genetic freaks and more – each is a living weapon. Whatever their reasons for competing, they risk everything in the Pit.

BATTLE ROYALE

Fights take place far from the eyes of the law. Managers amuse their guests with spectacular exhibition matches between fighters. High-stakes betting leaps from man to man like a fever. Special terrain, weaponry and rules add variety and thrills.

The tournaments themselves are single-elimination brackets, one-on-one, best two out of three. Otherwise, quarterfinals follow exhibition rules. But tradition dictates that finals and semifinals happen in a featureless Steel Pit, to knockout or to death.

MANAGERS

Joining a regional branch of the Fellowship carries three requirements: an oath of fealty, dues of service, and a plan to manage a fighter in the Steel Pit Tournament.

First an applicant swears to protect the secrecy of the Fellowship with all the means at his disposal, on pain of death. His first dues of service are required immediately. Here the Fellowship sifts out the weak.

If an applicant cannot pay a sum of billions, sway a government, or destroy a powerful enemy, he is dismissed. He most likely becomes the target for the next applicant's dues of service.

But if he can pay his dues, the Fellowship welcomes him as one of the powerful elite. If he signs a fighter who can win it all, the ultimate prize is his.

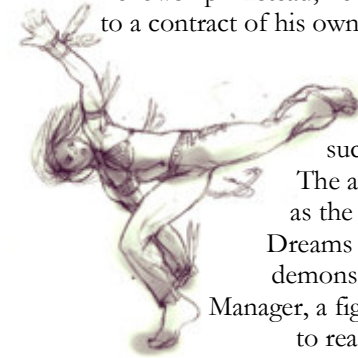
That prize? Leadership of the regional Fellowship for a year. During that time, he may require new dues of service from each other Manager. These dues cannot endanger the integrity of the Fellowship or its tournament. But with the rest of the world fair game, the regional leader still has lot of power at her fingertips.

Toward what end does a Manager hope to use all that power? Whatever the motive, it must be grandiose. Managers by definition comprise the world's elite. What more can they aspire to achieve?



FIGHTERS

A tournament fighter isn't a member of the Fellowship. Instead, her Manager binds her to a contract of his own design.



What makes a person sign in to such a dangerous deal?

The answers are as varied as the fighters themselves. Dreams drive some fighters; demons drive others. In her Manager, a fighter sees the means to reach her greatest goal.

Fighters bring an array of fearsome combat techniques to battle, many of which seem superhuman. Some fighters channel *chi* through ancient schools of martial arts. Others benefit from genetic and pharmaceutical enhancements. Some fighters trained in the military, learning more weapons than there are ways to die. Others hail from reclusive tribal warrior-cultures that time forgot. Some rely on dangerous illegal technology. Others fight with nothing but iron determination.

The circuits are small, so a fighter doesn't remain unknown for long. Soon her life grows complicated both inside and outside the Pit. Feuds, love affairs, alliances and betrayals bind her to the Pit like strands of a spider's web. Disappointed with the opportunities provided by her Manager, she may eventually seek out a new patron – gaining a dangerous new enemy as well.

The lucky fighters die in the Pit. The less fortunate simply retire, spirits broken by a long string of losses. But every year a singular competitor achieves all she ever dreamed, and asks – *was it worth the price?*

ENDS AND MEANS

The Ends and Means system for live-action roleplaying creates stories about the goals and dreams of a large ensemble cast.

As the person portraying a role, your job is that of a **Narrator**. You add imaginative narration to the story through your role. Your character is called a **Protagonist**. The person who narrates the rest of the setting into the story is the **Stage Manager**.



YOUR PROTAGONIST

First, get together with other Narrators and the Stage Manager. Your ideas alone do not create a protagonist. Listening to others' ideas helps develop your role better.

With the group, brainstorm concepts for your protagonist. Do you want to be a Manager or a Fighter? The story needs a roughly equal balance of both. There's also room for other roles, like the doctors, bookies and security that help the tournaments operate.

Think of a name or two. Fighters and Managers often go by aliases or stage names.

Work with other Narrators to create ties between your protagonist and theirs. Relationships create pure story material. The more you have to begin with, the better.

ENDS

Ends are those things your protagonist cares about deeply: long-term goals, wild dreams, unquenchable passions and unshakable beliefs.

- ↳ Become World-Famous
- ↳ Keep the Code of *Bushido*
- ↳ Make my Rival a Laughingstock
- ↳ Strike It Rich
- ↳ Discover my Father's Murderer
- ↳ Uphold the Law
- ↳ Win True Love

Choose three to six Ends. Write them down as short action phrases.

For the purposes of Steel Pit Fight Night, "Win the Tournament" and "Lead the Fellowship" are not appropriate Ends.

Why not? Because an End must differentiate your protagonist from others. If everyone in the game can claim the same End, it leads to boring play. Instead, ask yourself *why* your protagonist wants to win or lead: you'll discover a better End in the answer.

An End must also give your protagonist direction: it is not vague or generic. An End like "I look out for my own interests" lacks direction because it doesn't describe those interests.



MEANS

Means are how your character accomplishes his or her Ends: innate abilities, learned skills, worldly connections, combat styles or special equipment.

- ↳ Hell Viper Kung-Fu
- ↳ Vast Personal Wealth
- ↳ Fiery *Chi* Blasts
- ↳ Dazzling Beauty
- ↳ Speed-Boosting Drugs
- ↳ Cybernetic Arms
- ↳ U.S. Military Connections



Choose three to six Means. Write them down as short noun phrases.

Means are reasonably specific. "Jack-of-All-Trades" is too broad because you can call on it in any situation. Narrow down such a Means by splitting it up: "Boy Scout Skills" plus "Trivia Champion," for example.

Some super-science exists within the setting of this story. All such Means must respect the conservation of matter and energy. Prepare a technobabble explanation.

Supernatural power comes from the fighting spirit, or *Chi*, channeled through martial arts and the focused mind. Yang chi creates force, heat, and light. Yin chi destroys them.

"FINISH HIM!"

Once you have a concept, a name, three to six Ends, and three to six Means, finish your protagonist with these three attributes: **Weight Reserve: 50, Weight Limit: 10 and Plot Pool: 0.**

That's all. You're ready to join the story!