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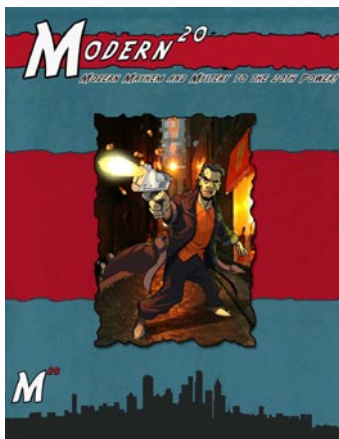
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MODERN²⁰

Charles Rice's
next evolution
in modern d20
gaming!

Modern
Mayhem and
Mystery to the
20th Power!



MODERN²⁰: SUPPLEMENT #1

BY CHARLES RICE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Modern²⁰ Supplement #1*. This is a selection of rules and options that, if I were writing *Modern²⁰* today, would be in the core rules. In time, the material in this supplement might actually be folded into the core rules, suitable for any modern campaign.

This is why the optional Psionics and Ki skills from *The Hunters* and *Martial Arts²⁰* are included but not the feats that supported them. The skills provide relatively minor benefits and are thus suitable for the vast majority of modern campaigns. Once the feats (from their sources) are added to these skills, they get much more powerful and would be suitable for a smaller, more specialized selection of modern campaigns.

Enjoy this addendum to *Modern²⁰*, hopefully it will liven up your campaigns as it did mine.

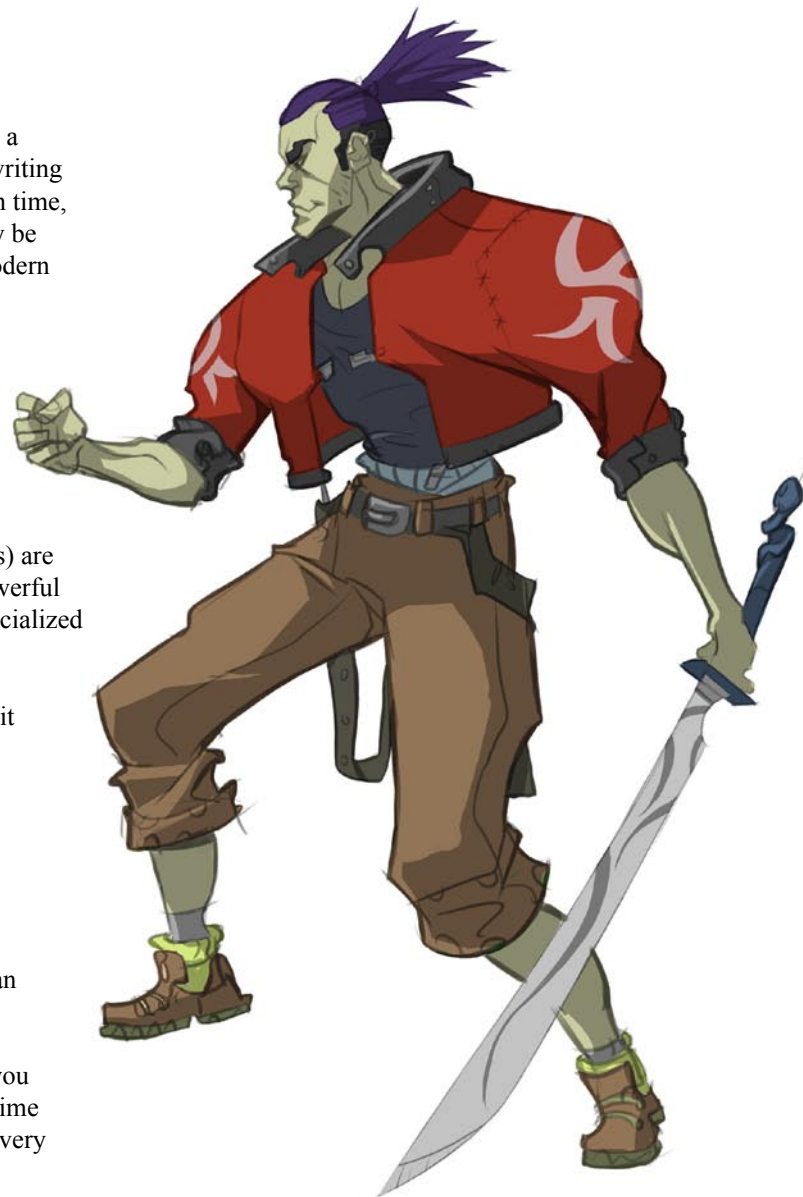
NEW OCCUPATIONS

LABORER

You are a manual laborer.

Professional Skills: Athletics, Outdoorsman and Perception

Improved Feats: *Die Hard*: when you are knocked unconscious by non-lethal damage you may make a Recovery save in the minimum time (one hour); *High Pain Threshold*: +3 to Recovery



saves; *Strength Training*: +2 Strength; *Talented (Athletics and Outdoorsman)*: this feat also grants a +2 bonus to Perception

SCIENTIST

You make your living on the cutting edge of an academic field.

Professional Skills: Academics, Computers and Perception

Improved Feats: *Book Learning*: +2 Intelligence; *Career Advancement*: +2 Reputation; *Cross Training*: two addition class skills; *Expert in your field*: your Reputation modifier is considered +2 higher for purposes of this feat

Occupation Specific Perks: *Defense Scientist*: you are a scientist known be friendly and available for government projects, granting you a +3 bonus on Influence check with the government or military and a +3 bonus to Reputation when requisitioning equipment from them; *Activist Scientist*: you are a scientist known to be friendly to ecological groups, anti-war groups and fringe groups (such as UFO hunters), granting you a +3 bonus on Influence checks with such non-governmental groups as well as a +3 Reputation when requisitioning equipment from them.

STUNTMAN

You make your living performing dangerous stunts and falls on film.

Professional Skills: Acrobatics, Outdoorsman and Vehicles

Improved Feats: *Cat's Landing*: you subtract and additional 10 ft. from the height of any fall; *Defensive Attack*: your defense bonus is increased to 1.5 per -1 penalty you take on your attack rolls (-1 attack for +1 Defense, -2 attack for +3 Defense and so forth); *Defensive Roll*: when an opponent strikes you, he thinks the blow lands full force and believes he is inflicting much greater damage on you than he really is, and after any successful hit, you may "play dead",

requiring a Perception check of 20+ your Reputation for your opponent to realize you are not dead or unconscious; *Dodge Focus*: you may use this feat normally for yourself (+1 Defense) but may also apply it to any vehicle you are driving, at +2 Defense per feat

TRUCK DRIVER

You make your living hauling goods on the open road. Despite its title, this occupation can also serve for long-haul air delivery pilots, simply substitute the Defensive Driving improved feat for the Evasive Maneuvers feat (improved the same way).

Professional Skills: Athletics, Perception and Vehicles

Improved Feats: *Defensive Driving*: your Vehicles skill is considered +4 higher for purposes of this feat; *Endurance Training*: +2 Constitution; *Loner*: +4 skill checks when alone; *Night Vision*: you can drive a vehicle without lights at no penalty to your Vehicles skill checks

NEW PERKS

The following new perk encourages a character to target a grappling attack. Remember that grapples inflict no damage, so the main effect of hit location (the damage modifier) is meaningless in grappling combat. The Joint Lock perk, as well as the different effects for grappling different locations presented below will make hit location matter to grappling characters.

UNARMED

Joint Lock (requires perk): By attacking the extremities of your opponent, you can hinder his performance for the rest of the battle.

If you successfully make a targeted grapple attack with this perk (the attack must target a specific hit

location rather than a randomly rolled hit location) the hit location suffers a minor injury. This perk can be selected even if injuries are not normally used in the campaign (though the GM might disallow this perk if he wants combat to run quicker).

This ability can only cause mild injuries.

Injuries caused by this ability are not true injuries and will heal after one hour. The injury is just a strain and its effects will fade once the character has had a chance to stretch out the effected area.

NEW SKILLS

These skills have appeared in other products and are included here to allow the game master the ability to include low levels of psionics and ki into his campaign, if desired.

KI

Wis; Trained Only

This skill represents the power of the spirit and is only available to those who select the Initiate of the Inner Mysteries feat. You may only call on your Ki a number of times per day equal to your Wisdom modifier. If you wish to call on your Ki more often you may spend an Action Point for each additional use.

Members of the Empath class can call on their Ki twice as often as other characters. This is considered part of the Empath's core ability in campaigns featuring Ki as a form of FX (meaning you only gain this ability if your first character level is in the Empath class).

Ki is a part of every living thing. Though it is often translated as an energy flow, Ki literally means "breath" and everything that breathes, from animals and plants to the world itself (as felt on the wind) is a part of Ki. As such, Ki is essential to all aspects of the practitioner's life. Martial arts and yoga teach the

student to channel Ki through meditation and deep breathing exercises. Feng Shui arranges a living space to allow Ki to flow freely through everything in the room (including those who live there).

The importance of Ki to the martial arts is shown not only in the vast number of styles that teach the student to harness his Ki but also in the number of styles to which Ki is so essential it is a part of the style's name, such as Aikido and Hapkido.

Focus: Ki allows you to focus on a task to exclusion of everything else. This grants a bonus to a single skill check as listed in the table below. Because of the total focus on this one skill check you are flat-footed while making it.

Meditation: Meditation allows you to reorder your body and spirit and bring them into harmony. While this can be used for a myriad of esoteric purposes, such as relaxation and getting in touch with the universe, this skill use also allows you to heal non-lethal damage at twice the usual rate. The maximum number of hours you can meditate per day is equal to your ranks in the Ki skill. Meditation is not a substitute for sleep (meaning you will still be fatigued if you don't rest).

Slow Metabolism (requires perk): You have learned how to use your ability to adjust your body's energy patterns to slow your metabolism substantially. This allows you to hold your breath for twice as long as you would normally be able to or to simulate death.

Holding your breath with this skill use is automatic. Simulating death is a targeted skill check equal to Medicine +10 of any character checking you for vital signs.

Speed Metabolism (requires perk): This use of the Ki skill allows you to use your Ki skill ranks in place of your Initiative modifier. If you spend an Action Point, may use this ability to re-roll your Initiative.

Ranks	Bonus
4	+1
8	+2
12	+3
16	+4
20	+5
23	+6

PSIONICS

Wis; Trained Only

This skill represents the powers of the mind and is only available to those who select the Wild Talent feat at 1st level. Unless specifically indicated in the text, Feat-based Psionic powers do not require a Psionics skill roll; they manifest automatically, and succeed or fail based upon a related Skill check (e.g. making a Perception check to see with Clairvoyance), or a target's Saving Throw result.

Using psionic abilities is taxing. Each time you use an ability granted by this skill, or a feat that requires this skill, you must make a Will save with a DC of 15 plus one for each previous saving throw that day. Failing this saving throw results in you suffering 1d6 points of non-lethal damage. This damage is physically evident and may allow your use of psionic abilities to be detected. Possible physical manifestations of psionic damage include bleeding from the nose, eyes or ears or unexplained bruises that manifest spontaneously.

Precognition (requires perk): This use of the Psionics skill allows you to use your Psionics skill in place of your Initiative modifier. You may either use this skill at the start of an encounter (when initiative rolls are normally called for), or during an encounter to re-roll your initiative.

This skill use is a free action that you can perform once per round.

Telepathy (requires perk): This use of the Psionics skill allows you to detect the general emotional state of your target. Thus you could detect nervousness, anger, fear and so forth. This ability has a range of line

of sight and the target of this ability may make a Will save to resist attempts to detect her emotional state. The DC of this Will save is your ranks in the Psionics skill +10.

If you successfully read a target's emotional state, you may add half your ranks in Psionics to a single Influence, Leadership or Perception check when interacting with that target.

This skill use is a move action.

Telekinesis (requires perk): You can move a weight of 10 lbs. per rank in this skill, you may hold this weight aloft for up to one minute and can move the full weight five feet per round.

You cannot effectively move this weight swiftly enough to damage a person. Even moving the object above a target and dropping it, you can move objects so slowly that an aware target could avoid being caught underneath an object being moved with this ability.

This skill use is a move action.

GRAPPLING AND HIT LOCATION

Hit location can effect grappling in interesting ways. Using these optional rules, a grapple will have a different effect based on the location of the grapple. If an attacker desires a specific effect, he can either trust to luck or target a specific area of the body.

Foot, Calf, Knee, Thigh: Your opponent must make an immediate Acrobatics check (DC equal to your Unarmed check) or fall prone.

At the start of every round, the grapple check is re-rolled as normal to maintain the hold. If this check fails the target has wriggled free.

If this check is successful, and the target is not already prone, the target must make another Acrobatics check to avoid falling prone.

If the target is already prone and the hold is maintained, the target cannot stand until he manages to wriggle free from the hold.

Groin, Stomach, Chest: After successfully grappling your target, you may make a Strength vs. Strength check to throw the target, inflicting 1d4 damage or your base unarmed combat damage, whichever is higher. This Strength check is optional, but if it is attempted and fails the grapple is treated as a failure.

Arm: The grapple affects either the left or right arm of your opponent (attacker's choice). Your opponent cannot attack with a weapon held in the affected arm or gain the defense bonus of a shield held in that arm.

Any attack with your opponent's other arm suffers a -4 penalty to hit because of the grapple.

At the start of every round, the grapple check is re-rolled as normal to maintain the hold. If this check fails the target has wriggled free.

Throat, Head: The grapple renders the target flat-footed for as long as the hold is maintained.

At the start of every round, the grapple check is re-rolled as normal to maintain the hold. If this check fails the target has wriggled free.

COVER AND HIT LOCATION

Hit location can also be used in conjunction with cover. This makes characters and game masters pay close attention to the environment during combat, since not only the type of cover but also the hardness of that cover will be important during combat.

Since hard cover could provide the same effect as expensive body armor, a character might even choose to kneel or lay prone, to gain more protection from low cover. A kneeling or prone character is flat-footed, only gaining his class bonus to his Defense.

Effects of cover: Rather than provide a Defense bonus, these alternate cover rules instead provide Damage Reduction to the affected areas equal to the hardness of the object providing cover.

Human shields: Cover as hit location also includes the possibility of someone using another character as a human shield. This requires the subject be successfully grappled or otherwise coerced into submission (such as having a gun pointed at their head).

Human shields do not provide Damage Reduction. Instead, attacks striking the cover (the person being used as a shield) inflict one-half damage to the human shield and the remainder to the target. The hope is that the attacker will be unwilling to inflict damage to another in order to strike his target. If the attacker has no compunction against hitting the human shield, such protection is less useful than hard cover.

One-quarter Cover (standing): Protects locations 1-6 (foot, calf and knee).

Example: Standing in a ditch or in front of a very low wall, kneeling behind a moderate wall.

One-half Cover (standing): Protects locations 1-11 (foot, calf, knee, thigh and groin).

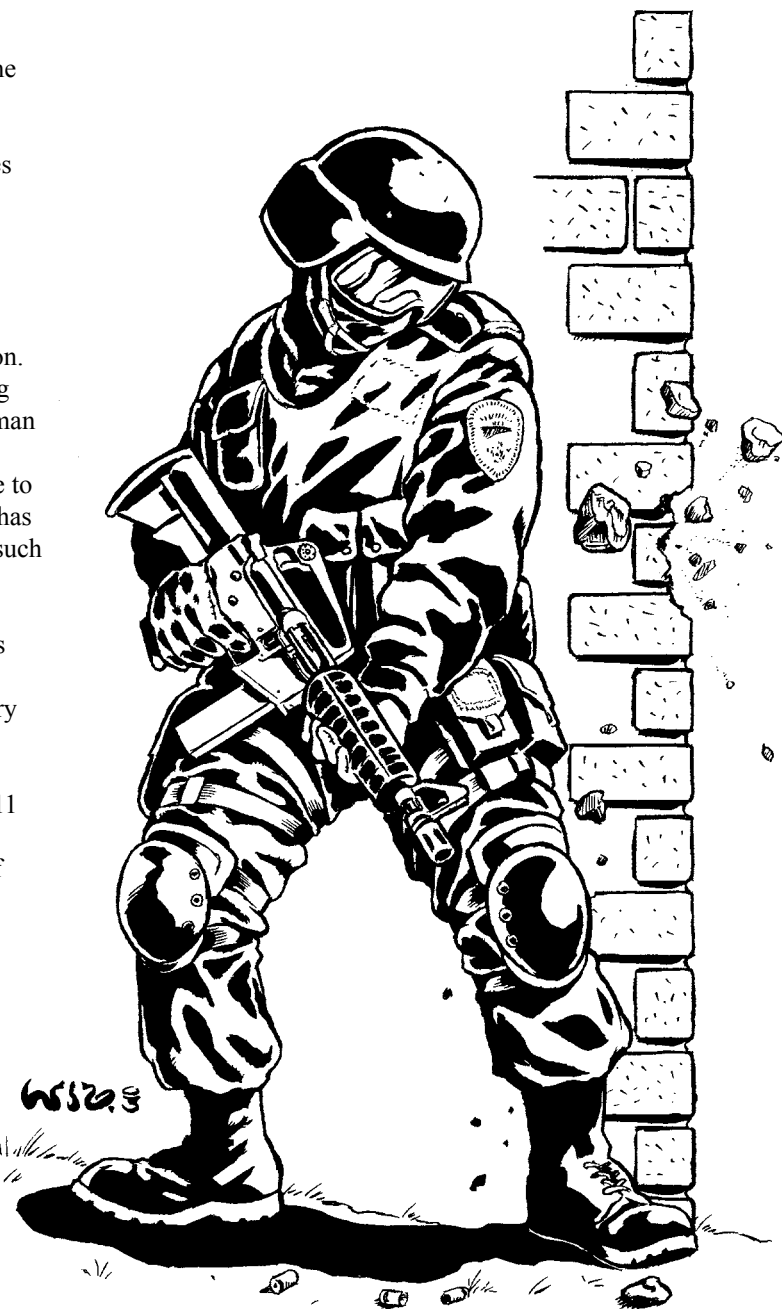
Example: Standing in a deep ditch or in front of moderate wall.

One-half Cover (standing, alternate): Protects locations 5-11 and 15-18 (partial calf, knee, thigh, groin, stomach and chest).

Example: A child held off the ground used as a human shield.

Three-quarter Cover (standing): Protects locations 1-11 and 15-17 (foot, calf, knee, thigh, groin, stomach and lower chest).

Example: Standing in a very deep ditch or



foxhole, kneeling behind a car door or moderate wall or laying prone behind a low wall. An adult used as a human shield can also provide this amount of cover.

Three-quarter Cover (standing, alternate): Protects locations 1-9, 11-12, 15-17 (foot, calf, knee, partial thigh, groin, partial arm, stomach and partial chest).

Example: Firing around a corner.

ARMOR AND HIT LOCATION

A game master wishing to provide more variety to body armor can use the hit location rules to provide different suits of armor, from light suits, to partial suits, to full suits of armor. This will allow a character to heavily protect certain parts of the body. As with all optional rules, this makes combat more complex and even in campaigns using this alternate rule, the “default” is to full suits of armor for mooks and henchmen.

Note that these rules assume that all armors affect the entire body, even those explicitly listed as “vests” in the core rules. This might require the game master to describe suits slightly differently. Alternately, the game master might only allow this variant with the heaviest armor, the forced entry unit.

Full Suit: A full suit armor protects the wearer from head to toe. While not realistic in anything short of a science fiction campaign, this is the simplest and thus standard option that requires the least amount of book keeping.

Locations: All hit locations protected.

Strength Minimum: No modifier.

Armor Penalty: No modifier.

Three-Quarter Suit: A $\frac{3}{4}$ suit of armor affords slightly better mobility and reduced weight by removing or using lighter protection around the

wearer’s joints. This leaves the feet, knees, groin, elbow and neck vulnerable.

Locations: 2-5, 7-10, 12-13, 15-18, 20 (calf, thigh, partial arm, stomach, chest and head)

Strength Minimum: -1 (minimum 3)

Armor Penalty: +1 (maximum 0)

Half Suit: A $\frac{1}{2}$ suit of armor offers less protection to the legs and arms. This affords the wearer more mobility.

Locations: 7-10, 12, 15-18, 20 (thigh, partial arm, stomach, chest and head)

Strength Minimum: -2 (minimum 3)

Armor Penalty: +2 (maximum 0)

One-Quarter Suit: A $\frac{1}{4}$ suit of armor protects only the critical areas of the stomach, chest and head, leaving the arms and legs completely exposed to attack, in return for the maximum amount of mobility.

Locations: 15-18, 20 (stomach, chest and head)

Strength Minimum: -3 (minimum 3)

Armor Penalty: +3 (maximum 0)

OPTIONAL RULE: NO CLASS SKILLS

Many, many people hate class skills. Heck, I’m pretty ambivalent about them myself. If you’d like to eliminate class skills from *Modern*²⁰ just follow these easy steps.

1. Instead of Professional Skills adding skills to your permanent class skill list, Professional Skills grant 2 “phantom ranks” to the listed skills. These ranks can allow a skill to exceed the normal cap on skill ranks (meaning if you take 4 ranks in a skill at 1st level and it is also a Professional Skill, you act as if you have 6 ranks in that skill).

2. Wealth is still modified by ranks in Professional Skills. Alternately, you can grant a +2 bonus to Wealth, which increases by +1 every two character levels. This prevents the “phantom ranks” from increasing the effective wealth bonus of occupations by +1.

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