

Ironsworn_Story_OSRIC_001

Intro Notes & Previously...

As promised, although after a 6-month delay, I'm continuing the Great Pendragon Campaign using the Ironsworn RPG rules (solo).

Thane Beorn of Tissburi has adventured through the first three years of the campaign but the GM notes I wrote from the GPC, gave me a choice of performing a quest for King Uther, or accompanying my Troops on a naval campaign (map at the bottom of this document).

I decided that Beorn would follow the solo quest "The Embassy to King Malahaut" and while he was doing that, I'd create "Osric" his aging retainer (45-ish), and play through the naval campaign with him and the troops. As this is the only planned adventure for Osric, I'll make it a FORMIDABLE one.

IRONSWORN Solo Character				Experience
Osric of Tissburi				0
1 EDGE	3 HEART	2 IRON	1 SHADOW	2 WITS
Health 5	Spirit 5	Supply 5	Momentum 2 Max:10	Burn Reset:2

BONDS: Tissburi, Thane Beorn, Elspeth (Osric's 17-yr-old daughter – his wife died last year)

ASSET: **BANNER-SWORN** (to the Thane of Tissburi) When you Sojourn or Make Camp in the company of your banner-kin, add +1 and take +1 momentum on a hit.

ASSET: **STORYWEAVER** When you Secure an Advantage, Compel, or Forge a Bond by sharing an inspiring or enlightening song, poem, or tale, envision the story you tell. Then, add +1 and take +1 momentum on a hit.

ASSET: **SHIELDBEARER** When you Face Danger using your shield as cover, add +1. When you Clash in close quarters, take +1 momentum on a strong hit.

Osric used to serve Beorn's father and is now the Thane's second-in-command, often left to manage the domain and lead the troops, when Beorn is called away on other business.

In the summer of 486, Osric was with Beorn when they slew the Green Knight and helped Merlin gain the King's Magic Sword from the Lady of the Lake. While they were in "The Other World" they also slew a Giant.

Osric was also present at a battle the year before, when they were ambushed by Saxons from the Ravenclaw clan, so he shares the domain's hatred of that clan and the desire for revenge.

In 487 Beorn has gone north with the King, and Merlin, while Osric and the troops of Tissburi have been ordered to the port of Hantonne at the mouth of the River Test (seems to be modern-day Southampton).

THE STORY

In spring of 487 Beorn is away in the north with the King, and Merlin, while Osric and the troops of Tisburi have been ordered to the port of Hantonne at the mouth of the River Test (seems to be modern-day Southampton or at least at the start of the estuary leading to the Solent).

It is a 40-mile journey by modern roads and seems likely they would take a couple of days to reach Sarum, slowly gathering troops from other domains and then a couple of days march from there.

There is a lot of drinking as the various families from different domains get together and some supplies are wasted.

They reach Sarum and learn from Ealdorman Robert that they are to join Prince Madoc (Uther's son) at the Port and then raid along the saxon shore to destroy saxon boats.

Robert has to pick one of the Troop leaders to command the combined Sarum contingent. The choice would only be from among the actual Thanes and Osric is only acting on behalf of Thane Beorn.

Osric has to swear an Iron Vow to bring honour to the region by completing the Naval Engagements.

Robert chooses Mark (of Winterbourne Gunnett) to lead the Sarum contingent, a neutral choice in terms of how he views Tisbury and their commander.

They are able to spend a day camping outside Sarum, so Osric orders his troops to try to round up some provisions.

THE GAME MECHANICS

Undertake a Journey : **1** +2 wits = 3

vs **2** & **8** WEAK HIT

On a weak hit, you reach a waypoint and mark progress, but suffer -1 supply. (now 4)

As this is only a Troublesome journey they mark off 3 waypoints and reach Sarum.

However, there may be some friendly and some unfriendly factions, so I'll roll dice to determine the effect of Robert's choice

I decided to make this a **FORMIDABLE** Iron Vow (on a strong hit, the leader will be a staunch ally of Tisburri and will listen to Osric's advice).

Swear an Iron Vow : **5** +3 heart = 8

vs **10** & **6** WEAK HIT

On a weak hit, you are determined but begin your quest with more questions than answers. Take +1 momentum (now 3), and envision what you do to find a path forward

Make Camp : **3** +4 supply +1 Banner-sworn = 8

vs **10** & **10** MISS!! MATCH !!

THE STORY

One of the young men from Tisburri tries to steal a goat from a Sarum farmer and is arrested.

Osrice is unable to come to his defence (perhaps because of their lack of a Thane). The troops lose faith in Osrice when the young man is hanged!

Next they set out south to the estuary (about 20 miles)

The mutterings and the sly looks from his own troops make for an uncomfortable journey.

But Osrice manages to keep going.

It seems there has been some petty pilfering and supplies are diminishing quicker than they should.

Osrice decides to tell stories around the campfire that night to try to regain his men's trust.

His tale of the Giant and the Green Knight makes an impact, restoring their faith.

THE GAME MECHANICS

That result could not have been worse! Osrice now has to Pay the Price and for the Match, I'll either double the effect or make two rolls.

Pay the Price 06

A person or community you care about is exposed to danger

Pay the Price 03

A person or community you trusted loses faith in you, or acts against you.

Osrice will lose the benefit of his Asset: **Banner-sworn** until the troops regain faith in him.

Undertake a Journey : 2 +2 wits = 4

vs 5 & 6 MISS

On a miss, you are waylaid by a perilous event. Pay the Price

Pay the Price 76

It is stressful.

Endure Stress : 2 +5 spirit = 7

vs 8 & 1 WEAK HIT

On a weak hit, you press on.

Undertake a Journey : 4 +2 wits = 6

vs 3 & 7 WEAK HIT

On a weak hit, reach a waypoint but suffer -1 supply (now 3)

As this is only a Troublesome journey they mark off 3 waypoints (now 6/10)

Forge a Bond : 6 +3 heart +1 Storyteller = 10

vs 9 & 5 STRONG HIT

No benefits as this was to remove an existing penalty.

THE STORY

Because of the problems of the previous day, they are running slightly behind schedule.

They will have to make an early start and hope for no delays or they will arrive late, making a bad impression on Prince Madoc.

They manage to break camp efficiently and arrive at the Port in good time.

This will count as the first Progress on the Formidable Vow, marking off 1/10.

Prince Madoc explains the plans for this mission. Osric offers some advice, despite his lowly status, he has experience and can usually explain things clearly.

Madoc's ships ran for several days along the coast to Pevensey where they found a Saxon settlement with three ships lying at the harbour. They quickly ran up to the beach and the warriors leapt out to smash and burn.

Perhaps if Beorn had been leading them, the troops of Tisbury might have taken greater risks and tried to capture a ship, but Osric decided to lead them more cautiously.

Despite his cautious approach, the battle turned nasty as the angry Saxons swarmed to the defence of their ships.

Only by a great effort was Osric able to re-focus his troops and cut their way out of the enemy.

Troops from a rival domain of Sarum (Cholderton) had been close by but had not come to their aid. Their commander Thane Brandon, called them away and Osric had seen the sly look he had given.

THE GAME MECHANICS

Undertake a Journey : 3 +2 wits = 5

vs 6 & 3 **WEAK HIT**

As this is only a Troublesome journey they mark off 3 waypoints (now 9/10)

Reach Your Destination

9 Progress vs 4 & 8 **STRONG HIT**

Choose to take +1 Momentum (now 4).

Secure an Advantage : 6 +3 heart +1

Storyteller = 10 vs 4 & 8 **STRONG HIT**

Chooses +2 momentum (now 6)

In the GPC Document, it states...

"In the first battle, the knights land near Pevensey. They surprise the foe completely and are confronted with 1 Saxon per 3 knights. The ships of King Ælle (of the South Saxons) are easily destroyed."

... This sounds as though the first engagement should only be Troublesome. I usually allow myself the decision to increase the danger for the chance of additional rewards (which is what led to Beorn's terrible result against the Ravenclaws last year).

Battle : 1 +2 iron = 3 vs 5 & 9 **MISS**

Osric will have to spend momentum to turn that into a **WEAK HIT** (momentum now reset to 2).

On a weak hit, you achieve your objective, but not without cost. Pay the Price.

Pay the Price 49

A new danger or foe is revealed.

The victory at Pevensey counts as another progress on the Formidable Vow.

THE STORY

A few more days of sailing and rowing east brought Madoc's little fleet to Dover.

Following the events of the first battle, Osric will attempt to make some adjustments to the plans to ensure they are not left to rely on Cholderton's forces for assistance.

Under cover of night, the troops attempt to sneak into position. There are enemy fighters on guard by the boats, but our heroes just manage get the drop on them.

The first strike has the benefit of surprise and most of the guards are cut down in the first pass.

They seek to end the fight quickly, but the cornered Jutes fight to the bitter end. Osric finds himself facing a desperate final sword thrust.

Although he gets a minor wound in his leg, troop morale is high.

THE GAME MECHANICS

In the GPC Document, it states...

"Next the fleet lands at Dover, and the knights must fight 2 Saxons per 3 knights. The ships of the Jutes are burnt."

This still sounds like only a "Troublesome" fight, but I'll run it in more detail instead of a single "battle" roll.

Secure an Advantage : 4 +2 wits = 6

vs 8 & 1 **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, your advantage is short-lived. Take +1 momentum (now +3)

Enter the Fray (sneaking into Dover) : 5 +1

shadow = 6 vs 8 & 2 **WEAK HIT**

Choose to take Initiative.

Strike : 3 +2 iron = 5 vs 1 & 2 **STRONG HIT**

On a strong hit, inflict +1 harm. You retain initiative. Armed warriors inflict 2 hits normally, so this does 3. (As it is only "Troublesome", each point of harm is 3 progress so 9/10)

Strike : 6 +2 iron = 8 vs 4 & 2 **STRONG HIT**

On a strong hit, inflict +1 harm. You retain initiative (progress 10/10)

End the Fight : 10 progress vs 10 & 5 **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, you win, but choose an effect... Choose It's worse than you thought: Endure Harm. Nb. Because Osric is fighting alongside the troops, I can choose "Endure Harm" or "Companion Endure Harm". If the failure had been a "1" it would have to have been "Companion Endure Harm".

Endure Harm : 5 +5 health = 10

vs 5 & 7 **STRONG HIT**

Choose "Embrace the Pain" +1 Momentum (now 4) and lose 1 health (now 4).

The victory counts as another progress on the Vow (3/10)

THE STORY

Madoc's fleet sail up the Blackwater River and find another small group of saxon boats.

A week later, sailing up the river Blackwater, where scouts have spotted more saxon ships, Prince Madoc asks for volunteers to sneak ashore to burn the enemy boats.

During the voyage, Osric has time to investigate Thane Brandon. Although he cannot find enough proof to accuse a man of higher rank, he is sure that Brandon is secretly passing word to the Saxons to warn them of the fleet's approach.

When Brandon offers to lead the shore party, Osric volunteers as well, in order to take the Tissburi Troops along to keep an eye on him.

Despite Osric's intentions, the Thane sent a few of his own men sneaking forward, while the men of Cholderton and Tisburri lay waiting for their signal.

After an hour or so the scouts returned and conferred secretly with Brandon.

The Thane orders Osric and his men to form up on the left side of the hollow with his own men on the right.

Suddenly saxon troops charge down the hill at Osric's men while the men of Cholderton do nothing.

THE GAME MECHANICS

The GPC document states...

"they sail up the Blackwater River and land at Maldon. Only a few ships are present, which are easily burnt without a fight"

However, I need more "progress" points for a Formidable Vow, so will find a way to make this another meaningful encounter.

Another week at sea is long enough to allow Osric to try to work out why Thane Brandon has it in for them.

Gather Information : **4** +2 wits = 6

vs **1** & **4** **STRONG HIT**

Envision what you learn (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and take +2 momentum (now 6)

Ask the Oracle **37**

Settlement Trouble – In league with the enemy

As we arrive at the scene, I'll use an Oracle roll to decide if Brandon is really in-league with saxons (50%) or if there is some other reason for his behaviour (50%). If he is a traitor, then the encounter at Maldon will become Formidable!

50% chance of Brandon being a traitor **49**

Can Osric spot the furtive looks?

Gather Information : **5** +2 wits = 7

vs **10** & **6** **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, the information complicates your quest or introduces a new danger. Envision what you discover (Ask the Oracle if unsure), and take +1 momentum (now 5).

The new danger will be the arrival of some saxon troops and the sudden betrayal by the Choldertons.

Osric's existing suspicion will prevent them being surprised.

THE STORY

Osric had shared his suspicions with several of the men and the Tissburi troops are well-prepared to strike.

At this critical moment, Harald Carpenter, face twisted with hatred, leaps at Osric, knocking them both down the slope. Harald snarls at him "You and your master killed my brother. I really wanted to kill Beorn, but now you'll have to do".

The two men begin to stab and slash at each other. Harald is a dangerous opponent.

Harald is younger and fitter and his attacks are driven by pure hatred, forcing Osric to give ground.

Impatiently, Brandon orders his men to join the fight "No witnesses from Tissburi must be allowed to escape".

Then he follows Harald and Osric, unsheathing his broadsword.

THE GAME MECHANICS

If the Tissburi troops appear to be winning (6/10 progress), Brandon will order his men to join the fray (wiping out all progress so far). They can't allow any of the Tissburi men to make it back to the fleet alive!

If Tissburi win, this could add 2 or 3 progress to the Vow.

Enter the Fray : **3** +3 heart = 6

vs **7** & **2** WEAK HIT

Choose +2 momentum or Initiative – I'll take Initiative!

Strike : **3** +2 iron = 5 vs **6** & **8** MISS

On a miss, your attack fails and you must Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Pay the Price **79**

A surprising development complicates your quest!

One of the Tissburi men has already been revealed (in a previous session) to HATE Beorn, I'm going to use him to engage Osric directly while the Troops (as a domain companion) have to fight the Saxons.

I'll run a couple of passes for the individual fight for each pass at the group fight.

OSRIC vs HARALD

Enter the Fray : **5** +2 wits = 7 vs **7** & **9** MISS

On a miss, combat begins with you at a disadvantage. Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Pay the Price **49**

A new danger or foe is revealed! This is getting complicated in the narrative. Either Harald has some supernatural assistance or Thane Brandon's troops will join the fight immediately (50/50).

Supernatural or Treachery **64**

Brandon orders his men to join the fight alongside the Saxons. 50/50 whether Brandon himself will join Harald.

Brandon aids Harald **71**

This makes Harald + Brandon = Formidable!

THE STORY

Battered from both sides, Osric is forced to defend himself desperately with his shield.

While the three men struggle desperately, the small band of Tissburi men somehow manage to hold their own against the formidable opposition.

With Osric's unexpected spear thrust, the three men roll further down the hill to the river's edge.

The two younger men recover more quickly.

A heavy blow from Harald knocks his shield away.

Brandon kicks away Osric's spear and the two men advance grinning. Harald scowls at the Thane who grudgingly holds back. "If it's so important to you, you can finish the old fool."

THE GAME MECHANICS

Clash : 6 +2 iron = 8 vs 8 & 10 **MISS**

On a miss, you are outmatched and must Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Pay the Price 57

Choose "delay" or "disadvantage" – disadvantage, which I'll take as minus 1 on next pass.

The Domain Troops (effectively Iron +2, Health 5, Momentum 2)

Strike : 6 +2 iron = 8 vs 3 & 8 **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm and lose initiative.

Harm of 2, ticks 2/10 progress.

Clash : 4 +2 iron = 6 vs 9 & 4 **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm, but then Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative. Osric inflicts 2 harm (progress 2/10).

Pay the Price 17

Your action has an unintended effect.

Clash : 6 +2 iron = 8 vs 10 & 10 **MISS!!**

MATCH !!

On a miss, you are outmatched and must Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Pay the Price 00

Worst possible result – 10/10 followed-by 00!

Pay the Price 26

Something of value is lost or destroyed – Osric's Shield.

Pay the Price 28

Something of value is lost or destroyed – Osric's Spear

THE STORY

Back near the top of the hill, the troops are doing OK, there are a few dying Saxons writhing on the ground and so far none of ours seriously wounded.

It is Osric's turn to surprise his enemies. Rather than fall back further (into the river) he charges, dagger in hand, screaming "Traitor!" directly at Harald.

Ignoring the scratch, Harald thrusts again with his spear, forcing Osric to desperately dodge.

Perhaps Harald's treachery stirred something in these men, but they are fighting like cornered lions!

As the Saxons, and men of Cholderton press their attack, more of them fall on the valiant wall of spears.

THE GAME MECHANICS

The Domain Troops (effectively Iron +2, Health 5, Momentum 2)

They risk all to Turn the Tide and seize initiative.

Strike : **6** +2 iron = 8 vs **10** & **4** **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm and lose initiative.

Harm of 2, ticks 4/10 progress.

Strike : **1** +2 iron = 3 vs **1** & **3** **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm and lose initiative.

Harm this time is only 1 as he only has a dagger now. Progress 3/10.

Nb. He can only attempt Turn the Tide once!

Clash : **1** +2 iron = 3 vs **2** & **5** **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm, but then Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Another point of Progress 4/10.

Pay the Price **62**

-3 Health (now 2).

Endure Harm : **1** +4 health = 5 vs **6** & **8** **MISS**

-1 momentum (now 4)

The Domain Troops (effectively Iron +2, Health 5, Momentum 2)

Clash : **3** +2 iron = 5 vs **2** & **4** **STRONG HIT**

On a strong hit, inflict your harm, you have the initiative and choose one...

* You bolster your position: Take +1 momentum.

* You find an opening: Inflict +1 harm

Harm of 3, ticks 7/10 progress.

THE STORY

Osric is getting desperate.

But he has been in danger many times before before.

He manages to score another hit on Harald, then leaps back out of the way of his spear and finds himself sinking in the mud at the edge of the river. In moments it is up to his knees.

Even in this desperate position, as Harald leans in for another spear thrust, Osric knocks it to one side and stab the young man in the arm.

The spear grazes along his side and the dark water of the river turns darker still.

The Tissburi men have the initiative now. Hearing Osric's desperate cry they strike as one. For a moment it seems as though they might actually win this battle.

At the river's edge, Harald closes in for the kill but stumbles in the mud.

With a desperate lunge Osric stabs him through the throat, snatches up his fallen spear and starts to clamber out of the mud.

The sight of this grim-faced veteran warrior sends Brandon running back up the hill towards his remaining men, only to find that they too are doing badly.

THE GAME MECHANICS

Clash : 5 +2 iron = 7 vs 5 & 7 **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm, but then Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

Another point of Progress 5/10

Pay the Price 50

A new danger or foe is revealed. This guy just can't catch a break!

Clash : 3 +2 iron = 5 vs 1 & 10 **WEAK HIT**

Another point of Progress 6/10

Pay the Price 32

Something of value is lost or destroyed.

Osric has nothing left so I'll take it as another point of health damage (now 1).

The Domain Troops (effectively Iron +2, Health 5, Momentum 2)

Strike : 4 +2 iron = 6 vs 8 & 2 **WEAK HIT**

On a weak hit, inflict your harm and lose initiative.

Harm of 2, ticks 9/10 progress.

Sadly they have lost initiative, so can't risk ending the conflict.

Clash : 6 +2 iron = 8 vs 4 & 1 **STRONG HIT**

On a strong hit, inflict your harm, you have the initiative and choose to inflict +1 harm. Progress 8/10.

End the Fight : 8 progress vs 9 & 1 **WEAK**

HIT

Victory, but has to choose a consequence -- Choose - **Others won't forget: You are marked for vengeance.**

The Domain Troops (effectively Iron +2, Health 5, Momentum 2)

Clash : 1 +2 iron = 3 vs 9 & 9 **MISS!! MATCH**

!!

On a miss, you are outmatched and must Pay the Price. Your foe has initiative.

THE STORY

Much equipment (shields, spears, swords) has been lost in this fight. The brave troops continue to fight on with whatever they can rip from the bodies of their fallen foes.

With Harald's spear, Osric heads wearily after the treacherous Thane. Brandon runs off into the night and Osric rallies his troops to finish the fight.

With the Saxons all dead or fleeing for the hills, the boats are unguarded and Osric is only too happy to set them all alight.

They make their way back to the fleet. Somehow, they have managed to not lose a single member of the Tisburri troop.

They bring Prince Madoc the news of Brandon's treachery

THE GAME MECHANICS

Pay the Price 30

Something of value is lost or destroyed.

I'll interpret this as a loss of enough equipment that the domain will lose 1 from its Supply. (now 3)

End the Fight : 9 progress vs 2 & 5 **STRONG**

HIT

!!!Victory!!!

This counts as **3** Progress towards the Vow (6/10)



1 = Where The fleet gathers

2 = Pevensey

3 = Dover

4 = Maldon (up the Blackwater River)

Wikipedia has a brief note about “Madoc ap Uthyr”

He is memorialized with The Death Song of Madawg (Marwnad Madawg) from the Book of Taliesin which laments his death at Erof's hands.

Whose is the quadrangular grave

With its four stones around the front?

The grave of Madawg the intrepid warrior.

According to the Great Pendragon Campaign, there are still a few more encounters left in this Naval Campaign, but that is enough for this session.