

Statistics Regarding Classes: (Additions) — BARDS

by Doug Schwegman

INTRODUCTION

... I believe it is a logical addition to the D & D scene and the one I have composed is a hodgepodge of at least three different kinds, the Norse 'skald', the Celtic 'bard', and the southern European 'minstrel'. The skalds were often old warriors who were a kind of self appointed historian whose duty was to record the ancient battles, blood feuds, and deeds of exceptional prowess by setting them to verse much like the ancient Greek poets did. Tolkien, a great Nordic scholar, copied this style several times in the Lord of the Rings trilogy (for example Bilbo's chant of Earendil the Mariner). The Celts, especially in Britain, had a much more organized structure in which the post of Barbs as official historians fell somewhere between the Gwelfili or public recorders and the Druids who were the judges as well as spiritual leaders. In the Celtic system Bards were trained by the Druids for a period of almost twenty years before they assumed their duties, among which was to follow the heroes into battle to provide an accurate account of their deeds, as well as to act as trusted intermediaries to settle hostilities among opposing tribes. By far the most common conception of a Bard is as a minstrel who entertained to courts of princes and kings in France, Italy and parts of Germany in the latter middle ages. Such a character was not as trust worthy as the Celtic or Nordic Bards and could be compared to a combination Thief-Illusionist. These characters were called Jongleurs by the French, from which the corrupt term juggler and court jester are remembered today ...

I wanted to put the Bard into perspective so that his multitudinous abilities in Dungeons and Dragons can be explained. I have fashioned the character more after the Celtic and Norse types than anything else, thus he is a character who resembles a fighter more than anything else, but who knows something about the mysterious forces of magic and is well adept with his hands, etc.

A Bard is a jack-of-all-trades in Dungeons and Dragons, he is both an amateur thief and magic user as well as a good fighter. He is supposedly able to extract himself from delicate situations through the use of diplomacy, but since this does not always work he is given the innate ability to charm creatures. A Bard has the thieving abilities of a thief one half his level rounded off to the lower level, thus a Bard 11th level would have the abilities of a 5th level thief. Elves, Dwarves, and Hobbits may be Bards but cannot progress beyond the 8th level (Minstrel). Elves receive an extra 5% on their charm and lore scores and receive all the extra benefits of an elven thief. Dwarves and Hobbits receive only their additional thieving benefits. A Bard may use any weapon and for purposes of hit probability he advances in steps based on four levels like clerics. For purposes of saving throws they are treated like clerics as well.

The percentage listed under charm on the Bard's statistics table reflects the percentage chance a Bard has, at each level, of mesmerizing any creature that can hear his song. However, creatures of more than three hit dice, and men types (Elves, Dwarves, Hobbits, etc.) of 5th level or greater, have a higher resistance to the Bard's charm. For every hit die above three a creature, monster, etc., has, subtract 5% from a Bard's chances of mesmerizing it. Likewise, for every level above 4th, men subtract 5% from a Bard's chances of mesmerizing them, and a Monk subtracts 10% for every level he has attained from the Bard's chances. Certain monsters have an especially high resistance to the Bard's charm, like undead, who subtract 10% off the Bard's chances of charming them for every hit die they possess, and Balrogs, who have a 200% resistance to the Bard's charm. However, in some cases a Bard's song may be very helpful, as in the case of the harpies' song, which the Bard can negate by playing. Some monsters even consider a Bard to be a great treasure and many legends are told of Dragons who refused to let Bards stop playing their restful melodies ... A Bard may attempt to use his charm once per day per level. When a Bard attempts to use his charm he rolls percentile dice once and all those creatures within hearing distance (app. 60 ft.), except the Bard's own party, whose adjusted charm scores are equal to or greater than the number rolled are mesmerized. While a creature is mesmerized by a Bard it does nothing but listen to the Bard play, however, if it is distracted (by a loud noise, etc.) or if it is attacked the charm is broken. Other things affect the Bard's ability to charm; for example, if the creatures were previously enraged or if they are particularly hungry, etc., the chances of charming them may be slightly reduced. While a Bard has the creature mesmerized he may attempt to implant a suggestion in the creature's subconscious, these should be relatively simple suggestions in the case of low intelligence creatures, the complexity of the suggestion being allowed to increase with increasing intelligence of the charmed creature, in all cases it is wise to follow the guidelines of the third level magic user's spell 'suggestion' and saving throws are always applicable versus the Bard's suggestion. If a creature makes its saving throw from a Bard's suggestion (save as vs. magic) then it will immediately realize what has happened and more than likely attack the party. A Bard receives experience points for charming and suggesting according to the hit dice of the opponent (treat as an assist in most cases).

A Bard's Lore percentage reflects the Bard's knowledge of legends, magic, etc. This is the percentage change a Bard has of telling what certain objects are, what they do, their properties, purposes, etc. This percentage also reflects his knowledge of locales and legends outside of the dungeon; the referee must decide which places and legends a Bard would have a chance of knowing on the outdoor maps. A Bard's Lore percentage is especially accurate inside the dungeon for reflecting a Bard's chances of successfully delineating the properties of any weapon (its intelligence and ego if any and its 'pluses' etc.) and for correctly doing this a Bard receives additional experience points (generally 100 pts. for every point of intelligence and ego as well as pluses to hit). Note that a Bard does not have to draw or use the weapon to tell its intelligence, alignment, etc., since his knowledge of the weapon comes from legends and his experience in recognizing various types of weapons and armor, both magical and non-magical, as well as his excellent knowledge of magical runes. When a Bard attempts to describe the purposes of an artifact or misc. magic item his chances of success are at least halved, especially when it comes to items that the Bard himself cannot use. Not even the highest Bard can tell any of the books apart, and only a Master Bard will have any chance of telling the different kinds of necklaces and scarabs apart, although almost any Bard has a good chance of identifying a cursed spear of back biting or a shield of missile attraction when he sees one.

In regard to magical items, a Bard may not use any wand, staff, or rod other than those usable by Thieves and Fighters or every class. In regard to miscellaneous magic a Bard may use anything a Fighter or Thief may use or those items employable by all classes. Certain miscellaneous magical items work better in the hands of a Bard, for example a Lyre of Building negates the effects of a horn of blasting for 12 turns and acts as if 200 men had laboured for one week when a Bard plays it. Pipes of the Sewers will call 1-100 giant rats in 1-3 turns when a Bard plays them. Since Bard's are a mixture of several classes (though they belong mainly to the class of fighters) they may benefit from many books, thus a manual of stealthy pilfering would give a Bard ¼ of the experience points needed to reach the next level, the proper Libram would award ½ of the experience points needed for the next level, and a manual of Puissant Skill at Arms would award ¾ of the points needed to gain the next level of experience. As far as damage from books goes Bards are treated as fighters. Bards may not use fighter's potions; however, they may read scrolls due to their vast knowledge of magical runes. All defensive pluses (i.e. rings of protection, etc.) subtract 5% from the Bard's chances of charming creatures.

Bards are basically neutral in nature though they may be lawful or chaotic. If a Bard decides to become lawful he will lose his thieving abilities. Bards and Druids are closely connected and since they both belong to the same sect each must aid the other if they are in need. Bards are usually wanderers and do not like to settle down, for this reason only a Master Bard may build a castle, other Bards are expected to find short time employment or lodgings in return for their songs and legends. Bards are extremely quick at picking up languages, customs, etc., and have a vast knowledge of cults, religions, and legends. Thus Bards are allowed to speak as many different languages as their intelligence score. Bards are limited to chainmail or leather armor. If a Bard chooses to wear chainmail his chances of climbing walls and moving silently are reduced to zero. Note also that a Bard does not receive +4 to hit from behind or x2 on damage.

Bard's Name	College	Dice 6 sides	MU Spell Dist.							Charm	Lore	Exp. Pts.
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
Rhymer	—	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10%	10%	0
Lyrist	Fochlucan	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	20%	20%	1,000
Sonateer	Fochlucan	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	30%	30%	4,000
Skald	Fochlucan	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	40%	40%	9,000
Racaraide	Mac-Fuirmidh	5	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	50%	50%	16,000
Jongleur	Mac-Fuirmidh	6	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	60%	60%	25,000
Troubadour	Mac-Fuirmidh	7	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	70%	70%	50,000
Minstrel*	Doss	8	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	80%	80%	100,000
Muse	Doss	9	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	90%	90%	150,000
Lore Master	Doss	10	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	100%	100%	200,000
Bard	Canaith	10+1	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	110%	110%	250,000
Master Bard	Canaith	10+2	4	2	2	-	-	-	-	120%	120%	300,000
Mstr. Bard 13	Canaith	10+3	4	3	2	-	-	-	-	130%	130%	400,000
Mstr. Bard 14	Cli	10+4	4	3	2	1	-	-	-	140%	140%	500,000
Mstr. Bard 15	Cli	10+5	4	3	3	1	-	-	-	150%	150%	600,000
Mstr. Bard 16	Cli	10+6	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	160%	160%	700,000
Mstr. Bard 17	Anstruth	10+7	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	170%	170%	800,000
Mstr. Bard 18	Anstruth	10+8	4	3	3	2	1	-	-	180%	180%	900,000
Mstr. Bard 19	Anstruth	10+9	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	190%	190%	1,000,000
Mstr. Bard 20	Ollamh	10+10	4	4	3	2	1	-	-	200%	200%	1,100,000
Mstr. Bard 21	Ollamh	10+11	4	4	4	3	2	-	-	210%	210%	1,200,000
Mstr. Bard 22	Ollamh	10+12	4	4	4	3	3	-	-	220%	220%	1,300,000
Mstr. Bard 23	Ollamh	10+13	4	4	4	4	3	-	-	230%	230%	1,400,000
Mstr. Bard 24	Ollamh	10+14	4	4	4	4	4	1	-	240%	240%	1,500,000
Mstr. Bard 25	Ollamh	10+15	5	5	4	4	4	2	1	250%	250%	1,600,000

* Highest Level a Dwarf, Hobbit, or Elf can attain

As a Bard progresses upwards he collects followers to follow him on his journeys, these wayfarers often become his loyal servants. Therefore a Bard of the degree of Fochlucan usually has two first level followers, a Bard of Mac-Fuirmidh has one second level and two first level followers, and two second levels, a Canaith Bard has three first, two second and one third level followers, a Bard of Cli has three first, three second and two third level followers, a Bard of the Anstruth degree is attended by three first level, three second level, three third level and three fourth level followers, a Bard of the Doss degree is accompanied by two first level followers, and a Bard of the esteemed Ollamh degree is attended by four servants of each level from first level to sixth level. These servants do not have to be paid, however when one dies he is never replaced, A Bard uses the following table to determine his followers:

01-30 Bard 31-55 Druid 56-75 Fighter 76-90 Thief 91-99 Magic User
00 Roll twice ignoring 00.

These characters have +3 loyalty and their characteristics should be determined. Note that if a Bard occurs, he himself will not have any followers. It is unnecessary to keep track of experience points for these servants since first level servants become second etc. as a Bard progresses through the colleges of Bard's

To become a Bard a character must have at least an average strength and intelligence. Below average dexterity reduces the Brd's thieving abilities by 1/2. A Bard must also have an above average charisma, for every point above 14 a Bard adds 5% to his charming abilities.

Mighty Magic Miscellany

Barding Harps by D. Schwegman

Barding harps are rare magical items which aid a bard on his long and dangerous adventures. There are five types of Barding harps, one on each of the miscellaneous magic tables.

TABLE 1 Fochlucan Harp: This harp adds 10% to a bard's chance of charming a creature. In addition to this it has three songs. The first of these and most powerful is its song of protection from evil which is equivalent to the third level spell. The second song is one of defense which casts a shield around the bard and is like the first level spell 'shield'. The last song casts a circle of light around what ever the bard desires (the party, an object, etc.) and is equivalent to the second level magic user's spell 'continual light'. This harp can only be played by a bard of the fochlucan college or higher, a first level bard who attempts to play the harp will take from 1-10 points of damage. The songs of this harp are playable only once per day by the bards of the Fochlucan college, for each additional college above this a bard is able to play the songs one more time per day.

TABLE 2 Mac-Fuirmidh Harp: This harp adds 20% to a bard's chances of charming a creature and also possesses the three songs of the Fochlucan Harp. In addition to this the harp has two more songs. The first of these turns the bard invisible and keeps him so until he stops playing. In this state he may still be located by the sound of his harp though the sound appears to come from nowhere; this makes the bard very hard to hit and baffles stupid creatures. The second song enables a bard to strengthen fighters and is like the second level strength spell except that it lasts as long as the bard has strength to keep playing, the spell is broken when the bard stops or is stopped by interruption. The Mac-Fuirmidh Harp is playable only by bards of the Mac-Fuirmidh college or higher, its songs, like the other barding harps, are playable but once per day unless a bard is of a higher college whereupon he may play the songs of this harp once more per day for every higher college he has attained. Note that a Mac-Fuirmidh bard would be able to play the harps first three songs (shield, protection/evil, and light) twice per day. A bard who is lower than the MacFuirmidh college who tries to play the harp will suffer 2-20 points of damage.

TABLE 3 Doss Lyre: This Lyre adds 30% to a bard's chance of charming creatures and has all the abilities of the Mac-Fuirmidh Harp as well. In addition to this the lyre has two special songs. The first song enables the bard to fly up to the limitations of the third level spell 'fly' with the exception that it lasts as long as the bard is able to play. The faster or the higher a bard tries to fly the quicker he becomes tired. Generally, a bard is only able to keep up maximum speed or very high altitudes for as many turns as his level; after this a roll of a 1-4 on a six-sided die indicates the bard has collapsed, unconscious from his efforts. The second song of the lyre is equivalent to the third level dispell magic spell in which the bard ratios his level over the level of the caster to determine his chance of success. These two songs are playable but once per day unless the bard is of a higher college than Doss. A bard of the college of Doss with this harp could use each of the first three songs three times per day, the next two songs (invisibility and strength) twice each per day. A bard of a lower college than Doss who attempts to play this lyre will suffer from 6-36 points of damage.

TABLE 4 Canaith Lyre: This lyre adds 40% to a bard's chance of charming creatures and has all the abilities of a Doss Lyre. In addition it has two special

songs. The first song is like the fourth level 'confusion' spell. The second is like the fourth level 'fear' spell. In addition to this the lyre has a healing song which when played can heal the listeners from 2-12 points of damage, this song is playable once per day only regardless of a bard's higher levels. A bard of a college lower than Canaith who attempts to play the Lyre will suffer between 6-48 points of damage.

TABLE 5 Cli Mandolin: This Mandolin adds 50% to a bard's chance of charming creatures and has all the abilities of a Canaith Lyre. In addition to this it has the power of telekinesis, contains one elemental, and can heal better than the Canaith Lyre, being able to heal from 3-18 points of damage. (Note that this is the only healing it can do; the abilities of the Canaith Lyre are not accumulative in this Mandolin; that is, it does *not* heal 2- 12 and 3-18 from those who listen to its song. This Mandolin also has a song of fire which is like the fourth level spell and can remove curses like the fourth level spell. For each college above Cli a bard can use these two spells once more per day. A Bard of a lower college than Cli who attempts to play this Mandolin will suffer from 6-60 points of damage.

It is important to note that a bard cannot tell two barding harps apart for all of the above instruments have powerful enchantments laid upon them so that they all appear as harps and until a bard attempts to play them he does not know what type of instrument it might be, nor what college it is from, for only a wish could reveal this information.

BOOT HILL Experimental Rule

by Brian Blume

A man can be an excellent shot with a gun when it comes to target practice, but when he faces another man who is also armed, his bravery shows. If he is not composed of iron nerves, his aim is liable to waver. This is reflected in TSR's BOOT HILL rules for western miniatures and campaigns, by modifications to the TO HIT CHART.

In a similar manner, a gunfighter may be greased lightning on the draw in practice, but when he faces an armed opponent, he may flinch on the draw if he is not steely-nerved. To reflect this in BOOT HILL, try the following experimental rule:

To the FIRST SHOT CHART, add a new column for Bravery. It should look as follows:

Bravery	
Coward	-3
Cowardly	-1
Average	0
Above Average	+1
Brave	+2
Very Brave	+3
Fearless	+4
Foolhardy	+5

This is still only an experimental rule, and your comments are welcome. If the rule is approved by you, the gamers, it will probably be added to the book in the next printing.

May your aim be true and may your spurs never rust!

