

The Purifying Snow Monastery Gazetteer

History

The Purifying Snow Monastery was founded 500 years ago by a monk of the yellow order who felt that only a harsh environment can form a strong body and that only a strong body can house the perfect soul. After getting the permission from his abbot, Fei Fu wandered to the Mountains of the North and climbed the highest of these mountains to found his monastery in a cave complex. Quickly, he attracted followers among the people of the mountains due to his healing arts and deep wisdom.

After 150 years a powerful fortress had been carved into the rock that housed the original cave and Fei's followers lived decently of the food given to them by the locals in return for their protection. It was around this time that a vengeful Emperor sought to crush the power of the monks and mutilated Tao Dao, the founder of the Steps of the Wind style.

Despite these dangers, the monastery prospered and with the new fighting style having become a cornerstone of their philosophy, the monks were left alone for the remainder of their history. In fact they decreased contact to the outside even further and few people can claim to have seen one of the monks.

Customs & Religion

The monastery is an orthodox yellow order and sees the perfection of the soul as the means for a higher form of reincarnation. They also believe that only through harsh environmental conditions, a body can overcome its limitations and house a pure soul.

Life in the monastery is monotonous and hard. A typical day consists of training

lessons in the Steps of the Wind technique, moral teachings, meditation, and hard work.

The ruler of the monastery is the abbot, who rarely leaves his state of meditation to directly interfere with the everyday activities of his monks. The factual ruler is therefore the master of the kitchen, who also handles the financial aspects of the monastery.

While technically all monks are equal, there are some who have achieved different states of enlightenment and are therefore treated with different levels of respect. Gaining a new level of insight is achieved by the holy tests. There are four tests, as described in the sidebar.



The Holy Tests

By taking these tests upon them in the order described here, the monks gain new levels of enlightenment.

1. The Riddle of the Fly: "Does a tree make a sound when it falls down in a forest and nobody is present?" This question is meditated upon for days and the answer is different for each monk. (Knowledge (religion) DC 20 to find an answer to this riddle)

2. Balance of the Soul: The monk must balance on the top of a pole for a day (Balance DC 20)

3. Resist Temptation: The monk must meditate for a week without eating in the kitchens of the monastery (Will Save DC 18)

4. Visions of Death: The monk must jump from a height of 100 feet and survive to gain insight into the terror of death.

Dress

The monks of the Purifying Snow Monastery dress in thin yellow robes that seem entirely inappropriate to the climate they live in. When training or

when expecting a fight, they wear yellow trousers.

The master of the kitchen wears white robes with a yellow flower pattern, the abbot is completely naked and has had his skin painted with gold. In fact most visitors mistake him for a statue at first.

Food

The monks eat rice, yak cheese, and a stone hard bread made from a local grain.

Important Personalities

- **Tao Doa:** The founder of the Steps of the Wind technique developed this style after his arms were chopped off for a crime that he did not commit.
- **Fei Fu:** The founder of the monastery, a skinny tall monk with a dragon tattoo on his chest, the symbol of the monastery where he was raised.
- **Shui Feng:** The current abbot who has achieved divinity and is rumoured to have godlike powers.
- **San Soo:** A rebellious monk who insists on training with a nunchaku. Only his fantastic skills have silenced his critics.

