

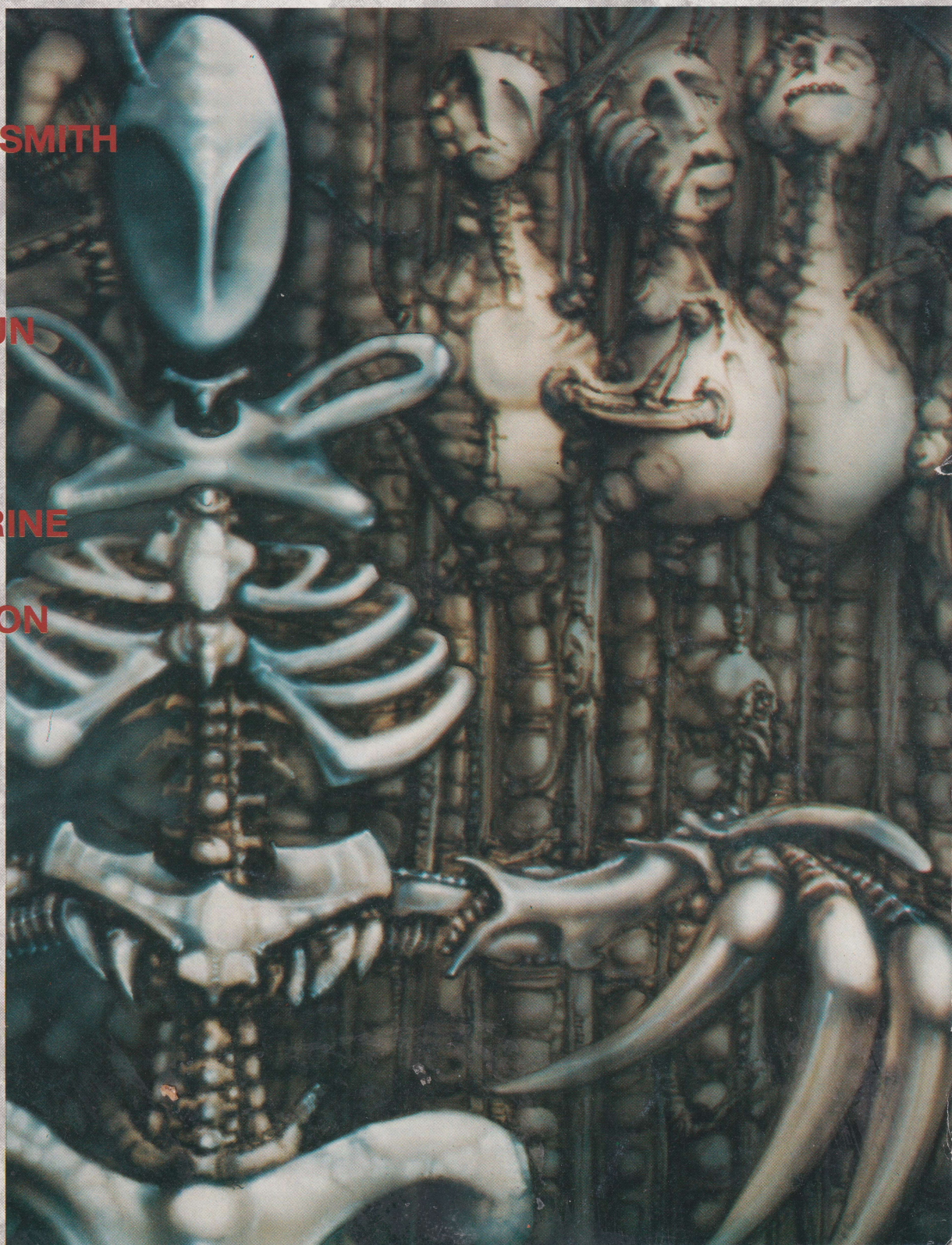
ISSUE
15

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Australian Realms

Issue 15, January/February 1994

The Australian Magazine of Role Playing

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Editorial Letters

Happy New Year!

Did you make a New Year's resolution? Broken it yet? I always promise myself I will stop yelling and be nice to the Assistant Editor even when she steps on my glasses (at least she let me take them off my face first this last time). This year I made the resolution that no matter what, I will always write a positive editorial..

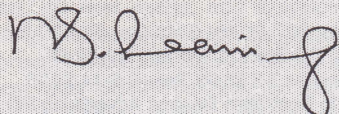
Christmas is over and the unlucky ones have either ended up with the first edition of a game that's now into its third, or have picked these really cool new rules which nobody in your group will let you play because they can't afford to upgrade too. Sometimes don't you wish games companies would leave well enough alone their games? 1993 was definitely the year of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and even 5th edition for some games - what happened to the Deming approach guys? Get it right first time!

Of course the real agenda is making repeat sales to a finite customer base - and we, the customers fall for it every time. If we didn't always want to have the 'latest and greatest' of an old favourite, and bought more of the new, alternative game systems that do occasionally come out, then perhaps we could expect more from the industry. But I guess gaming is like any other marketplace - the people will have what the people want, or else you go out of business.

Oops I've broken it already!

No doubt the new year holds many exciting times in store for us all. Once the formality of breaking all those silly resolutions is out of the way, that is. Australian Realms certainly has big plans, and no doubt all the game companies have their new releases lurking in the design departments ready to unleash on an unsuspecting world - lets hope some of the beasts are not old dragons with new paint-work covering the rust.

Have fun gaming in 1994. We will.



Nick Leaning.

Neil Warnes
Casino, NSW

Dear Australian Realms,

Well done on Issue 13, once again you have produced a very readable magazine.

I would like to comment on Karen Ogden's article "A Woman's Scorn". This is the type of article you should have more of. It is enjoyable to read, provides helpful hints on roleplaying while tackling one of the biggest problems in RPGs - sexism. As a GM I have tried to stray away from having women in my campaign as window dressing but looking back I can think of one or two occasions when they have been. "A Woman's Scorn" has got me thinking about how I can improve the situation. Fortunately sexism isn't too big a problem in my group, they are all males but have at one time or another played female characters and have played them with the respect they deserve.

Continued good luck with the magazine, I am eagerly waiting for next issue.

Neil, we heeded the advice of all those readers who wrote in commending Karen's article and asked her to write a sequel - "Hell Hath No Fury" on page 18.

Tony Martin
Dubbo, NSW

Dear Nick ARealms Team,

I must confess that when I visited CanCon last year, I never gave the AR stand a second glance. It was my first convention so maybe I was just whisked away in the excitement but I really didn't expect much from AR (forgive my unpatriotic views and bad spelling).

Anyway, one afternoon in a roleplaying frenzy (but unfortunately on a low budget) I picked up a copy, and I must say I'm impressed. The articles are professional and the contents free of advertising clutter. (Don't get me wrong, I certainly like a certain amount of advertising, it's interesting and keeps you informed, it's just when I have to fish through pages for the actual articles that I get annoyed).

My favourite sections of the magazine are the letters and reviews. I hope the letters section expands and some debate starts to circulate I'll try to contribute where I can. As for the reviews I enjoy a reviewer who gives an unbiased appraisal but then gives his/her personal biased opinion of what they really think (although they should acknowledge it as such).

My favourite features are GM helping, world creating, roleplaying of character, adventure writing, exotic locale and author interviews. These are the sections I flick to the moment I get hold of a gaming magazine leaving

other sections for my spare time. "Plotting Doom" from issue 13 is the kind of helpful/how to feature I'm talking about.

I also like "Dice Are Dead", I know other players just like myself who are aggravated by the ads and reviews of those American and English PBMs, I didn't know they existed in Australia!

Finally, you have really done the impossible with the A-Team. A gaming comic I actually like! I'm normally one of those whinging readers who complains that the comics aren't funny, aren't gaming related and waste valuable space, but this comic really makes me laugh, and takes me back to my early gaming years.

Now for the bit you're probably dreading, the complaints. Really I don't have that many and the fact that I'm now subscribing demonstrates my final standing, but here goes... Flicking through issue 13 I wasn't impressed with the artwork, except for the "Casting Iron" picture on page 45 which was very good. Hope I haven't offended any artists.

Although Unae seems to be a big part of ARealms I don't really like set worlds. I'll certainly be using any exotic locations or interesting societies in my own campaigns though. I just hope you don't reject any good ideas because they "don't fit into Unae". Maybe you could print such features every now and again, instead of, or as well as the Unae article.

ARealms also seems to like articles that feature "Game X system in Australia". I would prefer to see more of the original settings of these games. The fact that it is by an Australian writer in an Australian magazine is Aussie enough for me!

All in all, I really enjoy your magazine (especially the price) and my subscription is included here, Thanks for listening.

Tony, thanks for the feedback. We will never reject good ideas - they are too valuable. I urge all people with good ideas to contact us immediately and we'll post out Writer's Guidelines. If you get along to CanCon 94 come and have a look at our stand and stay for a chat.

Matthew Pittard
Safety Bay, WA

Dear Realms Staff

Thankyou very much for dedicating your time and energies to producing such a good magazine that I'm sure will bring in new people to the RPG scene.

Being a curious type, I was happily surprised to find out about UNAE. I know that not many people will like what I say next but I find AD&D as boring as Battletech rounds and without

a hint of true roleplaying. This is why I think Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay in which you can roleplay and bash at the same time is the perfect system for UNAE. I am a member of SAGA [a Perth-based club] and have played in UNAE many times. I love it. Thanks again for such a great roleplaying world. This is especially directed towards Colin Taber.

Hmmn, Matthew, you may have stirred up a hornet's nest there. Everyone has their favourite systems, it's just a pity Games Workshop don't support your fave game any more. PS: Colin Taber has sewn this letter onto the back of his T-shirt.

Chris Thomas
North Ward, QLD

Dear Editor,

I have just read Alan Ogden's contribution "Facing The Consequences" in Australian Realms issue 14. The suggestions Alan made for beating up on characters were clever but the article as a whole was flawed. I thought the article was aimed at GMs who didn't like gratuitous slayings.

Alan states "Few people will refrain from breaking the law if they think they can get away with it." This is not true. Laws are

made for reasons and lots of people think these reasons are valid, they wouldn't do "illegal" stuff even if there wasn't a law against it. People abide by laws for ethical, social and religious reasons as well as the deterrent effects of fines and incarceration.

Because of this narrow view of social order Alan has failed to mention ways of controlling miscreant characters other than by beating them up. Some games provide alignments to dictate PCs moral behaviour. Many games provide religions. Both alignments and religions provide avenues for encouraging certain patterns of behaviour in PCs. How many arguments would end in cold blooded murder if the "winner" was ignored by the deity of healing for the next ten days?

There is a role for Alan's law enforcers but if rumours of violent retaliation to any perceived antisocial behaviour are being used to control the hoi polloi then I'm going to be miffed if my brawny fighter isn't allowed to exercise his political prowess. It's not a case for fighting fire with fire. The destructive player and vengeful GM are playing different games, they should sit down and figure out a game they can both enjoy rather than waste energy and time trying to break each other's style. It's hypocritical to enforce "correct" behaviour

with "incorrect" behaviour. It's a matter of balance. With other, indirect types of disadvantages applied to instances of "incorrect" behaviour even a lowly clerk can become an obstacle.

Caladin the dwarf killer doesn't meet the deceased's brother in an alley: He meets him at the money-lender's when he needs an extension to his credit; he meets him when the emergency militia are introduced to the drill sergeant; or he meets him at the jeweller's when his latest treasure haul is about to be valued at about 5%.

Chris, you are right, once referees and players realise characters are accountable for their actions there are many ways in which their behaviour can be punished/rewarded. Alan was simply making the point many referees with unruly players overlook, there are ways and means to deal with these players. Not all groups play the same or would react the same way to Alan's suggestions. That's the beauty of role playing - there are so many alternatives and no hard and fast rules about morality, just like in reality.

We'd welcome comments from other of our readers who have come across this problem. Write to the address given above and air your views.

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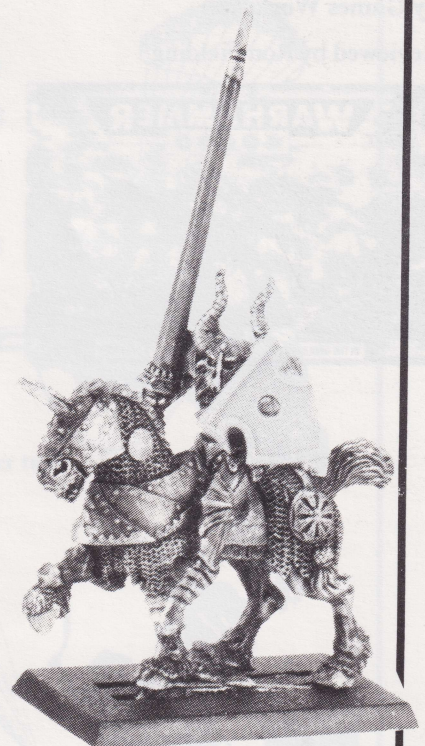
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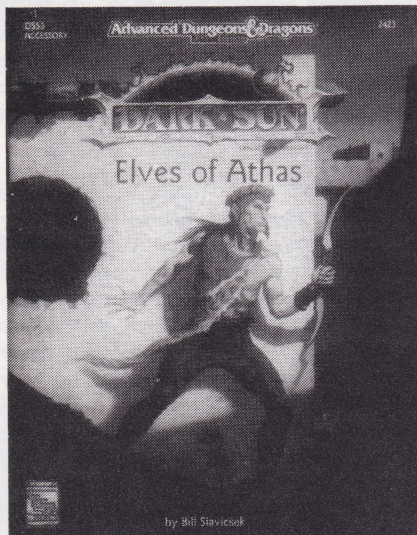


Reviews

ELVES OF ATHAS

Dark Sun Accessory
by TSR

Reviewed by Adam Whitt



This 96 page accessory for the increasingly popular *Dark Sun* campaign world introduces elves to Athas, which in itself is an interesting idea given AD&D's traditional high fantasy conception of elves as long-lived tree loving eclectics. Blighted Athas does not present the most inviting environment for such elves. But, as Bill Slavicsek this supplement's writer explains, Athasian elves are different. Much of what was printed in the core rules and in PHBR8 *The Complete Book of Elves* is overruled here. *Elves of Athas* presents a new breed of elf (not a subrace such as High, Grey or Wood) burned by the sun and filled with a tragic need to live life to the full in the now. Dark Sun elves are doomed to ignore their problematic past and their desperate future or else succumb to despair and insanity. Slavicsek's elves have branched well away from the rest of the AD&D universe's elves to become a cross between the African Zulu and European gypsy with a fair amount of maladjustment thrown in. And surprisingly the new amalgam is reasonably convincing. Certainly it presents numerous roleplaying alternatives to the overworked aloofness of the garden or Tolkien-derivative variety.

Elves of Athas covers such things as the different physical nature, psychological nature and societal make-up of the race, plus it describes in detail six of the many tribes that

run the deserts of Athas. The final section of the supplement describes eight new character kits specific to elves on Athas.

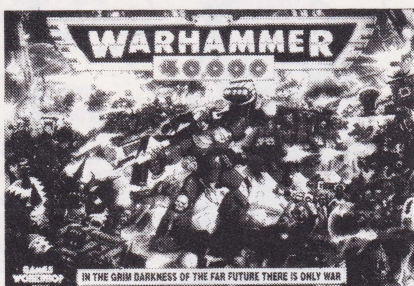
The text is suitably gritty in line with the overall tone of the *Dark Sun* campaign, there are many novel ideas presented, particularly the way the elven tribes change jobs each season as the mood seizes them - thus you'll find them changing lifestyle from herders to traders, to raiders to assassins to hunters at a whim. There are also some motivations built into the elvish backgrounds for having tribal elves (who are *very* clannish) turn up in adventuring parties. And at last, a writer who acknowledges that to be a half-elf would be to lives as an outcast, unacceptable to both races. To complement the good text, the artwork of Brom is very good, as always. The second interior artist used, Tony DiTerlizzi has made a valiant attempt to define the difference of Athasian elves but his tonal work has been reproduced so dark and muddily they tend to irritate after a while. Also included in the book is a pleasing map of the Tablelands, pretty much the same as in the boxed set but with a few more locations marked and several good DiTerlizzi colour renditions of the various elven tribes.

Overall a good addition to the *Dark Sun* milieu with plenty of ideas that could be adapted to mainstream campaigns.

WARHAMMER 40,000

2nd Edition
by Games Workshop

Reviewed by Ron Fielding



"Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go!"

Yup, Goff Orks are back, and they are packaged bigger and bolder than ever in a HUGE new boxed set edition of the best SF miniatures game on the market - **Warhammer 40,000**. Aside from three White Dwarf size and format books (rules, wargear and background on the Imperium), a scenario booklet, 20 card cut-out ruins (scenery), a card cut-out Ork Dreadnought (yeah!), two card reference sheets, three squad reference cards (Goffs, Gretchin and Blood Angel marines), eight mission cards (more on them later), 12 wargear cards, six vehicle cards, 14 card templates for weapon effects ("Gimme da 'eavy plasma!"), 56 card counters (to register unit orders, morale, weapon jams and so forth), 14 assorted combat dice and one victory record chart the real bonus of this box is the horde of superb plastic miniatures - 20 Spare Marines, 40 Gretchin (cannon fodder) and 20 ORKS!!!

I just couldn't wait to strip them from their sprues and start to play. But then as the kids rightly pointed out, perhaps I should read the rules first. Boring! But not really, 'cos Games Workshop have splashed the pages of each of the rule books with some great art (much of it resurrected). The illo of the Ork heavy weapons team trudging through the rain on page 23 of the Rule Book is one of the best bits of battlefield art you're ever likely to see.

But getting back to the rules. The first edition was so flawed and rushed in production, and patched up so many times in

White Dwarf that the game was well overdue for a rewrite just so that players could agree on which combat system, equipment, vehicle and psyker rules to use. Rick Priestly and Andy Chambers have achieved this and more, by streamlining the rules (reducing the number of stats to keep a track of) and introducing quite a few neat new ideas - tactical objectives, mission cards, limited turns, infiltration deployment, rapid fire for Marines, sustained fire and jams for heavy weapons, parry, criticals and fumbles, and overwatch. And Marines now truly answer their description as the best combat troops in the Imperium; they have an improved profile, are harder to break, and have the option of firing twice in a round they did not move in. To balance this, the game designers strongly recommend the use of heaps of terrain to break up open killing grounds, and have introduced mission cards which force the Marine army commander to move. For Orks and Gretchin - my advice to all my green brethren is to keep your head down, to hide and lurk, to sneak and wait, then when you're in position jump up, spray the bastards with suppressing fire, charge into melee and rip the Emperor's finest apart with weight of numbers.

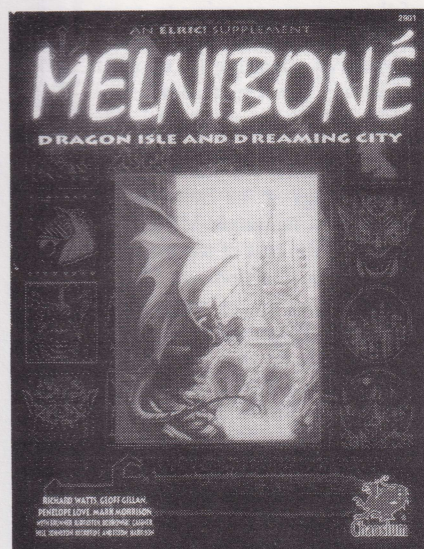
Warhammer 40,000 will be followed up by more rules on vehicles, psykers and chaos in the **Dark Millennium** supplement, and in many, many army lists and miniatures product lines.

"Ere we go again, 'ere we go again, 'ere we go again."

MELNIBONE

Elric! Supplement
by Chaosium

Reviewed by Andrew Daniels



Hot on the heels of Chaosium's metamorphosis of *Stormbringer* into the new, revised *Elric!* roleplaying game comes the first of a doubtless plethora of supporting supplements, **Melnibone, Dragon Isle and Dreaming City**. Melnibone! Shadowy home of the doomed Dragon Prince Elric. Bristling with dark magics and decaying splendour, the perfect place to set any adventurous heart tingling. But can you adventure in it? I mean, what can you achieve in a place where everyone's either a wiz at magic or in a drug induced coma? This book shows you.

Melnibone, based on Michael Moorcock's novels, expands on the master's scanty material covering the island home of his tragic hero. Written by an Australian, Richard Watts, the supplement follows Chaosium's usual clear layout supported by some fine illustrations (although the drawing of Imrryr looks a little too much like Munchkin Land from the *Wizard of Oz* for my liking). The book covers the Dragon Isle, its inhabitants, their customs and beliefs. Watts has done a great job of integrating Moorcock's published material with his own ideas to create a thoroughly authentic atmosphere.

Moorcock's Melniboneans are an aloof, distant people living in a world teetering on the brink. The players are placed in this world with sufficient inducement to get out and about to take one last look. Avenues for non-

Melnibonean characters are provided by the inclusion of the Foreign Quarter in Imrryr.

Along with the background material comes suggestions for encounters and a digest giving description and stats for npcs - not a lot on each but enough to set you on your way. Completing the book is a series of three scenarios. These are interesting and original. They take players on a tour of the island before plunging them into some meaty roleplaying which includes time travel, dragon flying and an opportunity to change the very history of the multiverse itself!

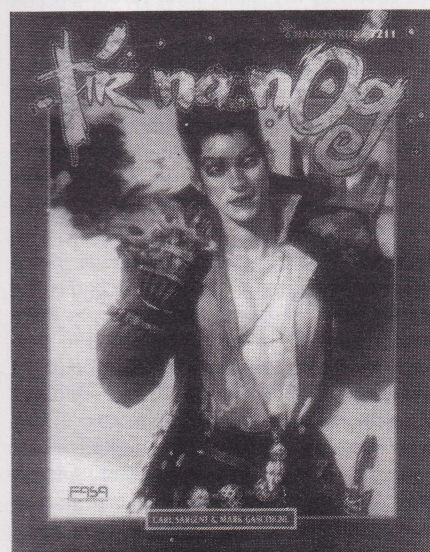
Each adventure adds to the unique feel of **Melnibone**; players interact with some real (read very strange) characters. Lunch during the Ceremony of the Sufferers is a hoot! The locations too are imaginative; Castle Crow especially caught my eye. The adventures play just like the novels - rollercoaster action along an edge of wierd unreality.

I must admit though, I do have one complaint with Chaosium and an industry increasingly run by marketers; this material could and should have been included in the game book. For mine it's not good enough to present a set of rules without a specific world then expect the consumer to buy endless background supplements to flesh out the game. That gripe aside the quality of **Melnibone** has gone some way to winning me over. Good.

TIR NA NÓG

Shadowrun Sourcebook
by FASA

Reviewed by Colin Taber



Something big is happening in **Shadowrun**, the world is moving apace and someone is up to something (notably the elves). With the recent release of **Tir Tairngire** (the elven nation in the north west of North America) and now **Tir na nÓg** (formerly Ireland) we are beginning to see snippets of elven plans and conspiracies. If you have followed **Shadowrun's** history you'll know the Awakening was big time stuff, but I think what's up ahead is perhaps even more worrying (look to FASA's excellent **Earthdawn** game for a taste). Such hints are dropped within the latest offering for the **Shadowrun** game from FASA.

Another work by Carl Sargent, pretty well a 'master' of RPG material, **Tir na nÓg** comes in at over 160+ pages, including some very good colour artwork. The book tells of Ireland's history and its current situation in 2054. It gives a full account of how Ireland was 'taken over' by the elven minority, including details on how Northern Ireland was finally reunited with the Irish republic.

The book also has information covering the major cities of Dublin and Belfast. Brief data is also given on the provinces and counties that make up **Tir na nÓg**.

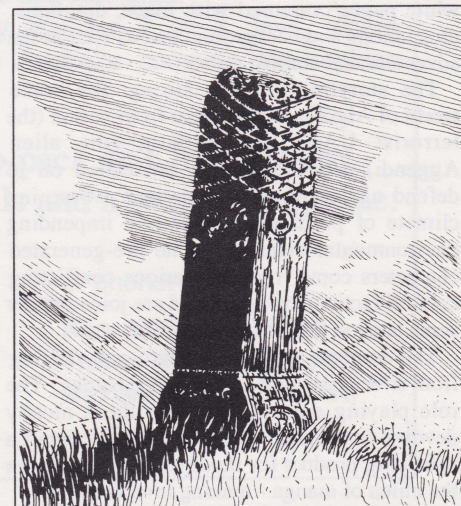
With full details on the elven belief system of 'Path' magic, and details on why elves believe that they are 'better' **Tir na nÓg** has more uses than for a European campaign.

It could be said that the product nearly doubles as an elven sourcebook for those who

want more information on the meta-race.

This is a well written book that is well presented with beautiful Rick Berry colour work and quality black and white throughout. If you are more into the 'story' and the fantasy elements of **Shadowrun** than corp dirt and new cyberware, consider making this your **Shadowrun** purchase for the year.

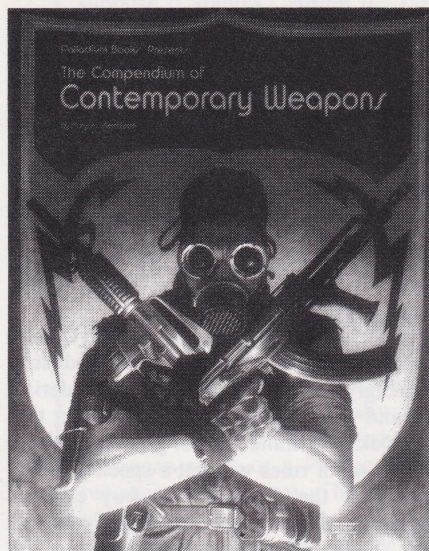
Combined with the **London Sourcebook**, **Paranormals of Europe** and the **German Sourcebook** (reviewed next issue) a indepth euro-campaign can now be established with all the colour it was previously lacking. But, as said above, it also stands as an elven source book in its own right. The *Land of Youth* awaits.



CONTEMPORARY WEAPONS

Weapon Sourcebook
by Palladium Books

Reviewed by Mike Trace



I have been looking forward to Palladium's **Compendium of Contemporary Weapons** (CCW) since early this year when we received the pre-release sheets.

This compendium does not pretend to be the *Janes Book of Infantry Weapons* although that was used as a significant source reference, but a gamers guide to the most commonly known and used weapons. CCW provides the reader with some basic statistics such as weapon weight, muzzle velocity, rate of fire, effective range and details of cartridge type and its feed characteristics. Additionally there is a basic penetration value (PV), damage rating based on D6's or D4's, with a multiplier for the heavier weapons and in some cases a hit probability. Most of the weapons detailed are illustrated by competently executed line drawings to help those who cannot visualise the weapons from its stats. I read with interest the Modern Ammunition section by Matthew Balent, and that sort of detailed background information makes CCW more than a book of weapon stats.

In its carefully generic approach the Compendium is useful for any role playing system that features modern weapons. In addition to pistols, rifles and MG's, Maryann Siembieda has included a limited number of infantry heavy/support weapons and sundry infantry equipments including; body armour (absolutely essential in modern combat for

players at the expense of NPC's), grenades, surveillance equipments and a few vehicles.

This brings me to a few of my criticisms - the vehicles included probably should have been left out or at least reserved for a Vehicle Guide of some sort. They are a poor collection and do not cover the basic vehicles that the bulk of the gamers are going to come across, which is in stark contrast to the comprehensive coverage of weapons; these vehicles simply aren't representational. There is an M48 Patton but no M1A1 Abrahams, even the ubiquitous M113 and its Old Russia counterpart, the BMP1/2 fail to get a mention. The line drawings of the ENGESA EE-9, the TM170 and the Challenger MBT are not up to the standard of the rest of the book. I just got the feeling that this section was filler.

That said, **The Compendium of Contemporary Weapons** is a definite asset to any gamer caught up in either the battlefields of the recent past, today, or the coming new century. With a little work to convert the stats to the system you are running it makes a good referee's handbook and an excellent gamer's "now what can my guy have" catalogue.

Currently available at \$39.95, the same as its sister publication **The Compendium of Weapons, Armour and Castles**, this 176 page book is good value.

OPERATION RIMFIRE:

A Mekton Adventure

by R.Talsorian Games

Reviewed by Ron Fielding

Mekton is RTG's tabletop game of mechanised warfare in the style of Japanese Animé. You can also play *Mekton* as a role playing game. **Operation Rimfire** supports this format by having the players run through a campaign of mecha combats linked by short episodes of role playing.

The book is an attractive package of 16 full-colour pages (illustrating the pre-created adventurers and villains) plus 88 black and white pages crammed with maps, diagrams, illustrations and background text as well as the adventure and combat stats.

The storyline is quite strong: the home world of Algol is under threat from within (the terrorist UAA) and without (the alien Aggendi) and the players are called on to defend against these threats in a worsening climate of political intrigue and impending environmental disaster. The pre-generated characters come from the various conflicting cultural factions on Algol and are joined under some tension to form an elite team.

The combats are well thought out, ranging from street gunfights to full space battles. The role playing episodes less so; these mostly devolve to teenage love affairs. But overall a satisfying product for those looking to capture the milieu of manga - making love and war.

DARK COLONY

Vampire Sourcebook

By White Wolf

Reviewed by Colin Taber

This latest *Vampire* offering from White Wolf is a regional sourcebook covering the New England states of the US. Nothing more need be said about the region itself, Boston, Salem and other sites are all well known to followers of horror. White Wolf has picked an obvious place to exploit for its *Storyteller* line and worked in the history of their **World of Darkness** so we have a well connected and evocative background.

The book presents the details of the current power struggle between British kindred, American Camarilla and the Sabbat. There are of course many others vying for control such as witches covens and lupines. This provides a unified and well thought out setting in which to place the players.

Almost half of **Dark Colony** is a three part adventure. This is quite good, the detail alone making it worthwhile to use for ideas.

Dark Colony is 120+ pages and is in the typical, expected and appealing *Vampire* style - macabre illustrations, some of which have a dark humour, and atmospheric text. This is a good product, and if you are looking for a new setting for your chronicle, then perhaps New England is it.

White Wolf fans will not be disappointed.

GAME MASTER PACK

Earthdawn Accessory

by FASA

Reviewed by Adam Whitt

I've found in my short time refereeing the fine game of *Earthdawn*, its only drawback is the lack of background information on its campaign world for referee's to build on (a mere five pages in the main rulebook). The rulebook hints at a lot, and the *Barsaive* boxed set promises to fix the problem, but in the meantime FASA are giving us support materials (the novels and this **Game Master Pack**) which really don't help much.

What the **Pack** does have is a referee screen with 12 useful tables on the inside; a perforated card of 9 new magic items; and a 64 page booklet which has a lot of information in it which could have gone into the GM section of the rulebook. The booklet lists optional combat rules (unnecessary for mine); a long 'how to' section which gives sound advice on creating adventures and campaigns, and on story telling techniques such as maintaining pace and atmosphere and on how to customise *Earthdawn* (all good stuff); a selection of npc profiles (the t'skrang river pirate, for one); the 9 magic items detailed; blood magic as promised in *ED*; plus some forms and tables.

Like most refereeing aids this is a solid, utilitarian product, but just maybe you can get by without it.

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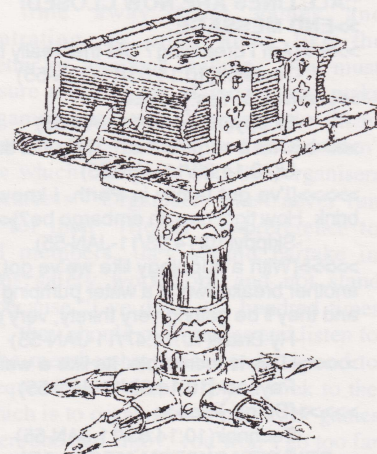
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STRANGLEHOLD

A Scenario Set in the Official Australian Setting for SHADOWRUN

By Colin Taber

Realms detailed an Australian background for Shadowrun over issues 6,7,8,9 & 11. This material has since been accepted by FASA as the basis for the official Australian setting and will see release as a sourcebook in the future. Based on the manuscript being prepared by Colin Taber, we present the following scenario set in the isolated and vulnerable Perth City-State. Over the coming issues more will follow.

THE SITUATION

The Perth City-State in 2055 is a fragile place. Should any of Australia's fortress cities be about to fall, this is surely the one. It's second perimeter fence is breached regularly by Dreamtime vermin, the first was over run late last year. The sprawl is a hive of corruption, crime and urban decay. The city's spirit and people are broken. It is the shame of the Australian Republic.

Corps know they can take advantage of the desperate situation in Australia, and all do to varying degrees. In the interest of political and social (thus market) stability none pushes too hard. What this translates into is that while they are unafraid to *bend* the law no corp is yet to trigger any major incident or crisis. **Stranglehold** is a scenario which illustrates the crossing of this threshold.

The diversified (and only) Australian based mega-corporation of **Austside** has just collapsed (in suspicious, possibly criminal circumstances), the nation's economic confidence collapses and financial panic begins. A hundred thousand are made jobless overnight and more are expected to join them. The corp's subsidiaries are being sold to rivals as creditors join the crazed fear sweeping local financial centres. It is a fire sale the size of which Australia has never seen. Now the Australian market *dupology* is a chilling reality. Amidst the continuing struggle over Austside's corpse for personnel, research, stock and assets the two rival Corporate Blocks of the dupology are fighting hard in *any* way they can...

>>PRIORITY MESSAGE OVERRIDE!

>>ENCRYPTED MESSAGE FROM CENTRAL!

>>BEGIN DECRYPTION CODE 10R7

::ATTENTION!

::EMBARGO NOW ACTIVE!

::PERTH IS NOW FORBIDDEN!

::ALL LINES ARE NOW CLOSED!

>>END MESSAGE

>>>>[Am I dreaming? Did that really happen?]<<<<<

-Technoir(10:14:03/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[No & Yes.]<<<<<

-Skippy(10:14:11/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[Can a corp do that? They just dumped on Perth!]<<<<<

-Li(10:14:20/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[I've got family in Perth. I know the sprawls already on the brink. How tight can an embargo be?]<<<<<

-Skippy(10:14:33/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[With a dupology like we've got, very. Perth is so vulnerable another breakdown at a water pumping station like it had last month and they'll be getting very thirsty, very quickly.]<<<<<

-Hy Brazil(10:14:47/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[This is incredible. Its like a war.]<<<<<

-Payback(10:14:50/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[Bingo.]<<<<<

-Technoir(10:14:53/11-JAN-55)

>>PRIORITY SYSTEM MESSAGE!

::THIS BOARD IS NOW CLOSED FOR MAINTENANCE

Word is out. They try and smother it, but it still gets to the streets. Perth is now 'limited access' to Fuchi corp, related Australian subsidiaries and Block partners. Half of Australia's dupology just put its WA operations on *base line*. Knowing they can't lose market share to the other half of the dupology (Fuchi controls many facets of the Perth sprawl, notably airport fuel supply, dock side loading facilities and some media networks) as their competitors can't import what Fuchi and its allies are withholding.

The alarm bells are ringing in the halls of power, but nothing is being said or done.

The entire city-state is being held to ransom, why?

But this is not how it begins, there is more to the crisis of isolation than the embargo will bring. There is greed, power plays and one fragile minded man's struggle for survival.

THE BACKGROUND

The Mega-corp **Austside** had a small but very fast growing subsidiary based in the Perth sprawl by the name of **Westside Entertainments**. This company was a chip maker, specialising in local documentaries and subculture shows for niche markets - *officially*. In reality, as the Austside parent corporation started to stumble, and the demand went out for increased profits and dividends from subsidiaries the directors of Westside started to look down other avenues. They feared being sold off and losing the autonomy they had under Austside, to any new owner. So, under careful direction from the Austside Perth State Manager (Regan Landis) the young Scott Sabatino (General Manager of Westside) had a new promising producer/director (Malcolm Pekovich) start work on the **Streetwise** label, a planned line of illegal BTL's sold through a shell company (Braindance Productions) to a network of dealers. The first chip was called *Firedance* and was successful enough to see Streetwise have more resources funnelled into it (via Austside, via Westside and finally via Braindance) for what was to be their *big* BTL release, *Skin Raker-Fire Taker*. A portion of these profits was to be paid to Austside, hopefully making Westside more secure and less likely to be sold off than other fellow, but less *profitable* corporate subsidiaries.

Austside had misled everyone over how desperate it's situation truly was. Hiding behind his corporate bureaucracy, Liam Davies, the man at the top fled Australia (heading some say to Azania) leaving his fellow board less-members a problem that was immensely larger than they had thought. Alarm bells started ringing when the panicked directors started selling off their personal stocks, within hours they were joined by every major stock holder around the globe, all trying to dump their shares. The stock price plummeted. The corp collapsed, its death took less than six hours. Due to the nature of the collapse several individuals are under investigation for crimes ranging from insider trading, to forgery, embezzlement, grand theft and official corruption. While the police prepare to investigate the corpse of Austside creditors continue to sell off whatever facets they can in an attempt to secure the mega-corps outstanding debts.

This was merely days before *Skin Raker-Fire Taker*'s release, the chips were in mid-production. So it was to never see the streets...

The BTL industry is riddled with 'spies'. Every BTL studio in Australia, and many others around the world had been impressed by the intensity of *Firedance* and were awaiting the sequel. Some got hold of sections of the master. It was breath taking. The pure energy in the chip, its rapid scene and sensation changes charged the nervous system of the viewer in ways that no BTL had done before. In short it was

new, consequently it was hot, and too many people knew that it was sitting in Perth and so was its producer, waiting to be *acquired*. Malcolm Pekovich was as good as dead.

THE PLOT SYNOPSIS

Competition is tough in a tight market the small size of Australia's, very tough.

Stranglehold is about a new kind of competition, a battle. It is summarised below, but boils down to a seek and destroy operation, of course there are complications and distractions.

THE ADVENTURE

1. (Monday) The players are contacted by **Sang Lee**, a parabiologist. He tells them he needs an escort to Rottnest island. He will arrange for a boat (and will captain it himself) but needs the players to come along as an escort. He will pay a total of 1000¥ for the afternoon's work, due to happen the following day.

Sang Lee is only involved in the first steps of the story. He is an independent parabiologist (but sponsored by GMC). His work on Rottnest Island (Rotto) requires an escort due to the Ghost Tribes (see issue 7 page 18 & Shadowrun II p224) that stalk the island.

2. (Tuesday) While travelling to Rottnest (a 20 minute trip) with Sang Lee the party stumbles across some heavy duty corp security (2 choppers and 4 boats) raiding an anchored luxury ocean cruiser. They will be warned away by some security captains in a power dingy. Sang, recognising the GMC corp colours will quickly abide and continue on his way to nearby Rotto. Once there Sang Lee will get the specimens he came for when a suitable landing sight is located (he needs to catch six quokkas -the native marsupial of the island- so that he can check them for a theorised change in their structure related to the Awakening). The escort will involve watching over him while he coaxes the tame quokkas and bags them. The whole operation takes only ten minutes, and (if you're feeling kind) should be completed without the complexities involved if Ghost Tribes arrive. As he prepares to leave the island **Malcolm Pekovich** crawls ashore, the sole survivor from the burning wreck that was the cruiser.

Malcolm is in an exhausted state and offers the players 5000¥ if they take him to Garden Island (for a reasonable share Sang Lee will accept the diversion). In his current state of mind he will tell them nothing about himself or who was after him, he will merely say his name is Malcolm and pay them 5000¥ upon his delivery to Garden Island (see map) observant runners will note that he has a slight BTL chipper's twitch.

Malcolm Pekovich has been in hiding since the collapse of Austside (previous Friday). He knew (being from the shadows, and a BTL user himself) that people would be trying to take him out of the picture to protect themselves, and that other BTL studios might want him dead rather than working for their competition.

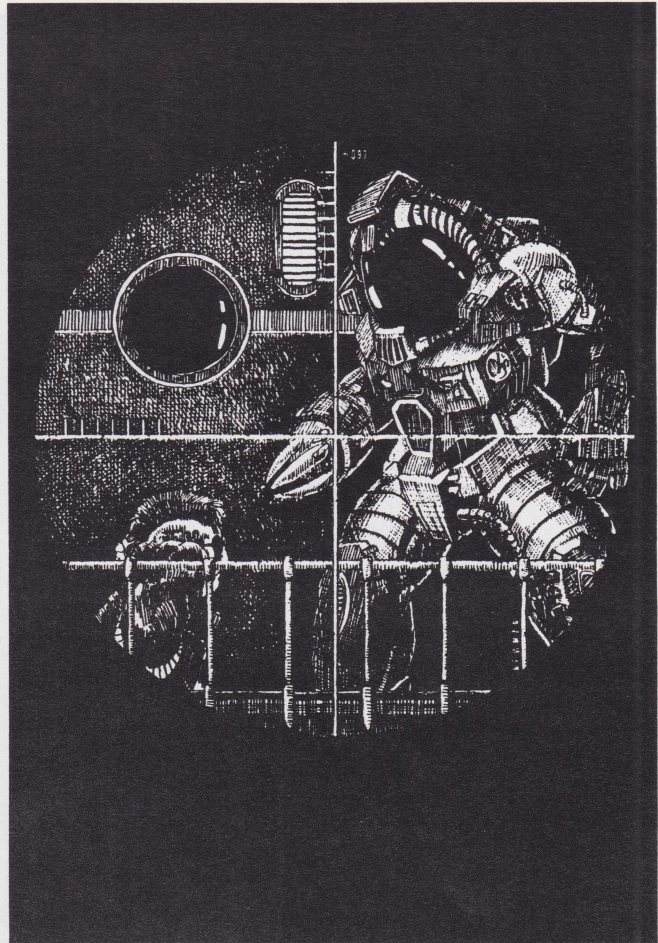
His first haven was the Westside cruiser, a fast ship that the subsidiary used to impress clients with. During the chaos of the Austside collapse, he broke into the locked Westside offices with four BTL user friends and grabbed the BTL masters, some warehouse chip stock and the cruisers keys. From there it was to the port, and then out to sea (previous Saturday). Malcolm was just going to wait and see what was happening in the sprawl before he decided where to head.

Soon as he saw the incoming GMC corp boats he jumped ship, leaving his fellows to their fate (Tuesday). When the cruiser sinks the security force will head back to the mainland, meanwhile Malcolm Pekovich will be swimming for his life towards Rottnest. It is during this time that he will lose the masters of the new BTL to the sea, all of the stock he had also will have been destroyed. As the players get to Rotto, complete their brief with Sang Lee and turn to go they will encounter the bedraggled BTL producer as he stumbles on to the beach.

When he gets to Garden Island he will leave the runners, telling them he will be okay. If they ask any other questions he will give them a local telecomm number and tell them he can be reached at it (it's a bogus number). From there he disappears into the squatter town.

On the evening of the following day (Wednesday) Malcolm will go to the locked offices of Westside Entertainments in Fremantle where the stock is kept (he has a key). He will make sure he is not being followed. Once there he will get some more stock of the new BTL to sell at Garden Island, and earn him badly needed ¥. He will spend most of that night at a club called **the Bull's Horn** (see Sprawl Sites p29) in Northbridge before returning early on Thursday morning to Garden Island via Fremantle to take 'the ferry' run by the Mafia.

3. The day following the players initial meeting with Malcolm (Wednesday) they are contacted by their Mr Johnson for information on the fire fight they witnessed. He also offers them an associated job, for more information on a former researcher from **Austside**. The target: Malcolm Pekovich.



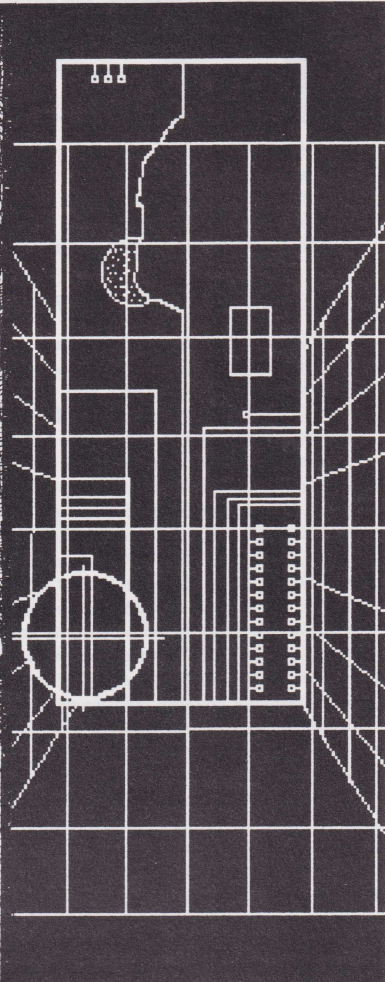
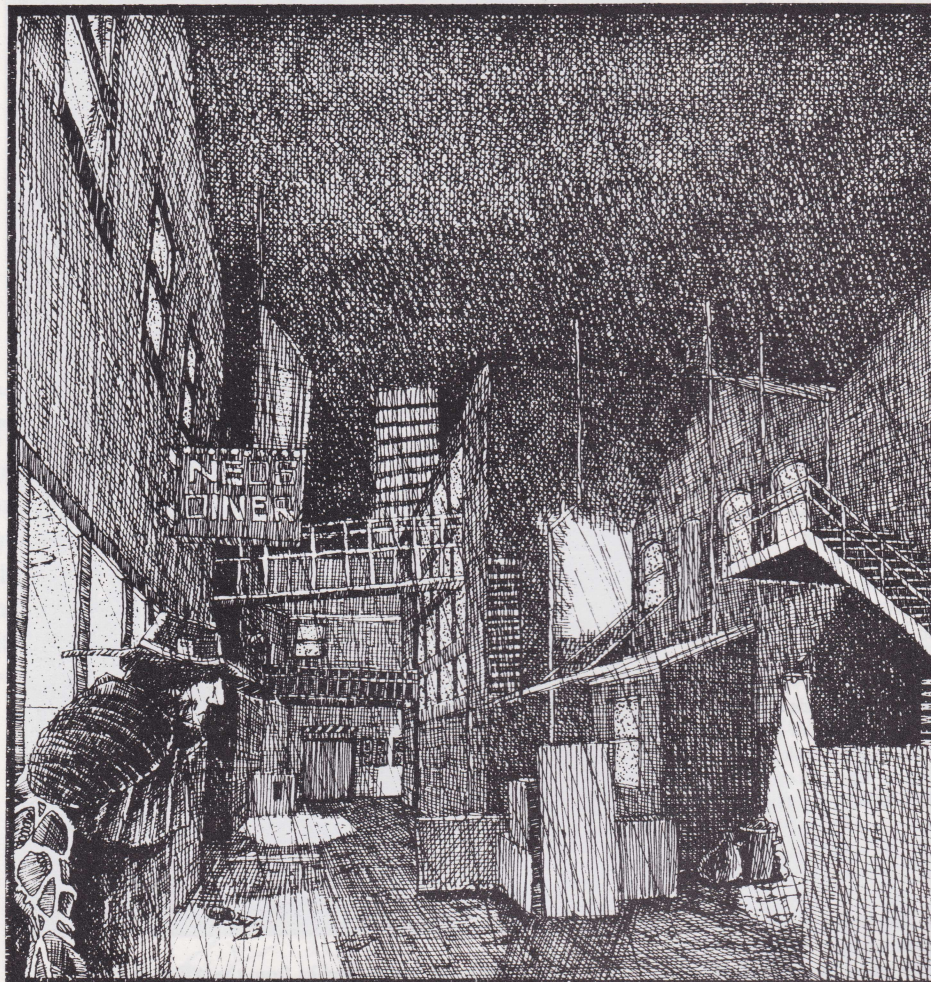
One of the head hunter catches from the Austside collapse was **Scott Sabatino**, formerly the General Manager at **Westside** but now a quality ranking corp exec at GMC's Perth arcology. He needs to have his tracks covered in regard to his involvement in the BTL line of chips at Westside. Such an illegal smear would harm his new, promising career. Finding that his new position comes with real power he has taken advantage of the general confusion caused by Austside's collapse, and has arranged for a Mr Johnson to hire a group of runners (the players) to take out Pekovich after a failed attempt by a cadre of corporate security (the Tuesday raid upon the cruiser off Rottnest, the security forces reported no Mr Pekovich aboard the cruiser when they boarded it).

Scott Sabatino is trying to hide his past from his new corporate bosses. He also requires that the BTL masters and any other evidence linking the BTL's to Westside, including the new BTL chip's stock be destroyed (only Pekovich knows where the masters are stored, the other linking evidence can be destroyed by trashing the Westside offices in Fremantle). Unfortunately Scott is meeting unexpected opposition from an ex-Austside director, who has been poached by **Fuchi Enter Regan Landis**.

Regan Landis is in a similar situation to Scott Sabatino, the difference is that she wants the BTL masters and Pekovich saved so she can move them out of Perth and have the operation re-established in Melbourne (her new homebase) with her pulling in the profits. The scenario is geared for players to be in the employ of Sabatino, but if they won't do wetwork, you can detour them to this employer. In either case another party of shadowrunners is going to be after the same target in the other employers pay.

4. It becomes a race to get to Malcolm first as another team is working on the same goal. Locating Malcolm is not going to be hard, it will just involve asking a lot of questions and following a lot of leads, in the worst case lost runners can follow the trail of BTL users that Malcolm supplies after his return on Garden Island.

5. With a carefully manufactured facade in place Regan Landis of the Fuchi Block places the corporate **embargo** upon Perth (Wednesday). Stopping the spread of the BTL chips to other city-states, and trapping Pekovich in Perth when her people advise her that the new Skin Raker-Fire Taker BTL is available. This is the night that the agreement is reached between the players and their Mr Johnson for the job of tracking down Pekovich. Two hours prior to the start of the **embargo** the word on the streets is that something 'big' is happening. Then it does...



THE PIECES

Timing of events in Stranglehold is fairly important. The above plot line information gives details for which day what event occurs upon. Once the embargo is placed (from Wednesday night, lasting until Saturday noon) the players will have no other time restrictions.

The **Embargo** is carefully disguised. It is described in the Fuchi Block controlled media as 'mass action' by union groups protesting over the implementation of a 'Dreamtime Levy' to cover the costs of maintaining the Perimeter Fence by the state government. The truth is more sinister, Fuchi (Regan Landis) has paid off over a dozen top union leaders to call for and mount a general strike. The selected industries involved all relate to transport. The goal of the strike is to isolate Perth, airport refuellers, port workers, customs officials and more are striking. Perth's travel links with the globe are cut. The media reports it for what it appears to be (mass action by renegade unions) but something closer to the truth does hit the shadows, so if the players have any contacts that should know what's going down, they will. The embargo will end when either party of runners get to Pekovich, at this point the adventure will also be at its end.

No one at Fuchi is aware of its involvement with the strike apart from Regan Landis. It is something she has arranged with several union leaders who owe her favours, or by paying cash to others. The 'mass action' banner is swallowed by the media and general public as the 'Dreamtime Levy' is a new tax that has caused grumblings and the talk of 'action' by various sections of the community. The purpose of the levy is to finance special forces to re-establish the first perimeter fence that was overrun late last year.

The **Dupology** is now very strong after Austside's demise. It is best described in terms of two rival blocks, with competing corps forming loose (but completely unofficial) alliances. The block members occasionally ask for favours from their fellows. The two blocks that make up the dupology carry immense power and are increasingly less afraid to use it.

The **Other Runners** will be a especially tough opposition for your players as I suggest you set them up against an identically skilled and equipped group, more or less mirroring your players. This will give them a tough fight when the two groups do meet (which would be appropriate for an exciting climax). Do make sure that the players are aware via

contacts or street gossip that there is another group of runners involved with their operation, giving them reason to hurry, and worry.

Malcolm and his haunts are scattered about the sprawl. He has succumbed to a chip addiction since Austside went down, and is already losing his marbles. He can't be located easily, but his movements are summarised in the below guide;

Monday-Tuesday afternoon - cruiser.

Tuesday night-Wednesday afternoon - Garden Island.

Wednesday afternoon-night - Fremantle, Westside office.

Wednesday night-Midnight - The Bull's Horn.

Thursday Morning-Saturday - Garden Island.

When Pekovich is on Garden Island he can be traced by following the trail of BTL chippers doing the latest chip; Skin Raker-Fire Taker. If the players go to *The Dreamscape*, formerly one of the two still standing casinos on the island they will meet Fido, an elven girl, who will ask them if they have any chips. She is after another copy of the latest and will say so if the players give her the chance. She will tell them that she got her first copy from Sally. If they find Sally she will say she got it from Karl, who got it from Sqawker, following this lead they will find Karl dead and be forced to locate Sqawker. He is a troll who deals in chips, if the players make it worth his while he will tell them that Malcolm is on the Penthouse level (20th floor) of the squatter filled Eden Hotel across the street.

The **Objectives** are to destroy Malcolm, the outstanding stock and masters, and any material evidence of Sabatino's knowledge of the BTL activities. The master is destroyed when Malcolm has to swim for Rotto, and the stock and evidence can be destroyed by eliminating the now closed Westside offices in Fremantle. The only goal that will be hard to achieve will be the removal of Malcolm as it will be a race to get to him, and the players may get distracted by the events of the embargo, the lines of names given out by chippers at Dreamscape or various other wrong turns players may feel inclined to take. I suggest giving them a good run-around, as constant travel between Northbridge, Fremantle and Garden Island takes time, with hints of being followed, possibly by the other runner team your players should get suitably concerned at the quickening passing of time. On the following page **Perth at a Glance**.

- Coming soon *Shadowrun Singapore: The Fortress State*.

PERTH AT A GLANCE

For further details on Perth and the other Australian City-States see issues 8 & 9 of Australian Realms. The details that follow give a brief overview of the Perth sprawl areas touched upon by the scenario, further information will see print in FASA corporations "Australian Sourcebook".

Population: 5,000,000

Human: 73%

Elf: 10%

Dwarf: 4%

Ork: 11%

Troll: 1%

Other: 1%

Per Capita Income: 23,000Y

Population Below Poverty Level: 34%

On Fortune's Active Traders List: <1%

Megacorporate Affiliation: 39%

Regional Telecom Grid Access: AS/AU/WA

GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The Perth sprawl stretches for over two hundred kilometres along the flat west coastal plain and into 'secure' areas of the Darling Range. Along the plain is a mix of urban densities and 'water reserves' while fortified estates make up the bulk of the inhabited areas of the Darling Range. Many parts of the 'Hills' area are also protected water reserves, due to the districts water catchment potential, while on the coastal plain such-named 'water reserves' are defined by ground water 'mounds'. Such reserves serve to keep Perth's rarest resource, drinking water as pure as is possible. To this end, coupled with several 'deep' pumping stations (bringing water from several large underground fresh water lakes discovered in the 1980's) the Western Australian Water Authority has been able to meet the demands of a thirsty population.

The Perth Sprawl is largely a flat place, but there are six main distinguishing features of the sprawl, Rottnest and Garden Islands, the Swan River, Murray River/Peel Inlet, the Leschenault Inlet and the Darling Range. The waterways mark the densest and oldest areas of population, these zones are also the most secure from Dreamtime vermin with many paranormals and other manifestations seeming to shy away from such *blighted* built up areas. It is also in these water side zones that the citizens with money live. The wealthiest areas are the canals of Mandurah & Dawesville and the riverside suburbs of Perth-Metro on the shores of the Swan River. More general detail follows on the regions involved in the Stranglehold scenario:

Rottnest Island is directly west of the city, only twenty minutes by boat. This one time holiday isle was abandoned when the dawn of the sixth world opened the islands' infamous mass graves (Rottnest island was used as a colonial prison for Aborigines). These sad places of misery and despair brought forth ghost tribes in the midst of 'Tentland', the island's camping ground. The island now is inhabited only by native wild life such as quokkas (small marsupials), devil rats and more. The island is stalked by several hostile Ghost Tribes.

Garden Island to the south of Perth-Metro is an island that was originally used as the Stirling naval base until a large chemical spill in 2023. The resulting poisons sickened tens of thousands of nearby mainland residents and caused several deaths; the public outcry was immense. The base was evacuated during the accident, and because of the hazardous nature of the chemicals involved was left abandoned for a full year due to residual toxins. During the navy's absence vandals entered the base and stripped it of anything valuable. By the time the island was declared safe the base was a charred shell.

>>>>[What's more worrying from what I heard, was that they never found the rest of the cargo involved in the original accident.]<<<<

-Payback(12:12:12/11-JAN-55)

With the naval base needing a complete refurbishment and a dollar strapped Federal government looking to make cuts, some one floated the idea that the small western navy be temporarily disbanded. Amid little protest from an apathetic public the move was agreed to.

After the military had formerly washed its hands of the whole sad affair it sold the land back to the State government. The government of the day passed it straight on in typical Perth style to an entrepreneur who planned to cover the island in high rise beach resorts. Within five years Garden Island became a bizarre tourist mecca. A global advertising campaign trumpeted the resort as "...an Eden, a garden, the heavenly Garden Island." It was a success. The luxury resort was the place to go and the place to be seen. With two casinos, shopping mall, parks, a golf course and three first class international hotels. It feasted on tourist nuyen, doing well until in 2034 when the island resort's first customer came down with a viral

infection. Within two days she was dead. The toll continued to climb until two weeks after the first death when the State government quarantined the resort, fifty people were dead. The strange illness received publicity internationally; it also soon became obvious that Sylvia Walker had not been the first victim. By the end of the month the island was declared off limits indefinitely, the resort owners compensated and a tally of two hundred and fifty one reported dead. Months later the mystery illness was named a mutated form of VITAS and was thought to be contracted via the water supply of the island. The city-state government just wanted to forget the entire episode and did so with the brashness that has marked Australian politics since the Awakening. Now Garden Island is zoned as a 'natural reserve'.

>>>>[There's squatters in those towers. A great black market, need something that's bad, real bad, come to the market town.]<<<<

-Leper(12:13:59/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[Didn't they blow the causeway to stop squatters? And what about the mutant VITAS strain?]<<<<

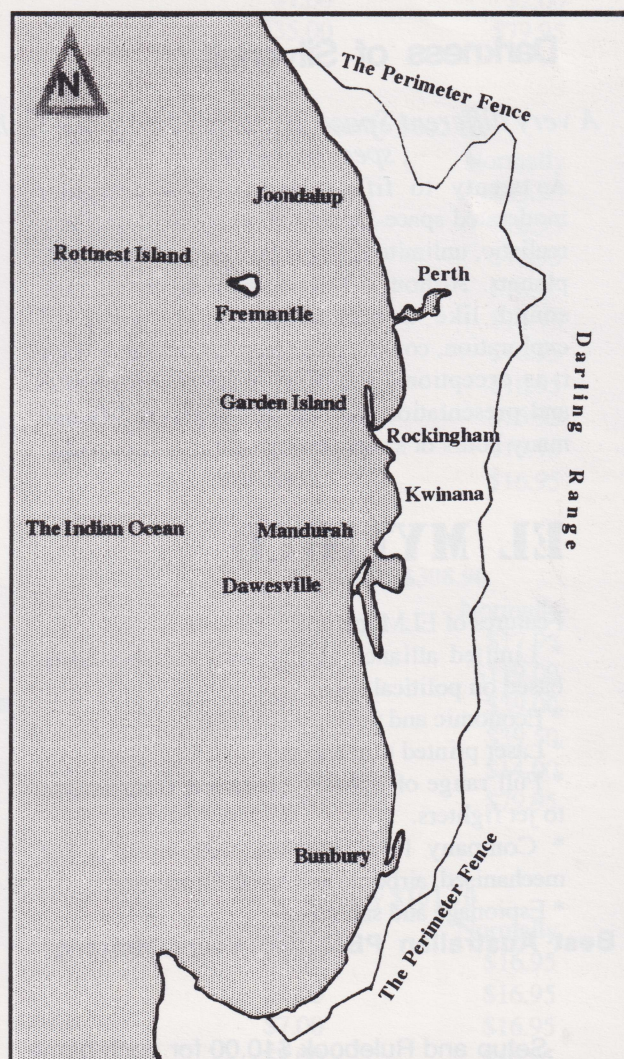
-Nguyen(12:14:29/11-JAN-55)

>>>>[Yeah, they blew the causeway, But there's a number of people who provide a 'ferry' service, and if you can't afford that its a short swim between the missing section of the causeway. Someone checked into the water supply, as in a Mafia somebody, and now all liquids consumed on the island are brought in, and most of it doubles for being medicinal. It's certainly worth the trip.]<<<<

-Li(12:21:01/11-JAN-55)

The Metro region is defined as the 'Perth-Metropolitan', or simply the Metro. This equates to the older (circa 1990) 'metropolitan area' of Perth. This region is now all medium and high density housing, and has large areas of commercial and light industrial properties. The Metro region also houses a GMC arcology in the Perth Central Business District and the Technology Park facility in Bentley in which many corps are represented.

If looking at the Metro, all regions west of the Kwinana-Mitchell Freeway, and all river side suburbs are secure, kept orderly and thus wealthy or at least comfortable. Other areas are of a more dubious nature, particularly Kwinana, Westfield, Balga and Belmont.



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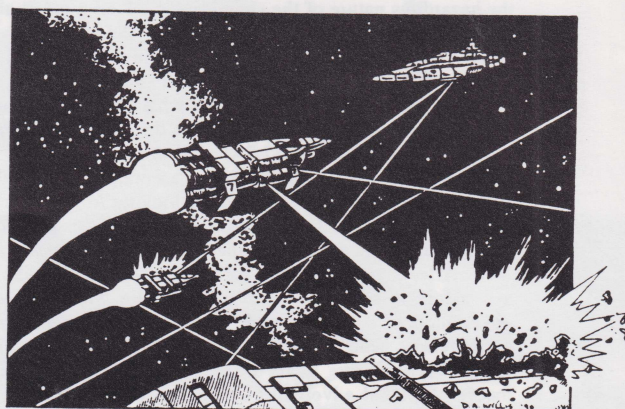
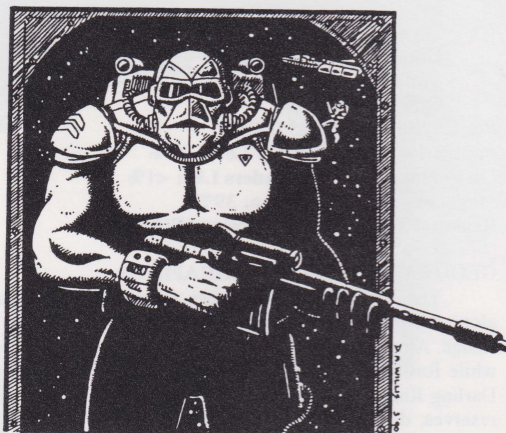
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Nightstalkers!

New Character Kits for Ravenloft - AD&D's Realm of Dark Horror

by Seng A. Mah

The world of Gothic fiction and cinema is peopled with stock characters who lend themselves easily to become character kits for use in the AD&D campaign world of Ravenloft. The kits presented here use information from the various Complete Handbooks (marked by *) and from the Tome of Magic (marked by **).

ROGUE KITS



Occult Investigator

Description: The occult investigator is an expert on things supernatural and sinister. He studies the occult and the dark and elusive beings that haunt the mists and shadows of Ravenloft. He walks on the borders of reality and sanity in his quest for information. Knowledge, he believes, is power against the dark things of Ravenloft. Occult investigators must have the following minimum ability scores: Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 13.

Role: The occult investigator is chiefly a scholar of the supernatural. His motives are varied; some do it out of mere interest, others are motivated out of a need to destroy all creatures of darkness. In his studies, the investigator has garnered much information in the fields of sorcery, religion and ancient history. If there are activities of the occult in his region, now or in the past, he will be aware of it. The occult investigator is also a dabbler of sorts in the metaphysical arts.

Good role models for this kit are Abraham van Helsing (*Dracula*), Sheridan LeFanu's Dr. Martin Hesselius and Ravenloft's own Dr. Rudolph van Richten.

Weapon Proficiencies: any small, easily concealed weapon eg. dagger, short sword, hand crossbow.

Non-weapon Proficiencies: Bonus: occult (new proficiency - see below). Required: religion, ancient history. Recommended: herbalism, local history, spellcraft, ancient languages, hypnosis*, observation*, information gathering*, warding (new proficiency - see below).

Equipment: concealed weapon, lantern, oil, garlic, wooden stakes, holy symbol, mirror - anything which can help ward off or identify creatures of darkness.

Skill Progression: Occult investigators need to practice stealth. Of the various thieving skills available, detect noise, move silently, hide in shadows and read languages are the most useful (see special hindrances below).

Special Benefits: Occult investigators have access to General, Priest and Rogue proficiency groups without penalty. When dealing with the occult, they gain +2 to saving throws and ability checks (+10% for percentile rolls). Occult investigators also gain +2 against Fear and Horror checks (in addition to other bonuses). Moreover, they have access to the following schools of spells: abjuration, divining and enchantment. They use the Bard Spell Progression Table (Table 32, PHB, p.42).

Special Hindrances: Only the thieving skills listed above are available to the occult investigator. Occult investigators begin with 40 points to distribute among these skills and gain 20 points per level thereafter. Investigators do not wear heavier armour than leather or padded armour. They do not possess the backstabbing ability of the common thief.

Races: any.

Wealth Option: To fund research: 3d6 x 10gp.



Vagabond

Description: The solitary wanderer is a stock motif of Gothic fiction, the self-reliant mystery man who calls the highways and byways of Ravenloft home. In his journeys he has seen and heard things unknown to most commoners. His experiences have made him one of the most imperturbable of folk in Ravenloft. Typically, the vagabond has taken to an itinerant lifestyle to escape some dark and mysterious past. A vagabond character must have minimum Con 13, Wis 12.

Role: Vagabonds are in the main pragmatic and close-mouthed individuals. A solitary lifestyle on the road has turned them into introspective thinkers prone to periods of silences and quiet contemplation. Vagabonds frequent farms and villages where they can find short-term work though they never remain anywhere for long: for the vagabond, the road always beckons. If they find no work vagabonds will take up begging to earn their evening meal. Travelling the roads is a lonely occupation and many vagabonds have taken on

some animal companion to ease the discomfiture of solitude. All vagabond characters harbour some dark secret or shadowy origin which periodically returns to haunt or blight them. Players should work these dark pasts out with the referee and roleplay their vagabond characters accordingly. **Weapon Proficiencies:** any makeshift weapons or tools usable as weapons eg. club, quarterstaff, hand axe, sickle, pole-arm.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus: survival (player's choice of terrain). Required: begging, observation. Recommended: any one craft (cobbling, carpentry, leatherworking, agriculture, blacksmithing, stonemasonry) animal training, direction sense, fire building, weather sense.

Skill Progression: A solitary, often penniless, life has taught the vagabond skills in the art of theft and stealth: pick pocket, move silently, hide in shadows and detect noise are primary vagabond skills.

Special Benefits: The vagabond can use non-weapon proficiencies from the Warrior group without extra cost. a lifetime of wandering make vagabond characters tough, they gain an additional +1 hit point per hit die. Because of their lifestyle, vagabonds also gain a +1 bonus to Fear and Horror checks.

Special Hindrances: Vagabonds are regarded with some suspicion by wealthy folk and suffer a -3 to Reaction Rolls when dealing with them.

Races: Any

Wealth Options: 1d6x5 gp.

Vistani Rover

Description: A full description of the Vistani, the gypsies of Ravenloft, can be found in the Ravenloft sourcebook, pp. 35-38. Vistani rovers are rare individuals who, for some reason or other, apparently work independently of their tribe. These reasons they keep to themselves. Perhaps they have been exiled, or perhaps they run a covert mission for their fellows; these reasons are only speculation. Very rarely will a Vistani divulge this information to a giorgi, a non-gypsy. It is suggested that those playing Vistani rovers confer with their referees as to the reasons for their separation from the tribe. Vistani rovers must have a minimum Wis and Dex of 14.

Role: Vistani rovers retain their wild, carefree spirits, even when journeying with giorgis. They are rogues through and through, disliked by many honest, hard-working folk. Vistani do not mix well with others, but a rover will warm to a fellow giorgi rogue. All Vistani rovers carry some sort of musical instrument which they play in towns and villages to earn extra coinage.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus: animal handling (horses), musical instrument. Required: astrology or fortune telling, weather sense, fire-building. Recommended: trailing*, tracking, dancing, direction sense, land-based riding, rope use, gaming, herbalism, juggling, tumbling.

Skill Progression: As consummate rogues, Vistani rovers are trained in all thieving skills. Pick pocket, hide in shadows, move silently and climb walls are all useful skills for these rogues.

Special Benefits: All Vistani are psychic to some extent. Vistani rovers can use precognition and sensitive to psychic impressions. They gain PSPs as wild talents. Vistani also have access to Warrior and Priest proficiencies at no extra cost.

Special Hindrances: All Vistani suffer -2 Reaction penalty when dealing with NPC giorgios as they are regarded with deep suspicion by other folk. Vistani never don armour heavier than leather, and cannot use shields. A rover with ties to a tribe must share his monetary gains with it.

Races: Only humans can be Vistani rovers.

Wealth Options: A rover can retain only as much as can be carried on his or her person.

PRIEST KIT



Monastic Monk

Description: In the isolated regions of Ravenloft stand huge monasteries and half-ruined keeps; abode of brotherhoods of monks. Organisation in a monastery is strictly hierarchical - the Abbot is the head and beneath him are lesser monks, nuns, novitiates and apprentices. Many of these monasteries are self-sufficient raising their own livestock and planting, and milling their own crops. Many monks are orphans or foundlings. Life is stern in the monastery - there are many rituals and taboos to observe. Monks seldom leave the monastery unless on an errand at the behest of the Abbot. Monastic monks must have minimum Wis 12, Int 11, Cha 11.

Role: The preservation of lore and learning, and the meditative contemplation of the human soul are the province of the monastic monk. A fair number of them roam the roads of Ravenloft preaching their creed and collecting new lore. Supplementing their academic disciplines are

the more pragmatic artisan crafts. Each monk must learn a trade which will make him a useful contributor to the economy of the monastery. Good examples of monastic monks can be found in *The Name of the Rose* (book and movie) and *The Monk* by Matthew Lewis (a horrifying Gothic tale which describes the fall from grace of a pious medieval abbot).

Weapon Proficiencies: varies but usually a club or quarterstaff.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus: religion, read/write. Required: local history, ancient languages, any one artisan craft (blacksmithing, stonemasonry, cobbling, carpentry etc.). Recommended: agriculture, artistic ability, brewing, etiquette, heraldry, modern languages, musical instrument.

Recommended Spheres: Major: All, Guardian, Divination, Protection, Law**, Thought**. Minor: Astral, Wards**, or Healing.

Special Benefits: the monastic monk will always find safe haven in his monastery. Monks practice meditation which halves their required sleep or rest period before they may pray anew for spells. Reaction rolls for NPCs interacting with the monks are modified by a bonus of +2 as many regard these holy men with respect.

Special Hindrances: A monastic monk observes a set of taboos. Chief of these is celibacy and abstinence from strong alcoholic drinks. A monk cannot spill the blood of another human being; they may only use bludgeoning weapons that do not inflict open wounds. Monastic monks cannot be chaotic.

Races: only humans are accepted into monastic brotherhoods.

Wealth Options: Monastic monks start out with 1d4x5gp. A monk must donate 90% of accrued wealth to his order.

WARRIOR KIT

Fiend Hunter

Description: some regions of Ravenloft are especially plagued by incursions of Darkness and the Unknown. Frightened and desperate, the folk turn to the fiend-hunter for help. The fiend-hunter is a mercenary warrior who makes a living exterminating supernatural creatures. Tough, weather worn and resourceful, the fiend-hunter is regarded by many as the only hope in a land rife with the minions of horror.

Requirements: Because of their lifestyles and nature of work, fiend-hunters must possess minimum Str 13, Con 15 and Wis 10.

Role: No one voluntarily chooses to become a fiend-hunter. It is a thankless job and few fiend-hunters ever live to retirement age. Many hunters are driven by a hatred of the supernatural, a hatred which sees them risking sanity and the sanctity of their soul to rid the realm of the darkness. It is correctly supposed that many such hunters have had a fateful encounter with dread beings in their murky pasts. The witch-hunter in the movie *Warlock* is a good role model for a fiend-hunter.

Weapon Proficiencies: any.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus: occult, endurance. Required: tracking, alertness,



divining (new proficiency - see below). Recommended: blind fighting, hunting, direction sense, warding (new proficiency - see below).

Equipment: Fiend hunters always own a silver weapon of some sort. They also carry rowan stakes, garlic and holy water with them.

Special Benefits: Fiend-hunters are resistant to the effects of Fear and Horror; they are not affected by either when confronting undead of 3 hit dice or lower. Otherwise they gain a +4 to Fear and Horror Checks. When fighting undead and supernatural forces, the vengeful fervour of the fiend-hunter grants her +1 to all attack and damage rolls (this is not a magical +1 bonus and of itself, will be ineffective against creatures hit only by +1 or better weapons). Fiend-hunters possess enough "faith" to turn undead of less than 4HD. A penalty of -4 is imposed on the die roll. The hunter requires an object of faith, usually a holy symbol, in order to turn undead. The same "faith" enables the fiend-hunter to resist the level-draining powers of some undead on a successful save vs. death (Constitution bonuses are applied to the roll).

Special Hindrances: A fiend-hunter will never shirk from his work: if there is undead or supernatural creatures about, the fiend-hunter will actively seek their termination. The nature of his work also exacts a Reaction Roll of -2 when dealing with NPCs. Undead and other dark beings recognise a fiend-hunter as such; any Reaction Roll is modified by a penalty of -4. Fiend-hunters use the Ranger/Paladin advancement table but are able to specialise in a weapon as a normal fighter.

Races: The majority of fiend-hunters are human. Dwarfs, with their single-minded determination and tenacity, also make good fiend-hunters. Half-elves and elves in this profession are unheard of.

PSIONICIST KIT

Seer

Description: Seers are exceptional individuals gifted with the ability to understand and foretell events beyond the normal human ken. Typical seers are the wise-women and wise-men of rural settlements, gypsy palm-readers, and the supposed "prophets of doom" who loiter the streets of Ravenloft towns.

Role: Seers realise early in life that they are "different" from other folk. Some are able to "see" or "hear" incidents that have yet to happen or have happened some distance away. Others can do what is known as "object reading" or psychometry. Seers in villages and hamlets are deeply respected. They are consulted as to the best times for planting and harvesting. Seers tend to live very lonely lives since the villagers who depend on them also fear them for their uncanny powers.

Weapon Proficiencies: any light small to medium weapon common in the seer's community. The only exception to this is the quarterstaff.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus: divining. Required: astrology, fortune-telling, healing. Recommended: artistic ability, direction sense, ancient history, herbalism, meditative focus, crowd working, hypnotism.

Primary Discipline: Clairsentience.

Recommended Discipline: Telepathy.

Recommended Powers: aura sight, clairvoyance, clairaudience, object reading, precognition, sensitivity to psychic impressions, know location, spirit sense.

Special Benefits: Seers gain a -2 to their power score when using clairvoyance, clairaudience, object reading, precognition and sensitivity to psychic impressions. seers can also use Priest proficiencies at no extra cost. Beginning seers may choose two Clairsentience sciences instead of one. A seer in good standing with his or her home community will always find safe haven there.

Special Hindrances: Seers can never wear armour heavier than leather. They cannot use metal weapons larger and heavier than a short sword.

Races: Seers are predominantly human though among the demi-human population of Ravenloft, dwarf, halfling, gnome, elf and half-elves seers can be found.

NEW NON-WEAPON PROFICIENCIES

Used elsewhere, the following non-weapon proficiencies are listed under the Priest group. In the Ravenloft setting, however, they are available as General proficiencies.

Occult: is the knowledge of things supernatural. It encapsulates lore about undead, cults, black magic and curses. Characters with this proficiency have a base 20% chance +5% per level of knowing 1d4 pieces of information about the strengths and weaknesses of any undead or supernatural being and curses. Occult costs 1 slot and is checked against Intelligence with a -2 ability modifier.

Warding: is the knowledge needed to create non-magical wards against undead and creatures of darkness. The use of physical objects or material such as garlic, silver or rowan is the main aspect of any warding. Purchased once, this proficiency allows one person or object to be protected; purchased twice, an area up to 10' diameter can be protected. Wards created must be specific to the type of creature. Creatures warded this must save vs paralyssation or be kept away from the warded area or object. Wards generally last 3d6 turns. Warding costs 2 slots and is checked against Wisdom with a -2 ability modifier.

Divining: is the ability to tune into the psychic or spiritual realm. This proficiency can be bought by psionics at normal cost. A divinist has become attuned to "otherworld" energies and can sense the presence of being and creatures which exist in both this plane and one other. In Ravenloft, this "other" plane is usually the Negative Material Plane. In order to tune into another plane (player's choice) the proficiency must be repurchased with that new plane in mind. The sense impressions of the diviner can tell if such an inter-planar entity has been within a 12 yard radius vicinity in the last 24 hours. The divinist also has a 5% chance per level of determining the type and power level of the entity by the "vibes" he or she senses. The proficiency costs 2 slots and is checked against Wisdom -3.



Mad Ludwig's Castle

R. Talsorian Games' Mike Pondsmith Interviewed

Tell us something of your background.

Well, I started out with a degree in Psychology and worked for a while as a counsellor of juvenile delinquents (or at least, that's the general term they used to use). I got fed up with that and went back to school to get a degree in design, hoping to be a special effects modeller for George Lucas. Somehow in the middle of all that I wrote *Mekton* and the next thing I knew, I was writing games for a living.

Has this been your only career?

At various times, I've worked as a university employee, a technical illustrator, a stationary engineer, a typesetter, a graphic artist, a radio DJ and a production designer for a computer company (that oddly enough, Richard Garriot of Origins Systems also worked at.)

How did you get involved in role play gaming, writing and design?

I first roleplayed with college friends back in the mid 70's, D&D like everyone, but dropped out after school. I didn't start playing till several years later when I met my wife Lisa. In order to pry her away from her old boyfriend (who was her DM), I had to join the game. I got involved in game design because at the time, no one was doing a science fiction game, and I was bored with dungeon crawling. So I wrote this game, Imperial Star, which was a non-robotic prototype for *Mekton*. It was never published, but the campaign around it has run in various forms for at least fifteen years off and on. I still game with some of the original players, but I don't often have time these days.

Was *Cyberpunk* your first major work in the role playing industry?

Well, it depends on what you define as major. I did *Mekton* at least three years earlier. It was a year earlier than *Battletech*, but R. Talsorian was hardly even a company yet so we never got much notice until after I wrote *Mekton II*. Next I did *Teenagers From Outerspace*, which won some awards and got a lot of industry recognition, so I suppose it's my first major work.

I personally think that every company has a critical success first and an economic hit second. That's because you're still learning the ropes on the first one, but by the second you know how to market the puppy and really get it noticed.

Tell us about Castle Falkenstein. What makes it different from other games?

Ah, *Falkenstein*. How to begin? Well, I like to say it's like combining *Lord of the Rings* with *Prisoner of Zenda*, with a dollop of Jules Verne tossed in. You even have a lot of fantasy mixed in; people like Captain Nemo and Holmes really do exist here, side by side with their creators. The premise is that there's an almost but not quite Victorian world just on the other side of reality, where the denizens of Faerie, Dragons, Dwarfs and Humans have been living in an uneasy peace for a few thousand years. Unbeknownst to the humans, the two Courts of Faerie; the Seelie and the evil Unseelie, have been manipulating history in a shadow war to see who will eventually control the world I call New Europa. The turning point centres around the unification of the German states and the plans of the Iron Chancellor Bismark to control Europe. The Faerie Lord Auberon decides to warp the entire course of Continental history by bringing back the legendary "Mad King" Ludwig II (the guy who built Neuschwanstien castle and sponsored Wagner), and use him as a puppet to base a counter Industrial Revolution around. But things go wrong, and instead he ends up with a revolution that combines sorcery and Technology called *Engine Magic*.

According to Lisa, the Castle Falkenstein rule book is set to break new ground in presentation for rpgs. Tell us how and why?

The presentation is what's taking so bloody long, actually. The book is basically three designs in one. The main design is a novella that centres around the main plotline I described above; it's almost entirely done in full colour plates and gorgeous artwork. In many ways, it's more like a coffee table book than a game book. Interspersed throughout this story line are articles and insights written by the protagonist of the story, a 20th century computer game designer who is shanghaied by magic to be part of the events going on. The articles are designed to really give you a feel for everything about the time - this alternate 1870 reality - social customs, governments, people, places. I think it may be the most successful integration of story, art and rules into a single package. But that's a tough task and we're taking the time to make sure it's right.

The other presentation blowout is the design. Most rpgs start from a wargaming base and go towards roleplaying. I started from a live action base and tried to keep the rules

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simple. The magic system is unique, there's a neat duelling game built in, and you use cards, not dice to determine actions and so on. It's hard to explain; you have to see it in action, but so far, it's had rave reviews at Origins, Gencon and other cons we've premiered it at.

Dream Park looked like a system which could have handled the *Castle Falkenstein* background. Where is the *Dream Park* game heading?

Dream Park is one of my favourites, and I gather that a lot of other designers like it too. But *Falkenstein* had too many subtle nuances that I didn't think DP could handle. I wanted *Falkenstein* to feel Victorian, and DP is a bit too generic for that. *Dream Park* is going to cover some new territory; we're going to show Gamemasters how to adapt the system to out-of-Park games in the upcoming *Metasystem Book*, and how to make it into a great "house rules" mechanic. We think it's the best on the market for this purpose and a lot of people agree. We'll also be upping the ante on in Park adventures; making them tougher and more puzzle oriented.

The *Dream Park* game is based on a 'real life' concept. How far away do you think this conceptualisation is from becoming a theme park reality?

Well, the *Dream Park* Corporation in Colorado already has a lot of the basics down; all they need is a bit more capital. *Dream Park* will work, I think, if you can pitch it as a vacation event rather than a short-term "look at the cool effects" situation. The technology is getting closer every day; but it needs a venue other than "shoot em up". That should be coming along any time.

Are there any novelisations planned for the *Cyberpunk 2020* world?

We're working on it. Right now, a major packager is putting something together for the big book publishers. We'll see. Lord knows, we've had enough great manuscripts sent to us. Maybe if nothing comes together in the next few months we'll publish an anthology ourselves, just so I can see my desk again.

The society of the *Cyberpunk* world seems to be getting darker all the time. The advent of *Deep Space* seemed to briefly light a candle in the darkness, yet *Cybergeneration* may well have snuffed it out. What are your long term aims with the game world you have created?

Arrgh! *Cyber Generation* is not darker future! A lot of people have already grasped that. *Cybergen* asks the important question, "If not you, then who?". It challenges people to change the dark future. The generation stands a very good chance of winning (with the current story arc we've created), and if they do, they'll restore the ecology, control the megacorps, stop the violence and clean up the planet. This doesn't mean everything will be hunky dory. It'll still be a tough world to live in. But the Generation is willing to fight and die to change things for the better, and that's a really big step towards the positive.

With *Cyberpunk* R.Talsorian Games beat every one (particularly *Shadowrun*) to the punch. Are you happy with the performance and evolution of *Cyberpunk* in competition with its rivals?

Happy? Oh yeah! Boy, am I happy. I just wish we could put out more stuff faster! I tend to feel that except for *Shadowrun*, the other dark future games are pretty much shadows of what we created. *Shadowrun* created it's own niche and I think they did a great job. But someone had to hold the line for the original "cyberpunk" concept and I feel that we've done better than anyone else.

What does the future hold for Mike and Lisa Pondsmith and R. Talsorian Games?

Plans? Who makes plans? Right now, we're just waiting for the "munchkin" to be born. In twenty years, I'd like to be able to hand my kid(s?) a really cool game company to work in, but with my luck, they'll want to be accountants. Can you hear it now: "Daaaad! Why can't you get a real job!" Ah well, at least I'm having fun. And that's what really counts.



REALMS

Hell Hath No Fury

Written & Illustrated by Karen Ogden

The beleaguered old man slashed his knife at the robber's face. It sliced along the left cheek up to the eye. Ranald winced and wiped away the blood that trickled down to his mouth. The old man was not as slow as he thought. He thought that such an ancient man would be easy to overpower. Ranald pushed the old man to the ground and sank a metal studded boot into his stomach.

Snatching the well-laden money pouch, he laughed. The old man's hand grabbed at his ankle, almost overbalancing him. Surprisingly the grip was strong and Ranald couldn't shake himself loose. The old man cried out for help.

"Shut up, old man!" Ranald hissed.

He pulled his sword from its hilt and drove it into the old man's heart.

Rhiannon looked down at her father's freshly-covered grave. A lone tear rolled down her cheek and fell onto the blood red rose that she held tightly. Her father was such a sweet old man. Who would want to kill him? She gently kissed the rose and let it fall onto the grave.

"I will find the man who did this and make him pay," she whispered.



Fury and revenge; two very strong driving forces. My favourite definitions of the two are: Fury - an avenging spirit or wild anger, and, revenge - to exact retribution or the desire for vengeance. It reminds me of a nursery rhyme learnt as a child.

There was a little girl,
Who had a little curl,
Right in the middle of her forehead.
When she was good,
She was very, very good.
When she was bad,
She was horrid.

The trick is that when you saw the good little girl you had no idea how nasty and

cunning she could be. This is the type of revenge I prefer. The unexpected type. The ones you don't suspect are usually the worse. If you know it is coming, you're prepared. If you don't, it's more devastating for the victim and all the more pleasurable for the revenger.

Over ten years of gaming, mostly with males I have come to the conclusion that men have little imagination when it comes to the art of revenge. Let's face it. Generally, men tend to take the most direct route. Subtlety and subterfuge is not usually in their repertoire when they are dealing with revenge. "Mess with me and I'll smash your kneecaps..." is more their style. Direct, yes. Painful, yes. Satisfying, usually so. Imaginative, no.

Besides the guy with no kneecaps now knows who you are, can usually prove it (the GM always has no end of convenient witnesses) and can get back at you in due course, usually by smashing your kneecaps!

More satisfying is the use of imagination and patience. Patience is usually the hardest.

In our AD&D campaign I once played a female, half-elven Magic User/Thief, named Rail of only second level. She wasn't very strong. She wasn't very tough. You could kill her just by tripping her up. But she had a great imagination and with a simple colour cantrip (in the early editions they used to last one month) she exacted a most satisfying revenge

on a loud, boorish fighter who said questionable things about her moral fibre. More on that in little while.

I've watched males playing female characters, and most of them are quite predictable in their reaction to an insult or affront: punch the guy and then wonder why they get beaten senseless. If you're playing a character or NPC (if you are refereeing), who is not very strong then you have to use your wits not your fists. You're female now. So try to think like one.

Most of the muscle-bound knuckle heads you encounter are either trying to impress you, or trying to insult you. It's part of an inferiority complex. Many men feel inferior, or don't want to feel inferior, or don't want to look inferior in front of their friends. What they don't enjoy is being beaten by a female fighter, but they may want you to fight *because* they don't expect you to win. In their eyes this makes them look good. All of this nonsense props up the 'typical' macho male fighter image. So what can you do as a female to combat this behaviour? Just stop and think for a minute, or two. You most likely can't win in a fist fight, so what have you got that you can win at. Remember, in the revenge game, winning is everything.

Rail thought, smiled to herself, sat down and pretended to fume and mutter under the breath. The fighter laughed along with the rest of the male patrons of the crowded Inn.

"What is the most important thing to a male fighter?" she thought to herself. "His macho image and the contents of his pants." While the others laughed Rail weaved a well thought out spell. She 'coloured' a yellow stripe down the coward's back and made a certain hidden appendage turn a horrid gangrenous green.

This action, in itself, was probably pretty mild but foreknowledge helped of course. There was a male paladin in the party who my character knew would defend her honour. After all Rail was a lady and he was a knight duty bound to uphold her dignity. He did just as expected. In the ensuing combat he won and, in the well-published tradition of the town, the loser forfeited all of his belongings (including his clothes) to the winner revealing Rail's cantrip effects in full technicolour.

Men call this humiliation. I call it a perfect set up to a most satisfying revenge. The obnoxious fighter was branded a yellow-striped coward and no one would sleep with him for over a month, for fear of catching something. Who said revenge isn't sweet?

Not only can revenge be sweet, but it can also provide very good opportunities for role-playing for both the gamemaster and the player. The planning and execution of the revenge will be unique for each person because everyone has different skills, abilities and sense of humour. Rail used a simple colour cantrip to humiliate because she had little else at her

disposal; she also had to rely on an unwitting ally to complete the revenge. Someone with other powers might react differently. For instance, a character with thorough knowledge of herbs could slowly poison their target and if she could make him sterile or impotent along the way, all the better. Nothing is worse to the 'virile' male ego than not being able to produce a son! Sometimes killing can be to good for them. Let your revenge linger so they suffer longer.

So how do you decide on what form your act of revenge will take? Start with your victim's weaknesses. This may sometimes require a little research. Is he proud? Does he consider himself a stud? Rich? Is he scared to death of spiders? Is he terrified that his wife will find out about his mistress? Which brings me to the next point. If you can persuade or trick or 'arrange' for someone else to do your dirty work so that there is less chance of getting caught, all the better. All is fair in love and revenge.

In my example, Rail knew that her victim eventually would visit the local harlot and word would get around sooner or later, but really she wanted him naked in front of as many people as possible. Getting the fighter naked was essential to her plan. She also knew that the predictable paladin would come to her 'rescue' and she was fairly sure that he would win the inevitable combat. She accomplished all this with a very simple cantrip and by playing on her femininity. Know thy enemy and thine allies.

If the victim does have a mistress and is hiding this from his wife one of the nastiest things you can do is to tell his wife. Not only can you revel in your own revenge but you can enjoy hers too. Trust me, women usually stick together on this one.

Now that I'm sounding like a man-hating feminist (which I'm not), I'll put a proviso on all this revenge business. Don't overdo it. Revenge is really quite a negative emotion, which can cause you more trouble than it is worth. For one thing, if you do something illegal you'll usually get caught and punished which defeats the whole purpose of exacting revenge. And there's not a lot of money in revenge. So unless your character has an endless supply of gold or is completely driven insane with revenge (which is rare) then don't hog all of the referee's time. Allow the other players to explore their characters and goals as well. Don't get too selfish. Above all remember; patience. Revenge can usually wait. And if you don't ever get a chance to get even, remember it is still only a game.

Not every insult needs avenging. It all comes down to role-playing. Unfortunately some players don't really play a character, but a set of numbers. A good player will decide on a personality for their character, and this will often detrmine how they react to any negative situation. Think about these questions before you sip of the cup of poison that is revenge. Is your character likely to be insanely jealous?

Does she have strong family ties? Is she sensitive about the size or shape of her nose or feet? What is the thing she feels most strongly about, that will tip her over the edge enough to dedicate herself to seek revenge? Even though no-one may ever comment on the horrendously large nose or size 14 feet, nobody may kill your father or your husband may not run off with the local floozie at least you have thought about your character's motivations and that will help you role-play when such a situation does arise.

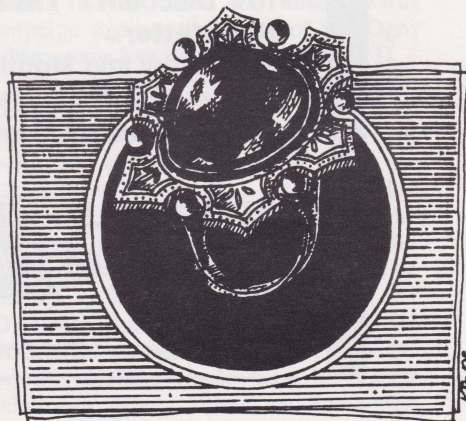
The reverse of all this is that something you do may tip someone else over the edge. That someone could be another player character or a NPC. You had forgotten questioning the night watchman's parentage, hadn't you? He was the vengeful type - who loved his mum and he is already plotting. You could find yourself up on charges of theft or murder (framed of course). Be careful. While you are spending so much attention on your intended victim, your husband may want to know why you are paying so much attention to the Inn Keeper.

Under these circumstances it is the gamemaster's turn to plot revenge. Be warned, just as you have carefully considered someone else's weaknesses she may use facets of your own character's personality which you thought were strengths against you.

Life is a vicious circle. What goes around, comes around.

Rhiannon smiled as she looked up at Ranald's adoring face. She had tracked him down, reeled him in and he had fallen for her. Ranald smiled back. A smile that would normally melt a heart. Rhiannon reached up to his face. Her fingers traced a jagged scar on his left cheek. As he turned his head to kiss the caressing hand, she slipped a long dagger from her belt and raised it high. Silently it dropped, piercing his ribcage and reaching his heart. Ranald's eyes widened in both surprise and pain.

"Die, you bastard!" she whispered into his ear. "This is for my father".



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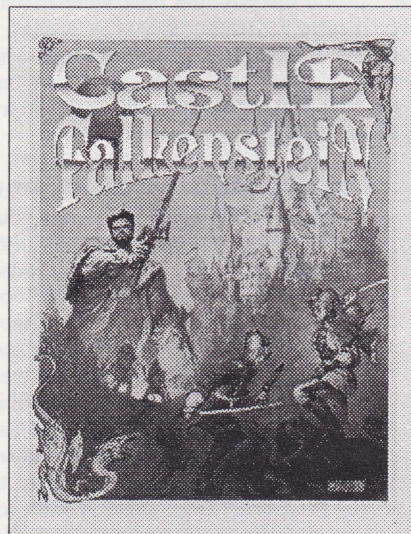
THE QUESTIONS

1. What are the names of the 3 castles built by 'Mad' Ludwig of Barvaria?
2. What government event marked the beginning of the London social season?
3. What was the name of the airship of Robur the Conqueror?
4. What dance craze swept the late 1800's which was considered a sign of growing decadence and reckless youth?
5. What was the name of the dwarf who forged the ring of the Nibelung?
6. What daughter of Queen Victoria was the mother of Kaiser Wilhelm of Prussia?
7. Who was the designer of choice for ladies clothes during the late 1800's?

THE ANSWERS

Will be printed in issue 17 with the prize winners names.

Send entries to: **Castle Falkenstein Competition**, PO Box 220, Morley, W.A. 6943.



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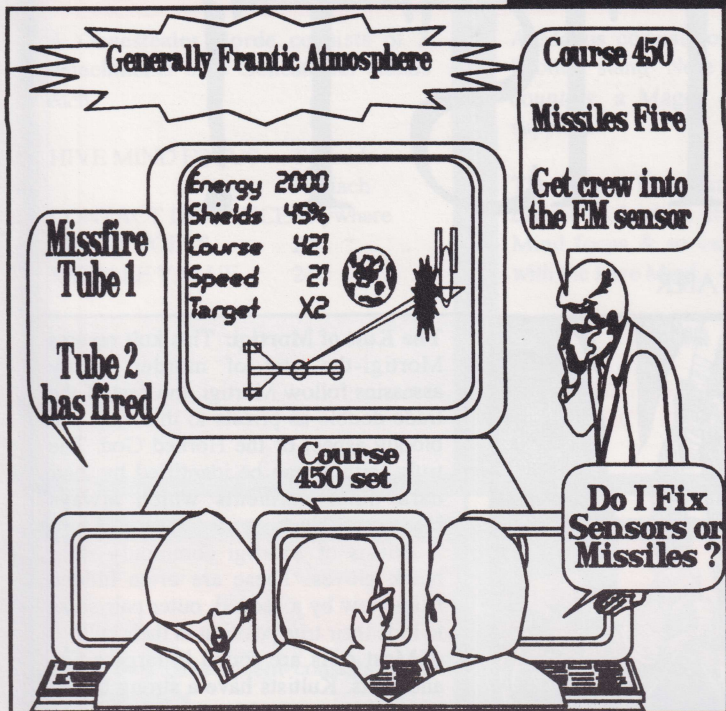




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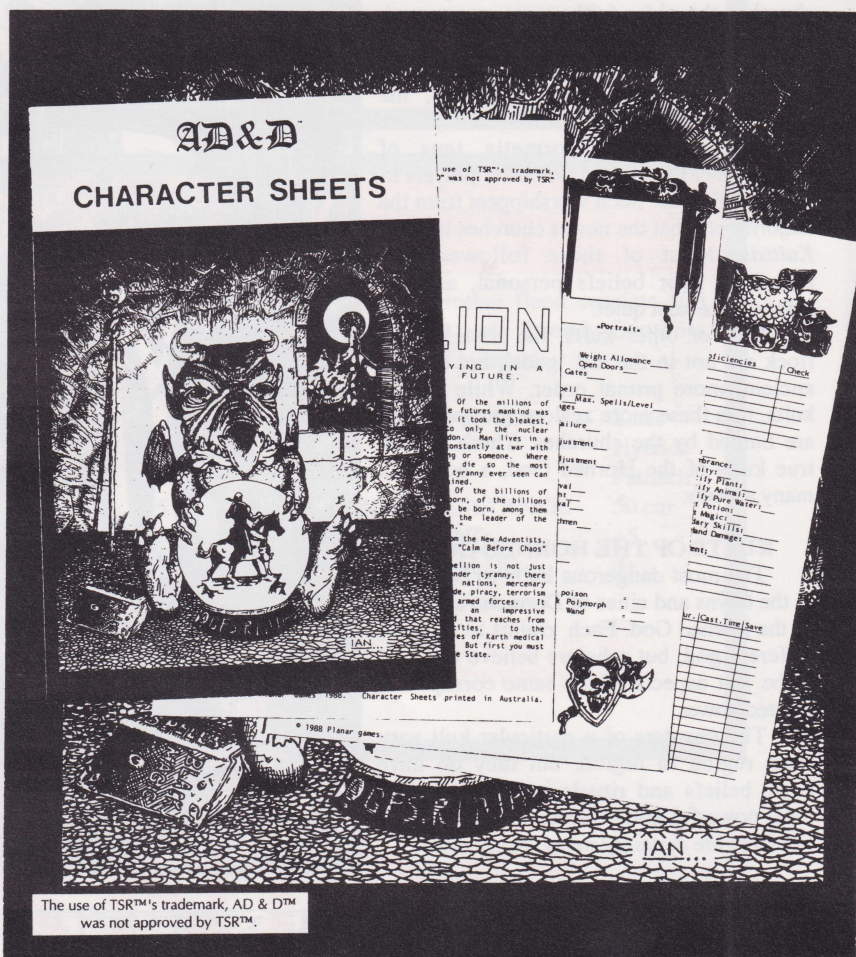
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The Sango Drago: Also known as 'the Kult of Blood' these are mages who spill blood to power their castings.

While some followers are still members of the mages' Cabal, most are *renegades*. Their god is actually *magic* and their focus blood. For this reason the Sango Drago is not your typical *faith*. They believe in the powers of blood, claiming that magic is a living being in astral space, and that it must be fed for it to be truly your servant.

With such beliefs they are dangerous, spilling blood and using it in casting rituals, sometimes even drinking it.

Usually wearing black and red these crazed individuals are one of the most hated, feared and hunted kulta.

The Callers of Malsano: This kult gets blamed for a great many things, usually rightly so. It's followers are self centred individuals who always becry of bad luck befalling them. Secretly, they pray for such things to happen to their fellows, such as a mother wishing the pox on her friend's son, so her own child may be spared. Malsano is often associated with pestilence, but she is more correctly a god of fate (many followers wrongly think she is a god of mercy). Her faithful see her as stern and dressed in black. Her priests wear greys and browns and are found in any large centres, particularly in slums.

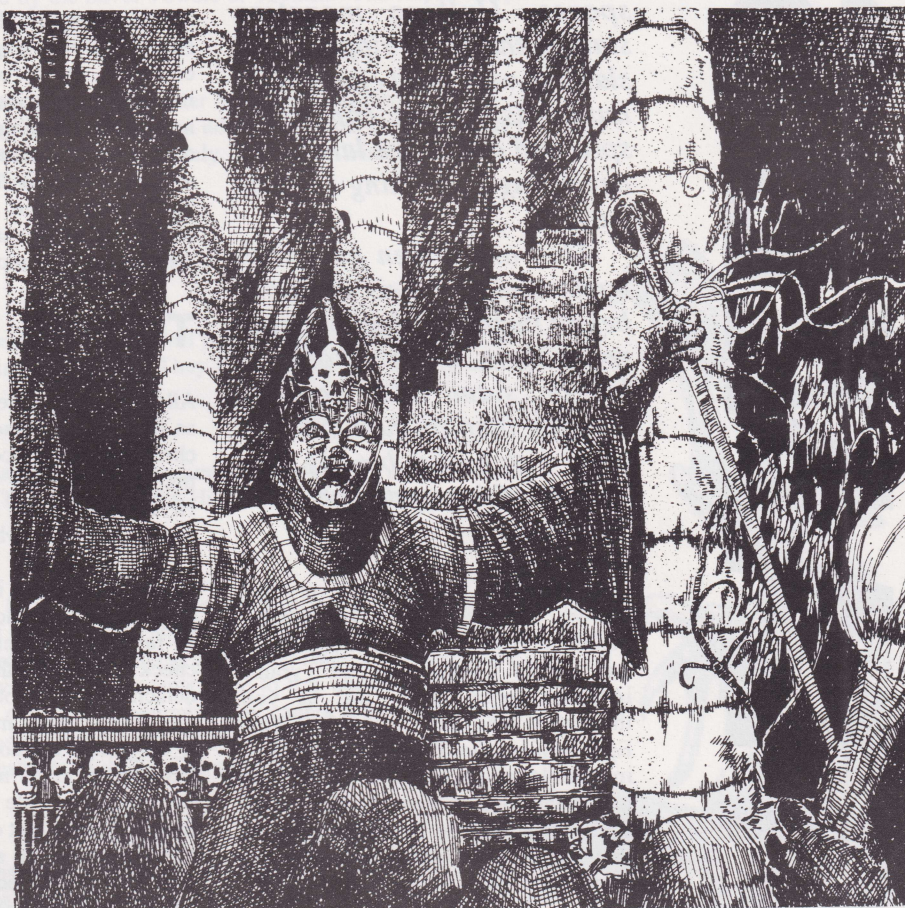
The individual covens of this kult rarely meet or co-ordinate anything. Porto Baimio, Karlamar, Belmez, Ossard and Zarustra have large numbers of worshippers, many of whom are blind to how they are manipulated by their priesthood.

THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE

This is the name given to the network of kulta devoted to the Horned God by the Church of Baimiopia. The church has kept its carefully researched information from all but the king, frustrated by the sheer scale of the corruption that festers beneath the veil of *normal* Heletian society.

It is known by the church that while there is no official hierarchy within the kulta, there is a loose power structure, one that to the Holy Benefice of Baimiopia's shame sees the *capital* for the Kultists in Dornetia being in Turaso, Greater Baimiopia. Other strong cities for the empire are Ossard, Karlamar, Tusmero & Bayner.

Information on such groups is gathered by the Church of Baimiopia's infamous inquisition. Centred in Baimiopia this group of elite *hunters* seeks out the corrupt amongst the common folk, and those in power. They are the last guard of the Heletians morality (see the article in this issue on the Inquisitors of Baimiopia).



THE COMMON KULTS

While the kulta of the Horned God are the most feared of sects, many common people do not realise there are other whole groups of similar, but less sinister worshippers. Before Heletian worship was organised into what gradually became the Church of Baimiopia many Heletians worshipped either the earth, known as *Patrino*, or entire pantheons of local gods, many of which were elevated to the sainthood by the Church in an effort to win local support and converts. While these adoptions of various 'saints' and local rituals won over many new souls, it didn't embrace all. Most of the truly faithful retained their beliefs. While they are not considered a threat by the Church of Baimiopia, they are nonetheless something that it feels should be assimilated, or obliterated.

The Stellisto: Many thieves belong to a kult known as *the Stellisto*. Such thieves worship *Stellis*, god of the night, luck and thieves. He is pictured as always being hooded, with light falling on only his chin, right cheek and nose. Many of his followers wear blue, grey and black. The most common place to find priests of *Stellis* is the local thieves guild, often they head up such groups.

Followers can be found in any large town or city.

The Kult of Battle: Kave is worshipped by many warriors as the god of war. Some scholars argue that he is a part of the Horned God, but current (secret) church dogma states that "*Battle in itself is neither good nor evil, therefore Kave is neutral.*" Many mercenaries follow Kave, only wearing his symbol openly when in less 'civilised' or 'regimented' places, for example not in Baimiopia, but in Belmez. The faithful of this kult dedicate themselves to the skills of battle and its honours. They despise 'murderers' such as assassins, and will often have disputes with the Kult of Mortigi (one such disagreement has recently flared in Belmez, Evora).

The symbol of Kave is the sword.

Tergaia: This is the kult of *Patrino*, it is a nature faith, one that worships the natural forces of Unae. Its priests are the druids, and it is among the oldest of religions. Most of her followers are found in the backwaters of Greater Baimiopia, Fletland and the Kramer states. Several facets of the faith have been worked into the Church of Baimiopia's own rituals, such as the Tergaia festival, that signifies the coming of spring (and Saint Baimio).

The symbol of Tergaia is the leaf.

The year is 514 EK, it is mid spring ☉

EPIC TYRANIDS

by
Darrin Mison

The tortured sky turned black with poison wind spores. Hulking monsters stalked the land, ripping and slashing with giant claws while hundreds of bio-constructs sprawled across the landscape devouring everything in their way.

Men are driven mad with terror and flee their positions before their ravening foes even reach them. Others, frozen in horror, stand with weapons hanging limp by their sides as they watch the bloody and truly terrifying approach of the Tyranids.

Sound familiar? It should be a very well known scenario for Warhammer 40,000 players who have been at the wet end of a well prepared Tyranid invasion force. Now, just as you thought it was safe to pull out your Epic armies, the Tyranids make their inevitable re-appearance. These are unofficial rules as there are no Tyranid Epic scale figures available yet, but they should give your opponent a few grey hairs.

Selecting Forces

Tyranid armies are chosen in the same manner as normal Epic armies. However there is only one company card, the Genestealer Horde card. There are six Support cards and two Special cards. Up to five Support cards and one Special card can be selected for each Genestealer Horde card.

Tyranids also benefit from a similar rule concerning their formations as Orks. Support cards chosen for a Genestealer Horde actually become part of that formation and increase the Break Point and Victory Points for it. Although a part of the formation, each formation supplied via Support cards does not have to maintain their formation distance (6cm) with the other formations to which they are related. This is covered in the Hive Mind Contact rules below. For clarity the term formation will refer to both the Horde card and its Support cards and the term detachment will refer to the individual support cards or bands of Genestealers. Special cards don't contribute to the formation's Break and Victory Points and act independently.

Hive Mind Contact

All creatures in a Tyranid force are part of the Hive Mind. The Hive Mind is a single co-ordinating will that directs all Tyranid creatures. It is formed from unthinkably huge numbers of individual consciousness' each of which is a living, although not always intelligent creature. The Hive Mind passes down orders to co-ordinate its members but has a limited range of influence. This is the Tyranids' major drawback. Each creature has a focus point from which they maintain contact with the Hive Mind and a maximum distance which they can stray from it. As soon as they move back into range contact is re-established.

Tyranid Morale

All Tyranid creatures are immune to the effects of morale as long as they have contact with the Hive Mind. Tyranid detachments check morale as soon as they lose contact with the Hive Mind, that is, when they move outside their contact distance to their Hive Mind contact focus. They do not check morale when they are broken, only when they lose contact.

When detachments in a Tyranid force check morale the results are different to other races. They are isolated from the Hive Mind and so fall back to their basic instincts. If they make their morale check this means they immediately go on charge orders. If the detachment has not performed any action in the combat phase they immediately move double rate towards the nearest enemy. If they have already shot or fought in hand-to-hand then they have these orders next turn unless contact is re-established that turn. If the morale check fails the unit is stunned and they lose their orders for rest of the turn and may do nothing. If they have already performed some action this turn apply this result to the next turn unless contact is re-established. If in hand-to-hand combat they may not roll dice and cannot pin opponents.

The only exceptions to this rule are mind slaves. Mind slaves that lose contact with the Hive Mind regain their free will but the shock can kill them. On a roll of 1-3 the mind slaves drop dead and Victory Points are awarded as if they had been broken. On a roll of 4-6 the mind slaves fall under the control of the opposing player but no Victory Points are awarded.

Detachments of Tyranids, Zoats, the Magus and the Patriarch are command units and form their own focus points and thus cannot lose contact.

Psychic Attacks

The Hive Mind is an exceptionally powerful psychic entity. However it must focus these powers through those of its warriors which have some psychic potential themselves. A Tyranid force can make one psychic attack for every Genestealer Magus or Patriarch in the force. Even though it is actually the Hive Mind making the attacks, line of sight and range for these attacks can be drawn from any Hybrid in the horde. It is assumed Hybrids gain some latent psychic potential from the human part of their parentage and they become the focus of the Tyranid force's psychic powers. These attacks can be made in any combat phase.

Mental Bolt

Chose one target within 25cm and roll 1d6. On a roll of 4+ the target's mind is melted by a bolt of psychic energy. No armour save is allowed though a psychic save can be attempted. Void shields disrupt the psychic energy on a roll of 4+, but if it fails the crew of the vehicle are destroyed. For Titans work out the damage as per a head hit.

Force Shield

This ability erects a shield between the model using it and one other friendly model within 10cm. This shield performs in the same way as the warding produced by the Silver Towers of Tzentch. The shield dissipates at the end of the phase.

Wind Blast

Place a barrage within 50cm of the 'casting' model. Any model under the template is thrown to the ground and may not move, shoot or fight in hand-to-hand. This does not affect Titans or Super Heavy Tanks. The blast lasts to the end of the phase in which it was cast only. Troops on First Fire orders which were blasted may not fire in the Advance Fire phase.

Tyranid Troops

Hunter-Slayers

Hunter-Slayers stand only a metre or so tall and resemble miniature Tyranid Warriors. They run on all fours, clutching their Fleshborers in their remaining front limbs. They have simple natures and can be likened to hunting hounds.

Tyranid Warriors

Tyranid Warriors stand twice the height of a human. They have six limbs, the lower two are hoofed and act as legs while the upper limbs serve as arms. They are one of the Hive Mind's most advance constructs and are capable of independent thought.

Genestealers

Man has known of the existence of Genestealers for some time. However, it is only recently that it has been realised that they were the advance forces of the Tyranids. They are six limbed and can operate independently of the Hive Mind as they have a group consciousness all of their own. Their speed and terrifying ability in close combat make them devastating opponents. Due to this ability in hand-to-hand combat Genestealer stands roll 3d6 instead of 2d6. Interestingly, they cannot reproduce naturally but instead infect their victims with their genetic structure. These unfortunates become Brood Brothers whose offspring are born as Genestealer Hybrids. The children of the Hybrids will be born as pure-strain Genestealers.

Zoats

Zoats are also six limbed but are centauroid in physique. Their original purpose was that of communicating with and assessing the value of race prior to conquest. Their communication skills are nothing short of stunning and they are often used to subvert members of alien races in order to try to suppress resistance against the Hive Mind. They are also very capable warriors.

Genestealer Patriarch

A Patriarch is an ancient Genestealer who first initiates a 'brood' of Genestealers. As the brood matures and becomes more powerful, the Patriarch develops psychic powers and becomes obscenely bloated. When the Patriarch reaches the zenith of his power he becomes a psychic beacon for the Tyranid Hive Fleet.

Genestealer Magus

The Magus is the figurehead of the Genestealer brood and a powerful psyker. The most human-looking of the hybrids, it can move easily in the society that they've infested to further the aims of the brood.

Genestealer Hybrids

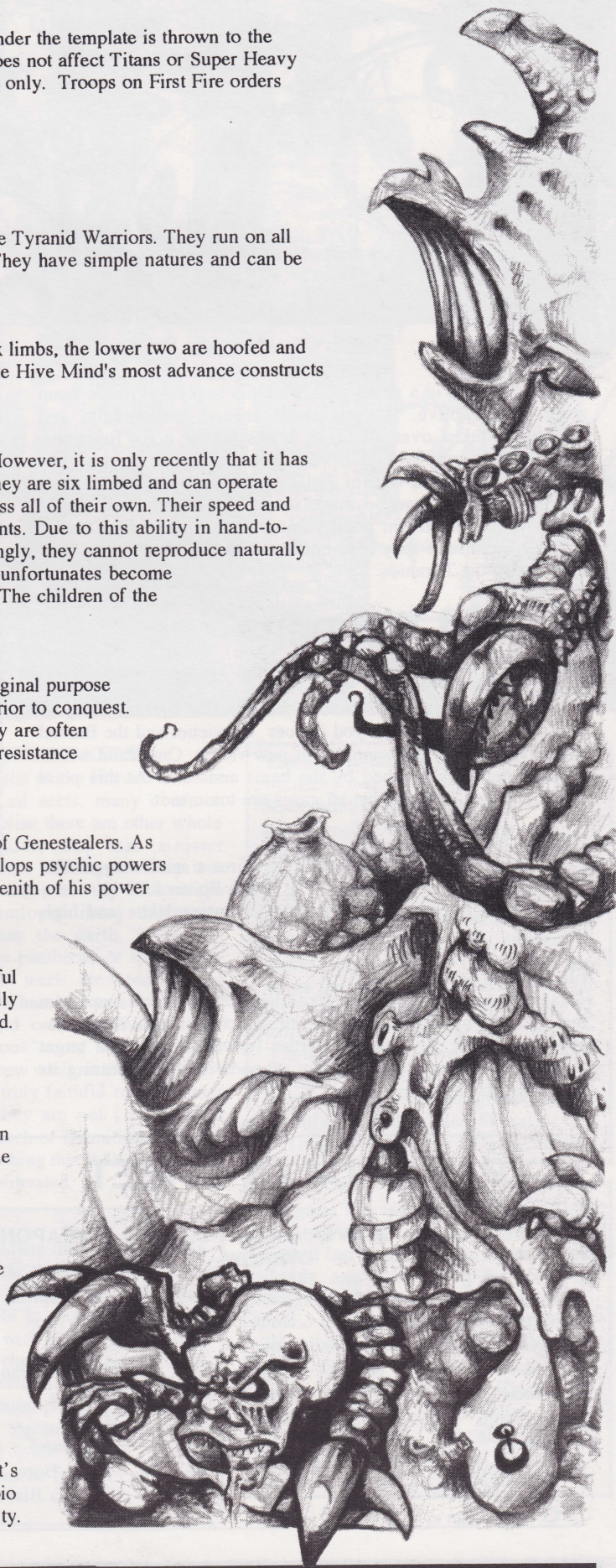
These are the monstrous offspring of the infected victims of Genestealers. Their children become more human-like as further generations are born until they eventually give birth to pure-strain Genestealers. Unlike Genestealers the Hybrids can comprehend the concept of technology and thus can use weapons.

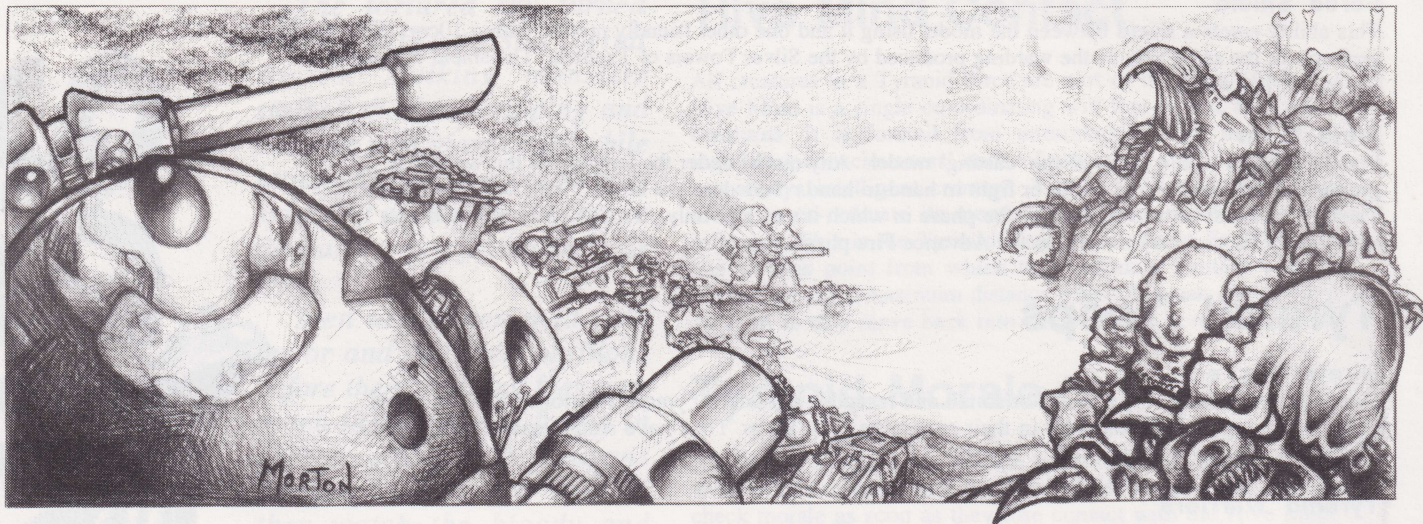
Brood Brothers

Brood Brothers are humans who have either been infected by Genestealers or subverted by Zoats. They are completely under the control of the Hive Mind and often are used to sabotage defence systems prior to the arrival of the main Tyranid force.

Screamer Killers

The Screamer Killer is the Tyranid equivalent of a dreadnought. They are quite intelligent and devastating on the battlefield. They resemble a stocky Tyranid with no neck, a heavily armoured carapace, and four huge claws for arms. As well as being deadly in close combat it is also powerful at a distance. Gases produced in it's lungs combined with a high frequency scream produces a ball of bio plasma. This is then belched across the battlefield at great velocity.





Mind Slaves

The Mind Slave is a small grub which is implanted in the brain stem of a captive. It curls itself around the medulla and effectively takes over all of its host's higher brain functions. Eventually it outgrows the cranial cavity and kills the host but in the meantime the warrior skills of the slave are put to good use. Mind Slaves can be made up of any detachment of any troops with a maximum point value of 300. Using Mind Slaves is risky because if they lose contact with the Hive Focus they can turn on the Tyranids.

Tyranid Weapons

Barbed Strangler

The Barbed Strangler is a tubular weapon that fires a seed pod. When the target is hit the pod pierces the victim and the Barbed Strangler bursts out in search of a new victim. One stand within 6d6 centimetres is grabbed by the beast and slain. At this point the Strangler dies as almost all gases are toxic to it.

Death Spitters

This weapon used by Tyranid Warriors fires a small maggot-like grub at high speed at its target. The Death Spitter kills its victim with a cruel combination of poison, corrosive slime and high velocity.

Flesh Borers

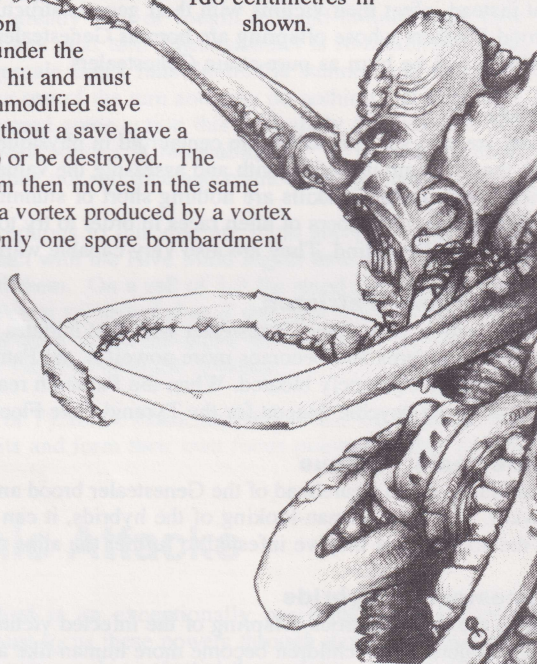
This weapon contains small flea-like beetles which leap from the weapon at high speed by means of a massive electro-chemical shock. The missile hurtles forward striking its target then spending the remaining few seconds of its life tearing its way through its victim.

Tyranid Spore Bombardments

In any combat phase one Tyranid command stand can attempt to call down a sporal bombardment from the Hive Fleet Kraken in orbit above the battlefield. When such a request is made roll a d6. On a roll of 5-6 a sporal bombardment is made.

Once a bombardment is made place a barrage template within 25cm of the stand which called it down. Then roll a scatter die on a roll of an arrow move the template 1d6 centimetres in the direction shown.

Anything under the template is hit and must make an unmodified save (models without a save have a save of 6+) or be destroyed. The sporal storm then moves in the same manner as a vortex produced by a vortex missile. Only one spore bombardment can be called down per turn.



TYRANID DATA SHEET

TROOP TYPE	MOVE	SAVE THROW	C.A.F	WEAPONS	RANGE	ATTACK DICE	TO HIT ROLL	SAVE MOD.
Tyranids	15	None	+5	Deathspitter	55cm	1	4+	
Genestealer	15	None	+6	Claws				
Hybrids	10	None	0	Various	50cm	1	4+	
Zoats	15	None	+4	Barbed Strangler	55cm	1	4+	
Brood Brothers	10	None	0	Lasgun	50cm	1	5+	
Patriarch	15	None	+8	Claws				
Magus	10	None	0	Laspistol	25cm	1	5+	
Hunter Slayers	15	None	+5	Flesh Borer	25cm	2	6+	
Screamer Killer	15	5+	+5	Plasma Blast	60cm	1	3+	-1

SO YOU WANNA BE...

ROLES FOR UNAE BY LEE SHEPPARD

THE MERCENARY;

"I am constantly amazed at the abuse that mercenaries receive from their compatriots in the regular forces. I have fought many campaigns with auxiliary units and I would not be alone in command when I say that I know who I would prefer guarding my flanks."

- Arnundo Cabrazzi, Heletian Military

Role

Professional soldiers and mercenaries both fight for money. The main difference between them is that the mercenary fights for the money of another country or city. Many military forces are boosted by the inclusion of mercenary (or *auxiliary*) units. In fact, many states maintain only a small regular corps of soldiers, relying instead on the recruitment of large mercenary units in times of war.

Description

The mercenary is a professional soldier for hire, with a specific military skill to sell. This means that employers can recruit specialist units, providing supplementary skills that may be deficient within the regular forces.

Prior to beginning play, the player must decide whether they are currently serving with a specific mercenary company or acting as a free-lancer. If a free-lancer, and not "on the run" from a previous employer, then the character will have documentation (in the form of references and campaign medals) that testify to the quality of their skills.

AD&D Kit Information

Primary Character Class: Fighter

Weapon Proficiencies: Players who wish to be a weapons specialist must choose to specialise in one of the following: long bow, composite bow, cross bow (light or heavy), lance, polearm, spear or waraxe. This restriction is placed to represent their particularly unique skills, thus providing potential employers with the opportunity to recruit a corps of specialists.

To reflect what has probably been a varied military career, PCs may become proficient in any other weapons of choice, but they may only *specialise* in one of the above mentioned weapons types.

Mercenary characters who choose to be

non-weapon specialists may not specialise in any weapon type. They must rely on their basic combat skills. Such characters also have their weapon proficiency slots reduced by one to reflect this lack of combat training.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: As with the weapon specialist, non-weapon specialists must also choose a specific marketable skill. The following are suggested as appropriate skills - riding, seamanship, engineering and siegecraft. If a player wishes to become a mercenary character whose skills are of a more "cerebral" nature, and decides to be a non-weapon specialist, then they will receive an additional proficiency slot to complement their preferred non-weapon proficiencies. Conversely, weapon specialist mercenaries have their non-weapon proficiency slots reduced by one to reflect their concentration on developing weapon skills as a priority.

Whenever the non-weapon specialist uses her particular preferred skill, she may do so without penalty. In most case, referees should also allow these characters an additional bonus of +1 to +3 on proficiency rolls, dependent on the task being attempted.

Special Benefits: Mercenaries have specific marketable skills. They will always receive a +3 bonus on reaction checks when dealing with potential employers. Mercenaries are often given command positions before other fighters of similar levels due to their greater massed combat experience. Mercenaries also receive an additional 10% in wages, in comparison to regular forces.

At the equivalent of the fifth level of experience they may begin to attract followers, depending on the success of their past exploits. A famous mercenary may find he has up to 12 first level fighter followers appear over a relatively short period of time wishing to join the mercenary company.

Special Hindrances: Mercenaries are not popular with regular forces or local populations, the latter living in fear that the mercenaries will turn on their employers and loot the city they were paid to protect. As a consequence, all mercenary PCs receive a -2 penalty to reaction checks when dealing with general soldiery and townsfolk.

Mercenaries are expected to give their loyalty to their current employer. As long as they are paid the agreed wage, and are treated reasonably well they are expected to do as they are ordered. This said, many mercenary units do form an intense loyalty

to their commanders and some regular employers.

WFRP Career Information

Use the information in the Warhammer rules on page 30. None of this information is changed, but do consider if the mercenary has any allegiance to any kulta, the most likely candidate being the Kult of Battle, dedicated to the god of war, Kave.

Generic Information

Equipment: Weapon specialists begin the game with a good quality version of their particular weapon of choice. If the player is a member of a particular mercenary company, they must spend an appropriate amount of Florins on uniform components to reflect their allegiance.

Non-weapon specialists begin the game with their tools of trade to the value of 50 gold Florins (ie. a siege warfare specialist can't begin the game with a heavy catapult).

Wealth Options: Mercenaries begin the game with 2D6 x 10 Gold Florins.

Mercenaries as NPCs

Players will frequently encounter units of mercenaries. The Kramer Confederation cities of Destu, Midullis, Zarustra and Vangre all employ mercenary units on a regular basis. The only concern for Players would be if they ran into small mercenary units that have broken away after defeat in battle, or fled poor pay or working conditions. Such groups have been known to supplement their incomes with a bit of highway thuggery. One such mercenary unit, "The Black Scalps", were responsible for the slaughter of an entire village near the Sardon River after an unsuccessful campaign against the ogres of the Ogro Arbaro, some five years ago (see issue 11).

Other well known mercenary units include the "Whispering Scythe", a large (200+) unit of spearmen, famous for their decimation of ill-prepared ogre units; the "Company of the Wind", a small (30+) but elite unit of cavalry found patrolling the north road out of Zarustra; the "Kassarian Archers", a very large (300+) and expensive unit of long bowmen based in Silvarcis; and "De Hache Garde", an elite unit (100) of two-handed axemen from Burvoy who are currently seeking employment in Greater Baimiopia. Many other smaller units, varying in size from six to twenty warriors can be found serving a variety of masters.

Mercenaries Goals

Players who choose to make their career as a mercenary can look forward to a life of battle. Unae is a strife-torn world with many opportunities for warriors with a steady nerve. Players are encouraged to develop their character's background and career, taking them from simple spearmen to be the commander of their own elite company. This Role provides an excellent excuse to wander the countryside of Unae, seeking adventure.

THE GRAVE ROBBER

"The dangers. Let me tell you about the dangers, before you get your head filled with thoughts of treasure. I've seen things that'd turn your hair white and turn your blood to ice. Things that live out in the darkness and that'll tear out your living soul..."

-Naldin "Three Fingers"-Tomb Robber

Role

There has long been a need for fresh corpses, whether it be for necromancers of the Cabal, bizarre kult ceremonies or the terrifying new discipline of *science*. As long as there has been a need for bodies, there have been those willing to provide them.

There are those, also, with little respect for history or the dead, who are more than eager to make a profit by looting their graves. Humans are not the only race to bury their dead, a multitude of crypts, barrows, mound and tombs can be found scattered throughout the lands of Unae, often holding riches. Many of these resting places contain a wealth of treasures, others contain dangers and guardians of unspeakable horror.

Description

The *grave robber's* task is to provide fresh corpses for necromancers, universities, unscrupulous alchemists, other cabalists and the new breed - scientists. It is their job to find and exhume such corpses for their "employers", while avoiding the attention of the authorities (body theft is sacrilege to the Church of Baimiopia, penalties are severe).

AD&D Kit Information

Primary Character Class: Rogue

Weapon Proficiencies: The grave robber requires no particular weapon proficiencies, other than a general preference for weapons usable at close quarters. Tomb robbers may wear armour, but usually restrict themselves to light armours to allow greater flexibility when passing through small openings.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus - ancient history, local history. Recommended - ancient languages, navigation, rope use, blind fighting, direction sense.

Special Benefits: Experienced grave robbers develop a number of unique skills. The constant exposure to devious traps and tomb guardians lead to an increase in a couple of particular skills. At the equivalent of fifth level of experience, the grave robber develops an innate "sixth sense" to detect traps, even when not specifically looking for them, on a roll of 1 to 4 on 1D6. Detection does not mean removal, a grave robber must still determine how to disarm the trap.

At sixth level, the tomb robber becomes immune to most disease associated with the carrying of the dead; long exposure to such diseases has developed this immunity. This does not apply to magically induced disease, or disease by curse.

At seventh level, exposure to various undead guardians has given the tomb robber an insight into the powers and weaknesses of the undead, and as a consequence, the tomb robber possesses the ability to *turn* undead creatures as a first level cleric, with this skill increasing at a comparative rate.

The *tomb robber* is a specialist thief, one whose forte is the entering and looting of tombs and barrows. Any grave robber may graduate into the more dangerous but proportionately more rewarding field of tomb robbing, as long as they meet certain prerequisite criteria. In addition to a base Dexterity score of 11, thieves wishing to become tomb robbers must also possess a Wisdom score of at least 12, and an intelligence of at least 10.

All tomb (and grave) robbers receive an additional +15% to be added to both *find/remove traps* and *read languages* thieving skill base scores.

Special Hindrances: Grave robbers and tomb robbers live a dangerous life. Apart from the multitude of traps and creatures that await these characters, society frowns upon such activities. In all cultures the dead are at least respected, if not revered, and anyone who messes with the dead is asking for trouble. Any grave/tomb robber who makes his particular profession known to others is liable to a minimum -4 reaction penalty.

Grave robbers in particular exude a certain stench, associated with death, and requiring the need for constant bathing if any social activities are to be undertaken. The chance of contracting some form of disease is also increased by this particular line of work at least until immunities are developed.

WFRP Career Information

See pages 27 and 41 of the Warhammer fantasy Role Play rule book for information on these careers. The information in the rule book remains unchanged.

Generic Information

Equipment: Grave robbers require no special equipment other than that required for digging and prying.

Wealth Options: Only the desperate make their careers as grave robbers. Grave robber players begin the game with only 2D10 gold Florins. It is not long before most turn to other activities (including tomb robbing).

Grave Robbers as NPCs

Adventurers wandering the streets late at night might run into a wagon occupied by grave robbers about their work. Be warned though, when times are tough and fresh corpses are not available, many grave robbers are not above providing a few fresh corpses of their own.

The grave robber may sometimes require the assistance of adventurers (as lookouts, extra muscle, go-betweens, or fall guys), and the tomb robber may need help to deal with undead in the larger, ancient burial sites.

The most infamous tomb robber is Naldin "Three Fingers", whose career spans some forty successful years. Other well known tomb robbers include the late Alfred Lemonet, recently flayed alive when caught



looting an orcish burial ground in the grasslands of Ungria (see issue 7); and the anonymous tomb robber who according to rumour has stolen the body of the Benefice Gulliamo Vestacci from its resting place in the Cathedral of Vangre itself!

Tomb Robber Goals

It's a rotten job, but someone's gotta do it. This role might start out that way, and certainly creative referees and players could have many sessions digging up bodies and avoiding capture and execution, but the real adventure begins with tomb robbing. Be warned though - the grave robber will definitely need to keep her wits about her. The brain will be as important a tool as nimble fingers if this profession is chosen.

THE INQUISITOR

"Let the word go out. Those who oppose the Church, oppose the will of Krienta. Those who would take the path of evil will suffer the cleansing flames of retribution. Have no doubt - the agents of Krienta are all-seeing. You cannot hide your sin. There will be no salvation and there will be no escape!"

- Benefice Vincenzo
- Sermon at Vangre - EK 505

Role

The agents of the Horned God are everywhere. Plotting, scheming and stealing innocent souls away from the Church. The *Bardes Malfaisant* from Burvoy spread dissent amongst the common folk, the Cabalists challenge the power of the Church and the Kultists defile the Holy Empire of St Baimio. All of these evil blights must be found and removed before they pervert the blessed. They must be destroyed in the fires of retribution. The sacrifice of a few innocents is, whilst unfortunate, nothing if the threats of corruption are to be removed.

Description

The inquisitor is tasked with the discovery, sentencing and execution of heretics, including those who would spread open dissent against the Church. Their role is to stamp out *evil* wherever it is found, with *extreme prejudice*, thereby setting an indelible example in minds of those who might otherwise be tempted. As the Church defines what is evil, these same specialists of the Episkopom are perfectly placed to judge those who need to be sentenced.

Inquisitors work directly under the auspices of the Church of Baimiopia, and report to the Grand Inquisitor himself, Benefice Vincenzo, who heads the *Tribunal* of the Episkopom (see issue 12).

AD&D Kit Information

Primary Character Class: Priest

Weapon Proficiencies: No particular weapon proficiencies are required. In the



majority of cases inquisitor PCs are likely to have only basic combat skills.

Non-Weapon Proficiencies: Bonus-religion, questioning techniques. Recommended - herbalism, blacksmithing, build fire, languages, rope-use, read/write.

Special Benefits: In the eyes of the Church inquisitors do a very important job. Inquisitors can expect a friendly welcome from most local parish priests, this extends to free food and lodgings.

In most areas where the Church is accepted, the inquisitor has a free rein to search, question and convict those found guilty. Technically, this jurisdiction extends to the nobility as well, but often the Episkopom turns a blind eye to the suspect activities of the ruling class, preferring other methods to achieve Church goals. Those unfortunates not protected by the nobility who oppose the inquisitors can expect a follow up visit from Des Sankta Glavos.

By the fifth level of experience, a PC is able to act off his own suspicions, and may be given missions as an independent inquisitor, with his own staff. The many years of careful observation instil the PC with the ability to see into the hearts of individuals similar to the *know alignment* spell, and to detect when individuals are lying (unless they are taking "special" measures to avoid detection); both abilities function on a roll of 1 to 4 on 1D6.

The prerequisites for the inquisitor are high (14+) Intelligence and Constitution (12+). These are required due to the long periods of questioning required to obtain confessions from those under suspicion.

At the lower levels, inquisitors are more likely to work as assistants, spies or guards to more experienced inquisitors (5th level and above), using the lower levels to learn from the masters, honing their skills.

Special Hindrances: Inquisitor PCs are tied to the doctrines of the Church of Baimiopia. Their missions are often provided by the Episkopom, removing some element of personal freedom. Those inquisitors who stray from the path, or fail to prosecute under the full strength of Church law, are

considered rogue. Being so marked results in pursuit and execution.

WFRP Career Information

Inquisitors power stems from their authority and imposing presence. While not beyond spying on their suspects, and defending themselves in combat, these are not their strong points (an advanced career).

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Dex	Ld	Int	C	WP	Fel
			+1	+1				+20		+30	+20	+30	+20

Skills: Arcane Language, History, Luck, Public Speaking, Read/Write Heletian (Sidian), Theology, Torture, Sixth Sense.

Trappings: Inquisitor Robes, Medallion of St Baimio. D6 other religious tokens.

Career Entries: Cleric.

Career Exits: Demagogue, Templar.

Generic Information

Equipment: Inquisitors require some special equipment to operate effectively. Such equipment as paper and pens (for confessions); or shackles, chains, locks and ropes (for securing prisoners).

Wealth Options: First-level inquisitors begin the game with 2D6 x 10 gold Florins.

The Inquisitor as an NPC

Many inquisitors suffer from paranoia. A player who falls under the suspicions of an inquisitor had better be a fast talker or fast runner. Bards (especially those of De Barde Malfaisant) can expect severe treatment.

Some inquisitors are more concerned with their reputation within the Church than the actual discovery of heretics. Numbers of heretics executed is of far greater concern to these inquisitors than guilt or innocence.

The most famous inquisitor is of course, Cardinal Vincenzo. An inquisitor for some thirty years, the mere mention of his name strikes fear into the hearts of many. There are rumours that Cardinal Vincenzo seeks the position of Holy Benefice itself, a result that would push the Church into an even greater intolerant stand on most issues.

The Inquisitor's Goals

This role might sound restrictive to play. It need not be seen this way. If the inquisitor is seen more as a clerical detective or as a clerical paladin, then the opportunities for role play are increased significantly.

The discovery of heretics and servants of the Horned God might prove exciting, but inquisitors should not restrict themselves to this. Many within the Church itself are corrupt, and players could have many adventures rooting out the bad apples, the potential for religious intrigue is immense.

An inquisitor will have to be cautious though, there are those who see them as the most representative aspect of the "evils" of the Church. Many an inquisitor has met his death at the hands of those who oppose the faith of Krienta, and all should be careful of the consequences. Various Kults (such as those of Mortigi, Stellis, Kave and Malsano particularly enjoy hunting the hunter.

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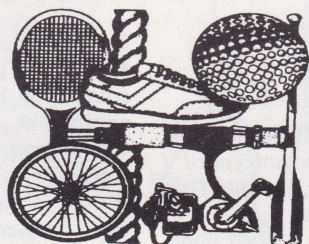
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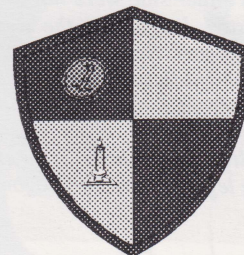
Rank	Clan Name	Faction
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2	XXXXXX	Ring Religion
3	Gormless Geeks	Banner Religion
4	Silverswords	Merc Verk
5	Clan McCloud	Boda Family

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'Here Be Dragons'

by Alan Ogden

Mapping techniques and design tips for overworked referees. Alan explains how to create workable settings for your campaign with the least effort.

Renn looked at the map in his hand and then at the valley before him. His brow wrinkled as he tried to reconcile the blasted, devastated terrain before him with the words on the map "Greenglen Village". No village stood in the valley, not even ruins. And the twin peaks on either side were not even mentioned - save leagues to the west. With sinking heart Renn turned the battered parchment through 90 degrees. The valley matched. The mountains matched.

"Oh, St Baimio" breathed Renn as he read the legend. Here be Dragons.

The Importance of Maps

Maps. They're an integral part of any role-playing game. Whether you run a series of "one-off" adventures or an ongoing campaign it is almost certain that you are using maps of one sort or another. Maps form a template or a stage on which the action of an adventure rests. They provide the players with a reference point for their actions and, more importantly, a framework around which the gamemaster can build their adventure.

In a previous article (Deep Dark Dungeons, Issue 9) I touched briefly on the fact that part of creating believable adventures was to have them occur in "realistic" settings. That is, have the setting - be it a goblin lair or a mighty fortress - correspond to the nature of its inhabitants. A large part of this is creating

believable maps. You should think about the needs of the area, lair or whatever and seek to incorporate them into your map design.

When creating maps consider how they will fit into the overall picture, how one region relates to the others around it. This may be as simple as ensuring that the staircases on one floor are matched by staircases on the floors above and below, or as complex as determining sociopolitical relationships between countries. For example, if two countries are at war with each other then the borders will tend to be heavily fortified with castles, towers, watchposts etc.. If some sort of trade exists between the countries then you have to ensure that you have set aside a region where the trade goods are produced.

This may seem a little daunting at first but it isn't. All you need to do is work out a rough overall picture. For instance you may decide to have three regions (Aryal, Bansaba and Carwyn). Aryal mines iron ore in the hills. They ship it to Bansaba where skilled artisans manufacture steel weapons from the iron. Bansaba trades the weapons to Aryal (for more iron) and to Carwyn for grains and cattle.

From this quick thumbnail sketch you know that Aryal has to have iron mines, perhaps set deep in rugged hills and mountains, that Bansaba may be a city state unable to produce enough food for its citizens and Carwyn is a rural or agricultural area, probably with a few towns dotting rolling savannas peopled by nomadic herdsman. By giving some careful advance thought to the overall scheme of things you can lay the ground work for future expansion and avoid possible inconsistencies in your campaign.

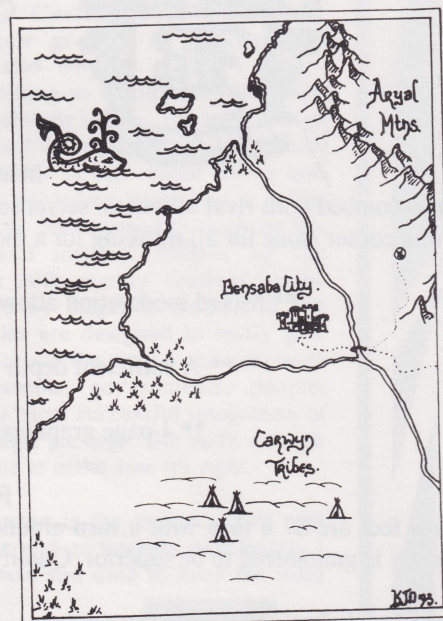
Two Types of Maps

As I see it there are two types of maps - player maps and gamemaster maps. A player map is one created for the benefit of the players, something they are meant to see, handle and keep. Player maps are where you can allow your imagination and artistic talents to run wild. These maps form props for your campaign and the more attention to detail you put in the better their effect.

If a map is supposed to be an adventurer's hand drawn treasure map possessed by goblins for the last fifteen years, try resting a scrap of paper on your knee and drawing the map freehand with a piece of charcoal or chalk. Then give it to a three year old for a couple of hours. The resulting mess should look something like the "real" thing. On the other hand if the map is supposed to be something prepared by the royal cartographer then it should almost be a work of art.

When creating maps for your players' benefit feel free to create your own set of symbols and alphabet/language for the map. If the map is a thousand years old it could be written using obsolete symbols or the personal shorthand of the adventurer or scribe who originally created it. In Tolkein's Lord of the Rings saga, the dwarfish cartographers oriented their maps with East at the top. Why not include such cultural factors into your maps - something that may make for interesting confusion as players get themselves hopelessly lost.

Another factor to consider when creating maps for your players is to allow for changes that have occurred between the time the map was created and the present. A building may have several new wings added to it, sections destroyed by fire, flood or war. Passages may be bricked up and rooms sealed for one reason or another - perhaps to incarcerate a hated enemy or to prevent the wanderings of a relative who doesn't know they've died. Players following such maps may stumble onto family secrets long hidden or turn into unexpected dead ends.



Player maps are a way of providing the players with information and your campaign with a little window dressing. They should never include more information than the player characters know. The maps created for players do not need to be exactly to scale and the information they contain doesn't need to be accurate. If players find discrepancies between what's on the map and the reality you've created then allow them to amend the map. Once the adventure is over keep the map; a corrected map with player's notes scribbled in the margins makes a great prop for a re-worked adventure (see *Raising the Stones* in issue 11).

Gamemaster maps are a different story. These should be far more detailed than anything the players ever receive, containing information that the players will only discover through trial and hardship. When drawing these maps remember they are for your own use and so don't need to be neat or artistic. What they do need to be is easy to read so that you don't have to spend valuable time trying to decipher your own notes. If you can do it try to ad lib when describing the complex rather than reading a long-winded description. The best way to do this is to make a note of the important features of the room, listing them from most to least obvious. Each point should only be a couple of words long. Concealed or secret features should be listed separately so that they are not accidentally revealed. When describing the room just include each point as you come to it.

I find that this technique saves me a lot of time in preparation and that it adds spontaneity to my campaign. It also helps me to maintain player attention levels and to adjust the pace and difficulty of the adventure without too many problems as I go along. The point form descriptions make it very easy to quickly determine what is important to the overall adventure and what isn't without having to sift through lengthy texts.

Useful Mapping Aids

When physically mapping regions I use a variety of techniques and tools, varying from detailed coloured maps to rough sketches, depending on the demands of the campaign and the memory cues I need.

One of the most useful tools I have found in mapping regions is the use of transparency film or clear plastic sheets and a set of overhead projector pens. These can be laid over GM maps to quickly trace a region for players, used as overlays to reveal the positions of hidden attackers or to indicate PC actions. The use of transparencies also makes copying and modifying floor plans very easy. When drawing maps I generally rule them up exactly in pencil first then go over them with a pen freehand after. This is purely for aesthetic reasons as I feel it gives a more "natural" look.

Vague Mapping

I think that most gamemasters have experienced that sense of frustration of carefully establishing a region or adventure and then having their players head off in the opposite direction. One way to overcome this is to use vague maps.



When mapping out a world I tend to keep things as vague as possible. Frequently I'll only map the regions in which my players are currently gaming and maybe a few surrounding regions as well. This allows me to retain a large degree of flexibility and to add in features as I need them. Even the regions I do map in some detail remain pretty vague. Towns and villages are rarely marked on a large map until after they've been visited by the player characters. My primary reason for doing this is so that I can manipulate my game world in response to player actions. If I want them to "wander" into a specific encounter I can easily place its location in their path. The players will feel they have some control in the matter but in reality it makes very little difference what they do. By not fixing the location of an adventure in advance you can save yourself hours of lost work. There is time enough afterwards to bring your campaign maps up to date.

In line with the concept of vague mapping I'd say don't bother too much with mapping out an entire world. Frequently it will be a waste of time as your campaign will peter out or the player characters will die long before managing to explore every corner of the world. If you're really keen on having an entire world at your disposal then I'd suggest buying one before trying to create one by yourself. While this is expensive it has the advantage of providing input from a variety of sources and (in theory) greater creativity. The downside is that it can

be expensive and the amount of background information can be difficult to remember.

Another option you can take is to plagiarise from elsewhere. As long as you don't try to pass it off as your own work, feel free to rip off Tolkein's Middle Earth, Raymond Feist's Midkemia and Kelewan or perhaps (shudder) Piers Anthony's Xanth. These authors (and numerous others) have created colourful and entertaining worlds which can be a joy to adventure in. Your players will be able to gain a wealth of background about their characters culture by reading the books and "your" game world will have a ready made source of legendary material. Again the problem with using someone else's work as a background is the amount you have to remember. Another difficulty may be in adapting the rules system you use to the world.

If this doesn't appeal to you but the task of creating a world by yourself is too daunting then you can try a team effort. Many gaming groups have more than one gamemaster and each could agree to develop a portion of the game world in which they run their part of the campaign. This has the advantage of reducing the workload and increasing creative input. The major problem will be dividing up the various regions and coordinating the end product. If done well the results can be well worth it. This is the approach we're taking with the Realms campaign world Unae.

An "easy" way to quickly map out a world would be to create a "parallel" Earth. In this world the Roman Empire may still exist, or perhaps the Celts rule the world. Mythical creatures (unicorns, centaurs etc.) could inhabit their traditional homelands and heroes such as Hercules and Beowulf may still be alive. The gods of this world would be those of history and legend. The advantage of this sort of world mapping is that a huge quantity of information is readily available and some research will quickly establish background, history and culture for a specific region.

If a direct copy is a bit too blatant you could try mirror imaging a world or changing sea level by a few hundred feet. Doing this will radically alter the face of the world and your players may never realise where they are.

City Maps

Don't. I find mapping an entire city is a waste of time. The end result is rarely convincing and unless it is the setting for your campaign much of your carefully mapped city will never be explored. When running an adventure in a city only map the areas you need for the adventure, otherwise just use the vague mapping technique. Allow player characters to get from one part of the city to another without too much trouble if they're locals. If they aren't then you still don't need a detailed map to get the characters lost. It either happens or it doesn't - whatever is necessary to advance the current plotline.

If you really feel you need a map of the city then see if you can find a street map of a real city or town of about the same size (population). If the player characters are

familiar with the city then you could use a street map of your home town, otherwise grab one of another city. With a few modifications and your own index you soon have a realistic city in which to run things. As a general rule try and avoid using the maps of planned cities. Medieval cities tended to grow from villages and show little coherent thought in their development. London is a fine example of this. Using an existing street map may also give you an idea where to place rich and poor quarters, red light districts and central business areas although this may require some research if you are not familiar with the city yourself.

Temples and Castles

When mapping specific buildings always try and keep the purpose of the building in mind as it will make it easier to flesh out the details. A roadside altar is going to be very different from a cathedral housing the head of a church. If you are designing a temple try and make it reflect any requirements the deity may have. If you are stuck for ideas then you can look to modern churches and cathedrals for inspiration, as well as archeological sources on ancient Greek, Roman and Egyptian temples. Sometimes all this will give you is a basic floor plan but that's enough to get you started.

The same thing can be said of castles and forts. The numerous ruins throughout Europe and the Middle East can provide more than enough raw data for your needs. These maps can be copied and modified to suit your game world. A point of caution - frequently castles were designed for a specific purpose and made use of existing terrain. When re-creating these fortresses in your own world you should take

this into account. Another factor to consider is that the demise of medieval castles was due in part to the invention of gun powder and cannons. Castles are an even less effective against magical and aerial attacks unless fitted with special defences against these attack forms. By considering this at the design point you can prevent nasty surprises during play.

Stock Maps

When running a campaign it is often useful to have a few "stock" buildings mapped out - just in case. The type of buildings you should keep are taverns, rooming houses, general stores, small temples (specific to PC priests), warehouses and moneylenders. These are areas where player characters may end up starting fights or otherwise getting into trouble. Floor plans for these buildings can be lifted from modules you've played before, old adventures and anywhere else you can find them. Each floor plan should be accompanied by a key and short description (eg 1. Common Room. 10-15 Occupants.). This can often be written on the back of the map or in some free space on the front. Optional extras may include a list of suitable names for the establishment, an inventory and a couple of brief NPC descriptions. If needed the floor plan can be fished out quickly and used to run an "off the cuff" scenario. After the session is over you can flesh things out a little more and make the establishment a fixed feature of your world.

By using these techniques you'll be able to create realistic maps for use in your campaign without expending more time than you have to. ■



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*The mind is a labyrinth,
and though the paths of the brain
are plainly visible, its ways
deceptively apparent
its destinations are unknown.*

- Dr Channard, "Hellraiser II - Hellbound"

The Source Of Magik

In the Gothic-Punk world, the threat to tradition mages seems to come mainly from sources like the Technocracy, Nephandi and large magik using groups. This allows many smaller groups, cults and secret societies to escape general notice.

One such group is a loose affiliation of scientists and doctors who are dissatisfied with existing explanations of magik, and are dedicated to finding the physical sources of human magik.

Drawn from many different areas, members of this group vary enormously with their only common ground being that they like to cut people up and conduct experiments on them.

Members include both rogue and technomancer mages, and even a few from the traditions. These are mainly members of the Sons of Ether or the Order of Hermes, although some Hollow Ones have been known to conduct particularly bizarre experiments.

A similar cross section of Kindred is also presented, with Tremere, Malkavian, Anarch and Sabat freely exchanging theories and information, where they would usually be at each others throats.

There are even mortal sleepers, with no active magical ability who are aware of the awakened world around them.

Rarely do individuals of the society meet, rather the results of their activities are posted to others via electronic or regular mail, or published in rare underground journals, such as Mental Man, and the International Bio Energy Journal. Some publish books, which are eagerly sought after. Just as eagerly as subjects for experimentation.

The majority of members of this society personally know only one or two colleagues, and may know a few by correspondence (the mundane kind) and as such the society has very little coordination, and even fewer global objectives. There are no regular meetings, and even the most well read member could only guess at the number of people who shared her belief.

There are however a some large groups, based in private hospitals, where their activities can go unnoticed. One such group exists at a psychiatric hospital in southern New South Wales. Others can be found in the most unlikely places.

A Visit to the Doctor

The Technocracy know that these people exist, and some factions within the progenitors covertly support their line of research. Rogues and tradition mages usually fail to realise why they have been captured until the physical experimentation takes place.

Chances of escape once captured are variable, as the resources available and security measures taken by each researcher are variable. Some mages have developed specialised spells to inhibit other magik users. Others rely on physical force and tranquillisers.

Project Avatar

The Avatar project is a research team set up by Dr Cassandra Anderson to look into the links between mages and their foci. It is based in the St Ariel private psychiatric hospital near Camden New South Wales. The hospital itself is a legitimate facility, and has its own power and water supplies.

Built in the 1950's, the facility was purchased by Dr Anderson in the mid 1980's and several sub basement layers were added. These levels are the domain of Project Avatar. Equipped with full hospital facilities it allows members of the project complete freedom in the direction of their research. The gauntlet of the area has been reinforced by rogues, who have since become fuel for the furnaces.

One side effect of these experiments has been the creation of pools quintessence in and around the facility. This has lead to many bizarre events happening both in the hospital, and in the nearby town. It is not unknown for the recently departed to shamle out of the morgue, and local time loops causing people to leave the local pub before they get there.

Dr Anderson herself is a sleeper, having no awakened magic ability. Born in New Jersey USA to Swiss-American parents, she met a member of the progenitors, Brian Key while studying biology at MITT. They later married, and it was through him that she learned of magik. Believing mages to be a mutant strain of humanity, she began research into the subject.

Financial support for the project is no problem, as Brian ensured that he was well set up. He is also an influential member of the progenitors. He also knows of the free quintessence that exists at the hospital, and makes frequent visits to see his wife, and collect a little bit of power.

Alice took note of her surroundings as the chloroform induced haze cleared. Bright light reflected off the white roof and tiles and an antiseptic smell permeated the air. There were various benches surrounding her, but no sign of her computer. Without it she felt stripped bare, completely vulnerable, the focus of the power gone. Shadow puppet figures move on the far side of the ground glass of the door. Upon attempting to rise she found herself strapped to the table upon which she lay.

Extending her consciousness, she felt out the area. The room lay underground, and was part of a much larger complex. Seeking more information, she shifted her sight to better view the figures outside the room. A man and a woman, both dressing for surgery. Seconds later, another woman similarly dressed entered this room, and they all moved through a door on the right. Returning sight to her physical form Alice wondered if Dr Anderson was in fact a member off the Progenitors. She couldn't be though, her Avatar was dormant.

*"You have rejoined us then Alice. This is good."
'Let me up, or you're toast!'*

'I fear not, at least not without that little box of yours. Now it is time to see if I can find out whether it is a bio-electric or psychic link that you have with that pile of chips. Now if you will be so kind as to not scream too much when we remove your scalp.'

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Dice Are Dead

*Play-By-Mail &
Live Role Playing
Column compiled
by Nick Leaning*

After last issue's Play By Mail special we invited Adrian Whitehead to write this article on organising a Live Role Playing club. Our PBM coverage returns next issue.

How To Set Up a LRP Club

by Adrian Whitehead

Live Role Playing is a fun and exciting version of roleplaying that has taken off in Australia over the last five years. Players of LRP dress up as characters and monsters and act out their adventures in a realistic environment complete with weapons and equipment built for safety and realism. Many roleplayers are looking at LRP as an addition to their normal gaming activities, and want to know how to go about setting up a club. In this article some of the basic requirements and issues of setting up a LRP club will be discussed, but I recommend that you also read Brad Smart's article in issue 11 which discusses setting up a club and contains many relevant points not mentioned here to avoid repetition.

Commitment

Setting up a LRP club involves a lot of hard work for this organising it. You will find you put in hundreds of hours making props and weapons, writing modules, running games, updating character sheets, and you will rarely, if ever, be thanked for any of the work you put in. Don't let this put you off, LRP is *great* fun and the enjoyment of seeing a club set up and games being run is well worth the effort.

Organisation

You must find 3 to 5 people who will be willing to help run the club and become active members of it. Organisers will need to deal

with a number of different areas, some of which are Game Organising, GMs, Writers, Weapon Smith, Props, Safety, First Aid, Advertising and Publishing. Always keep a look out for new members who could help out; the most important thing is they should be enthusiastic and willing to make a serious commitment to their hobby. The organisers must lead by example with a proven track record of delivering high quality equipment, roleplaying, scenarios and games.

Membership

Your club lives and dies by its membership. You will need to get at least 5 to 10 people wanting to play and maybe pay for a LRP game. Advertise in local game stores and role playing clubs that you are looking for members. Membership can be free or set to cover the cost of producing newsletters and buying a few props. When new members do turn up to a meet or event, it is vitally important to welcome them and make them feel a part of the group. Talk to them before and after an event, and get feedback on what they thought was good and bad.

Site

You will need to find a site to play at in your local area. Sites can be obtained from local councils, state conservation, and forestry bodies or even friends with large properties. Try to find a number of sites so you can vary the environment you run your games in. Be careful how you approach people when asking for the use of land, as some people still have very negative attitudes towards roleplaying and roleplayers. Once you've got your site don't lose it by annoying other users or people who live near the site. Keep the noise levels controlled and always leave the site clean.

System and Style of Your Games

Choosing the rules system and type of game you wish to run is important as it will determine the "feel" of your club and the players you will attract. Systems are available from established LRP clubs inside Australia and overseas. *Shadow League* for instance, currently has three systems (with more coming) which have been designed and written by club members. The style of game you run is also important. Games can be fun, humorous, serious, and have differing levels of roleplaying, prop quality, survival of characters, problem solving, physical demands on players, combat and plot development. Not all members will like all types of games and other types of players. For example roleplayers tend not to like LRPing with power or rules players. You will find that you lose people because you are not running the style of LRP they are looking for. One way to overcome this is to run different styles of events alternately, and encourage different groups to attend these events.

Props and Weapons

A good set of props or weapons can add a realistic feel to the game, and is expected by players to some degree, especially if they are paying money. Go to Op Shops, garage sales, and raid old cupboards to find interesting props cheaply. A weapon making booklet detailing how to make different types of weapons is

available from *Shadow League*.

Money

There are three basic ways to run your club, that is as a non-charging group, a volunteer running-costs covering group, or as a professional group after a profit. If you choose not to charge, then the members *must* supply most of their own props, costumes and weapons. Alternatively money can still be raised to cover costs through fees or by selling food; you'll find that people who might whinge about paying \$2.50 a day gaming fees will quite happily spend \$10.00 on cool drinks and munchies. Either of these first two methods is a good low hassle way for organisers to run a club as the quality of the games depends a lot on the effort of the members. A professional club seeks to run games at prices that will provide the organisers some profits for their efforts. Personally, I do not recommend this as you will find people will not be able to afford your games if you use a realistic pricing system. Even YSEDA (based in Sydney) which runs the most professional and well equipped games in Australia, still works as volunteer group just managing cover its costs.

Accounting

As you will be dealing with other people's money, and sometimes large amounts, it will be important for you to keep accurate records of money coming into your club. Give out receipts and keep ones you get when spending on behalf of the club. Make regular reports to your members. If money goes missing it could be a criminal matter.

Protection

It is important to get some form of protection for you and your member's personal assets as there is always the risk of being sued as a result of an accident while running a LRP event. One of the best ways is incorporate as an association, this protects club members assets and the organisers. Insurance is another possibility but insurance prices quoted for LRP are prohibitively expensive. Australian Realms recommends you check the law in your own state and get professional advice on this matter before taking action to reduce liability.

Keeping on the Right Track

Once you have set up your club its easy to get off track. Organisers begin spending too much time away from games and concentrating on other areas like the newsletter or weapons making. You must make sure a big chunk of money you make from games goes straight back into them. Another trap to fall into is the "us and them" attitude which can grow between organisers and members. Organisers must never run games for their "friends" in preference to normal members, they should partake in weapons safety workshops and not stand aside because "I've done it a hundred times before", they should play games and listen to what the membership wants and respond to their requests or desires. If you stick to the plot which is to organise and play LRP games that everyone can enjoy, you won't go too far wrong. ■



COMSTAR CLASSIFIED REPORT

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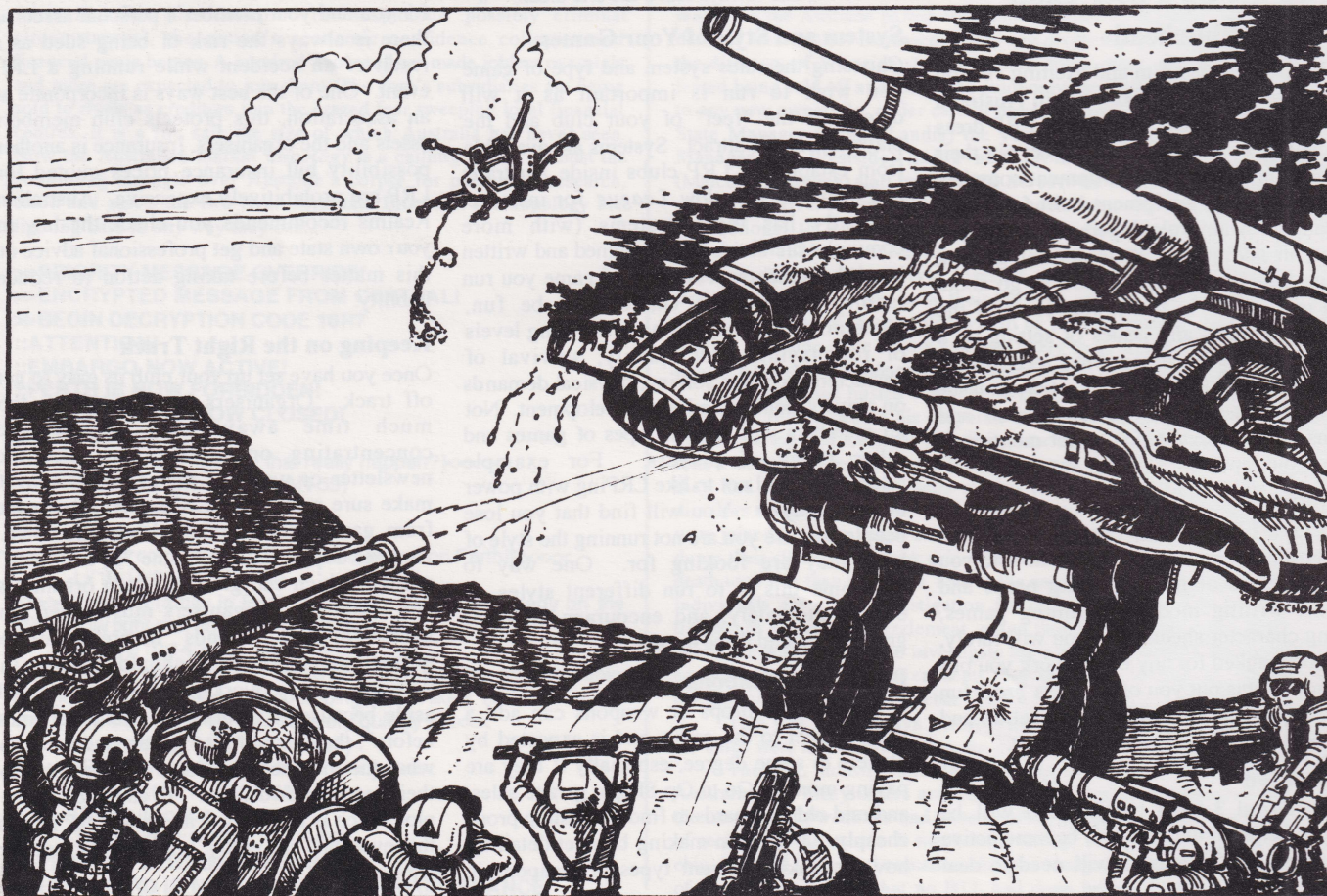
❖ ACCESSED BY: Gary Jerram

It is foolish, despite the protests of Precentor Sian, to think that the Clans have been put on the back foot following Our Blessed Order's victory at Tukayyid. The truce is tolerated by the Clans, little more. The only way we will be able to defeat the Clans in fifteen years time is by knowing all we can about them. The various frictions between the Clans, such as the rivalry between Clan Wolf and Clan Jade Falcon, are well documented. Therefore, this document intends to concentrate on the Warder and Crusader factions that divide the Clans.

The Crusaders are by far the most dangerous of the two factions. They harbour a deep hatred for the Inner Sphere, regarding its inhabitants as a lower form of life, even lower than a *freeborn* in some cases, because of the collapses of the Star League due to the actions of the rulers of the five Houses at the time. They further justify their position by frequent, and incredibly lengthy quotes from The Remembrance as well as the speeches of Nicholas Kerensky.

The hatred for the Inner sphere can be seen no better than in the actions of Clan Ghost Bear at Turtle Bay when they used one of their space-based warships to bombard the planet during the breakout from one of the planet's prisons, something which even Jinjiro Kurita would have thought of as going too far, which resulted in many thousands of people being killed and many billions of C-bills worth of damage being caused.

It is the belief of ROM that the Crusaders are currently in the majority in the Clans, although the Warden faction is continuously gaining in strength. It is no coincidence that three of the first four Clans to attack the Inner Sphere - Clan Jade Falcon, Clan Smoke Jaguar and Clan Ghost Bear - are all Crusader Clans. Conditions for civilians on worlds held by Crusader Clans are appalling and ROM intelligence reports that after Tukayyid things became even worse. Slave labour is common and detainment without trial or charge a daily occurrence. Crusader Clans also think nothing of killing civilians as a means to an end or as an example to others, much like



the ancient barbarian Chieftains of Terra. The activities of our own Blessed Order, when we were still able to operate openly, were impeded at every opportunity.

The Wardens, on the other hand, appear to be more civilised. They believe that the role of the Clans is not one of persecution against the Inner Sphere, but rather one of guidance. They favour remaining on the Clan homeworlds and leaving the Inner Sphere alone and coming to it's aid only in times of crisis.

They believe that the words of Nicholas Kerensky, rather than giving them carte blanche to slaughter innocent people as the Crusaders believe, were meant to stir courage amongst the Warrior caste of the Clans and also to increase the bond of loyalty to the Clan from the warrior.

The major Warden clan, perversely, is Clan Wolf the most successful Clan in the attack on the Inner Sphere (Clan Steel Viper is also a Warden Clan although it's position is more moderate than Clan Wolf). Fortunately for the people on worlds they have captured, the then ilKhan Leo Showers from Clan Jade Falcon, chose to insult Clan Wolf by giving them what Clan intelligence estimates believed to be the worst warriors in the Inner Sphere, and therefore the least chance of gaining any honour from the campaign. Clan Wolf has managed to turn this around by a series of victories that has netted them many more worlds than any of the Crusader Clans, and without the embarrassment of battles like the Clan defeats at Walcott or Luthien.

In general, citizens on Wolf Clan, and therefore Warden worlds, are treated with more respect than those on Crusader worlds. Slave labour is much rarer and our own Blessed Order is able to operate much more freely, which makes intelligence gathering that much easier.

However, despite their civilised guise it must be remembered that these are still Clanners. They still think like Clanners and more importantly, fight like them. When our fifteen years grace ends and the Clans once again start their advance on Terra, Clan Wolf who like Clan Jade Falcon does for the Crusaders, symbolises the Wardens, will be leading the charge to become the ilClan, if only to stop Clan Jade Falcon claiming that "prize".

Should a Crusader Clan become the first Clan to land on Terra then we can expect a never ending reign of terror and destruction that would make Romano Liao's reign look amateurish. If it is a Warden then we can expect better conditions then the Crusaders would even dream of giving us, although we would still be considered like freebirth and treated as such.

Remember, that if any Clan captures Terra then they will recreate the Star League, but it will be their Star League, not the one the Blessed Blake knew. They will be the rulers and we will be little more than a large labour force. We must fight the Clans at every opportunity to stop the complete collapse of all that we have strived for over the many centuries since the collapse of the Star League. Let us not allow the Clans to do in a few short years what the rulers of the Inner Sphere could not do in centuries.

Anastasius Focht
Commander ComGuard

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We don't do enough for our Australian writers!

You! Yes you! When did you last buy an anthology of Australian SF or fantasy? Or a novel? Preferably one from a home grown imprint like Aphelion. Speculative Fiction in Australia has a proud tradition. Names like George Turner, A. Bertram Chandler, Damien Broderick, Lee Harding, Cherry Wilder Terry Dowling, and on and on...Are any Australians REALLY BIG? Weeelll. No, not really. Why? Cultural Cringe? Yes I suppose it applies. Admit it. For years you couldn't even buy the works of Aussie writers, the major publishers didn't carry them. We hunted for American imports or made do with what the local distributors provided in this UK rights part of the world. We weren't really interested in Aussie fiction. We craved American product. What fools these mortals be. Especially those that hungered to see their own names in print. You need a local market. We have to have a voice, we have important things to say, we have a unique viewpoint.

Consider Australia: depending on your viewpoint we are essentially an Asian nation populated by English speaking European stock or a Pacific Rim nation (whatever that means). The near future of the planet (economically, politically and culturally) is going to be heavily influenced by this region, whatever label you put on it. China is emerging as the world's fastest growing economy; India will in the next century outstrip China in total population and will be a military power to be reckoned with; Japan is THE major economic engine on this planet and has the potential to be a major military power as well (ask the ASEAN nations what they think of that!); Indonesia and Malaysia are experiencing an Islamic resurgence, Allah alone knows what that will bring the region (remember Iran). The speculative potential here is enormous. We should be producing Speculative Fiction by the supertanker load. We've already seen local writers turning to the rich heritage of our native Australian mythos for inspiration. There's only so much you can do with Uluru and the Dream-time, lets broaden the scope.

Short stories are the common entry point for novice writers. There are now plenty of venues for local writers. Sure Overseas magazines pay better, their marketplace is huge, and hell you might just sell the movie rights! The competition is fierce in America, their understanding of the Aussie viewpoint limited (so what do you do? Adopt an American voice, of course). Always remember though that a strong healthy local market will make it easier for any of you aspiring authors to find places for your work. So try it out. Lots of local product will generate better fiction through the Darwinian processes of competition (a bonus for the reader) and

The Analytical Engine BOOK REVIEWS

by Peter Crank

*Support local talent -
buy Australian!*

the local product will gain added credibility overseas which can't hurt if you want to venture further afield (our writers benefit) In the Landdownunder we have the likes of, Aurealis and Australian Realms to take your work. Start hittin' those keys.

Aurealis (I wish they'd change the name, it's clumsy, I dribble when I say it) has been around for 12 issues now, it is the premier Aussie venue for Speculative Fiction and the roll call of its contributors is impressive. Dirk Strasser is at the helm as editor and deserves your support in every way. If you are nurturing a secret need to see your name in print, to write that Ditmar Award winning story, then this is the place to send it (or Realms if it's a really GOOD story). I've spent the last week going over stories in the Aurealis back catalogue. Sure there are some turkeys, but gems aplenty too. So this Christmas do two very important things to support Australian writers and gamers; subscribe to Realms and subscribe to Aurealis.

Terror Australis (Coronet \$12.95), there's a name! This anthology is edited by Leigh Blackmore and is optimistically sub-titled, "The Best of Australian Horror". Inside we meet some familiar names: Terry Dowling, Leigh Blackmore, Dirk Strasser, Cherry Wilder, Greg Egan, to name a handful. This is a must buy if you are new to Aussie Horror. There are some crackers in here (and some duds, but not many). Noteworthy are Wilder's **Anzac Day, A Dangerous Thing** by Michael Bryant, Greg Egan's **Neighbourhood Watch**, Stephen Dedman's **Heir of the Wolf**. Lots of entertainment value, some very tight writing in places, some pedestrian stuff too, but on the whole recommended for

fans of horror. I'm not crazy about the illustrations though, I like my own images, much scarier (you should see the inside of my head, what a mess!).

Also from Coronet is **Mortal Fire, Best Australian SF**. This one's edited by Terry Dowling & Van Ikin. The trouble with living in a small market like Australia is that the same people keep turning up. Not that I'm complaining about the quality of the prose, its just a bit weird to see the same names cropping up in all these anthologies. Come on you wannabes, get writing! If anything this is a superior collection to **Terror Australis**. The one real turn-off story is the one from the "name" writer Peter Carey **Report on the Shadow Industry**. Really the collection doesn't need it to add any credibility and something else should have taken its place; the story leaves me cold - artsy, meaningless, too cute for words. Some of the others though, WOW! I can't stop thinking about Damien Broderick's **Coming Back**, you won't see a better story anywhere for my money. Dowling's **Shatterwreck at Breaklight** is good stuff (with a title like that you just know he's a friend of Harlan Ellison's), this man can WRITE. You can always spot a good writer, they don't use capitals for emphasis. Buy this book; do us all a favour.

George Turner has, like Heinlein in his day in his own country, been called the Father of Aussie SF. I guess that's because he's pretty old. Mr Turner may be approaching 80 at the speed of light but he still turns out a bloody good novel. **The Destiny Makers** Avon Nova \$11.95 (this one is an import! is that weird!) George has a bit of a thing about over-population and the Greenhouse Effect. These are issues of vital importance, but I have a feeling the population one, while globally significant, can be misapplied in the Aussie context. Argue with me if you like but I don't think overpopulation is gonna be a problem on this continent for a while. Sure, we Westerners (even us Asian ones) use up disproportionate amounts of the global resource pool, but we also produce more too. I think the more important aspects of this issue have to do with the tensions between developed and under-developed as we go green and they gear up. Developing Nations won't want to use expensive green technologies when oil and coal and phosphates and all the other crap that makes economies grow are there to be used, and cheap. They'll want it, they'll pollute to get it and we'll probably buy from them, even as we complain about them despoiling the biosphere. Anyway Mr Turner posits an Australia grappling with Greenhouse side-effects and with a strict regime of population control. I just don't buy that. I also don't buy the poor down-trodden masses. The gap between the richest and the poorest is claimed to be bigger than in the past; is

it really? The poor are richer than they ever were, but only here in the Western world where safety nets exist for those that wish to use them. I think Mr Turner should get out a bit more.

That aside I think he's a top shelf author. This man knows the English language, and uses it well. His characterisation is first class, the issues relevant. That he is guilty of the occasional politically incorrect utterance should not be seen as criticism. Mr Turner is definite in his views and says so. Good on ya, George. That's what makes Science Fiction great. We don't have to be "politically correct", though we often let ourselves be bullied into conformity. I won't compare George Turner to any other author I've experienced in SF, simply because I can't think of any. He's unique, has an Aussie flavour as patentable as Vegemite and deserves to be recognised to a greater degree in this his home country. Also available from George Turner is **Brain Child**. Here we have genetic manipulation by short-sighted Aussie geneticists producing advanced versions of homo sapiens. The brightest group of quadruplets kills itself. The mystery is why, and what is their legacy? Both these books deserve your attention. As Christmas, that pagan festival, is upon us why not buy someone an Aussie book.

Fantasy fiction plays with different cultures altogether (thats its major

strength) but the American brand is often too squeaky clean and seems locked into the Heroic Quest model. Dare to be really different! Our backyard is much more interesting than theirs. There are too many bloody David Eddings clones out there. Given that Eddings is highly derivative himself, well cloning a clone is like bonking a rubber lady - pointless and more than a bit sick.

American SF is, like Americans themselves, often self-centered, parochial and noisy. America occupies centre stage in American Fiction, the rest of us mere bit players. Only if we let them. American Magazines have always been full of self-congratulatory articles and reviews touting the forward thinking and unfettered vision of speculative fiction. Crap! It perpetuates the traditional values of the American Scientific and Engineering and Military elite (who used to, and still do to some extent, write most of it). Don't get me wrong, I'm not going all political on you, its just that we humanoids tend to follow the fashion leaders and I don't think you have to wear platform soles and flairs if you don't want to. Cyberpunk supposedly rebels against that traditional focus, but it has a strong genetic link to the very American Crime fiction of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler and also has a very incestuous nature. It is also in danger of becoming old. Lets look at **Virtual Light** by William Gibson. Yes the Gibster is back

with more cyberpunk. Or is it? 12 years is the time frame the jacket blurb puts between us in the now, and Gibson's virtual world. A tight fit. That was the first worry.

I read this book at light speed. I put it down and said, "Yeah!" Then I went away and thought about it awhile. This book bothers me. Its too cinematic, too light. It's like a diet milkshake; all froth and bubbles and not a gram of fat. And when you're finished you're hungry again within minutes. I like it, but. I like Gibbo's style, some very fine word smithing here. But. But what? I dunno, I feel a bit cheated, like Gibbo needed some grocery money and went to work to earn it. Thats not my idea of Cyberpunk. Not enough anger I decided, not enough of the confusion, the entropic decay I felt pulsing through the Neuromancer trilogy. I finally decided that what it felt like was reading some mainstream author doing a Gibson rip-off. Get back on the streets Gibbo, losing your street-cred kid. Actually I had to giggle at Gibbo's vision of a Kiwi civil war, complete with UN peace troops - I mean, get real! Read it by all means. Its a good read (giggles aside - I liked the Russian cops), but not what I'd wanted from the guru. Normal folks might find it exciting.

So, disillusioned, I leave you. Adios Muchachos!

VICTORY!

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- IMAGINE - seeing your SS Panza Tanks punch a hole through the opponent's cavalry in a perfectly executed pincer movement.
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- IMAGINE - VICTORY! The Battle For Europe.

IMAGINATION GAMES

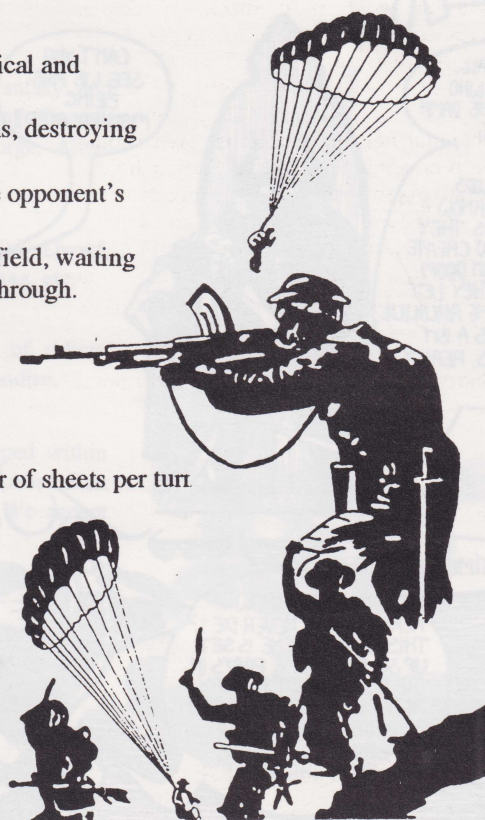
- * A 3 year game, 73 turns at 15 day turn cycles.
- * \$8.00 per ordersheet with the ability to issue a number of sheets per turn
- * Thisgame is **BIG !!**

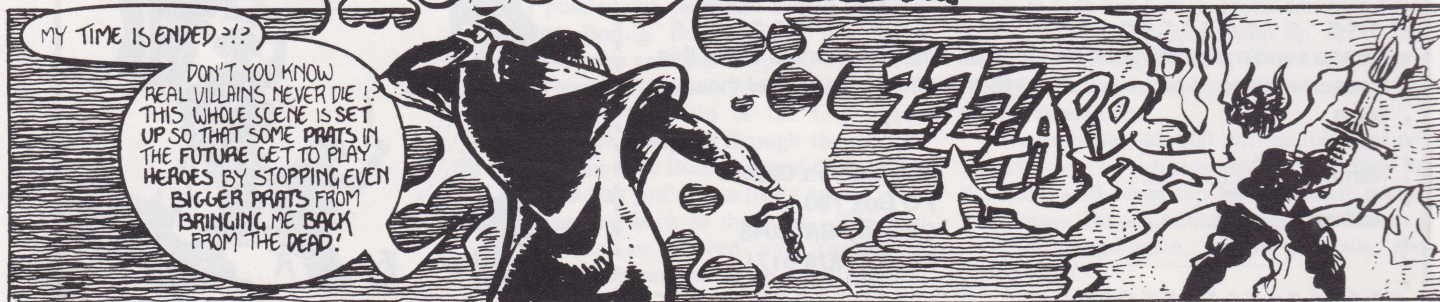
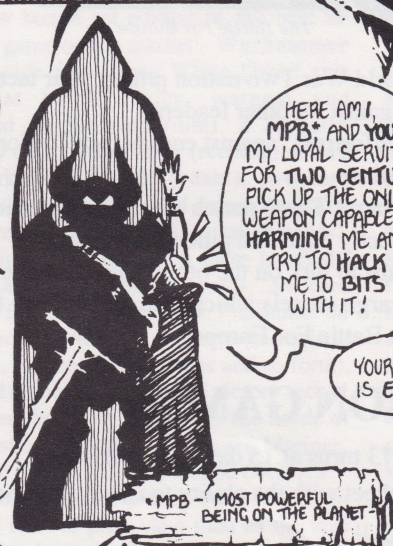
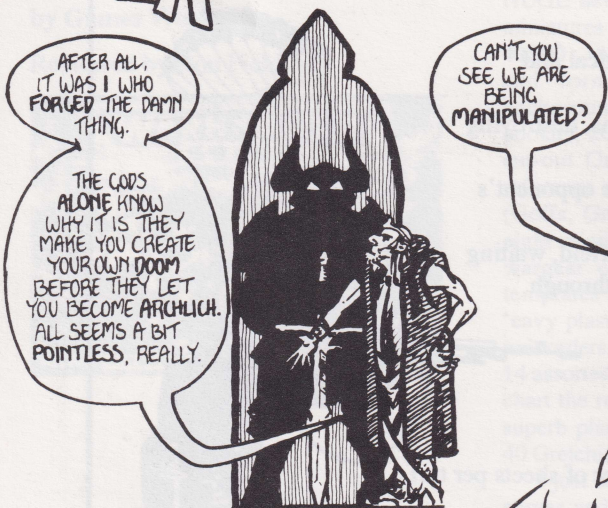
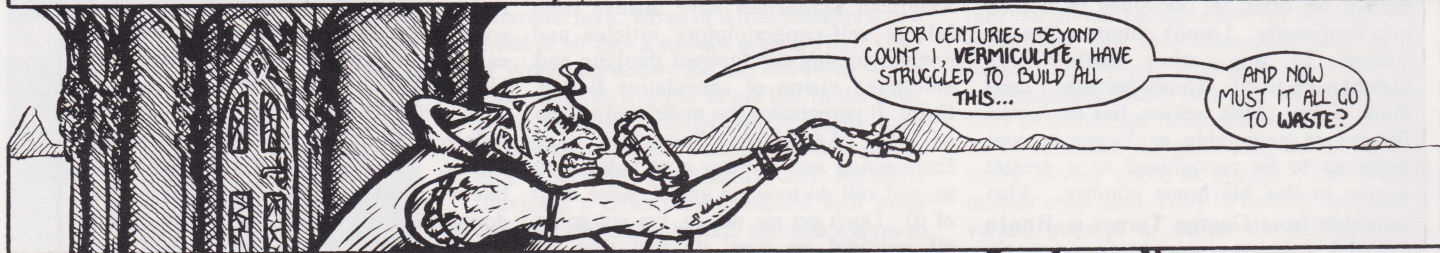
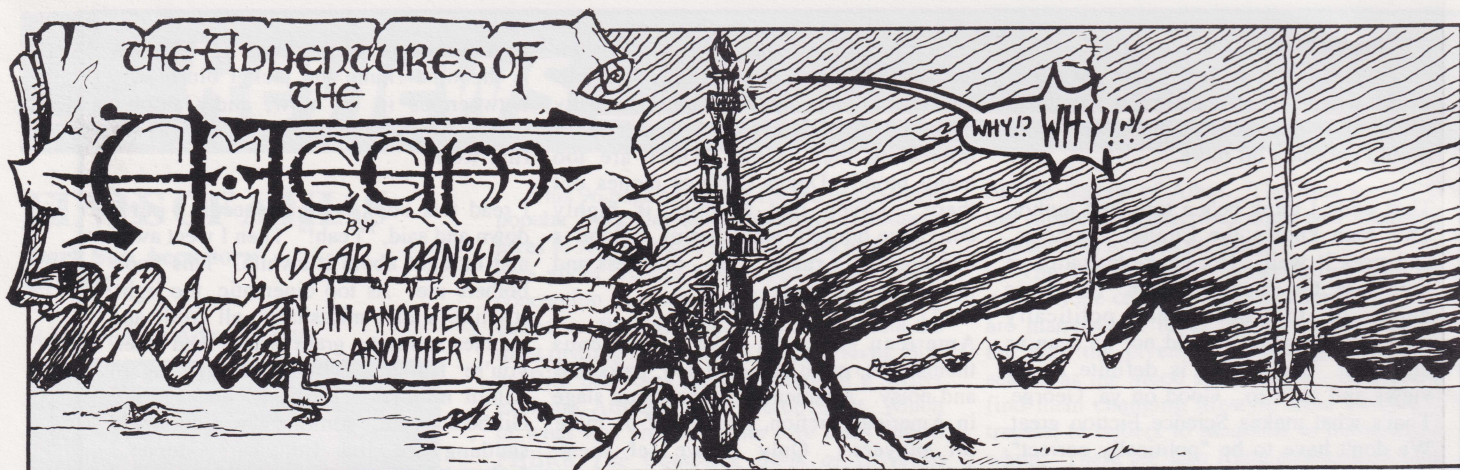
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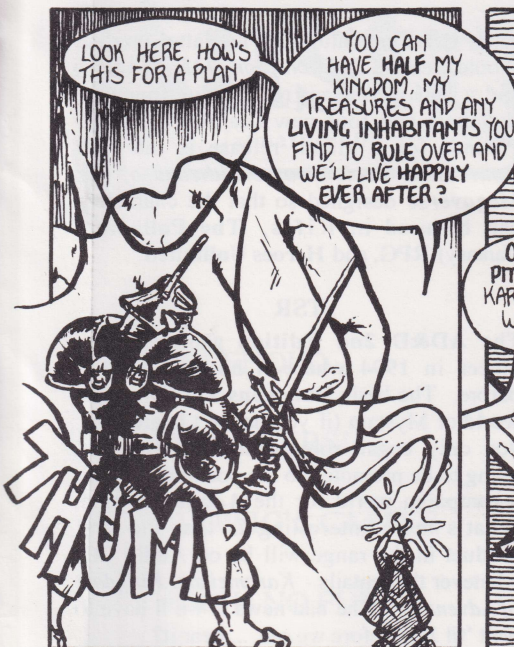
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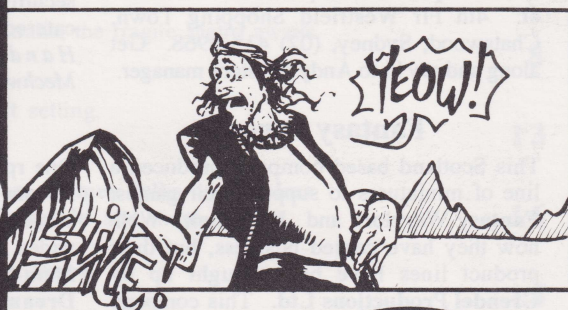


YOU CAN HAVE HALF MY KINGDOM, MY TREASURES AND ANY LIVING INHABITANTS YOU FIND TO RULE OVER AND WE'LL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER?



OH, FOR PITY'S SAKE, KARL, I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

I MUST BRING YOUR DOOM SO THAT LIFE CAN RETURN TO THE WORLD.

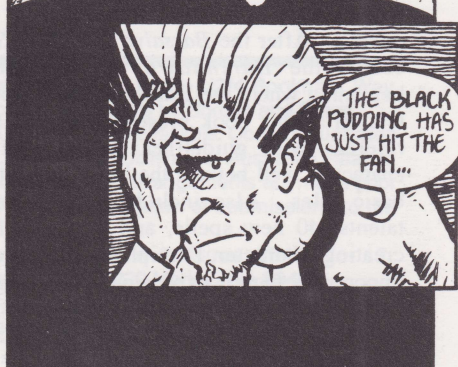


'NOTHER ROUND HERE!

BESIDES, HAVE YOU SEEN THE COST OF RESSURECTION? IT'S OBSCENE!



OL' MANGO WILL HAVE WRANGLLED SOMETHING OUT OF THAT SHAMBLES FOR...



NEWS

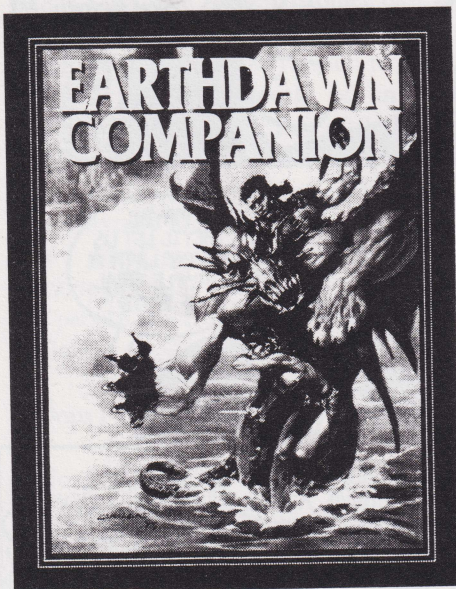
Games Workshop Australia

Congratulations and welcome to **Games Workshop** who've opened a retail outlet at: 4th Flr Westfield Shopping Town, Chatswood, Sydney, (02) 415 3968. Get along and say hi to Andy the store manager.

Fantasy Forge

This Scotland based company produced a line of miniatures to support their games, **Fantasy Warriors** and **Kryomek**. Well now they have ceased business, but their product lines have been bought up by **Grendel Productions Ltd**. This company already has a history of producing quality figures including innovative 25mm *resin* miniatures. We will keep you posted on new releases as information becomes available.

New Releases



FASA Corporation

The new fantasy rpg from the creators of **Shadowrun** and **Battletech** has a number of releases scheduled for the new year which means exciting times ahead for those fantasy gamers looking for a change of scenery. After the **Barsaive Campaign Set** comes the **Earthdawn Companion** beginning where the **Earthdawn** rulebook left off. This book presents players and referees with guidelines for advancing characters well beyond the limits set in the basic rules. Also included are 50 new talents, 40 new spells, and a system for creating character Disciplines, but most importantly there's expansion of the magic system and rules for playing questors (priests). Other planned sourcebooks are *Denizens of Earthdawn Vols 1 & 2*.

To be previewed in next issue of **Realms** is the *Lone Star* sourcebook for **Shadowrun** which details the inner workings of Seattle's security force. **Battletech** players will be catered for with the *Battletech Tactical Handbook* and later next year the *Mechwarrior Companion*.

R.Talsorian Games

One rpg which deserves more attention is **Dream Park**. A great generic system for players who want to have fun. In an effort to widen its appeal RTG are about to produce *Meta-System* a sourcebook which takes the **Dream Park** system out of the Park. It includes new world creation rules for one-shot and cross-genre games or campaigns in worlds found only in the personal imagination of the GM.

Meanwhile, for **Cyberpunk** comes *The Unexpurgated Cyberpunk Ref's Guide* which draws on the experiences and opinions of the system's authors and qualified referees to tell you how best to run a good campaign. This book should be available in January and will be very welcome as running a 'near future' campaign comes hard to a lot of refs bred on medieval fantasy.

The other big news from **R. Talsorian Games** is the impending arrival of Mike and Lisa Pondsmith's baby. Congratulations! When they told us how busy they were with **Cybergeneration** and **Castle Falkenstein** they hardly had time to eat dinner together, obviously other appetites were accommodated.

Chaosium Inc

The unspeakable continues to rear its evil head in print with more **Call of Cthulhu** supplements out in the new year. Foremost of these is *King of Chicago* - a gaming guide to the Chicago of the roaring 20s. Also soon to be available is *The Investigator's Companion Volume 2* and a new piece of Mythos fiction *Cthulhu's Heirs* which contains original stories focusing on the monsters, denizens, worshippers and victims of the Cthulhu Mythos.

No doubt the **Elric!** rpg will receive some more attention in 1994 with the prolific Australian connection - Messrs Morrison and Watts and Penelope Love contributing. Already in production is the *Elric! Gamemaster Screen*.

Palladium Books

This company has a long pedigree of quality products. Its latest success, **Rifts**, is gaining momentum in Australia and is being well supported by regular releases.

The New Year will see *Rifts Dimensions Book One: Wormwood* and *World Book Five: Triax & the NGR* available with the official miniatures for these backgrounds to follow in February along with the first boxed

set of **Rifts** miniatures. This latter product should feature the *Coalition UAR-1* (a three and a half inch giant robot) plus four new skelebots and four new coalition soldiers. Planned for a March release is the *Rifts Conversion Book Two: Pantheons of the Megaverse* designed so that the characters can be used in **Rifts**, **The Palladium** (fantasy) **RPG**, and **Heroes Unlimited**.

TSR

The **AD&D 2nd Edition** game is going places in 1994 where it has never been before. The basic **Dungeons and Dragons** world of **Mystara** (if you haven't heard of it, you only began roleplaying yesterday) is going to be promoted to the position of being a campaign world for the *Advanced* game. What's more interesting is that the first product in the range will be on Audio CD, whatever that entails - *Karamaikos: Kingdom of Adventure*. The bad news is we'll have to wait 'til July before we see, ... hear it?

The other big development for **AD&D** is the *Planescape* campaign setting which promises to transport your favourite characters across the multiverse - plane hopping to all new adventures.

Other developments as well as many items for their established campaigns are more releases in **AdventureVision** as per the *Dragonstrike* boxed game. Next in the series is the *Wildspace* game, drawing on the *Spelljammer* background.

White Wolf

Realms is pleased to announce and congratulate Richard Watts (Melbournite) who is contracted by **White Wolf** to write the **Werewolf** sourcebook - *Rage Across Australia*. Look for this mid-year.

Phenomenon!

GenCon 93 was swept by a new gaming craze - described by one US distributor as the biggest thing since *Trivial Pursuit*. The new game, produced by **Wizards of the Coast** features addictive rules and attractive trading cards and is called **Magic: The Gathering**. Its first production run has already sold out, with Sydney stores empty within two weeks. Already expansion sets are being produced with several other game companies showing interest in having their game done in this format - *Vampire: The Masquerade* is one possibility. Look out for this game!

Earthdawn Competition

The winners to our issue 13 **Earthdawn** Competition with correct answers being *Geeble the Windling Beastmaster* have all received their limited run collector's edition of **Earthdawn**. The lucky winners were:

Arnd Hurlbrink of Perth, WA
David Lucardie of Box hill, VIC
Simon Bryant of Sale, VIC

Thanks to all of you who entered. If you'd like to win some other neat prizes, checkout the **Castle Falkenstein** competition on page 20 this issue.

...See ya 'round like a d100!

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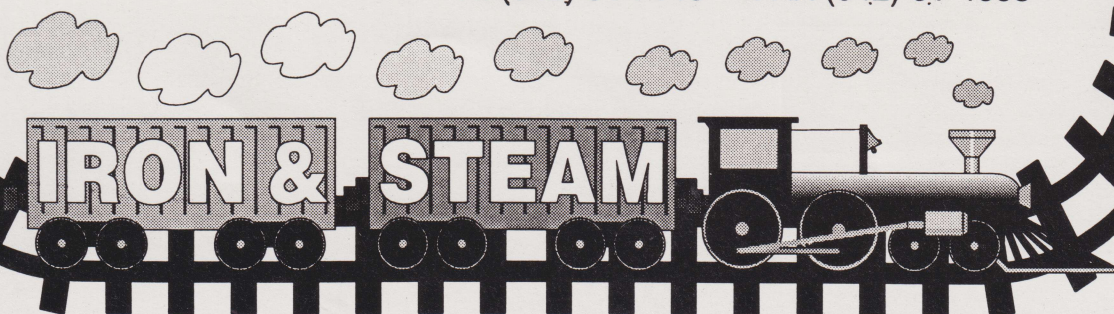
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KULTIST!

BY COLIN TABER

In my travels I have seen things that would chill your blood. From the hives of the Gargoyles to the twisted city of Ossard. Of all these no single sight has made me wrestle with insanity as much as the rituals of the kultists of the Horned God. These worshippers and their god defy explanation, such things have to be witnessed, but no one may see such things without being forever marked.

Be strong. Be faithful. Beware!

-Forwao, Elven Charlatan

THE KULTS

Before the domination of Dormetia by the churches of Baimiopia, Rosemaigne and the Coor'Ve there existed many different beliefs. Most were forms of elemental worship, animism or other *tribal* religions. This was over 1,500 years ago.

With the rise of the more organised churches the older faiths were suppressed, forcing them underground. Most of the followers of these old religions converted, many who didn't died for heresy, the survivors carefully hid their true beliefs.

Today, across Dormetia tens of thousands of the faithful will offer prayers to these 'old' gods. Such worshippers form the majority of what the newer churches label as *Kultists*. Most of these followers are harmless, their beliefs personal, and for safety's sake kept quiet.

But for other kults, the roots of the flock are not in the old 'gods', but a more ancient, more primal order. While all are kults, it is these more zealous groups which are hunted by the churches. These are the true kults of the Horned God, a god with many aspects.

KULTS OF THE HORNED GOD

The most dangerous kults to be found in the towns and cities of Dormetia are those of the Horned God. Each claims to follow a different god, but scholars believe them all to be just aspects of the same corrupt and twisted power.

The chapters of a particular kult vary from region to region, but they do have basic beliefs and rituals in common. The most powerful kults are documented below, but there are certainly many, many more;



The Kult of Mortigi: This kult reveres Mortigi-the god of murder. Many assassins follow Mortigi, the best of the trade double as priests to this dark and bloody aspect of the Horned God. The truly faithful can be identified by their dark outer garments which always incorporate black.

Priests of Mortigi commonly wear black gloves. These are often hidden from view by a second, outer pair so as to hide their true position in their kult.

Most cells are found in large cities and ports. Kultists have a strong hatred for followers of *Kave*, the god followed by the *Kult of Battle* as they see the slaughter of war as an insult to the art of murder. Many a warrior has been killed by Mortigi kultists solely for pleasure, and art.

Rabisto, Saint of Bandits: This is a renegade god. He is followed by bandits and is venerated for his knowledge of woodlands, theft and survival. He is also partial to merriment and drunkenness, consequently also to mood swings and bouts of anger. The vast majority of bandits follow Rabisto, treading his lawless path. Priests of Rabisto do not exist proper, the bandits lifestyle is worship enough. Most bandits pray to Rabisto before an attack on road travellers or villagers, seeking success and wealth. The full moon is always a time of great celebration for his followers. His symbol is the arrow.

Avida the Wealthy: This kult's followers are largely greedy merchants and nobles. Any person who is willing to sell their morals for a handful of Florins is partial to this faith.

Followers are very discrete, and pray to Avida before business and during the evening of the monthly holy day (dictated by kult-friendly astrologers). The most holy day in the year for this kult is the summer solstice.

Priests often seem to also be the head of the local merchant guild, this being just one of the benefits of following a mercantile god. This is a faith in which the wealth of a believer *seems* to match his devotion.

GENESTEALER HORDE

A Genestealer Horde consists of 3 detachments of 5 Genestealer stands each.

HIVE MIND FOCUS: Tyranids
Patriach
CONTACT DISTANCE: Anywhere
BREAK POINT: 20
MORALE VALUE: 2+

POINTS VALUE: 500
VICTORY POINTS: 5

SPECIAL CARD MAGUS

A Magus consists of a single Brood Brother stand. Note that when using counters, a Magus counter must be supplied.

The Magus is a command unit & so cannot be broken. It is its own Hive Mind focus & so cannot lose contact with the Hive Mind.

POINTS VALUE: 100
VICTORY POINTS: 1

TYRANID DETACHMENT

A Tyranid Detachment consists of 6 Tyranid stands

Tyranids are their own Hive Mind focus points & so cannot lose contact. They also do not check morale.

BREAK POINT: +4

POINTS VALUE: 200
VICTORY POINTS: +2

HYBRID DETACHMENT

A Hybrid Detachment consists of 10 Hybrid stands

HIVE MIND FOCUS: Patriach
Magus
CONTACT DISTANCE: Anywhere
BREAK POINT: +6
MORALE VALUE: 4+

POINTS VALUE: 150
VICTORY POINTS: +2

SPECIAL CARD GENESTEALER PATRIACH

A Genestealer Patriach is made up of a single Genestealer stand. Note that when using counters a Patriach counter must be supplied.

The Genestealer Patriach is a command unit & so cannot be broken. It is its own Hive Mind focus and cannot lose contact.
BREAK POINT: +6

POINTS VALUE: 150
VICTORY POINTS: 2

SCREAMER KILLER DETACHMENT

A Screamer Killer Detachment consists of 5 Screamer Killer stands.

HIVE MIND FOCUS: Tyranids
CONTACT DISTANCE: 50 cm
BREAK POINT: +3
MORALE VALUE: 1+

POINTS VALUE: 250
VICTORY POINTS: +3

ZOAT DETACHMENT

A Zoat Detachment consists of 5 Zoat stands.

Zoats are their own Hive Mind focus and so cannot lose contact. They also do not need to check morale.

BREAK POINT: +4

POINTS VALUE: 150
VICTORY POINTS: +2

HUNTER SLAYER SWARM

A Hunter Slayer Swarm consists of 8 Hunter Slayers stands.

HIVE MIND FOCUS: Tyranids
CONTACT DISTANCE: 25 cm
BREAK POINT: +5
MORALE VALUE: 5+

POINTS VALUE: 150
VICTORY POINTS: +2

BROOD BROTHER BAND

A Brood Brother Band consists of 1 detachment of Brood Brothers consisting of 10 stands.

HIVE MIND FOCUS: Zoats
Hybrids
Patriach
CONTACT DISTANCE: 50 cm
BREAK POINT: +5
MORALE VALUE: 4+

POINTS VALUE: 150
VICTORY POINTS: +2

EPIC TYRANIDS

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