

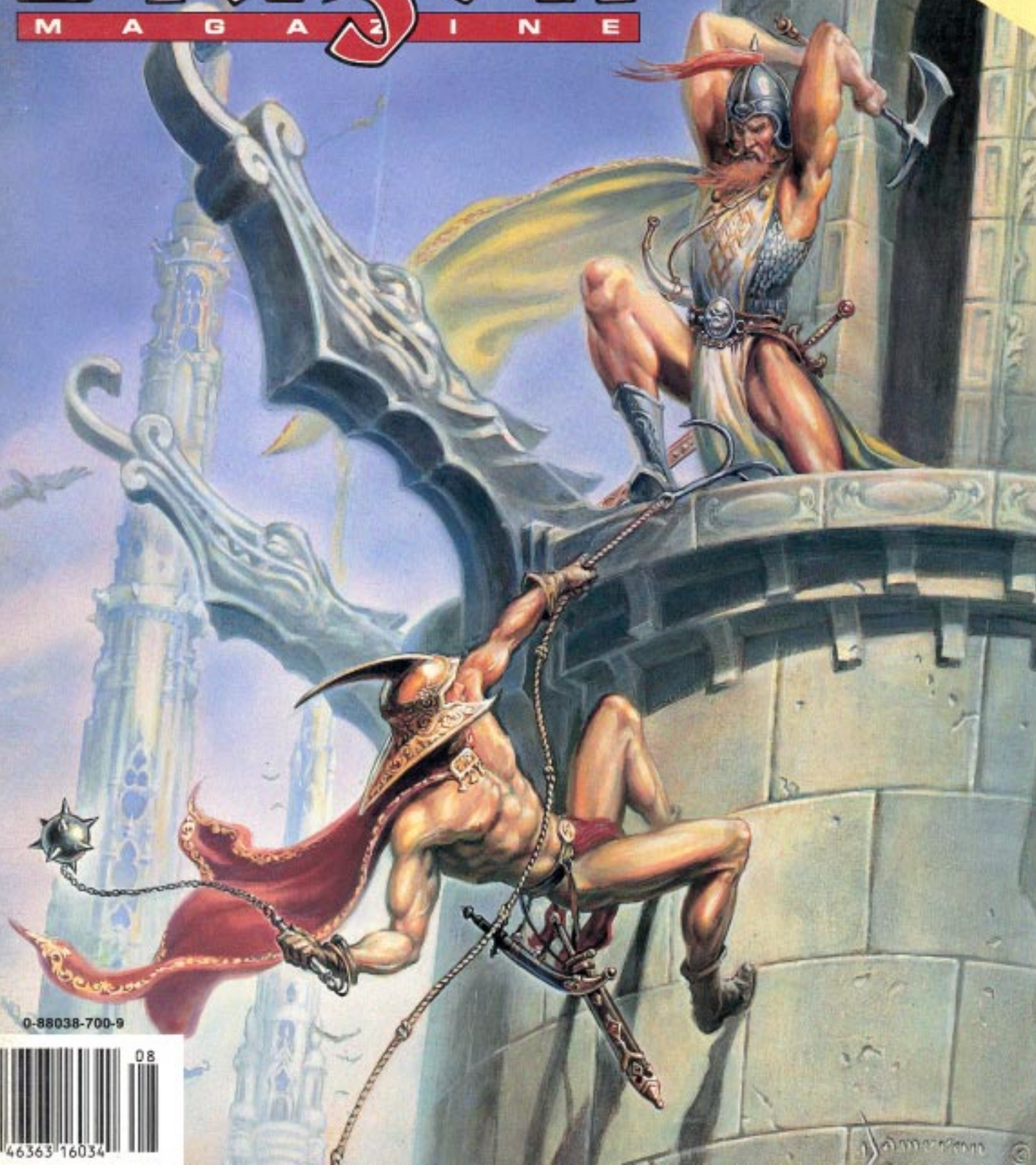
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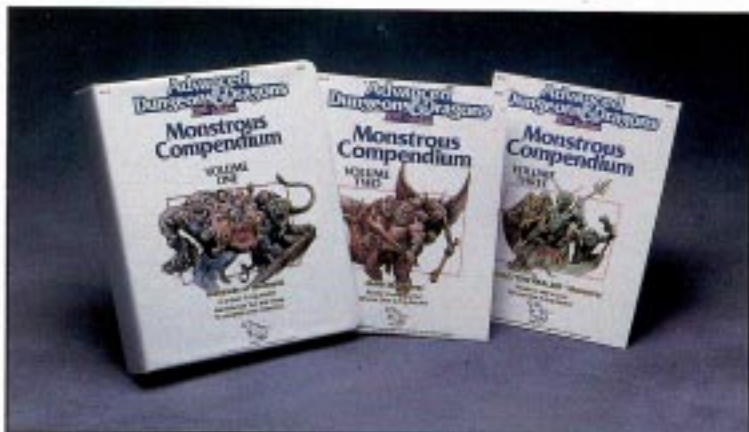
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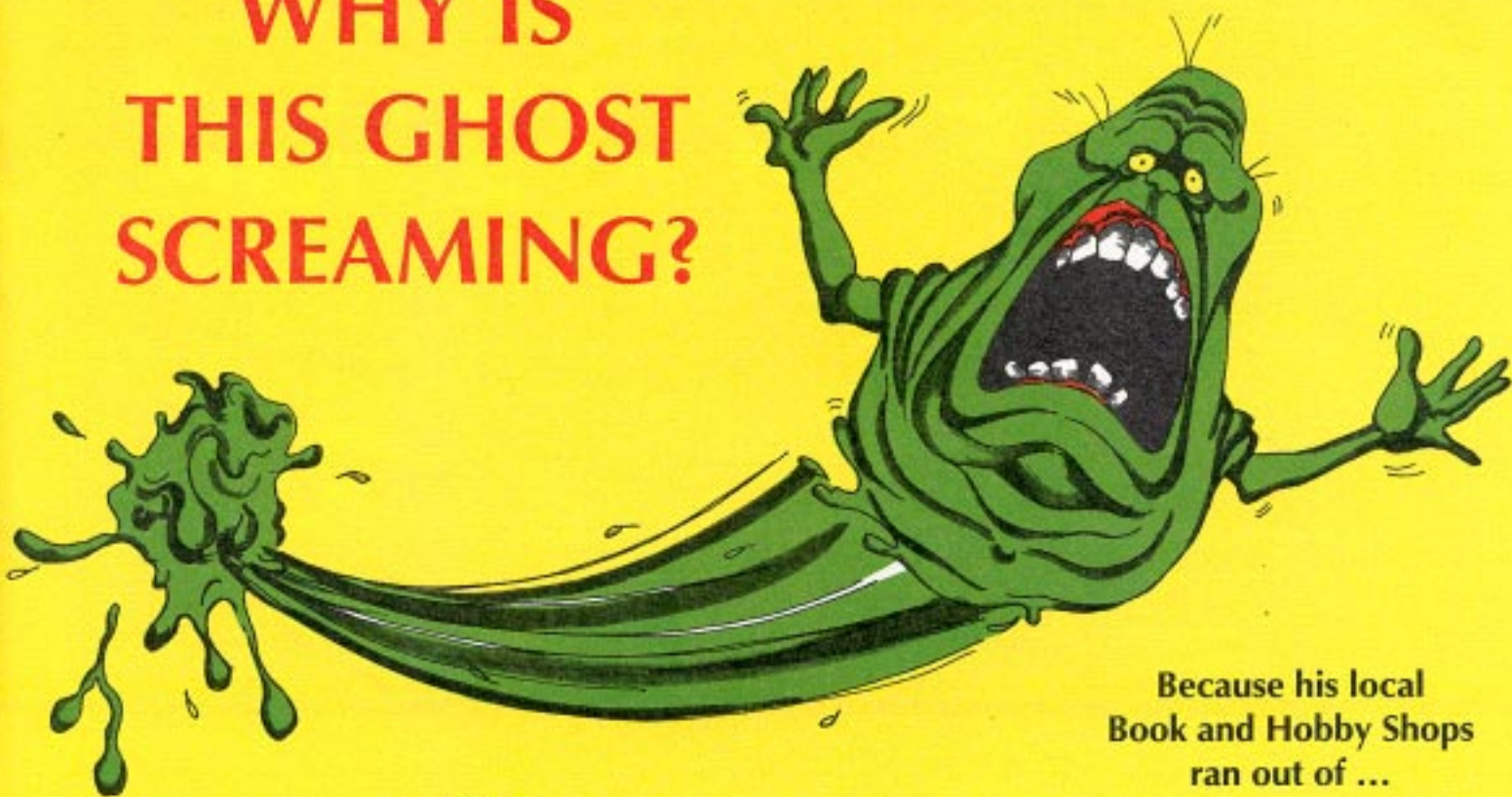
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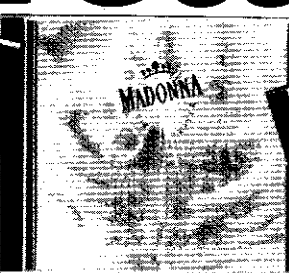
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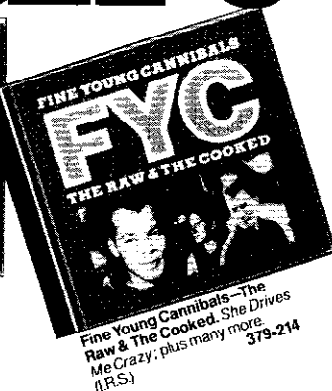
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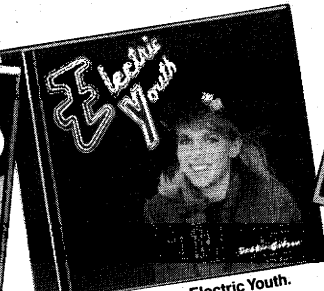
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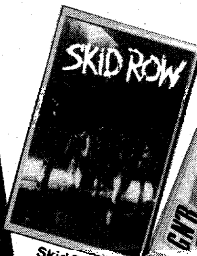
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# Dragon<sup>®</sup>

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### COVER

Ned Dameron (noting that art directors sometimes look at a painting and ask, "What is going on here?") sent a five-page description in screenplay format of the action in his cover painting. Both warriors are searching for a mysterious item—but they don't plan to share it. By the way, any similarities between this cover and last month's cover by Clyde Caldwell are coincidental ("independent invention," as per this month's editorial).



# LETTERS

What did you think of this issue? Do you have a question about an article or have an idea for a new feature you'd like to see? In the United States and Canada, write to: Letters, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Letters, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LD, United Kingdom.

## Quick ones

Dear Dragon:

I really enjoyed "The Marvel®-Phile" section in DRAGON Magazine. It helps make the MARVEL SUPER HEROES® game more entertaining. I have been disappointed at not seeing more Marvel characters put into this section.

Craig Moore  
Claymont DE

*Jeff Grubb, who wrote most of the installments for that column, has moved on to other projects at TSR. However, we are picking up other material on the MARVEL SUPER HEROES game for use in the magazine. Because so many heroes and villains are scheduled for the Gamer's Handbook of the Marvel Universe™ series, we will probably focus more on campaign information and suggested rules for the game than on character statistics. Still, we may have some surprises in store.*

Dear Dragon:

In reading David E. Cates' article on drakes in issue #146 ["Dragons Are Wizards' Best Friends"], I noticed that it says there are five types of drakes to be described; the article describes only four. Also, there is a table labeled "Faerie Dragons' Ages and Spells," and a reference to the "color of a faerie dragon's wing markings." I assume that these references should actually refer to faerie drakes.

Sean D. Reddy  
Phoenix AZ

*That should have been four instead of five drakes in that first paragraph. And yes, that should be "faerie drake" instead of "faerie dragon."*

Dear Dragon:

I'm pretty sure that I found an error in issue #146. On page 26, in the statistics for the rainbow dragon, it says that an 11-12 HD dragon would be worth 8,050 xp per hit point.

Now, if a 12-HD rainbow dragon with 96 hp (maximum) came along and it was slain, it would be worth 772,800 xp! You'd have to kill Asmodeus 11 times before you could match that!

Geoff Manaugh  
Blue Bell PA

*The experience-point value for the 11-12 HD rainbow dragon should have read "8,050 + 16 per hit point." Sorry!*

Dear Dragon:

I am writing about the cobra dragon in issue #146. The cobra dragon's venom reduces a character's strength by half. Would that include magical strength, such as from a *girdle of giant strength* or *strength* spell?

Eric Moon  
Fairport NY

*Cobra dragon venom would not affect magical strength gained from a potion or girdle, though if the character using such strength-boosters lost the effects of the potion or took off the girdle, his normal strength score would be reduced by half. If the character was under the effects of a strength spell when he was bitten, reduce his normal strength score by half, then add the amount of strength he gained from the spell to get his new strength score.*

Dear Dragon:

Recently I got issue #144 and almost immediately found a big mistake. In the review of Ral Partha's Regimental Command Lance ["Through the Looking Glass"], you stated that the recon 'Mech was an Ostscout. It isn't. It's a 60-ton Ostsol. So offense.

Ben "Zed" Gillian  
Garland TX

*Here we go: When the review column arrived, we checked it against a copy of FASA's BATTLE-TECH® Technical Readout 3025. We did not have the Regimental Command Lance figure set, however. The smallest 'Mech in the figure set was identified as an "Oscout," but there is no "Oscout" in the Technical Readout 3025. There is, however, an Ostscout. We thought the reviewer had made an error and so "corrected" it.*

*As fate would have it, the boxed set does indeed identify its smallest 'Mech as an "Oscout," but the Ostscout in the book does not look very much like the figure in the boxed set. As we later learned, the Technical Readout 3025 was itself in error; as it had reversed its pictures of the Ostscout and the Ostsol. (Note that the Ostsol is said to be capable of punching other 'Mechs — but the picture of that 'Mech on page 79 of that book has no hands; also compare the "Weapons and Ammo" descriptions with the pictures on pages 29 and 79.) Thus, the smallest miniature in the Regimental Command Lance is really, an Ostscout after all — we think.*

## Duplicates

Several readers recently pointed out similarities between one of the new dragons described in DRAGON® issue #146 and a small dragonlike creature that appeared in several SF novels by Alan Dean Foster. We were not aware of the similarities and have no evidence that the new dragon was derived from the one in the novels. We do our best to avoid the unfair use of copyrighted materials in DRAGON Magazine, but with the enormous growth of fantasy and SF in recent years, we cannot always tell if a submission is wholly original or not.

Most role-playing games abound with materials and items that were based in part on other sources. The works of J. R. R. Tolkien, Jack Vance, Poul Anderson, Gordon Dickson, Robert Heinlein, Larry Niven, and Jerry Pournelle (not to mention *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*) have served as inspiration for hundreds of ideas in the field of role-playing games. Such inspiration is fine, but there is a limit to what you can borrow before it is considered theft-and thus legally actionable.

To complicate the issue, we regularly see cases of independent invention, in which two or more writers independently create monsters, magical items, spells, characters, and even adventures that are extremely similar. While everyone would like to think his ideas are unique, your magazine editors can tell you that certain themes do appear over and over. We have seen many interesting duplicates of witches, shape-changing NPC classes, unusual vampires, Oriental martial-arts NPC classes, aliens and demons that resemble the creature from *Alien*, and certain types of dragons, golems, and giants. It is not unusual to see two or three monsters, spells, or magical items with identical names and powers from different writers over the course of a year (e.g., glass and wood golems, *thunderclap* spells, *rings of quasi-elemental or para-elemental command*). It is difficult, if not nearly impossible, to develop a truly original idea.

Sometimes we have published independently created items if they

*Continued on page 52*



# FORUM

*"Forum" welcomes your comments and opinions on role-playing games. In the United States and Canada, write to: Forum, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Forum, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Ltd.™, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. We ask that material submitted to "Forum" be either neatly written by hand or typed with a fresh ribbon and clean keys so we can read and understand your comments.*

I am writing in response to Aaron Goldblatt's letter in issue #141's "Forum" in which he says that no real religion, "modern or not, should be allowed in the AD&D® game." Although I have not read the article in issue #121 that inspired his letter, I must comment on his statements.

First, I see no reason why players should not ROLE-PLAY interactions with deities. I capitalize role-play because that is what you are meant to do—the ideals of any AD&D® game religion should be restricted to characters not players) in game sessions. Second, the ideals behind most deities (particularly the historical ones in *Legends & Lore*) are ideals present in human society and human nature, reflected in a divine figure, and so no morals are being "imposed" on anyone.

Also, I would like to comment on the way Aaron Goldblatt simulates the priestly duties of clerics (and druids, too, I hope) and paladins. The idea of just taking money from a character sheet or removing a character from play takes a lot of fun out of the game, as many possibilities for adventure are lost by doing so. Too many assumptions can do the same—a fiendish DM could have a lot of fun sending PC clerics on quests if the PCs failed to inform the DM that they would carry out their religious obligations. To add to this, if such major tasks as constructing an altar or shrine are simulated just by removing funds from a player's character sheet, I see no reason why the nearest bandit group shouldn't just go and knock the shrine down, as the player has not gone into detail about the defense, location, or maintenance of the construction. (Note: This will do terrible things to a character's funds—a useful DMing tool.)

Robert Benson  
Papakura, New Zealand

I am writing in response to Aaron Goldblatt's letter in "Forum" (issue #141), which implies that religion is best left out of the AD&D® game. While Aaron's letter raises some interesting points, I must say that I completely disagree with them. I am a Moslem and, like Aaron, am not offended by much. Unlike Aaron, however, I feel that mythology and religious systems are an integral part of the game.

My own religion strictly forbids belief in more than one God, but the AD&D® game is fantasy, not reality. Because it is fantasy (and not just fiction), religion and mythology become all the more important. Who can be responsible for the workings of the multiverse and the laws of magic other than the immortal beings who

control the destiny of man (elf, dwarf, etc.)? Religious systems used in a campaign dictate no morals or values to the players, just to their characters. Gods and their pantheons do not exist to influence the players, but rather to maintain a cosmic balance in the multiverse and make the game more fascinating and even educational. Demons and devils aren't there to promote satanism, but to oppose the celestial forces of Good. Good vs. Evil is, after all, the major conflict in the game system.

Without having divine beings of earth-shattering power to represent, it is much less exciting to role-play a cleric, druid, paladin, or any other character for that matter. How can one merely assume that a cleric worships a certain deity? The cleric's mission in life is to increase the number of worshipers for his patron, thus increasing his patron's overall power. A cleric in a superior campaign will show no shame when worshipping and promoting his god. He will immediately oppose anyone who is against his religion.

Mythical gods are, therefore, very important, as most religions in the campaign world will be polytheistic. Gods can be unique to a fantasy world or can be borrowed from mythology. Use of the latter creates a sense of familiarity and plausibility, which is an important element of any fantasy world. Monotheistic religions should be used as well. They simply cannot be left out of a quasi-medieval fantasy world. Besides adding to that sense of familiarity, they allow a player with strong religious beliefs to play a character with similar beliefs, rather than one with different morals and values. Besides, many Biblical stories are more awesome than myth and fiction and are an excellent source of inspiration. Andrew C. Gronosky's article in issue #140 ("So Many Gods, So Little Time") is an excellent tool for creating monotheistic and polytheistic religious systems for a campaign world.

For these reasons, I hope that the list of deities and heroes in the AD&D® 2nd Edition game is more complete. The only hint of a monotheistic religion in *Legends & Lore* is in the section on Arthurian heroes. The 2nd Edition game should include more knights and saints (Roland, El Cid, etc.), as well as characters from the Arabian Nights tales (Ali Baba, Aladdin, Sinbad, etc.). Such legendary characters are an inspirational source for many contemporary heroic-fantasy epics.

In short, the AD&D® game simply cannot be deprived of its very roots. Religion and mythology are two of the most interesting and important elements of the game.

Hammad Hussain  
Newark NJ

Mr. White, in issue #141, seems to imply that illusions are merely sense-affecting spells. There is sufficient evidence that the illusionist practices fooling both the senses and the mind of the target of the illusion. (One merely need refer to the *phantasmal killer* spell to understand this.) The contribution that mind and sense alter-

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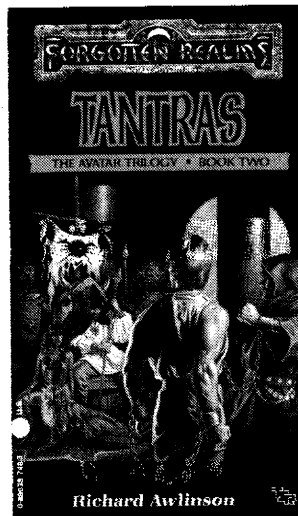
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ations make to the illusion varies with the spell.

The illusionist attempts to cause the deluded to act or change his or her state of being. The illusionist may not cause the target of the illusion to undergo any effect that the target is not potentially capable of undergoing with the resources of his own body or mind. Mr. White points out that "An illusion adds; it doesn't take away." While this is true of physical things, an illusionist could certainly make a victim believe that an arm had been removed by casting an illusion over the space the arm occupies and deadening the senses impacted by the still-attached arm. (Note the spells *deafness* and *blindness* for relevant effects.)

Mr. White notes that deficiencies in the illusion can aid in the resistance of its effects. While this is true, there are many things that affect this. A knight in full armor, visor down, who has sweated in that armor for days with the sounds of battle crashing around, may not be quite so critical of an illusory dragon that appears.

It is also suggested in Mr. White's letter that damage caused by illusion can only be cured by illusion. Why is this? If the illusionist can spur the mind to heal the body faster than normal, "real" damage could certainly be healed. All one needs to do is define the capabilities the body's resources have to deal with physical injury. Consider the effects of the *dispel exhaustion* spell. It has a long duration, large effect, and is applicable to one to four individuals. A similar spell, when limited to one person, could conceivably cure "real" damage. It might be limited to some fraction of the total hit points the patient has normally. Of course, this might have long-term costs as the patient recovers the "inner resources" the spell invokes. Obviously, this spell could not be used again on the same individual until those resources are regained.

Mr. White correctly points out the vulnerability that an unattended illusion can have to falsification. An attended illusion is another matter entirely. The illusionist controls the entire area of effect of the illusion. If the illusionist wishes, the illusory targets of missile attacks may sprout arrows and continue walking, or the arrows may simply bounce off those targets. The real arrows will land on the ground, and if they pass out of the area of effect of the illusion, they may serve as evidence as to the nature of the illusion.

As the illusionist gains power, the ability to affect real change grows. Note that the *shadow* magic spells are but illusion/phantasm spells, but they have partially real effects. There is much need for rules governing the illusions a caster may produce. Such a system would not necessarily hamper play.

The second issue of concern is that of playing lower-level magic-users. It is quite clear that the 1st-level magic-user is weak, with an extremely strong one-shot punch (depending on spell availability). This initial weakness is the price the magic-user pays for future power. Remember, game balance is with respect to the whole game. Unless you make the game uniform in all ways, you will always be able to find parts where some local inequities lie. In these areas lie the choice trade-offs that make choosing and playing a character interesting. One of the most interesting parts of the game is watching the party's relationships change as the differing rates of character growth change.

On the other hand, the 1st-level magic-user does not have to be useless. The party needs someone to map, someone to handle the pack animals, or someone to carry the torch or lantern. The magic-user can load a crossbow if

need be. If skilled with the dagger or dart, he can provide missile fire. Of course, others in the party can do these things as well, but they are usually occupied by their primary functions. Once the magic-user has cast memorized spells, he can still be useful to the party. In the long run, the payback for supporting a magic-user during his weak period is rewarding.

One thing to remember is that a magic-user can always earn money. Higher-level magic-users may hire low-level magic-users to copy spells into books. A higher-level mage might hire a low-level mage to conduct spell research, saving the higher-level mage the personal time expense. *Continual light* and *magic mouth* devices can be sold. Dozens of ways of making money by selling castings of spells have been mentioned at various times in DRAGON® Magazine issues. The breadth of spells available to magic-users makes their services highly marketable. At 7th level, a magic-user may scribe scrolls and (with the aid of an alchemist) produce potions. An enterprising DM may also extend this with a system that allows lower-level magic-users to produce the weaker potions, and restricts production of more powerful potions to magic-users of levels higher than 7th.

Allen Wessels  
Austin TX

I am writing in response to letters by Dean Wright and Steve Allen, recently found in "Forum" (issue #140). I agree with Mr. Wright on the fact that house rules should not be contested, unless the player has a good argument. In my own campaign, gods and demigods are invincible, as well as devil and demon lords; not much is even a challenge to the more powerful demons and devils. I also agree with Mr. Allen's statement that tells everyone to stop crying about low-level magic-users. If you don't like 'em, don't use 'em. The characters in my campaign realize how nice it can be to have high-level magic-users as friends and, therefore, protect them when they're still weak.

After reading my first paragraph you might believe that I totally agree with these two people. Wrong! They both sound like one of my players. From this player we often hear quotes such as, "These characters are so cheap!" or "I hate method V!" Also, he always protests against elves, humans, cavaliers, paladins, magic-users, and rangers, claiming that they're too generic and that we should make something different. I wonder what he thinks our gnome fighter/illusionist is?

First, to address Mr. Wright's question: Why doesn't anybody like elves? The argument that they can be too many things is a bad one. What about humans? Humans have unlimited ability in any class. And as for an elf's bonus for swords and bows, what good is this if the character isn't proficient in these weapons? Try giving an elven cleric a long sword and see how well he does in combat. I also disagree with his rule about the nonexistence of elven clerics. Every race should be allowed to choose the cleric as an occupational class. Primitive people are not atheists, and most people maintain those beliefs in their god or gods for many generations and have priests to help guide their worshiping of deities.

Now, Mr. Allen, have you ever tried pitting a 5th-level fighter against a 5th-level cavalier, paladin, or barbarian? It doesn't work. Specialization is needed to balance out a campaign; fighters have no chance otherwise. Just look at the name: FIGHTer. Specialization gives fighters the edge they need to compete. What good is a 15th-level fighter when a 12th-level magic-user

can kill more enemies faster with *chain lightning* and *magic missile* spells? Even a 5th-level magic-user is better at close range using a *fireball* (5d6 hp damage vs. the 3d6 hp damage from the two-handed sword the fighter might be using).

Returning to method V character generation: The last character I saw generated by this system was a drow cavalier (in my campaign, players use any system they want to make characters) S 17, I 16, W 15, D 18, C 17, Ch 14, and Co 18. As you can see, the original rolls were 17, 16, 15, 17, 18, 14, and 16. Only one 18 was rolled. Due to the race of this character dexterity was raised to 18, constitution was lowered to 17 and comeliness was raised to 16 (also partially due to the charisma roll).

Often, deep gnomes aren't taken seriously. I believe that the ability to summon elementals is to offset this. Besides, the character can do nothing except command the elemental while it is there or be attacked. Drow and svirfnebli are limited as to how many levels they can obtain.

Finally, we come to the barbarian class. I know that barbarians are great guys and all, with their attacks on creatures that normally can be hit only with magical weapons, their 12-sided hit dice, and their saves vs. spells. But try having a barbarian PC in the same party as a magic-user PC; the barbarian will most likely kill the magic-user, or at least try.

Last, but not least, I would like to say a few things about saving throws. Don't a lot of you DMs out there often hate how a high-level character can guzzle down a large glass of poison and still survive? I know I do. The spells and poisons that petrify, paralyze, or kill people often do no damage at all. These things should at least do some damage. Even Hercules was in great pain when poison was introduced into his bloodstream, and he was the son of Zeus! My solution to this problem is to double the experience level needed to improve a character's chance of making the saving throw. This will lower the chance, so that when a question like "Does a 3 save?"—to quote Gregg Sharp in "The Last Word" (issue #129)—comes up, the answer will be no.

Eric Ehlers  
Springfield, VA

I've been playing the AD&D® game for about five years, and for the past three of those glorious gaming years I've been the primary DM for our campaign. In those years, I noticed that all of the unique evil creatures who inhabit the planes of existence, such as the Nine Hells, Hades, and the Abyss, are cowering wimps! A crack team of five solars could easily annihilate all of those so-called "lords of evil!"

But I'm not writing about their terribly low hit-point totals, or their pitiful armor classes, or their measly damage-per-attack abilities. I am writing about their spell abilities—or, rather, their lack of spell abilities. Arch-devils are supposed to be far superior to mortals, but a 12th-level magic-user has more than twice the spell ability of any arch-devil. Don't you think that over the thousands (if not millions) of years that they've been in existence, the lords of evil might have picked up some decent spells? For this problem, I've got a solution: Give each of them the spell abilities of a cleric, druid, magic-user, and illusionist of levels equal to that being's hit dice.

Bryan Penney  
Superior WI

*Continued on page 32*

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# SAGE ADVICE

by Skip Williams

If you have any questions on the games produced by TSR, Inc., "Sage Advice" will answer them. In the United States and Canada, write to: Sage Advice, DRAGON® Magazine, PO. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Sage Advice, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LD, United Kingdom.

And now, for a special edition of "Sage Advice!" The AD&D® 2nd Edition game has arrived, and the sage is here with an in-depth look at the 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*. All page numbers herein refer to the 2nd Edition text alone, unless otherwise stated.

## Priests

**How long does a *produce flame* spell last? How many flames can the caster hurl?**

*Produce flame* lasts one round per caster level. The caster can throw a maximum of one flame per level, but no more than one flame per round.

**How do you determine how many square feet of *faerie fire* is required to cover a creature?**

Just assume the caster can cover one man-size creature per level. Assume small creatures equal one-half a man, and large creatures equal one-and-a-half men.

**Can halflings become clerics? Also, where are the advancement limits for demihuman characters?**

Yes, halflings can become clerics. See the upcoming 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide* (page 15) for advancement limits for halfling clerics and other demihuman characters.

## Rogues

**Can a thief character take the mountaineering proficiency and improve his climbing chance?**

Yes, but the character's climbing chance cannot be made better than 95%.

**Are you supposed to multiply strength bonuses to damage in a successful backstab, as described on page 40, or are you supposed to add strength bonuses after the multiplier, as explained on page 104?**

The text on page 104 is correct.



**What penalties does a bard suffer by using thief abilities when wearing normal chain mail?**

Use the "Elven Chain" column in Table 29 but add another - 5% to the column's values.

**Are multiclassed bards allowed? The text on page 45 mentions multiclassed bards, but the chart on page 44 does not.**

Page 44 is correct; page 45 is wrong.

## Warriors

**According to page 13, any warrior with a strength score of 16 or more gets a 10% bonus to experience. But later on, in the descriptions of the paladin and ranger, the rules say that members of these classes must have other high ability scores to get the bonus. Which is correct?**

The text on page 13 is a misprint. Fighters get the 10% for a strength score of 16 or better; paladins and rangers must have additional high ability scores.

**What happened to the fighter's ability to double specialize with a weapon?**

It has been dropped.

**Can a fighter specialize with more than one weapon?**

No, but he can "save" additional slots as he earns them and specialize with a weapon later in his career if he doesn't fill those slots at the start.

**Do demihuman fighters get to roll for extraordinary strength?**

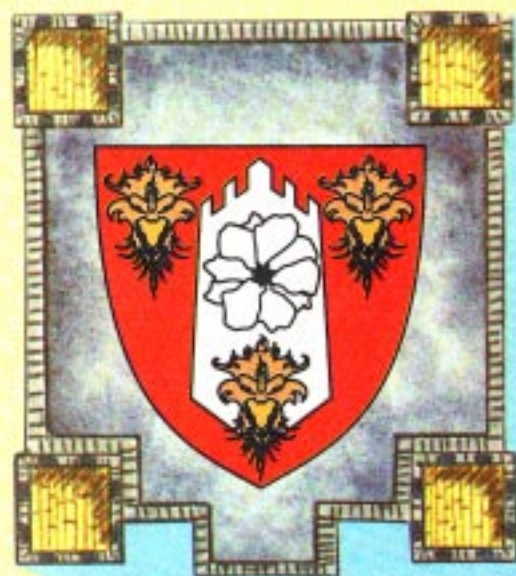
Yes; all warrior characters are entitled to exceptional strength rolls if they have strength scores of 18.

**Does armor interfere with the new ranger's *animal empathy* ability? What is that ability's range? Why don't druids have this ability?**

A ranger can wear any type of armor



# Briarwood Castle



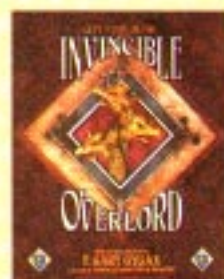
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and still use animal empathy. The ranger must be close enough to the animal to attract the animals undivided attention (about 10 yards in a wilderness setting—less, if the setting is something like a crowded marketplace that provides distractions). Individual DMs may give druids *animal empathy* if they wish. The rules don't give the druid this ability because a druid's focus is on nature as a whole, not just on animals.

**Isn't the new ranger too limited in spells? Can a ranger pick more than one type of creature for an enemy?**

The ranger's two spheres give him plenty of spells. However, individual DMs might want to add a sphere or two; one campaign I am familiar with allows rangers to use healing spells. The DM has to decide what constitutes a valid enemy. Since the rules mention giants, it is probably acceptable to choose a class of creatures. Thus, a ranger from the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting might be allowed to choose the goblin races (see *Cyclopedia of the Realms*, page 46) as an enemy. A ranger can never choose two or more entirely different creatures as enemies.

**Can rangers wear elven chain mail and still use the special abilities described on page 28?**

Elven chain mail interferes with a ranger's special abilities; refer to Table 29 (page 39) for a list of penalties. Elven chain mail also negates the ranger's ability to use two weapons without penalty.

**Does the ranger's + 4 attack bonus vs. a specific type of adversary apply to both attack and damage rolls?**

The bonus applies only to attack rolls; see page 29.

**Can paladins become dual-classed characters?**

As clearly stated on page 44, there are no restrictions on the class combinations allowed to dual-classed characters, provided that alignment restrictions are respected. Most DMs, however, do not allow characters to combine subclasses (e.g., no bard/thieves, paladin/rangers, etc.).

## Wizards

**With the large increase in the number of wizard spells, why wasn't there an increase in the minimum and maximum number of spells a wizard can learn? A wizard with an 18 intelligence can learn a maximum of 18 spells a level; that's less than half the number of first-level spells!**

The AD&D® game is one of choices. The additional spells are intended to create a greater variety of mage characters, not more powerful mages.

**Table 22 (page 31) shows the minimum ability scores required for specialist wizards. What is the minimum intelligence score required for a specialist wizard?**

Specialist wizards must have an intelligence score of at least 9, just like a normal wizard.

**What happened to the write spell?**

It isn't needed anymore. The primary function of the write spell was to allow a mage to add a spell to his books after he had failed his "chance to know" roll for that spell. In the 2nd Edition game, a mage can attempt a new "chance to know" roll each time he gains a new level. (See "Spelling It Out," in DRAGON® issue #147, for more information.)

**What is the material component for the spectral hand spell?**

There is none. The "M" in the components' line is a typographical error.

**Does casting the first version of a flame arrow spell break invisibility?**

No, because this is not an attack.

**Does the delayed blast fireball spell have a damage limit?**

Yes. The limit is 10d6 + 10 hp damage.

**Several spells are missing from Appendix 5.**

Here are the schools for the omitted spells (at least the ones I know about): *irritation deafness*, *fabricate* and *slow* are alteration spells (*fabricate* is also an enchantment); *Melf's minute meteors*, *evocation* and *alteration*; *locate object* and *know alignment*, *divination*; *geas*, *enchantment/charm*.

**In Table 22 (page 31), the races allowed entry for diviners is "any." Does this mean that a character of any PC race can be a diviner?**

No. Only races eligible for the mage class (humans, elves, and half elves) can become diviners.

**What happened to cantrips?**

Cantrips are still in the game. Just use the first-level *cantrip* spell. If you need help figuring out what kind of cantrips to cast, use your copy of *Unearthed Arcana* as a guide. Actually, things are better now for cantrip-using mages because they no longer need to waste spell book space on cantrips, and they are no longer limited to the few cantrips in their books.

**Since mages start the game with the ability to read spell books and to write in them, do they also have the ability to read and write their native languages?**

No. Magic is written in a special language.

**The new rules mention the possi-**

**bility of fireballs detonating early and lightning bolts rebounding because of hitting an obstruction. My group and I thought these spells always hit, just as a magic missile spell does. If these spells do not always hit, how does the mage hit his opponent?**

The spells do always hit, after a fashion. In the case of a *fireball*, the missile bursts at the designated range unless it strikes an object before it gets there. Since the missile flies in a straight line between the caster and the target, it can be blocked by invisible barriers (such as *walls of force*) or by a bend in a passage obscured by an illusion or mirror.

A *lightning bolt* is similar to a *fireball* in that the spell begins at a designated height and range, extending directly away from the caster. A *lightning bolt* is always either 40' or 80' long, and the caster must decide which when he casts the spell. If the caster miscalculates and casts this spell into an area too small to contain it, the *lightning bolt* grows to its full length (as measured from the point where it strikes a barrier), heading back at the caster unless it smashes through the barrier (see page 151). Some readers have misread the example on page 151; *lightning bolts* do not bend or fold over when hitting a barrier. The 80' bolt in the example starts 40' away from the caster, travels 10', and strikes a barrier; the bolt must maintain its full length, however, so the opposite end of the bolt (starting from the point of origin) instantly grows out in the direction toward the spell-caster, extending 70' from its point of origin. Thus, the bolt's final length is 80'. A victim caught between the point of origin and the wall behind him is not struck twice by the bolt. The use of the word "rebound" in the spell's description seems to be the confusing element.

**The text under the new identify spell says a fully charged ring of three wishes radiates only faint magic. Is this an error?**

There is no error in the spell's description, but you have made an erroneous statement. The identify spell does not detect magic or its strength; it reveals an item's functions and charges. A *ring of three wishes* has only three charges, so it is faintly charged. Smart wizards use a *detect magic* spell, which can determine magical strength and type, before casting *identify*.

Ω



# Fighting the Good Fight







# Always Wear Your Best Suit

Making armor and weapons unique for all characters

by Gordon R. Menzies

**A**ppearances count in fantasy campaigns, particularly for fighters, cavaliers, paladins, and other glory-seeking warriors. If such warriors are short on impressive magical items, then with or without decoration—be it enameling, engraving, or plating with a unique metal—can make even mundane weapons and armor unique and attractive. Herein are some suggestions for outfitting fighters, whether magical arms and armor are available or not.

Assuming that the majority of weapons, suits of armor, and horse barding in the many AD&D® game worlds are forged from iron and steel, much room is left to elaborate on various means of decoration and various optional metals to be used as either base material or plating. Some campaigns may limit the metals and means of decoration that are available; a land still in its Bronze Age will not likely employ mithral. The DM must place restrictions as he sees fit to harmonize these guidelines with his game world.

The decoration of personal arms and armor can indicate the identity of the owner and his social class, or can simply be an expression of current fashion. Decoration beautifies and increases the value of many items, bringing both greater wealth and distinction to the owner. The knowledge that he alone owns plate armor made by a famed craftsman, or a sword forged of a metal not employed in his native land, can do much for a warrior's social standing, if not his ego.

Decoration need not be based upon an individual's personal taste. Rather, it may indicate membership in an organization or nationality in much the same way heraldry does. For instance, mercenaries of the Bloody Hand Company may all carry swords with hilts enameled red; soldiers from the royal palace may wear silver-plated armor; and so on.

Almost any combination of the various methods of decoration described below can be used. By employing one or more of them, players and Dungeon Masters alike can create interesting items of worth to enhance everything from individuals to entire societies.

## ENAMELING

Applied to a suit of armor or horse barding, enamel certainly makes a character stand out in a crowd, regardless of the color of enamel chosen. Red and black, because of their association with blood and death, are commonly favored colors among warriors. The enameling has no effect whatsoever on combat, nor does it significantly increase an item's encumbrance for game purposes. However, the value of the item is generally increased by 10% if properly enameled. Enamel cannot be used on leather, studded leather, or padded armor, and is rarely used to coat more than the hilt or handle of most weapons. Limners and some specialized armorers can do enameling; see Table 1 for details.

The drawback is that enameled items frequently chip and flake, especially during rigorous movement or combat, decreasing their overall value. Thus, enameled armor and weapons must be touched up frequently. This repair work costs 1-10% of the original value of the repaired item.

## ENGRAVING

Engraved armor became popular in 15th-century Europe and was commonplace among kings and lesser nobles. It was worn at ceremonies and social functions, and soon became a mark of social status and high fashion. By that time, because of the increased use of gunpowder, armor was of little military use anyway. In pre-gunpowder fantasy worlds, PCs may still deck themselves out in such finery.

*Simple engraving* denotes uncomplicated lines and basic etchings on the armor or weapon in question. Table 1 gives details on fees, time involved, and results. Simple engraving on a short sword costs 16 sp, but the finished sword is worth 12 gp.

Complex *engraving*, in addition to adding complicated decorative etching and symbols, includes the addition of heraldic devices and nonmagical runes and script. Table 1 has details on this type of work. The fee for having a two-handed sword engraved with complex designs is 15 gp, but the new value of the sword is 60 gp.

*Elaborate engraving* denotes fine, origi-



nal artwork, incredible detail, and the overall resulting beauty of the item worked upon. The fee for this type of work is equal to the item's original cost; see Table 1 for other details. Simple plate mail can be worth 2,000 gp, and a dagger worth 10 gp!

Engraving work is generally reserved for various types of plate armor, but leather and studded leather may also be worked, as well as shields and various

weapons. These items so decorated are not proper for combat purposes; if they are taken into battle or into any other situation in which the DM decides they incur damage, they lose 1-20% of their value, and repair work may not be possible. Damaged metallic items (plate mail, barding, etc.) with simple engraving have a 25% chance of being suitable for restoration; metallic items with complex engraving have a 10% chance of being suitable

for restoration; all leather items and those metallic items with elaborate engraving cannot be restored at all. Repairs, when possible, cost 25% (for simple engraving) or 50% (for complex engraving) of the original value of the damaged item. It is easy to see why this type of decoration is so often reserved for social functions.

Unfortunately, professional engravers are few and rare, and their work is highly coveted by kings and noble lords. It will be difficult for the average character to obtain the services of such an individual, because it is not just a matter of having the money available. A king may want to keep all high-quality work for himself. Elves are master engravers, and the DM may add 25% to all stated fees and 50% to all resulting values of the items obtained through elves. Gnomes are also quite skilled and may add 15% and 30% to these values, respectively.

Metal plating

Silver, electrum, gold, and platinum are generally considered too soft for the forging of armor and weapons used in combat. However, it is possible to have a character's arms and armor plated with such. Copper, bronze, mithral, and adamantite platings are also available, even though these latter metals can be used as pure or alloyed base materials for making metallic items. Some fighters simply can't afford such extravagances as mithral and adamantite, but they won't settle for anything less than silver or gold.

The process of plating with any metal will cost the buyer the exact value of the item to be worked upon; the buyer must also provide the armorer with the equivalent of 25 coins of the desired metal (see Table 2 for other details). Plating has no effect on combat, nor does it add to the encumbrance of the plated item. Any sort of engraving on precious-metal plating can create a valuable item indeed.

New Metals

Iron and steel are the metals commonly employed in the making of arms and armor in most AD&D® game worlds. Man, however, did not always have access to these superior metals—and in most fantasy worlds, even better metals are available. Here are a few metals for use in forging armor and weapons, with the bonuses and penalties they incur.

**Copper:** One of the first metals to be used in the making of armor, weapons, and various other utensils, copper is a relatively soft metal compared to steel or iron. (Try hammering a penny to see how pliable it is.) Any weapon forged from copper will break if it makes a natural to-hit roll of 1, 2, or 3. Likewise, copper armor is two armor classes below what it would normally be (a suit of copper chain mail would be AC 7), but it is much lighter than a normal sort of armor (see Table 3). Copper tarnishes quickly, so copper items require weekly upkeep to look nice; other-

Table 1  
Decorations for Arms and Armor

Decoration method	cost of decoration *	Increase in value of item*	Time required
Enameling	5%	10%	1-6 days
Simple engraving	10%	50%	1-2 weeks
Complex engraving	50%	100%	1-3 months
Elaborate engraving	100%	300-500%	7-12 months

\* Figure given is a percentage based on the normal price of the item decorated.

Table 2  
Plating With Precious Metals

Usable metals	cost of plating *	Increase in value of item*	Time required
Copper	100%	+ 10%	1-4 weeks
Bronze	100%	+25%	1-4 weeks
Silver	100%	+50%	1-4 weeks
Electrum	100%	+ 100%	1-4 weeks
Gold	100%	+150%	1-4 weeks
Platinum	100%	+200%	1-4 weeks
Mithral	100%	+200%	1-4 weeks
Adamantite	100%	+ 500%	1-4 weeks

\* Figure given is a percentage based on the normal price of the item plated.

Table 3  
Base Metals For Arms and Armor

Usable metals	cost of item made from metal *	Encumbrance increase	Bonus or penalty
Copper	75%	- 50%	Weapons break on a to-hit roll of 1-3; +2 to armor class
Bronze	90%	-	Weapons break on a to-hit roll of 1-2; +1 to armor class
Meteorite iron	Special	+50%	Weapons gain +1 to hit* *; no bonuses for armor class
Mithral	500%	-	Weapons gain +1 to hit and damage* * *; -1 to armor class
Adamantite	1,000%	-	Weapons gain +2 to hit and damage****; -2 to armor class

\* Figure given is a percentage based on the normal price of the item made from given new base metal.  
\* \* May be enchanted up to +3 value as weapons or armor.  
\* \* \* May be enchanted up to +4 value as weapons or armor.  
\* \* \* \* May be enchanted up to +5 value as weapons or armor.  
(The last three footnotes were taken from the 1st Edition DMG, page 164.)

wise, they eventually turn blue from oxidation. For all their penalties and problems, copper items are beautiful when polished and cared for.

**Bronze:** An alloy made from copper and tin, bronze is an attractive metal but still inferior to common iron and steel. Table 3 reveals the costs and penalties of using bronze in making armor and weapons. *[The bronze plate mail in Unearthed Arcana, page 75, uses leather or padded underarmor instead of chain mail, and it is not constructed like normal plate mail—back protection is worsened, and the armor is very heavy.]* Like copper, bronze is beautiful when cared for properly.

**Meteorite iron:** This material is composed of iron and carbon, and is exceptionally good for the making of weapons and armor. Divine intervention may warn a character of a meteorite strike, even allowing him time to set up a forge and work the metal while the meteor is still hot; Table 3 has details on this metals use in weapons and armor. The weapons and armor made from meteorite iron are often considered holy and are frequently magicked into greater weapons still. Excalibur was one such weapon made by this process.

**Mithral:** Coveted by elves, mithral is a rare and beautiful silvery metal, quite superior to iron and steel. Armor and weapons forged from mithral-alloyed iron

are generally only obtainable from elves. The elves almost never sell mithral, so unless the item is a gift, the average adventurer would never have a chance of owning anything made from it. Table 3 has details on mithral-alloyed items. *[Interested readers can consult DRAGON® issue #123, "Fire For Effect!" for more details.]* This rare metal is made rarer still because of the extensive hoarding practiced by the elves. Some of this race's greatest magical weapons are forged from mithral.

**Adamantite:** Superior to and even rarer than mithral, adamantite alloys are second to none in terms of strength. Adamantite itself is pliable but very difficult to work when alloyed. Adamantite can only be found deep beneath the earth, and so the black metal is very hard to obtain; human miners simply don't go that deep. Drow, the dark elves, are rumored to have an abundance of it, but they have somehow tainted the forging process with their dark magicks so that drow-forged adamantite immediately deteriorates when exposed to sunlight on the surface world. Luckily, a few clans of deep-delving dwarves have come across the metal and utilized it to meet their own needs. The few adamantite-alloy items that exist on the surface world are most certainly dwarf-made. *[See DRAGON® issue #123, "Fire For Effect!" for other details.]*

## CONCLUSION

These suggestions can put more variety into a game, allowing the players to make their characters unique. Aside from this and the overall increase in value of common arms and armor, decoration allows for many role-playing situations. An engraved, gold-plated suit of plate mail can sweeten the pot in a joust in which the armor is exchanged or ransomed at the end. Perhaps the local king or lord will present a beautifully crafted suit of mail or an elaborately decorated sword to a character who has performed some great deed in service to the realm. Such items will sometimes be found in treasure hoards. The Dungeon Master can make them available in many ways.

Remember: The mundane need never be dull and boring. Ω

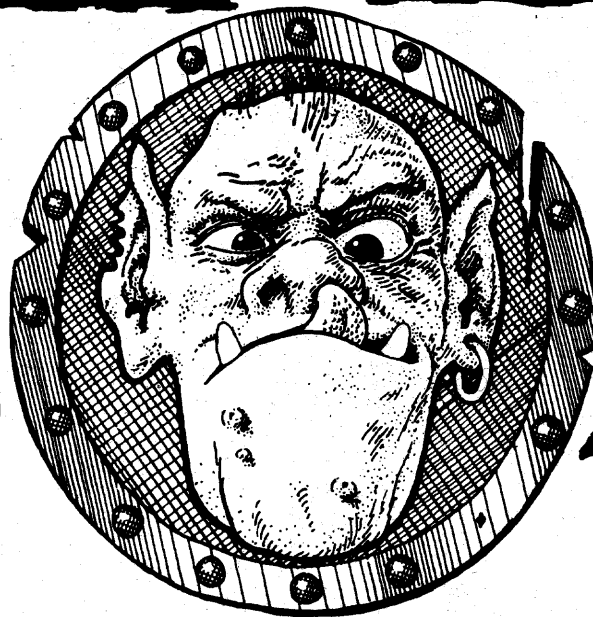
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**T**he barbarian subclass, as described in *Unearthed Arcana*, is a unique type of fighter with many interesting abilities. The class has come under fire recently with claims that it is too powerful and too vaguely defined. While I agree with these criticisms, I don't agree that the class should be eliminated. This article presents a revision of the barbarian, making use of the new material in the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* and the *Wilderness Survival Guide*, for AD&D® 1st Edition games.

The main problem with the barbarian is that the rules concerning it are vague. There are several proficiencies given, but no real guidelines on assigning them to different types of barbarians. In addition, many of the abilities can be replaced by proficiencies in the *DSG* and *WSG*. The purpose of this article is to create standard barbarian types based on cultures from history, which can then be placed into any campaign world. Note that this article does not affect Oriental barbarians, which are already well defined in *Oriental Adventures*.

#### The new barbarian

The following characteristics of the barbarian are unchanged from the information given in *Unearthed Arcana*:

- Minimum ability scores of 15 in strength and constitution, 14 in dexterity, and a maximum wisdom of 16;
- No principle attribute or dual class, and class allowed only to humans;
- Armor-class bonus of +2 per point of dexterity over 14, reduced to +1 per point if wearing bulky or fairly bulky armor (reaction/attacking adjustment unaffected);
- Hit-point bonus of +2 hp per point of constitution over 14;
- Non-lawful alignment;
- 15" movement;
- Limited language skills;
- Experience points and hit dice per level (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 19);
- Actions and abilities per level (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 20), unless otherwise noted in this article; and
- Barbarian-horde summoning powers.

The following characteristics of the barbarian, as given in *Unearthed Arcana*, are now dropped:

- Ability to hit creatures that can only be harmed by magical weapons; and
- Saving-throw bonuses vs. poison, paralyzation, death magic, petrification, polymorph, rods, wands, staves, breath weapons, and spells.

Since the barbarian is eventually able to use most types of magical items available to fighters, these bonuses and to-hit abilities are not needed; if kept, they give an unfair advantage to this subclass.

Illustration by Karl Waller

# Tracking Down the Barbarian

Creating better  
barbarians  
for AD&D®  
1st Edition games

by David Howery

These primary abilities, taken from *Unearthed Arcana* (pages 19-20), are possessed by all barbarians:

- Hide in natural surroundings;
- Leaping and springing;
- Surprise;
- Leadership;
- Back protection; and
- Healing (1 hp/day normally, 2 hp/day if resting).

The following primary abilities from *Unearthed Arcana* are now dropped:

- Detect magic; and
- Detect illusion.

It is hard to justify giving these latter

two powers to the barbarian. Even if barbarians do grow up in the boondocks and hate magic, they should have no better chance to detect magic and illusions than any other fighter.

'Barbarian characters must take proficiency with the spear, knife, and hand axe at 1st level. Among foot tribes, the spear is 5-6' long. Among mounted tribes, the spear is 7-13' long, serving as a lance.

The barbarian has three other weapon-proficiency slots at 1st level. The weapons chosen will depend on the barbarian's background. Although the barbarian is restricted in his choice of weapons at 1st level, slots gained at higher levels can be spent on any weapon. The barbarian receives one weapon-proficiency slot for



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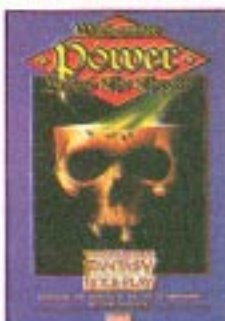
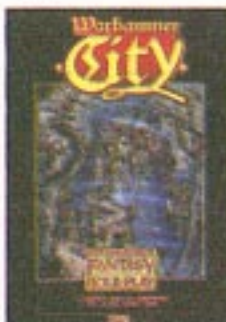
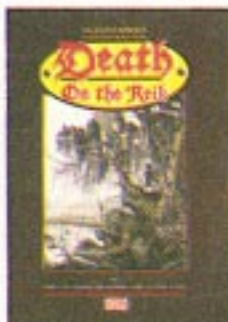
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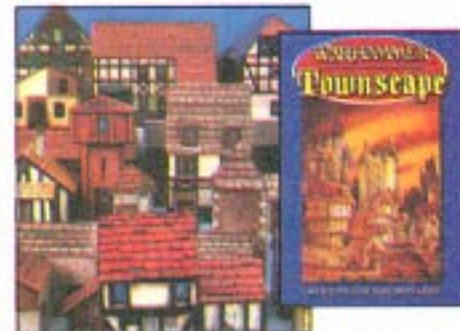
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### New Barbarian Wilderness Proficiencies

Proficiency	Slots required	Appropriate ability	Die roll modifier
Climb cliffs and trees	1	Dexterity	0
Long-distance signaling	1	Intelligence	0
Snare building	1	Intelligence	0

every two levels beyond the 1st (3rd, 5th, etc.), but he cannot specialize or double specialize with a weapon as a fighter or ranger can.

Secondary and tertiary abilities granted by *Unearthed Arcana* have herein become various nonweapon proficiencies granted to certain types of barbarians. In *Unearthed Arcana*, secondary abilities were given to all barbarians. This is not entirely appropriate. Some barbarian cultures had an agricultural base, so not all barbarians should know how to track. In addition, barbaric clans usually had only a few people who knew how to set bones and prepare herbal medicines; not all barbarians should know first aid.

The abilities to climb cliffs and trees, perform long-distance signaling, and build snares are now considered to be wilderness proficiencies, as per the table in this article.

Due to the many abilities that barbarians receive at 1st level, barbarians receive only one nonweapon proficiency slot at 1st level, then gain one slot for every four levels beyond that (5th, 9th, etc.).

### Barbarian types

The descriptions of barbarian types are broken down as follows:

**Proficiencies:** These are the nonweapon proficiencies from the *DSG* and *WSG* that are given to barbarian characters of the type in question. The proficiencies from the table herein are also used. These replace all secondary and tertiary abilities given to barbarians by *Unearthed Arcana*.

**Preferred weapons:** These are the weapons that the barbarian must take profi-

ciency in at 1st level, in addition to the spear, knife, and hand axe. In some cases, the player is given a choice between two weapons.

**Native terrain:** This is a term required by some of the primary abilities, classifying the barbarian's homeland terrain.

**Barbarian horde:** This describes the armor and weapons of the common warriors that can be summoned. All the barbarians in the horde are zero-level humans with 5-8 hp, except for the leaders. Leaders are armed as desired by the DM.

The notes for each type provide a general background and historical basis of the barbarian type in question.

### Foot Nomads

#### Cavemen

**Proficiencies:** animal lore, fire building, foraging, hunting, plant lore, tracking

**Preferred weapons:** (stone) battle axe, club, sling

**Native terrain:** forested mountains or hills

**Barbarian horde:** 50%—spear, club; 20%—sling, club; 20%—battle axe; 10%—hand axe, club

This barbarian type is based on Stone Age Cro-Magnon humans, not Neanderthals or any other race. A barbarian horde of cavemen is not really feasible, since cavemen would spend too much time finding food. But the AD&D® game is a fantasy game, so rules for the horde have been included.

#### Desert Tribes

**Proficiencies:** alertness, animal lore, endurance, fire building, foraging, hunting, long-distance signaling, running,

snare building, survival (desert), tracking

**Preferred weapons:** short composite bow, club

**Native terrain:** mountainous desert

**Barbarian horde:** 50%—short composite bow, spear, knife; 50%—short composite bow, hand axe, club

These tribes live in the midst of brutally hot mountainous deserts. They are very skilled at finding water and game. They are also fiercely protective of their possessions; trespassers and thieves will be tracked and killed. This barbarian type is based on Lipan Apaches.

#### Forest Tribes

**Proficiencies:** animal lore, boating (canoes), fishing, foraging, hunting, plant lore, running, snare building, tracking

**Preferred weapons:** short bow

**Native terrain:** temperate forest

**Barbarian horde:** 75%—short bow, hand axe; 25%—spear, hand axe

These tribes live in villages among the vast temperate forests. They make excellent dugout canoes, grow small gardens, and hunt and fish extensively. Like people everywhere, some of the tribes are friendly while others are hostile. This barbarian type is based on native peoples of eastern America.

### Mounted Nomads

#### Desert Nomads

**Proficiencies:** animal trainer (horse or camel), direction sense, land-based riding (horse or camel), long-distance signaling, survival (desert)

**Preferred weapons:** scimitar, javelin, or short bow

**Native terrain:** subtropical desert

**Barbarian horde:** 75%—scimitar, spear, javelin, or short bow (mounted on war horse or camel); 25%—as above, but with a shield

These people live an arduous life in the worlds barest and hottest deserts. Mounts are vital to survival, as are sheep and goat herds. This barbarian type is based on Bedouin and Berber tribes.

#### Prairie Nomads

**Proficiencies:** animal handling, animal trainer (horse), animal lore, fire building, foraging, hunting, long-distance signaling, plant lore, land-based riding (horse), tracking

**Preferred weapons:** short bow, club

**Native terrain:** temperate grassland

**Barbarian horde:** 100%—short bow, spear, knife, shield (mounted on war horse)

These tribes, based on Comanches, are fast and fierce raiders. Luckily, they have to spend a lot of time gathering food, since they have no real agriculture. Bison and wild cattle are hunted extensively. Intruders are hated and will be tracked for days; the nomads will attempt to rob and kill them.

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### Steppe Nomads

**Proficiencies:** animal handling, animal handling (pony), endurance, land-based riding (pony), survival (desert)

**Preferred weapons:** scimitar, short composite bow, lasso

**Native terrain:** desert grassland

**Barbarian horde:** 90%—short composite bow, spear, scimitar, lasso (mounted on pony); 10%—as above, but with armor equal to AC 5

These nomads herd cattle and sheep on the cold dry steppes. They are a hardy and ruthless people. Ponies are important to their way of life; the ponies are short enough to provide a stable base for mounted bow fire. Raiding neighboring countries and other tribes is a favorite pastime. This tribal type is based on Yakka Mongols.

### Northmen

#### Forest Clans

**Proficiencies:** animal lore, climb cliffs and trees, endurance, foraging, hunting, running, snare building, tracking

**Preferred weapons:** long sword

**Native terrain:** temperate forest

**Barbarian horde:** 75%—spear, shield; 25%—long sword, shield

These are tribes of large, fierce clansmen based on Cherusci Germans. The warriors are most highly regarded among them. They live by a combination of agriculture, hunting, and gathering, and they place great value on weapons forged in civilized lands.

#### Highland Clans

**Proficiencies:** animal handling, chariot-eering, climb cliffs and trees, running

**Preferred weapons:** two-handed sword or long sword

**Native terrain:** forested hills

**Barbarian horde:** 50%—spear, knife, ring mail; 15%—battle axe, knife, ring mail; 10%—spear, shield, ring mail (mounted on normal horse); 25%—spear, chain mail (two-man chariot)

These semi-civilized clans live in forests and swamps, and they depend heavily on agriculture for their living. The clan leaders and champions ride to battle in small chariots. The clans forge excellent weapons and armor. This barbarian type is based on various Celtic tribes of Britain.

#### Sea Raiders

**Proficiencies:** boating, direction sense, endurance, fishing, running, swimming

**Preferred weapons:** long sword, battle axe, short bow

**Native terrain:** mountainous forest

**Barbarian horde:** 90%—battle axe, short bow, chain mail, shield; 10%—long sword, short bow, chain mail, shield

The kingdoms of the sea raiders consist of nearly civilized groups. They are excellent sailors and savage raiders. Although their economy is based on agriculture, their land is poor for farming and grazing.

Thus, raiding is almost a necessity. The sea raiders make excellent steel weapons and armor. Both sexes tend to be taller and heavier than the folk of other lands. These barbarians are based on Viking groups.

### Tropical Natives

#### Jungle Tribes

**Proficiencies:** animal lore, boating (canoes), climb cliffs and trees, hunting, long-distance signaling, running, snare building, survival (heat), tracking

**Preferred weapons:** club, short bow, or blowgun

**Native terrain:** tropical rainforest

**Barbarian horde:** 100%—spear, club, short bow or blowgun, shield

These primitive tribes, based on various west African and Brazilian natives, live in the depths of the jungles that are hostile to men of northern lands, due to disease and wild beasts. The tribes subsist on food from small garden plots, augmented by hunting. Although some tribes have cannibals and headhunters, others are a vital part of the trade routes, trading spices and ivory.

#### Savannah Natives

**Proficiencies:** animal handling, direction sense, endurance, long-distance signaling, running, survival (heat)

**Preferred weapons:** club, javelin

**Native terrain:** Tropical grasslands  
**Barbarian horde:** 90%—javelin, shield; 10%—club, shield

Although they are called barbaric, some savannah tribes may have highly organized armies. Some tribes have elevated the status of the warrior above all other social positions. The tribes depend on small gardens and cattle and goat herds for their living. The organized tribes are usually friendly if treated with respect. This group is based on the Zulu and other Bantu cultures.

### Conclusion

It is hoped that this article will turn the 1st Edition barbarian into a more viable class. The barbarian given in *Unearthed Arcana* has some interesting features but also has some unnecessary powers.

How powerful is the class now? It's weaker than before but still equal to any other fighter or cavalier, class. Some abilities were removed but others remain. The barbarian's high hit points and many non-weapon proficiencies are balanced by his distrust of magic and inability to specialize in a weapon. True, he starts out with a large number of abilities, but many might not be used in a typical dungeon adventure. The revised barbarian is a balanced, viable character. Ω

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# “Good” Does Not Mean “Boring”

Paladins are far more complicated  
than you might think

by Scott Bennie

Of all the character classes in the AD&D® 1st Edition game, the paladin is one of the most misunderstood. When comparing campaigns, you will find people role-playing paladins in radically different ways. Some paladins treat anyone who isn't of their social class and heroic standing as vermin. There are also those paladins who drink nothing but milk and spend most of their time helping little old ladies across the street. Will the real paladin please stand up?

Complicating matters is the *Unearthed Arcana* tome, which unearthed paladins but reburied them as part of the cavalier class. The cavalier class, however, is based on certain medieval knighthood orders that did a lot of foolish and unpaladinlike things (such as at the Battle of Agincourt, where the cavaliers mowed down their own troops in pursuit of the glory of battle, only to be used as pincushions by sturdy peasant bowmen). How can paladins be categorized as a part of this class?

To understand paladins, you have to look at the reasons paladins exist and view their attitudes and actions from a variety of perspectives.

Illustration by John Paul Leon

## The origin of paladins

Paladins exist to combat evil. Their primary abilities are most effective against evil; thus, whatever powers created paladins and gave them their abilities had the destruction of evil as the main objective.

Paladins also exist to protect and heal. They have been given powers to aid the sick (e.g., by curing disease) and heal minor wounds (e.g., laying on hands). Thus, paladins, who are destroyers, are also healers. Their healing abilities are obviously not meant for evil beings; it would be most natural to heal those who are true and virtuous, especially if such people could not help themselves. Therefore, the powers that created paladins want them to protect the innocent.

Another characteristic of paladins is their ability to turn undead and to cast clerical spells. Obviously, in addition to their formidable fighting skills, a paladin needs the wisdom and piety of a cleric. Therefore, paladins were created to serve the gods. They form religious orders of knighthood; in fact, they are the fighting champions of their religions.

Because paladins have different abilities and purposes, each one probably differs in his individual emphasis on which goal is most important. The pursuit of these ideals leads to four different types of paladinhood which, while lawful good to the core, provide players and DMs alike with different ways of playing this class.

## Paladins of justice

To some paladins, justice is the ultimate ideal. These paladins believe that they exist to serve an unswerving and unyielding law, and that this law is in the best interests of Good.

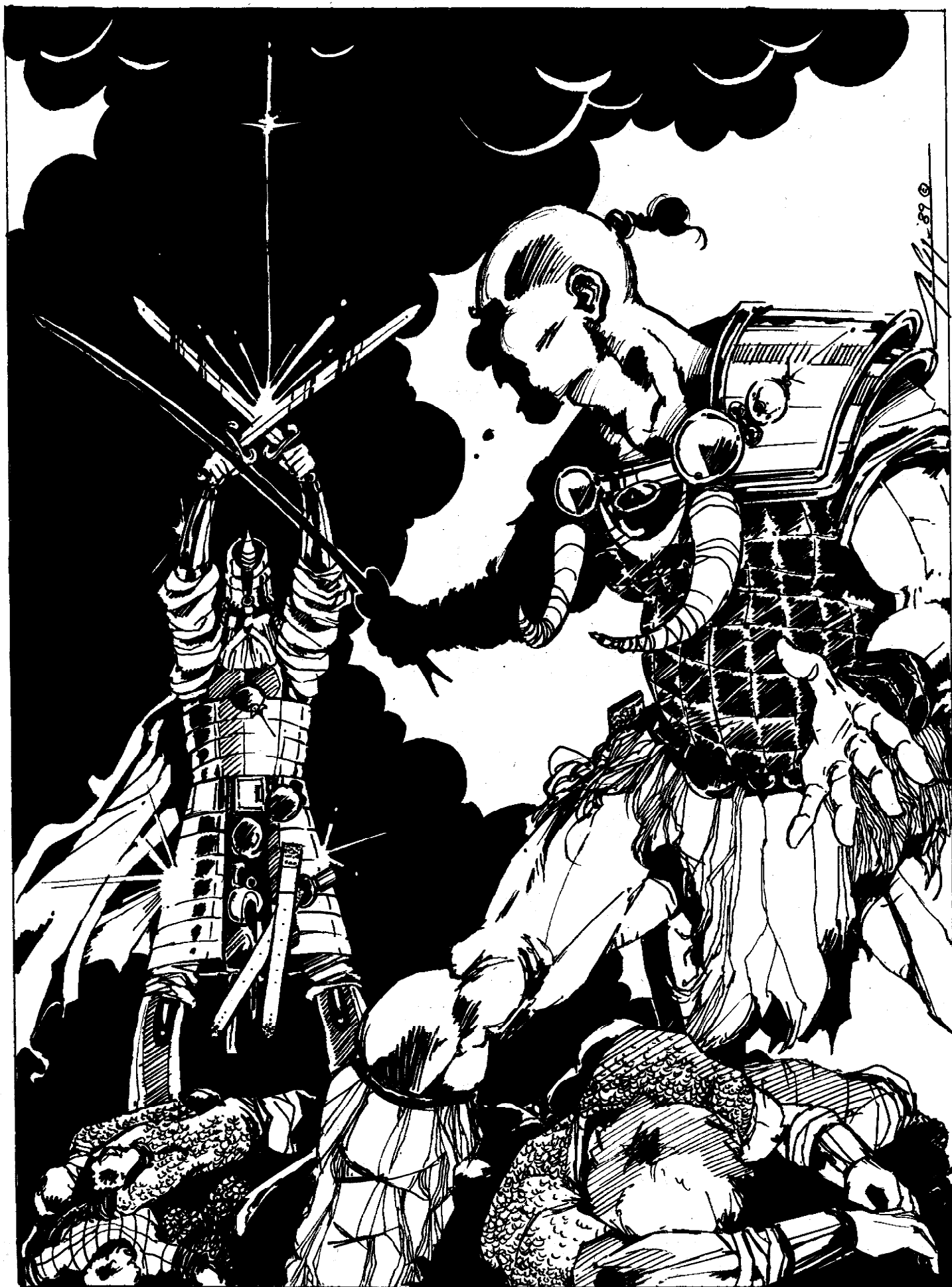
A paladin of justice will spend his life pursuing injustice, seeking to punish the guilty. Such a paladin travels in search of wrongs to be righted, of crimes to be prosecuted, and dead to be avenged. A paladin of justice seems to be grim and obsessed (consider him to be a Clint Eastwood, Judge Dredd, or Batman sort of paladin).

Paladins of justice are found among all sorts of religions but are especially prominent among those religions devoted to law and justice. The highest priority, of course, would be righting the wrongs of the enemies of the religion (a paladin of Tyr, if such paladins exist in a campaign, would be devoted to fighting injustice caused by giantkind or Loki's agents, the enemy of the Norse gods).

## Paladins of war

Because so many of the paladin's abilities are directed at fighting evil, it is logical that many paladins will devote their energies to the Holiest of Wars: seeking out and exterminating evil. These paladins seek out sources of evil and attempt to eliminate them in the most effective manner.

Paladins of war are the sort who can't decide whether to take their annual vaca-





tions in the Abyss or in the Nine Hells, so they do both. Paladins of war are extremely aggressive—sometimes too aggressive. Stories abound about paladins who wander city streets, using their detect evil ability on everyone passing by; when such a paladin finds someone of evil bent, he takes out his gleaming sword and slays the miscreant. Well, paladins are supposed to slay evil—but what is wrong with this picture of paladinhood?

The answer is simple: It is missing the quality of justice. Even though a paladin may sense that an entity is evil, no proof exists that the entity has committed an evil deed unless it is caught in the act. Paladins should slay evil beings while the evil actions are taking place (e.g., attacking someone who is torturing peasants), not just because the beings are noted to be evil. The paladin's detect evil ability is meant to give an advantage in dealing with evil and to prevent him from being tricked and not to give him a license to kill.

Compounding the problem of fighting evil is the fact that evil is often lawful. A lawful-evil culture may have a rigid system of slavery, and if a paladin slays a person for committing this evil act, the paladin is breaking the law. If the paladin breaks the local law while fighting evil, does he violate his code?

In my view, a paladin is bound not to the law of a nation or individual (unless he has

sworn fealty to that nation), but to a more personal law, the principles by which his life is governed (the conflict between the principles and rigid laws of the Solamnic Knights in the *DRAGONLANCE®* volume *Dragons of Winter Night* is an excellent example of this conflict in action). This does not allow the paladin to assassinate an evil king, but it does allow him to organize rebellion and encourage overthrow of the evil ruler if the ruler will not agree to change his ways.

This law governs a paladin's relations with evil humans and demihumans. Paladins are considered to be at war with evil humanoids, undead, and monsters such as evil dragons, demons, daemons, and devils, and can usually slay them with impunity, preferably by a clean kill in combat. Paladins never use torture, nor will they permit themselves to be led out of the room just when the rest of the group is about to stick bamboo splinters under the drow's fingernails.

### Paladins of glory

One of the primary goals of a paladin is to be an effective leader and a symbol of goodness, to serve as an inspiration for all people to follow the ways of lawful good. These paladins seek glory.

Of all types of paladins, a paladin of glory is closest to a cavalier in attitude. A paladin of glory goes on quests for the

destruction of the most prominent evil beings available and gives himself long flowery epithets, such as Sir Edwyn Darius Dracobane Demonslayer, Knight Champion of the Order of Golden Gryphons, Darkcrusher, Paragon of Chivalry, etc. But paladins of glory, unlike cavaliers, do not have a "haughtier than thou" attitude toward people of lesser repute or social status. Yes, they often enjoy their fame and fortune, but everyone has the potential to serve good; only evil is not worthy of respect. A paladin of glory may get annoyed when someone fails to treat him with respect, and he may view this as a sign that that person is evil (since anyone who was *really* good would certainly be smart enough to give the paladin the honor he deserves). But such a paladin doesn't go out of his way to make enemies by insulting people, and he generally treats common folk with courtesy.

### Paladins of defense

The fourth variety of paladin is sometimes referred to in gaming as the "boy scout." The goals of these paladins are to protect the innocent, defend the weak, and liberate the oppressed.

Paladin defenders, like heroes on some television series, travel about in search of people to save. They heal the sick and try to comfort fears, encouraging persecuted people who are too timid to fight back. Most important to a defender is the safety of the innocent; if a paladin would endanger innocents by picking a fight with evil, he'll back down but will try to mete out justice as soon as it is safe to do so.

Paladin defenders should (in my view) form the majority of paladins. They are gentle and courteous people but can be fierce in battle. Paladin defenders usually acquire good reputations and are the variety of paladin most hated by evil.

### Paladins and religion

Paladins are granted their abilities by the gods. They are not simply fighters or cavaliers; they are priests as well, knowledgeable in the ways of their religions, and are also instruments of their religions. The attitudes of paladins are shaped by their doctrines. A paladin of a war god would usually be a paladin of war; a paladin of a justice god would be a paladin of justice; etc. More than one goal may be followed if the lawful-good deity of a paladin controls more than one area (such as Tyr, as noted in *Legends & Lore*).

Paladins are responsible to the priesthood for their actions. Bestowing paladinhood may be the duty of a priest, the paladin's status being granted only after the candidate had proved his skill and his worth; the appointment must be confirmed by the deity himself. Likewise, priests may have the ability to strip paladinhood, although only under the direction of the deity concerned. Paladins are for the most part rare.

A paladin must swear an oath to follow



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his doctrine with absolute faithfulness. Minor violations may be grounds for loss of paladinhood. If a religion forbids a paladin to travel on a certain day of the week, the paladin would have to petition the deity or his servants to lift the ban in life-or-death circumstances.

Paladins are considered lesser priests in the hierarchy of a lawful-good church; they will never be found within higher levels of religious leadership. Paladins are considered to be more effective in the field than at the pulpit.

Paladin limitations are subject to alteration by the church. For example, whereas a paladin may be limited in the number of his possessions, this limitation may also apply to priests of the paladin's religion. Some religions might permit paladins to save up wealth to build major strongholds, to further the territory of their religion. Some religions may permit paladins to associate with neutral beings, preferably to convert them to the side of good. In principle, however, paladins should be self-reliant, should not covet wealth or possessions, and should not associate with corrupting influences.

Another issue is that of paladins and marriage. Some DMs insist that paladins take vows of chastity. Others are more liberal and permit paladins to marry without relinquishing their paladinhood. In my view, marriage laws vary according to the governing religion and the rules of the Order. In the *WORLD OF GREYHAWK®* setting, the King of Furyondy is described as a paladin, and his son is also a paladin, which would appear to indicate that some orders of paladinhood are permitted to marry. Historically, knights who strove for paladinlike virtues often took a vow of chastity. This is yet another case of both sides being right. It should be left to the DM to determine whether certain orders are allowed to marry.

Because paladins serve different religions, it is unlikely that paladins of differing religions will always get along. Regional rivalry is also a cause for inter-paladin conflict. Because of these differences, some orders of paladins will label other paladin groups as false and will fight them when they meet. Many paladins have lost their lives and honor during such conflicts. When there is a great evil to fight (a rampaging dragon or a lich with hoards of undead), however, regional and religious rivalries take a back seat to more important needs.

### Paladins and cavaliers

Like cavaliers, paladins often come from the upper classes of society. Paladins often seem concerned with glory, which is the chief pursuit of all cavaliers. At least on the surface, the two classes appear very similar, so much so that paladins are considered to be a subclass of cavaliers, not fighters.

The principle difference between paladins and cavaliers is attitude. Cavaliers

**Cavalier-Paladin Experience Table**

Experience points	Level	d10 hit dice
0-3,500	1	1
3,501-7,000	2	2
7,001-15,000	3	3
15,001-30,000	4	4
30,001-60,000	5	5
60,001-120,000	6	6
120,001-250,000	7	7
250,001-500,000	8	8
500,001-1,000,000	9	9

500,000 xp/level for each level above 9th.

Paladin-cavaliers gain 3 hp/level above the 9th.

tend to be arrogant and haughty toward those who are of a lower social station. Paladins are much more humble; humility is considered a virtue.

Cavaliers have many powers that are also included in the paladin class. These powers include weapons of choice (another form of weapon specialization), near-total immunity to fear-based spells, and parrying and riding skills. How should a DM handle paladins? Are they cavaliers?

There are at least three available options for the DM. First, he can use the paladin with all the cavalier abilities listed for it in *Unearthed Arcana*. Second, he can say paladins are fighters, as given in the 1st Edition *Players Handbook*, and ignore *Unearthed Arcana*. Third, he can combine the two books, creating cavalier-paladins and fighter-paladins.

Fighter-paladins are simply those listed in the *Players Handbook*. They may be given a couple of *Unearthed Arcana* options, such as riding, horse knowledge, and parrying, but otherwise are as they were originally described.

Cavalier-paladins have many of the abilities of the true cavalier, such as:

1. The opportunity to improve characteristic scores by rolling percentile dice (unlike cavaliers, they may only choose one of the following characteristics to improve at each level: strength, constitution, or dexterity);
2. Weapons of choice, as described in *Unearthed Arcana*, but making multiple attacks with a weapon of choice as if they were three, not five, levels higher;
3. The riding ability of a cavalier and the knowledge of horses of that class;
4. Immunity to *fear* but without the ability to radiate that immunity in a 10' radius) and a 30% immunity to the following spells and effects: *beguiling*, *charm*, *domination*, *hold*, *hypnosis*, *magic jar*, *possession*, *sleep*, *suggestion*, and *mind blast*; and
5. The ability to function at negative hit-point totals, like cavaliers.

The cavalier-paladin does not have the armor requirements of a cavalier. He owes his loyalty not to a liege lord but to a religion, and his hospitality duties are colored

by his allegiance to a church or religious group. All of the knightly virtues listed for cavalier-paladins are applicable, except pride. Under *no* circumstances will a paladin mow down his own troops just to get into battle more quickly. Instead, a paladin is concerned with the lives of all who serve under him or with him, and fights to protect them as well as gain personal glory. In a world where fighter-paladins exist alongside paladin-cavaliers, the paladin-cavaliers should pay extra experience points for rising in level. A suggested experience-point table is given here for cavalier-paladins.

### The paladins' code

Sometimes it is difficult to decide how a paladin should be role-played. The following is a suggested set of guidelines that I have found useful:

- Death before dishonor.
- Dishonor before innocents are harmed.
- All women are to be honored.
- Be polite and courteous even if insulted.
- All challenges are to be met honorably.
- Obey your religion and honor its tenets.
- Obey the laws of the land where they do not conflict with your religion.
- Respect all opponents.
- Avoid all excesses.
- Care for the sick and aid the distressed.
- Honor your liege lord and your deity.
- Do not permit evil to do harm.

Paladins are a very interesting class to play in the AD&D® game. In many ways, paladins are the ultimate heroes in heroic fantasy. Being "goody two shoes" isn't for everyone, but it can be a lot of fun. Ω

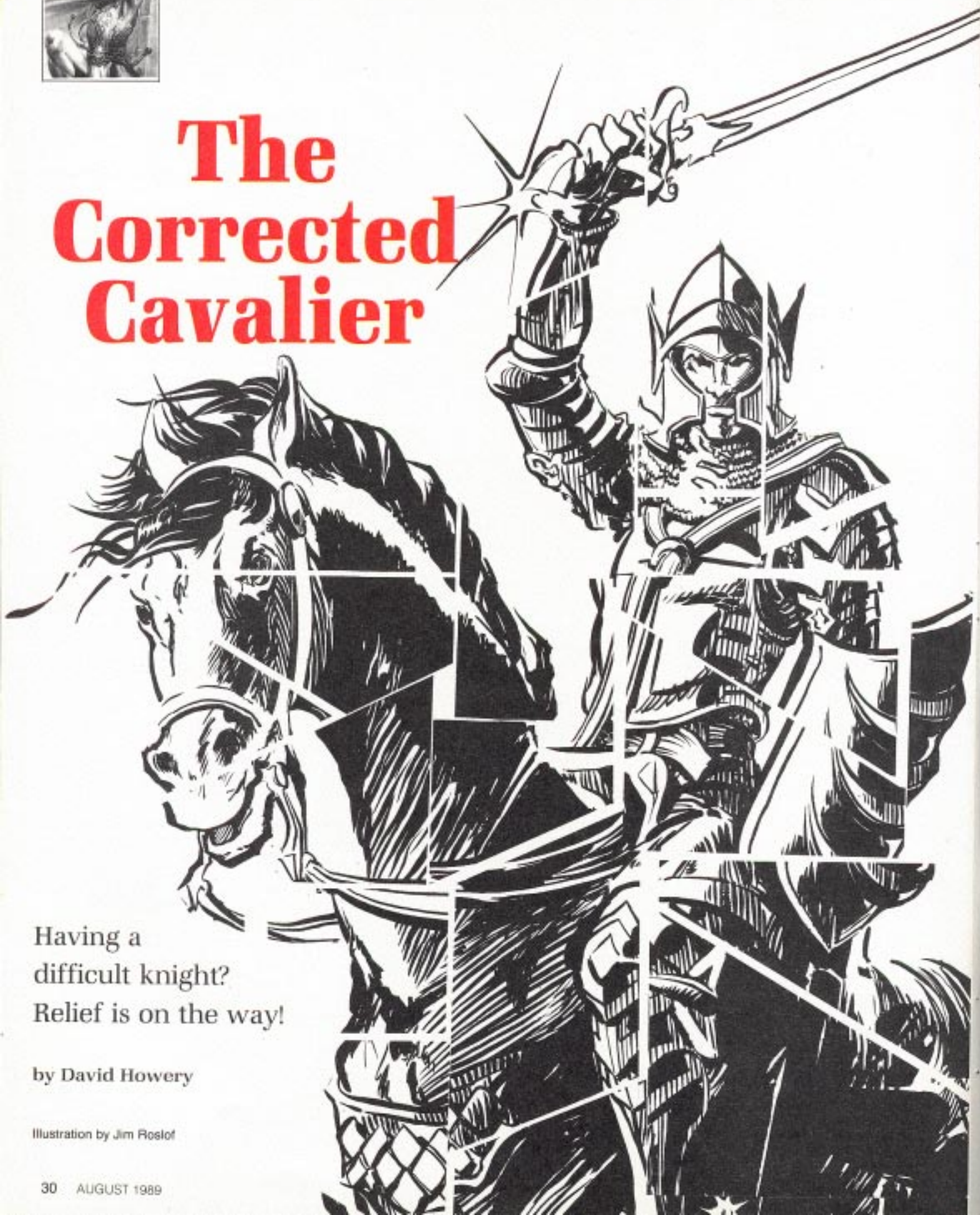


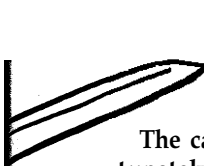
# The Corrected Cavalier

Having a  
difficult knight?  
Relief is on the way!

by David Howery

Illustration by Jim Roslof





The cavalier, based on the knights of medieval Europe, has the potential to be a unique and interesting fighter. Unfortunately, the cavalier described in *Unearthed Arcana* is complicated to play and overly powerful. Some players say the class should be eliminated, but the cavalier can be revised to be a unique and viable class. This article redefines the cavalier in AD&D® 1st Edition games.

Cavaliers are warriors with a background of nobility. Their training emphasizes mounted and personal combat as well as the leadership of military units. They have a strict code of conduct, although nonlawful cavaliers tend to ignore it. Not all noble warriors are necessarily cavaliers; some are paladins, rangers, or ordinary fighters who come from the noble classes. Like barbarians, cavaliers cannot be multiclassed characters. In addition, cavaliers cannot be reduced to fighter status for their actions, as their skills are not linked to alignment.

### The new cavalier

The following rules regarding the cavalier are unchanged from those given in *Unearthed Arcana*:

Experience points and hit dice per level, including level titles (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 15);  
Ability to estimate the worth of horses;  
Bonuses to lance damage, whether mounted or on foot;  
Immunity to *fear*;  
Parrying ability with shield or hand weapons; and  
Henchmen restrictions (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 75).

The following rules from *Unearthed Arcana* for the cavalier are removed from the class:

**Alignment restrictions:** Cavaliers may be of any alignment at 1st level and have the usual penalties for switching alignments. Why would all cavaliers begin their careers as good-aligned? To use the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting as an example, the knights of Iuz or the Great Kingdom would be evil from the start. Also, the idea of characters switching alignments without penalty, as given in *Unearthed Arcana* and DRAGON® Magazine supplements to that book, should be discouraged.

**Zero-level Horseman and Lancer levels:** These are weak and unnecessary; it would be simpler to require the cavalier to be at least Upper Middle Class.

**+3 hp bonus at 1st level:** This is an unfair advantage that is not logically justified.

**Ability to increase strength, constitution, and dexterity scores.** This is an unfair idea. The other fighter classes could easily claim that they also spend every nonadventuring hour training hard and increasing their ability scores. Cavaliers are now subject to all limitations by race and sex on ability scores.

**Protection from fear aura:** This is a semi-magical power that is completely beyond a cavalier's training. Cavaliers are not favored beings like paladins.

**90% resistance to mind attacks:** Of all the cavalier's powers, this one most unbalances the class. Once again, a cavalier's training does not cover this, and the power should be dropped.

**+2 bonus on save vs. illusions:** A cavalier is trained in combat, not magic. If anything, a cavalier should be more sus-

ceptible to illusions due to a lack of familiarity with spells. However, if this power is simply dropped, the cavalier will again be equal to the other fighter classes in this regard.

#### **Ability to function at negative hit points:**

This is another idea that is hard to justify. Why would this power be linked to alignment? Cavaliers will be unconscious at 0 to -9 hp and dead at -10 hp, as with other classes. Healing is at normal rates.

**Charge at all opponents in sight:** This is a foolish and unrealistic notion. Even prideful historical knights would retreat when they absolutely couldn't win. Knights are sometimes reckless, but they are not stupid. They are trained to lead armies, and would not immediately charge the enemy.

These rules from *Unearthed Arcana* are modified:

**Class type:** Cavaliers are now a subclass of fighter and use the fighter's combat and saving-throws tables.

**Ability score requirements:** Cavaliers must have a minimum strength, constitution, and charisma of 13. Cavaliers have no prime requisite and cannot gain bonus experience points.

**Social class:** Cavaliers must have a minimum social class of 56, as Upper Middle Class. This roll will determine their starting money (see *Unearthed Arcana*, page 82, and "Starting money" section elsewhere in this article).

**Racial limits:** Only humans, elves, and half-elves can be cavaliers. Among elves and half-elves, only those of gray, high, and valley elf stock can be cavaliers. Drow cannot become cavaliers, since horses are not used underground.

**Preferred weapons:** Cavaliers prefer to use any sort of lance, any sword (except short and khopesh), scimitar, horseman's mace, horseman's flail, horseman's pick, dagger, hand, axe, javelin, and bec de corbin. Elves and half-elves add either a short bow or short composite bow to the list. These weapons must be taken as weapons of proficiency before any others can be learned.

**Mounted combat bonuses with weapons of choice:** Delete all the *Unearthed Arcana* rules on this subject. Instead, at 1st level, the cavalier has three weapon-proficency slots. These must be used to gain proficiency with: a lance (any); a sword (any except short, khopesh, or two-handed) or scimitar; and a horseman's weapon (mace,

pick, or flail). These three weapons are known as the cavalier's *weapons of choice*. The cavalier has a +1 bonus to hit with these weapons, and a +2 to hit when mounted. The number of attacks per round with these weapons is: levels 1-6, 3/2; 7-12, 2; 13+, 5/2.

**Other weapons of proficiency:** Weapons of proficiency taken at levels higher than the first are not weapon: of choice. The cavalier has normal combat proficiency with these weapons. The number of attacks per round with such weapons is: levels 1-6, 1; 7-12, 3/2; 13+, 2.

**Nonweapon proficiencies:** The cavalier has two nonweapon proficiency slots at 1st level. One slot must be spent to gain the land-based riding proficiency (*wilderness Survival Guide*, page 16) with horses. This replaces the riding skills of the cavalier as given in *Unearthed Arcana*; however, the cavalier still has the same chance to stay in the saddle under difficult conditions, and the same chance to be uninjured if he does fall, as given in *Unearthed Arcana*, page 15 (84% plus 1% per 1 level). There is no other restriction on the nonweapon proficiencies that the cavalier can learn.

**Armor restrictions:** Cavaliers will not use leather armor, studded leather armor, padded armor, or wooden shields. Other than this, they are free to wear any type of armor they choose. In large battles, they will wear the heaviest armor available. While adventuring, they will be more flexible (e.g., they will not insist on wearing plate mail in the desert).

**Paining:** From levels 1-9, a cavalier must be trained by another cavalier at least two levels higher. The cavalier must pay normal training fees.

**Followers:** Cavaliers can gain henchmen as noted in *Unearthed Arcana*, page 75. Material on followers on pages 74-75 is ignored. To gain men-at-arms and followers, the cavalier must be of 9th level or higher, must build a castle or keep, then must clear an area for 20-50 miles around the castle. When construction is completed, the cavalier will gain men-at-arms, all of zero level with 5-8 hp and the same alignment as the cavalier. The men will consist of:

20-50 light cavalry (ring mail, shield, three javelins, light lance, scimitar (saber), light war horses).  
10-40 heavy cavalry (chain mail, shield,



broad sword, heavy lance, heavy war horse in chain barding).  
 20-50 heavy infantry (splint mail, pike, falchion).  
 10-40 crossbowmen (ring mail, heavy crossbow, falchion).

In addition, the cavalier will gain all retainers noted in *Unearthed Arcana*, page 75 (but replace Horseman and Lancer with two Armigers) and four zero-level men with the following craftsman proficiencies: animal trainer (horse), armorer, blacksmith, weaponsmith.

**Pennon and heraldry:** The cavalier is not required to display a pennon or coat of arms unless he has built a castle, but a pennon may be displayed at any time before then.

**Hospitality:** The cavalier cannot expect hospitality from other cavaliers until he becomes a landholder (i.e., builds a castle).

**Proficiency slots:** Cavaliers gain one weapon and one nonweapon proficiency slot for every three levels beyond the 1st (4th, 9th, etc.).

**Starting money:** Delete the rules in *Unearthed Arcana* on page 25 regarding starting funds. Instead of equipment, the cavalier receives only a number of gold pieces at 1st level. The amount depends on the cavalier's social class roll (*Unearthed Arcana*, page 82):

Roll	Funds
56-87	50-200 gp (5d4 X 10)
88-96	90-200 gp ((1d12 +8) x 10)
97-99	101-200 gp (1d100 + 100)
00	155-200 gp (5d10 + 150)

## Miscellaneous notes

**Paladins:** It is not a good idea to combine cavalier and paladin powers into a single character. This creates a character who is much too strong. Under the variant rules given here, the paladin is treated according to the rules in the 1st Edition *Players Handbook*. A special type of royal paladin is not needed, since random social class rolls allow for high-born paladins.

**Background:** A cavalier is not likely to be an only child or a first-born (10% chance). If he was, the PC would be kept at home as the immediate heir to the family lands and holdings. If a PC cavalier is an only child or first-born, it is likely that the cavalier's parents are dead or have lost their holdings, forcing the PC into the insecure life of an adventurer. The DM and players can create the details.

**BATTLESYSTEM™ supplements:** Cavaliers have a +1 bonus to their command radius in addition to all other bonuses. Units led by a cavalier have a +1 bonus on their Discipline Rating and a -1 bonus on rally attempts. All these reflect the cavalier's training in military leadership.

**Chivalry and knighthood:** The rules on these subjects are now optional. The PC cavalier is an independent, free-willed adventurer. His skills are not dependent on alignment or service to another; they are the result of military training. The cavalier can change his alignment but not his class. Therefore, a PC cavalier does not have to be knighted, be in the service of another, or be devoted to any cause. If the DM and players desire, these aspects of chivalry can be added.

The code of chivalry is well detailed in *Unearthed Arcana*, though it is heavily slanted toward law and good. Since cavaliers can be chaotic, neutral, and evil, obviously many would ignore various parts of the code. Chaotic cavaliers would resist this restrictive set of laws, while evil ones would hardly render "cheerful service" or "courtesy." Again, it is the player's choice to follow the code of chivalry (and incur all penalties for doing so).

## Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to turn the cavalier into a viable character. With these variant rules, the cavalier is a subclass of fighter equal (but not superior to) to the paladin or ranger. This revised cavalier is similar to the original paladin: Both subclasses are similar to the fighter in regard to hit points and combat abilities, and each has a special immunity and unique abilities. Both also lack weapon specialization, which puts the fighter back on equal footing.

## Forum

### Continued from page 8

I am writing to disagree with two letters printed in issue #137: Bahman Rabbi's letter complaining about nonweapon proficiencies, and David Howery's comments about the "plain old fighter."

To the former: I would say nonweapon proficiencies allow players to develop the personalities of their characters and offer opportunities for role-playing. I'm in a campaign that played the AD&D® 2nd Edition game. I think you may like some of the changes and new proficiencies presented in this game. It should be up to the DM to mitigate imbalances in his campaign. A DM able to think on his feet wouldn't allow his players to run rampant over his well-laid plans simply because one character has a blind-fighting proficiency.

As to the second letter commenting on the "fact" that other warrior classes are more interesting than the fighter class, I say "Come on!" It's up to the player to make his character interesting. For example, my 3rd-level fighter is high-born, cultured, and a gentleman well versed in the courtly skills of etiquette, dancing, and the singing and playing of musical instruments. He has high charisma and comeliness.

Recently, while spending a few weeks in a

small town (one of our party members needed training), my character, Harmony Madrigal Greenwood, spent his nights singing and playing for tips in a local inn with the party's illusionist, Taran, who accompanied Harmony with a beautiful light show and pretty illusions. They shared a percentage of their take with the innkeeper who, in turn, fed and lodged them.

Due to my character's high comeliness and charisma (and the deviously clever mind of Tracy Reed, my inventive DM), the local women became enamored with Harmony and began congregating at the inn to see his performances. During the second week of his appearances, the situation got out of hand when a jealous husband made his way through the throng of women to attack Harmony. The innkeeper attempted to control the situation, but a bar brawl ensued and Harmony and Taran were forced to flee.

The above is only one example of my "plain old fighter's" young but already very interesting career. If a player puts no imagination into a fighter character, I can see how you can end up with a boring hack-n-slash type. But that's the player's fault. It's up to you to build an interesting personality into your character—you're only limited by your imagination.

Valerie A. Valusek  
 Williams Bay WI

true that the fighter class is somewhat limited outside of the dungeon, but with the use of a little logic, the class becomes more useful without unbalancing the campaign.

Nothing aids hostile critter negotiations better than a 6'6" warrior with 18/98 strength standing behind you. Fighters should also get more respect from the common folk. A magic-user may be feared because he can turn you into a toad, but a warrior can associate with the average people who understand fighting.

One option for fighters in my campaign is to allow them a 2% chance per level to identify high-quality or magical weapons. This allowance is limited to discovering how to operate the item's powers (without necessarily knowing what the powers do) and gaining a general knowledge of weapon's attack bonuses, within +1 or -1 of its true value. This stems from the fact that a warrior trains with all sorts of weapons and little else. I deny this type of training to the fighter subclasses because they spend more of their time in other pursuits. (Paladins in clerical training, rangers in druidical and magical training, etc.).

Howard J. Nenko  
 Macedon NY

Continued on page 58

I am writing in response to the downgrading of the fighter class in "Forum" (issue #142). It is

# MIDDLE-EARTH

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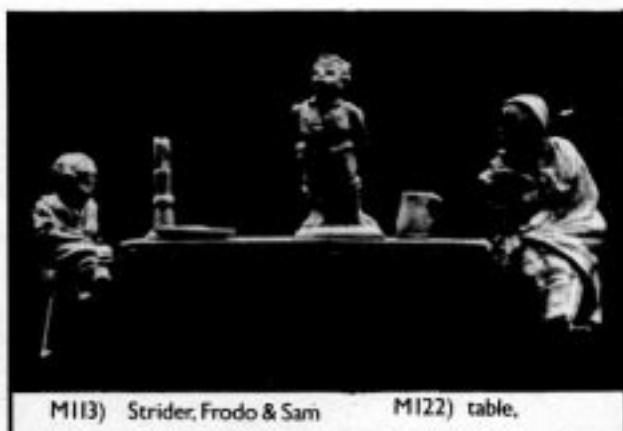
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# Arcane Lore

Can a wizard cure your  
light wounds? No, but . . .

by Bruce Kvam

*Villem was dying. His breathing became ragged and irregular, and his eyes glazed over as he muttered a prayer to Tyr. His grasp on Renfrew's forearm loosened.*

*"Can you do something to heal him?" Renfrew cried, turning on Fratakara.*

*The mage took a step back, stroking his chin slowly. His eyes were hooded by shadow, and the others could not read his expression. He shook his head.*

*Renfrew knelt over Villem, checking the bandages with which he had crudely bound his brother's wounds. He cursed himself for not listening to Villem's lessons, being more interested in the arts of combat than the arts of healing. The young priest had taken the brunt of the dragon's attacks, holding the monster off so that the others could pull Renfrew from beneath its claws. Now Villem was paying for his bravery with his life.*

*As the last breath slipped from Villem's slim body, a rage grew within Renfrew, a senseless rage that he could not hold back. "Damn you, Fratakara!" he shouted. "All your books, all your knowledge, all your spells, and you can do nothing to save my brothers life! Your magic is worthless!"*

It is by design that magic-users have no healing abilities in the AD&D® 1st Edition game. Were they able to heal as well as they harm, they would be invincible indeed. Game balance dictates a separation of powers. But must the answer to the question, "Can you do something to heal him?" always be negative? Three typical responses from magic-users are:

1. "Alas, no," the low-level mage replies. "I am not trained in the healing arts!"
2. "Alas, no," the high-level mage replies. "But after he dies, I can reincarnate him as a bugbear."

3. "No problem," the very high-level mage replies. "I can *wish* him back to full strength, but I'll age three years in the process. Got a potion of longevity?"

None of these options is particularly heartening to the player whose character has no hit points left to his name. Is it possible for magic-users to heal others? Is it desirable?

## What is healing?

When we speak of healing, we mean restoring hit points that a character has lost due to damage. The powers that affect healing are represented by: the clerical spells *cure light wounds*, *cure serious wounds*, *cure critical wounds*, and *heal*; the potions *healing* and *extra-healing*; and the *elixir* of life. It is also possible to give a character more hit points than his maximum, by means of the clerical *aid* spell and the potions of *heroism* and *super-heroism*.

Other forms of healing that most clerics have access to can: restore functions to a damaged character (spells like *cure blindness*, *cure disease*, *restoration*, and *regenerate*, and the *elixir of health* and *ring of regeneration*); negate the effects of poison (*slow poison*, *neutralize poison*); bring the dead to life (*raise dead* and *resurrection*, and the *rod of resurrection*); and prevent

death (*death's door*). Other forms of clerical healing include a full-spectrum immunity energizer (*heroes' feast*) and your basic snake-oil (*Keoghtom's ointment*).

One could argue that magic-users can already heal, because they (along with alchemists and other spell-casters) are the manufacturers of potions—and potions are, after all, spells in a bottle. This begs the question, though, because mages cannot carry their laboratories when they go adventuring. But it does point out that magic-users *can* heal. Why, then, can they not cast spells that have the same effects as the clerical healing spells?

## Why no healing?

Magic-users and clerics (including druids) share many spells. Most of the detection spells are common to both character classes (*detect evil*, *detect magic*, *know alignment*, etc.). Some combat and



person-affecting spells are the same or very similar: *hold person*; *quest* and *geas*; and *flame strike* and *fireball*. Many general-purpose spells are also held in common, such as *light*, *animate dead*, protection from evil, and rock to mud.

The magic-user's arsenal generally packs more powerful punches when it comes to damage (e.g., the clerical *flame strike* does an average of 27 hp damage, whereas the equivalent 9th-level magic-user's *fireball* does 31.5 hp), while the cleric's arsenal generally offers longer spell durations (e.g., the clerical *protection from evil* at one turn per level, while the magic-user's is two rounds per level). As far as casting time goes, magic-users are quicker on the draw than are clerics—but not always (e.g., *know alignment*).

There is a philosophical difference between mages and priests that is reflected in their abilities. Magic-users are interested in abstract knowledge, personal gain, and shaping the universe to fit their whims. Clerics desire to serve a deity, aid and serve those who share this desire, further a particular ethos, and gain converts to their beliefs. Clerics, by virtue of their relationships with higher powers, have a closer connection to the origins of life. Thus, they have a wide range of healing and detection abilities to help further those goals. Magic-users, on the other hand, have many spells that allow them to dominate the physical world.

Not all magic-users are selfish, power-mad individuals lusting for control of the universe. The question is, then, how can we give magic-users spells that heal without disturbing game balance? It would help to see what magic-users can already do to heal themselves and their fellows.

### Magic-user healing

"Magic-user healing" sounds like a contradiction in terms, but magic-users (including illusionists) do indeed have rudimentary healing powers, though it may not seem that way at first glance. Here's the rundown by spell level:

**Find familiar** (first-level spell): This double-edged spell allows the magic-user to add the hit points of a familiar (2-4 or more hp) to his total when the familiar is within 12". Unfortunately, if the familiar is killed, the magic-user loses double the number of its hit points.

**Feign death** (third-level spell): This is a useful but underused spell. It can produce the same effect as slow poison (though for a lesser duration), because poison does not affect a person under the effect of *feign death*. It might also be used to prolong a character's life when he has been brought to zero or fewer hit points.

**Dispel exhaustion** (fourth-level illusionist spell): This spell temporarily restores 50% of lost hit points. However, the character loses those magical hit points at the end of the duration of the spell (thus, if he is "running on empty," he will collapse).

**Polymorph self** (fourth-level spell): This spell heals only the magic-user who casts it. When he finally reverts back to his original form, the spell-caster is cured for 1-12 hp. Many mages keep this spell memorized only for this reason!

**Dream** (fifth-level illusionist spell): This spell is similar to the *limited wish* spell but is a little more flexible.

**Reincarnate** (sixth-level spell): This spell brings someone back from the dead in much the same way as the clerical *raise dead* spell. No system-shock or resurrection survival roll is required. There is, of course, a drawback: The recipient of the spell most likely will not return as his original race. On the positive side, there is a 48% chance of returning as a humanoid (so for a fighter, this might not be a terrible option if no others are available).

**Tenser's transformation** (sixth-level spell): This spell temporarily doubles the mage's hit points, giving a kind of healing. It has many drawbacks, though. It makes the mage berserk and unable to cast spells. If he is damaged beyond the added hit points, the mage takes double damage. And to top it off, the material component for the spell is a potion of *heroism*!

**Limited wish** (seventh-level spell): This spell cures the mage of some of his hit-point loss, or all his hit-point loss temporarily. As with all wishes, the wording of the wish is critical and is subject to the interpretation of the Dungeon Master. It is also an expensive spell to cast, for it ages the caster by one year.

**Alter reality** (seventh-level illusionist spell): This spell is similar to the *limited wish* spell.

**Clone** (eighth-level spell): Though not as obvious as the other spell choices, this spell is an excellent replacement for *raise dead* (albeit a less-convenient replacement). When combined with the *preserve* spell, an effective life-insurance policy can be taken out with a high-level magic-user. A character need only donate a bit of flesh to the mage (who *preserves* the flesh) at regular intervals. If the character meets an untimely end (such as *disintegration*), he

can be restored to life as he was when the last donation was made. The character loses some memories and experience points, but he will at least be alive. Be forewarned: Some DMs may not be amenable to this sort of bending of the rules.

**Temporal stasis** (ninth-level spell): Similar to the *feign death* spell, *temporal stasis* might be used to defer curative action to a later time when a cleric is available.

**Wish** (ninth-level spell): This is the ultimate spell, the one every mage itches to be able to cast (but is afraid to cast). This is *the* magic-user's cure-all: It can restore lost hit points, remove diseases, raise the dead, etc. It has the drawback of aging the caster by three years, and it is subject to the interpretation of the DM. But healing is the most benign use of the *wish* (as it has no debilitating side effects other than the aging) and will most likely be granted by all but the most heartless DMs.

There may be other conniving schemes by which magic-users can obtain healing powers, but this list is sufficient to draw a few conclusions. These conclusions are as follows:

1. Spells that mages can use to heal are higher level (none below 4th).

2. The amount of healing is either small, temporary, or the by-product of another effect.

3. There is a substantial cost for casting the spell (e.g., aging or an expensive material component).

4. There are often undesirable side effects.

5. Increases in hit points are generally confined to the spell-caster.

6. No new life essence is created. Healing is accomplished by accelerating normal processes or by transferring hit points from another source.

This last point (#6) shows the key difference between the clerical and magic-user spells: The former produce a net increase in life-force while the latter maintain a balance.

### New magic-user spells

Keeping the above guidelines in mind, we can design curative spells for the magic-user that do not disrupt game balance or anger the gods.

#### Arnvid's Unseen Limb (Conjuration/Summoning)





Level: 4 Components: V,S,M  
 Range: *Touch* CT: 1 round  
 Duration: 6 turns/lvl. ST: None  
 AE: *Creature touched*

**Explanation/Description:** When *Arnvid's unseen limb* is cast, the magic-user causes an invisible limb (arm, hand, leg, or foot) to come into being. This limb may replace a missing limb, or it may be used to create an extra one. The invisible limb functions exactly as a normal limb, except that, at the option of the recipient of the spell, parts of it may become immaterial so as to pass through solid objects. For example, the limb could be used to uncork a potion inside a closed chest and dump the bottle out, but it could not remove the potion from the chest. The limb has normal touch sensations. It may be used to wield a weapon only if the limb is replacing a missing arm or hand. The limb bestows no extra senses other than touch, so it cannot be used, for example, to add a second shield arm in the middle of the recipient's back. The invisible limb has no hit points or armor class as such, and it cannot be harmed unless it is *dispelled*.

The material component of the spell is the tail of a lizard (any type that regenerates lost body parts). This is touched to the place on the body where the *limb* is to be restored.

#### **Empath** (Necromantic/Alteration)

Level: 4 Components: V,S,M  
 Range: *Touch* CT: 5 rounds  
 Duration: *Permanent* ST: None  
 AE: *Creature touched*

**Explanation/Description:** The *empath* spell enables the caster to transfer a certain loss in hit points from another creature to himself, thus curing the recipient. Up to 2 hp per level of the spell-caster may be transferred, so a 10th-level magic-user could cure his friend of a 20-hp wound (but the magic-user will then take 20 hp in damage himself). The hit-point loss could have originally resulted from physical attacks, certain poisons, spell effects, diseases, or *curses* (except those that cannot be removed by *remove curse*). This spell cannot restore amputated limbs, drained life levels, or death. It also cannot undo any continuously acting poison or disease, so the spell only temporarily reverses such harm, which will then con-

tinue to affect the victim.

If the caster is brought below zero hit points by use of *empath*, he begins to die. No effect results from casting *empath* on the deceased character.

The material components of this spell are hair and blood from both the recipient and the caster, two newt eyes, and two wolf teeth (each from a different animal). The components disappear in the casting of the spell.

#### **Life Force Transfer** (Necromantic)

Level: 4 Components: V,S,M  
 Range: 12" CT: 4 segments  
 Duration: *Instant* ST: None  
 AE: *One creature*

**Explanation/Description:** This spell allows the caster to transfer some of his life-force to another creature. When cast, the spell transfers 1 hp/level of the caster to the target creature, plus an additional 1-4 hp. The hit points are added to the target's current hit-point total and deducted from the spell-caster's. Thus, a 7th-level magic-user can transfer 8-11 hp from himself to another creature. The caster can transfer only as many hit points as he currently has; if he purposefully or accidentally transfers more, his current hit-point total plus 1-4 hp are transferred to the target, while that amount is subtracted from the caster's total (and the caster begins to die). The target creature cannot gain more hit points than its full normal total; such extra hit points are merely lost. The magic-user's hit-point losses can be regained by normal healing or magic.

After the *transfer* is complete, the magic-user loses four points of constitution temporarily; each point may be recovered by six turns of rest. If the caster's constitution drops below 3, unconsciousness results and full constitution is not regained for 24 hours. The material component of this spell is a glass tube filled with the caster's blood, which disappears when the spell is cast.

#### **Dispel Exhaustion** (Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 5 Components: V,S  
 Range: *Touch* CT: 5 segments  
 Duration: 2 turns/lvl. ST: None

AE: 1-3 persons

**Explanation/Description:** Except as noted above, this spell is the same as the 4th-level illusionist spell of the same name.

#### **Accelerated Metabolism** (Alteration)

Level: 6 Components: V,S,M  
 Range: *Touch* CT: 6 segments  
 Duration: 1 turn/lvl. ST: None  
 + 1-6 turns

AE: *One creature*

**Explanation/Description:** This spell speeds up the life processes of the recipient at a rate of 1 day/turn for the duration of the spell. All life processes (sleeping, eating, healing, etc.) progress at this accelerated pace. If insufficient nourishment is provided, the recipient suffers from thirst and starvation. Three rounds of rest per

turn must be allowed, otherwise exhaustion results and no healing is possible. The other seven rounds per turn must be spent eating and drinking a day's rations. The recipient regains 1 hp/turn for the first seven turns (minus any penalty due to poor constitution). In subsequent multiples of seven turns, characters with constitution bonuses additionally receive their constitution bonus score. In any case, 28 turns of accelerated metabolism heal a character completely.



However, each turn ages the recipient a week (as opposed to a day), due to the stresses of the artificially high metabolic rate.

Note that the character does not move or fight any faster than normal. Also, if the recipient of the spell is unwilling, a saving throw is applicable.

The material component for this spell is a candle, which must be lit at both ends. The candle must burn for the duration of the spell; if it is extinguished, the spell ends prematurely. The candle is completely burned if the spell runs its normal course.

#### **Vampire Dagger** (Necromantic)

Level: 6 Components: V,S,M  
 Range: 0 CT: 6 segments  
 Duration: 1 rnd./lvl. ST: *Neg.*

AE: *Personal*

**Explanation/Description:** By casting this spell on a specially prepared nonmagical dagger, the magic-user is able to drain hit points from other creatures that he strikes with it and bestow those hit points on himself. The magic-user must attack the creature normally with the dagger. If the hit is successful, the creature takes normal damage from the dagger (1-4 for small- and man-sized creatures, 1-3 for large-sized creatures, plus any strength bonus), plus bonus damage of 1 hp for every two levels the spell-caster has. The magic-user in turn gains this bonus damage as cura-

tive hit points. If the victim makes its saving throw vs. death magic, it takes damage from the dagger but no hit points are transferred to the spell-caster. If the save is a natural 20, the magic-user takes the bonus damage instead of the victim. If this spell drains more hit points from a victim than remain in that victim, the victim dies; only those hit points left to the victim after the dagger's damage (with strength bonuses) is subtracted are transferred to the magic-user. The magic-user cannot gain hit points above his normal hit-point total; all extra hit points are lost.

For example, a 16th-level magic-user hits a minotaur with 26 hp and rolls a 2 for damage, doing a total of 10 hp damage. The minotaur fails its saving throw, and the magic-user gains 8 hp (he lost 10 hp in a previous fight). The next round, the magic-user hits again and does 1 + 8 = 9 hp damage. The minotaur makes its save, so no hit points are transferred. On the next round, the magic-user hits again and does 2 + 8 = 10 hp damage. The minotaur fails its save and dies, having had only 7 hp left. Thus, only 7 - 2 = 5 hp can transfer to the caster. The caster gains only 2 hp, however, since this increase puts him at his maximum hit-point total.

This spell is ineffective against creatures that can be harmed only by magical weapons (undead excluded) and creatures that have no blood (e.g., golems). If the dagger

is used in an attempt to drain an undead being, the magic-user must save vs. death magic with each strike or die himself; the undead being only takes damage from the dagger and associated strength bonuses.

One of the material components of the spell is a dagger that has a channel inside it running from the tip through to the handle. The dagger must be forged from an alloy of silver and steel that has been mixed with the crushed bone of a vampire. The minimum cost of such a dagger is 2,000 gp. Blood from the dagger's wound must travel through the channel and touch the bare flesh of the magic-user's hand for the hit points to be transferred. The dagger remains after the completion of the spell. The other material component of this spell is the claw of a vampire, which disappears after the spell is cast. The effects of this spell do not protect the caster from any unusual effects of the victim's blood.

#### **Exchange** (Necromantic/Alteration)

Level: 8 Components: V,S,M

Range: *Touch* CT: 5 rounds

Duration: *Permanent* ST: *Neg.*

AE: *Two creatures*

**Explanation/Description:** This spell is similar to the *empath* spell, except that it allows the caster to transfer a hit-point disability (of up to 2 hp/level of the caster) between any two creatures, excluding the

caster. The magic-user must be able to grasp both the creature with the disability and the creature about to receive the disability without having to make to-hit rolls, so the two beings involved must either be willing to undergo the spell or else be sleeping or unconscious. The recipient of the disability is entitled to a saving throw vs. spells if unwilling. If the recipient's saving throw succeeds, the *exchange* is incomplete and nothing further happens.

If the recipient fails the saving throw, the disability passes through the magic-user, inflicting him for an instant. If such a wound would normally place the magic-user below zero hit points, it immediately does so, and the spell ceases; the creature that first bore the hit-point loss is healed, and the recipient is unharmed.

The material components for the spell are the same as the *empath* spell, except for a ruby (worth at least 5,000 gp), which is shattered as the disability passes through the caster.

If the risks of some of these spells seem to outweigh the benefits, remember that these spells deal with life and death—dangerous territory for magic-users. But these spells offer new options in role-playing. *Empath* and *life force transfer* allow magic-users to perform heroic acts of self-sacrifice without stepping on the hem of the cleric's cloak. *Arnyid's unseen limb* allows limbless victims to limp along until a high-level cleric can be found. With *exchange*, black wizards can trade lives and white wizards can save them.

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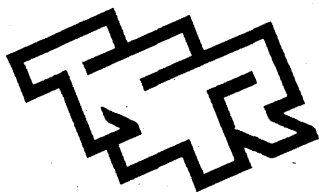
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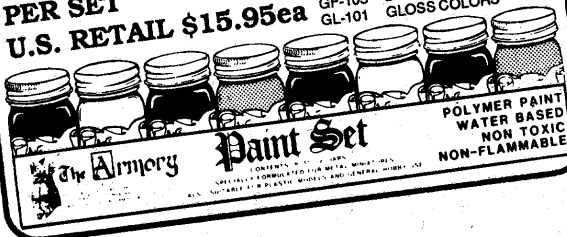
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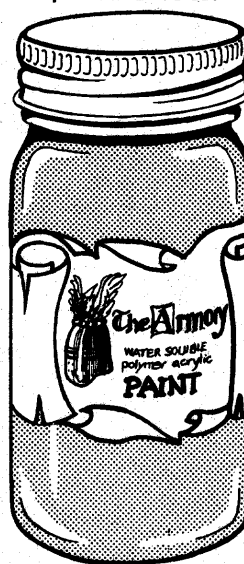
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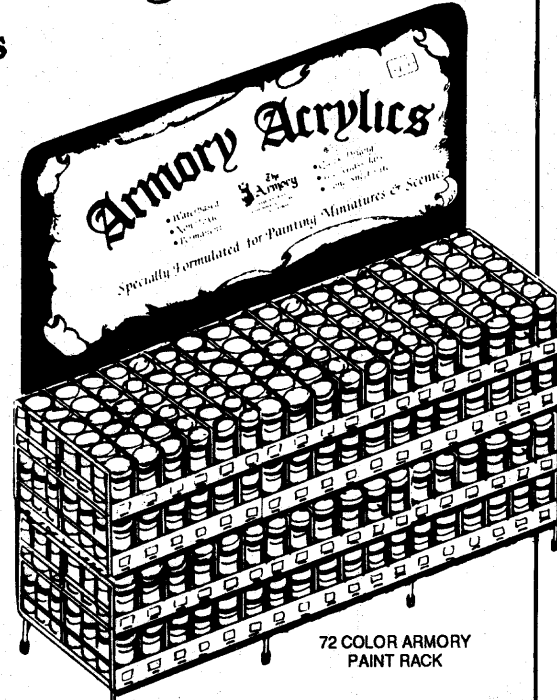
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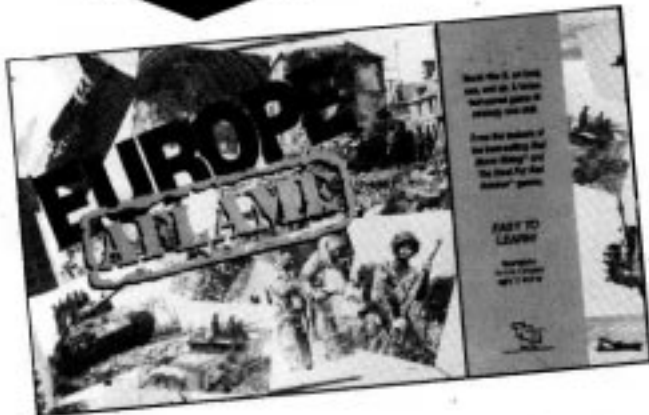
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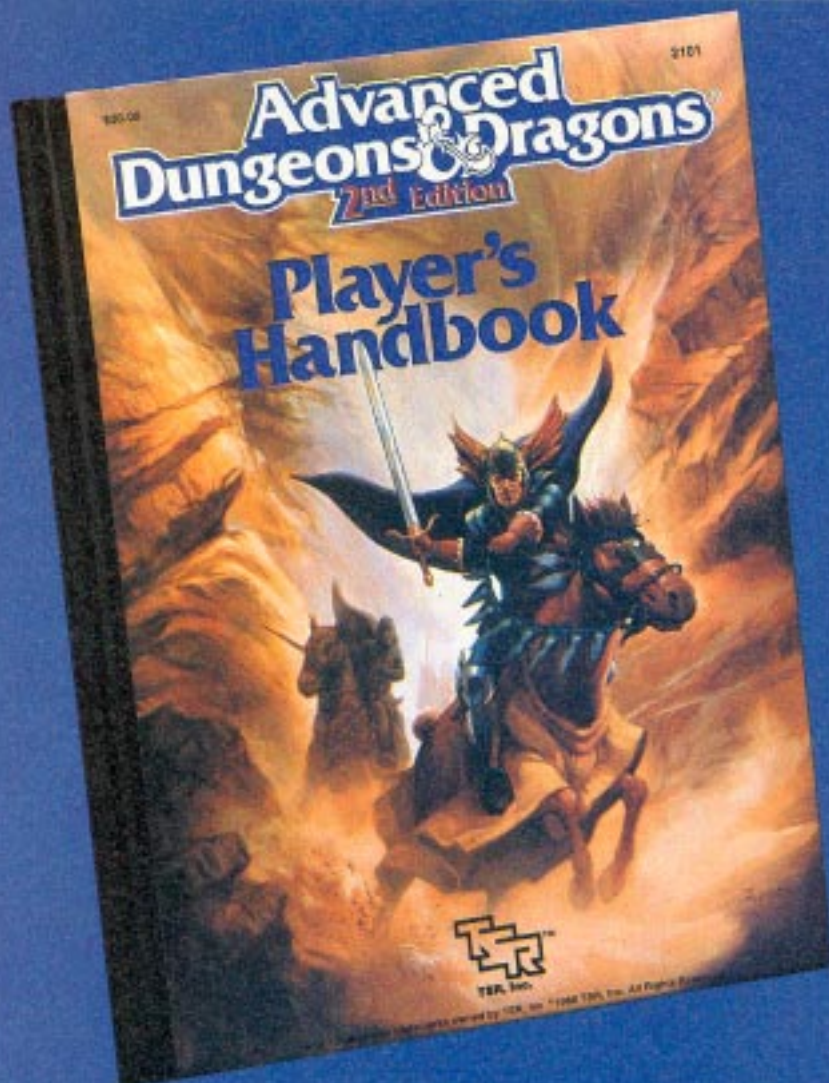
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# The Deck Of Many Things

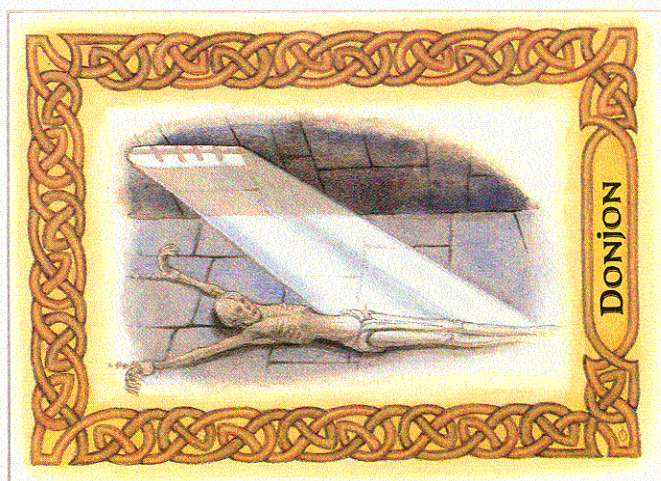
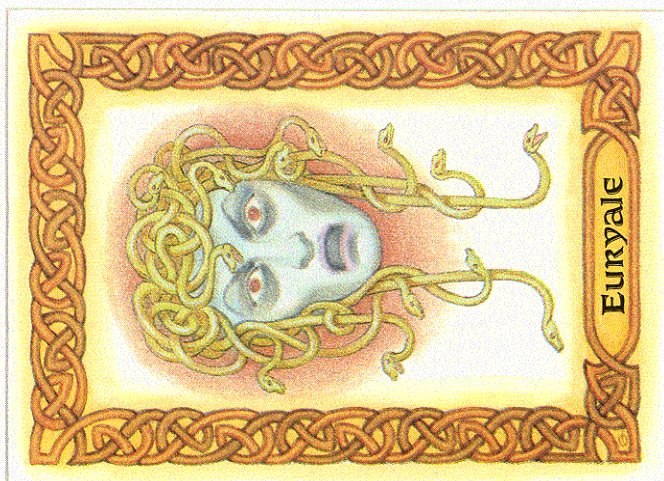
Artwork by George Barr

As a special bonus for our readers, we present a complete set of the *deck of many things*. Carefully remove the card pages from this magazine, then cut out each of the cards using either a sharp pair of scissors or a modeling blade and metal straightedge on a flat, smooth surface.

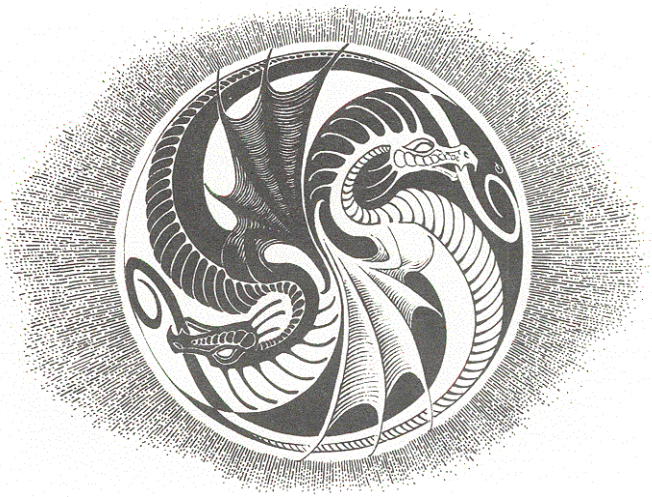
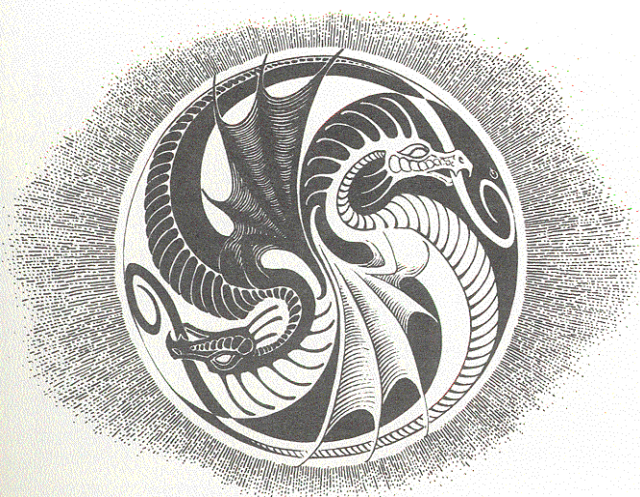
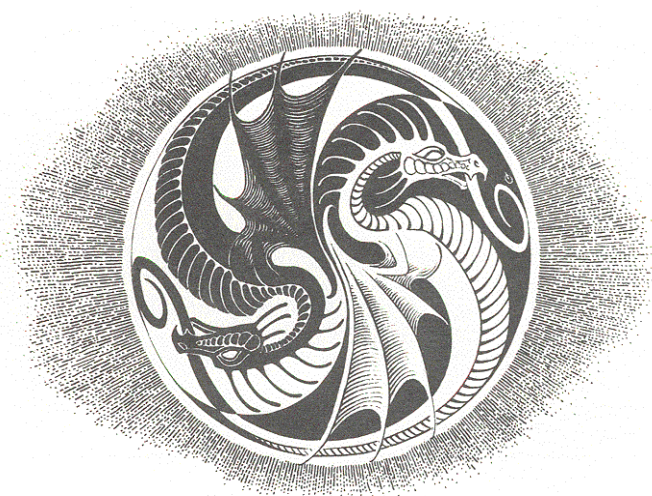
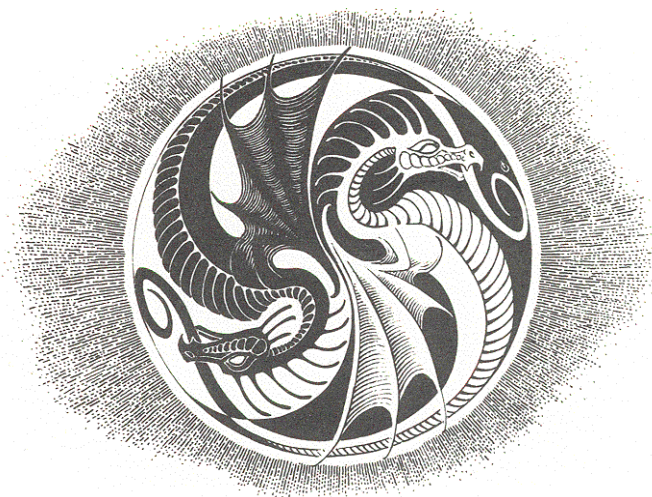
These cards may be used to create either the 13- or 22-card deck, whenever such is found during the course of an adventure. The DM can allow the player whose character draws from the deck to draw from this full-size deck, with each card drawn producing the appropriate results in the game setting.

Inventive players may attempt to create specialized card games based on the *deck of many things*, and special adventures using this item may be created for a campaign. An excellent adventure of this type appears in DUNGEON® Adventures issue #19 (September/October 1989). "House of Cards" (by Randy Maxwell) makes use of the 22-card *deck of many things* in a dungeon setting.

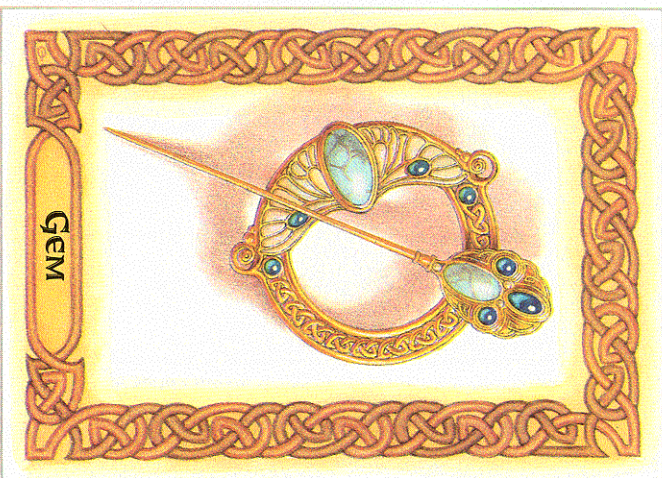
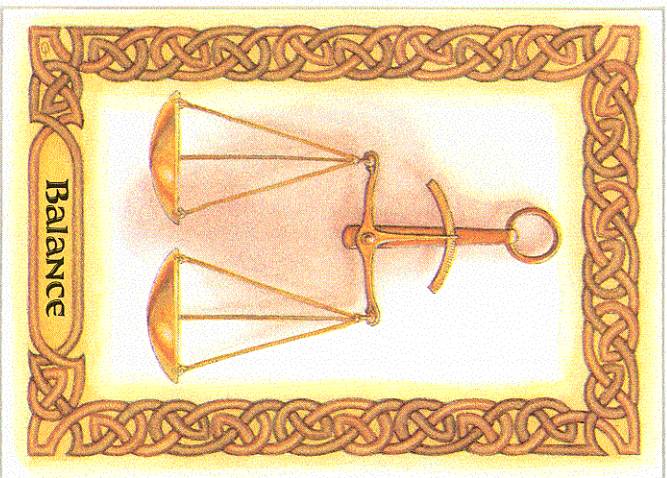
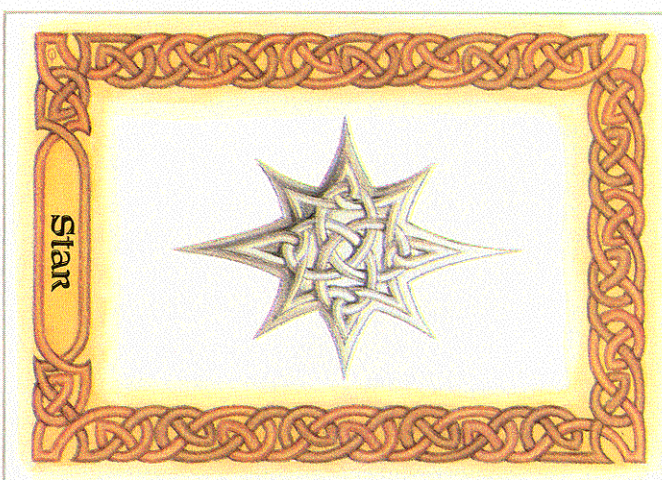
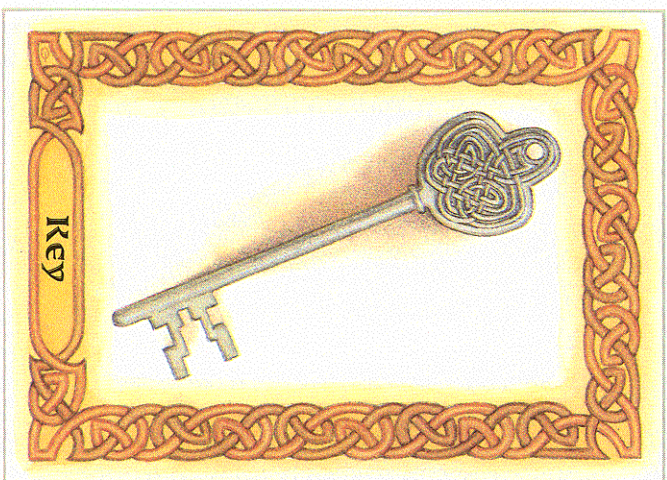
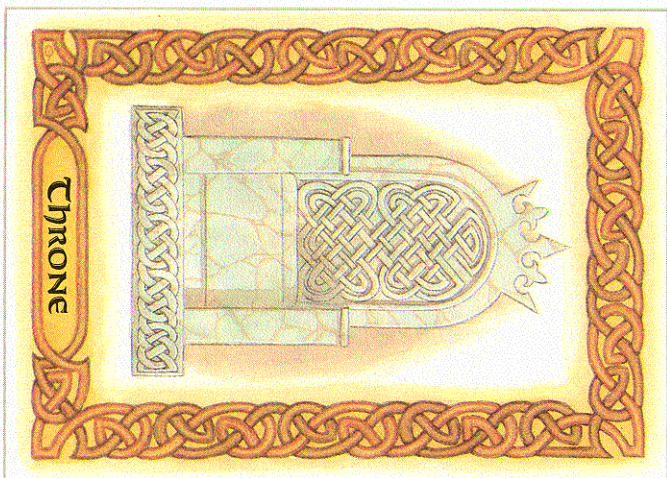
For more information on the *deck of many things*, see "Luck of the Draw" (by Robin Jenkins) in this issue.



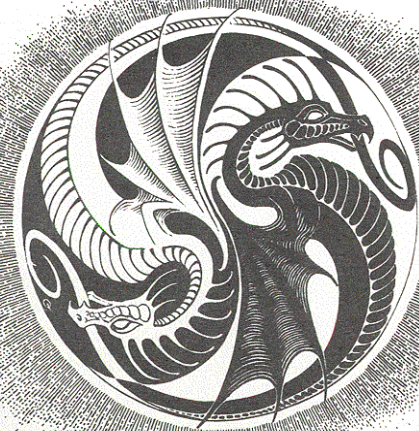
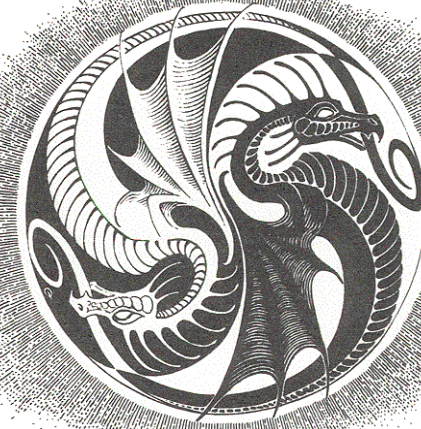




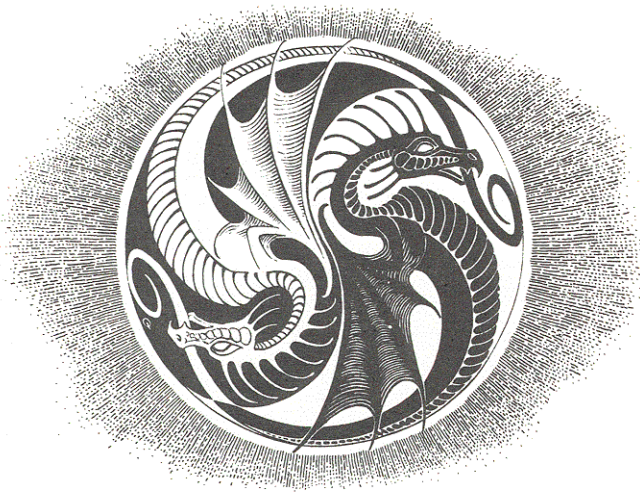
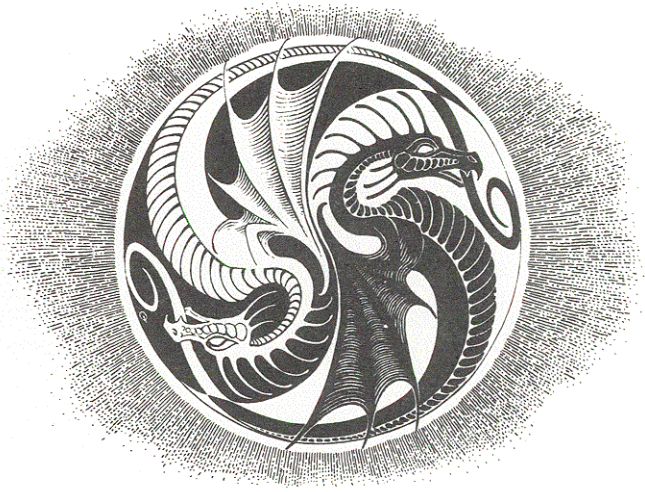
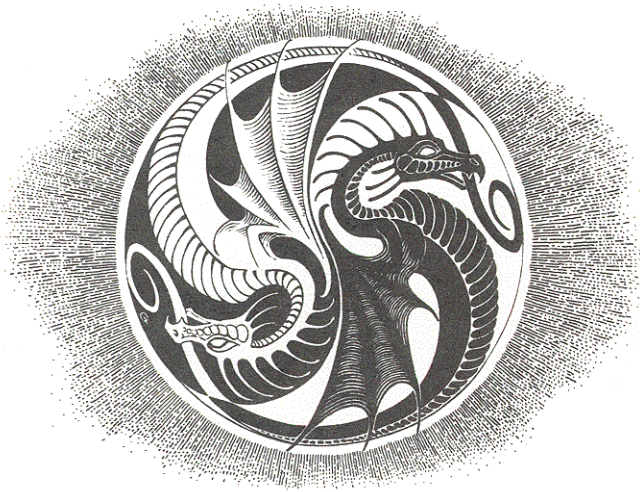
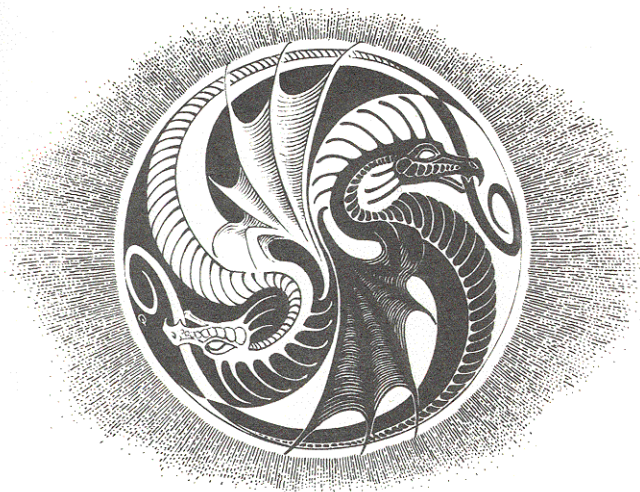






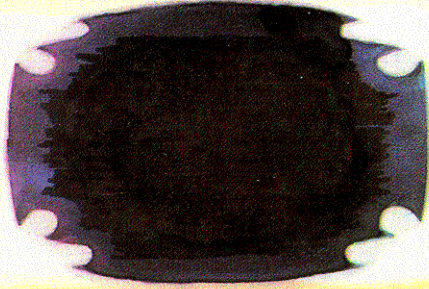








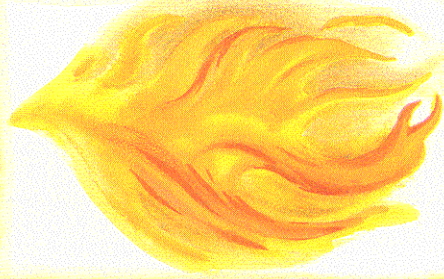
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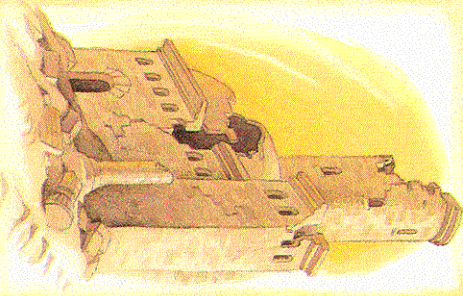
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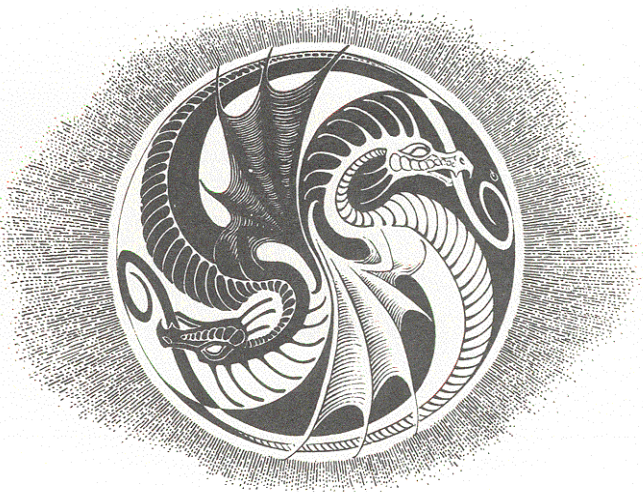
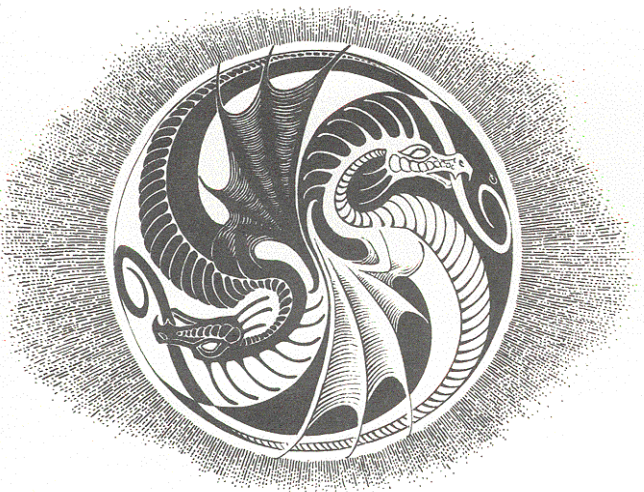
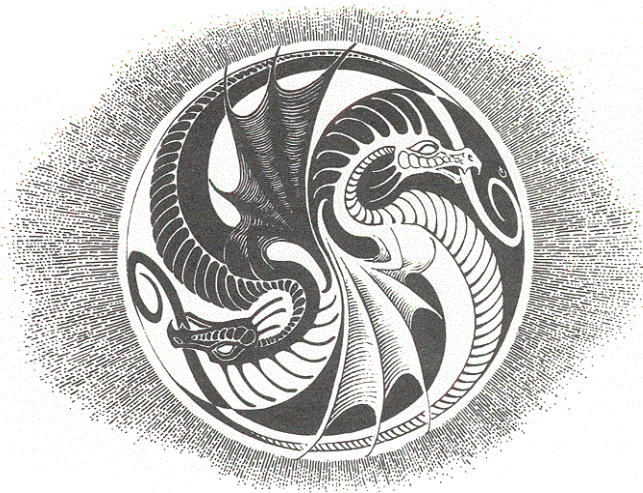
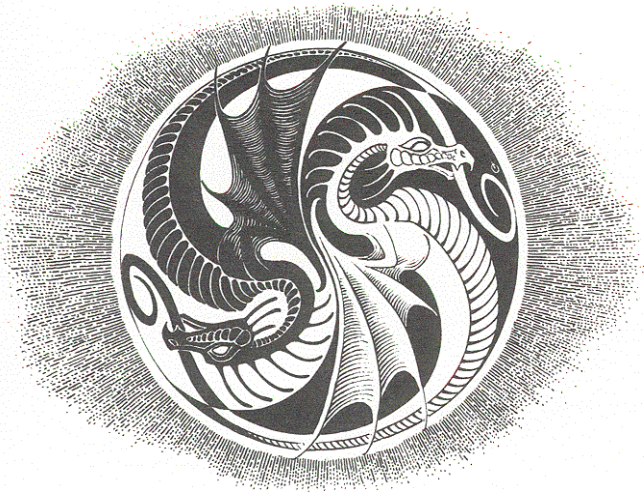
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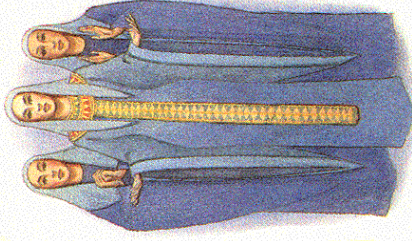




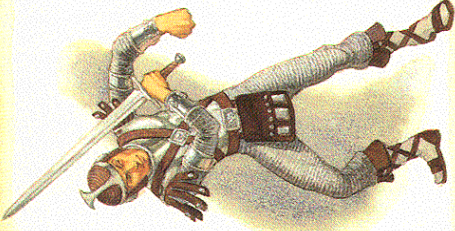




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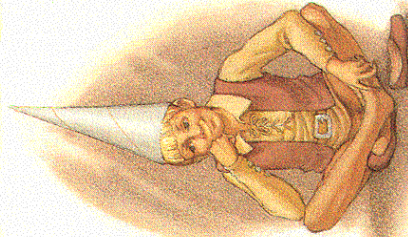
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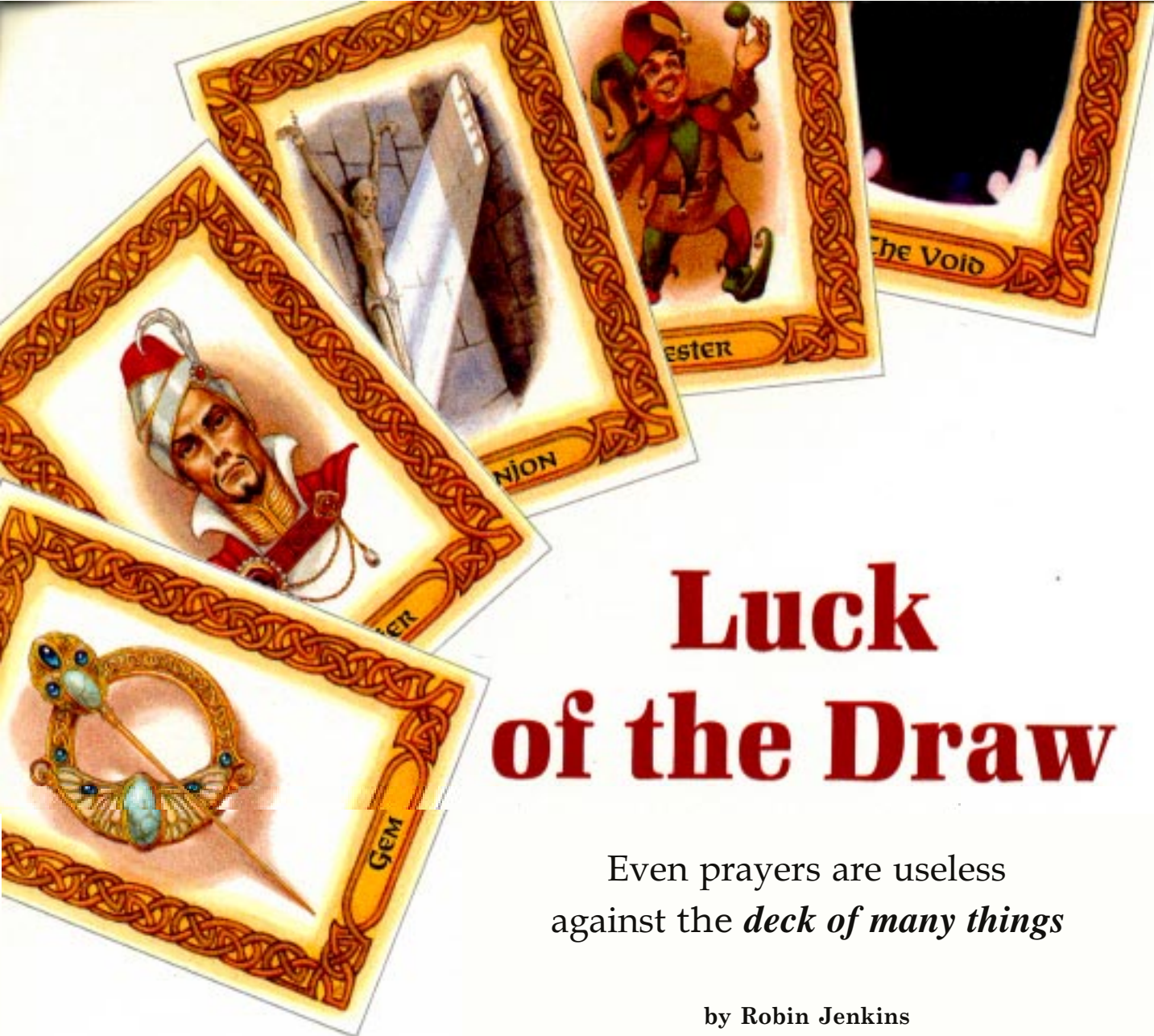


Jester



Fool





# Luck of the Draw

Even prayers are useless  
against the *deck of many things*

by Robin Jenkins

"It's all there in front of you," Jared said, scowling as he pulled on his beard. "It took hours to collect my notes and write down all my observations."

"And I appreciate the work you've done," Basil replied, shuffling the sheets between his open hands as the fighter looked on. "But these are merely words on vellum; they lack feeling and conviction." The old mage let the papers fall from his hands. They drifted slowly to the hardwood table below, each suspended by some magical dweomer. The magician then leaned over the table, his hands supporting him. His milky, sinister eyes bored deeply into Jared's hazel ones. "These 'reports' are merely that-sound effects from a magic wand, not the tangible experience."

Jared watched the papers spin like lazy pinwheels until they landed, leaf upon leaf, on the table's surface. *The old guy is such a dramatist*, he thought. *He's difficult to work for. Still, you had to admire his flair....*

Basil settled into his high-backed chair. "Words are of little importance to me. I read them by the thousands every day, and still I know little until I feel the experience for myself. That is why I called you here; it is your experience I require, not your words."

Jared smiled and pulled a small, ornate box from the pouch on his belt. "If it's experience you need," he said, sliding the box across the table, "I suggest you go through the deck yourself, one card at a time."

The wizened mage stared stupidly at the box before him. The box's wooden trim curled repeatedly upon itself like a nest of carved snakes connected mouth to tail. Pearly streams of inlaid ivory twinkled in the candlelight like so many trickles of spilled milk. Basil found himself mesmerized by the box's intricate beauty and the strength of its allure. With a sudden effort, he turned away from the box and looked up at the man across the table. "Do

not be sarcastic with me. I do not require your information enough to bear the barbs of your derisive wit."

There was silence, punctuated only by the occasional "caw" of the spell-caster's familiar. Jared squirmed in his seat, roasting uncomfortably under Basil's reprimanding glare. Another moment passed in silence before the mage sat back in his chair and crossed his hands. "But I do require your information," he said. "Do we understand each other?"

Jared searched the mage's eyes for his motives. Unable to pierce the milky globes, he nodded anyway.

"Good. Let's begin. You will describe the experiences of you and your party with the *deck of many things*." As usual, I intend to 'read' you. You know what that means, of course?"

Jared nodded again. "Sure. It means you don't trust me."

"Perhaps. One cannot be too trusting in these matters; you know that from our



past associations. I would not rely on you if there were someone else more capable and available. But as for trusting you, that I cannot do. Thus, I must warn you: Do not attempt to block my spell. You and your friends have been well paid for your services; I intend to get my money's worth. Likewise, do not withhold any information from me; I will know in an instant if you are hiding something."

Jared nodded blankly. The wizards tirades grew less bearable with every meeting. Besides, he knew the spell merely copied words; it did not check for truth. He would be truthful enough, though. If only there were easier ways to earn gold.

Basil shuffled Jared's report into one pile and set it to the side of the table. Pulling a leather-bound tome from a rack, he muttered a brief, unintelligible phrase and placed the open book before him. He then drew a black quill from the inkwell and laid it point first at the top of the page. He muttered another clandestine phrase and clapped his hands sharply together. Instantly, the quill sprang to life, floating perpendicular to the open book, point to page. "Let us begin!" The quill scratched across the page.

Jared watched in silence. He had seen the wizard's tricks a hundred times and was no longer impressed by parlor magic.

Basil stroked his mustache momentarily, then extended his crooked, bony hands toward the ornate box. Withered fingers wavered above the wooden container, then descended. Reverently, the mage wrapped his fingers around the container and lifted it level to his eyes. With one eye closed, he examined the box, turning it over and around in his hands several times. Basil focused his thoughts as he scrutinized the treasure. *Dimensions: six inches long by four inches wide by three inches deep. Composition: mahogany, perhaps, or possibly cedar.<sup>3</sup> Weight: about two pounds. Distinguishing features: ornate scrollwork, carvings of humanoid faces—six in all—one on each box face. Three smiling, three frowning. Smiles and frowns appear opposite each other. The faces appear to be those of pixies or even leprechauns.*

Basil's eyes widened. The pen came to a halt. The mage pulled the box closer to the flickering candle, pulling himself closer as well. Reaching into his cloak, he produced a single, metal-rimmed lens and placed it over one pale eye. Now all but forgotten, Jared yawned.

*Distinguishing features*, Basil continued. *The scrollwork appears to form an elaborate maze, the paths of which connect to each smiling and frowning head. Odd, but there doesn't appear to be an entrance or an exit to the maze.* The mage traced a yellow fingernail around the edges and sides of the box. *Likewise, there appears no obvious means for opening the box.*

"How do you open it?" Basil asked his fidgeting guest.

Jared sat forward in his chair, elbows on

knees, 'hands mimicking the action of a opening container. "You kind of pull at the top and bottom with both hands." Basil stared skeptically through the flickering flame. "Trust me on this one," Jared assured. "It's simple, and it's the only way."

Nodding, Basil wrapped his crooked fingers around the box and pulled. The box remained closed. Basil shot a quick glance at Jared.

"Pull a little harder," the young fighter suggested.

Basil pulled again, harder this time. Lid and bottom came quickly and equally apart, dumping ivory plaques all over the table in clattering piles. A mask of uncertainty, then gradual horror, passed across the wizards wrinkled face. The lens fell from his eye. Speechless, he looked to Jared for help. Jared blinked. The wizard blinked. Each man remained transfixed by the other's ludicrous stare.

"Styx in the Hells!" Jared shouted. "Hit the floor!" He dove face down under the table. Basil stammered unintelligibly, unable to find his tongue. "Just do it!" Jared shouted.

Basil pushed his chair back quickly. Two of its legs caught in a crack between the floorboards, sending both chair and occupant tumbling backward with a thud and a yelp. Dizzy-eyed, Basil scrambled for cover, bumping his head solidly against the leg of the chair. He crawled beneath the table, cowering.

Minutes passed in silence. Whispering, the wizard ventured a question. "What happens next?" he asked.

Jared remained silent, his face hidden beneath his arms, his body convulsing. Basil waited for another moment to pass. "What happens next?" he repeated. Jared continued to shake in silence. Slowly, muffled sobs seeped from the fighter's hidden head; gradually, they were revealed to be muffled snorts. Within seconds, the fighter rolled onto his back, wracked with gales of laughter.

Basil caught on quickly. Once again, Jared had played him for a fool. Fear turned quickly to anger as the mage slid from beneath the table and jumped to his feet. "Boisterous ass!" he shouted, his face livid.

Unable to contain himself, Jared hooted loudly, exploding in a fit of laughter. Tears streamed from his eyes as he cradled his stomach and pounded his feet against the floor.

Basil slammed his fist against the table, sending the pen bouncing into the air. "You irreverent toad! By the gods, I'll send you to the Ninth Circle of the Hells for this!" Basil grabbed a book from his shelf, tore open its pages, and began chanting loudly. Jared saw that—and stopped laughing.

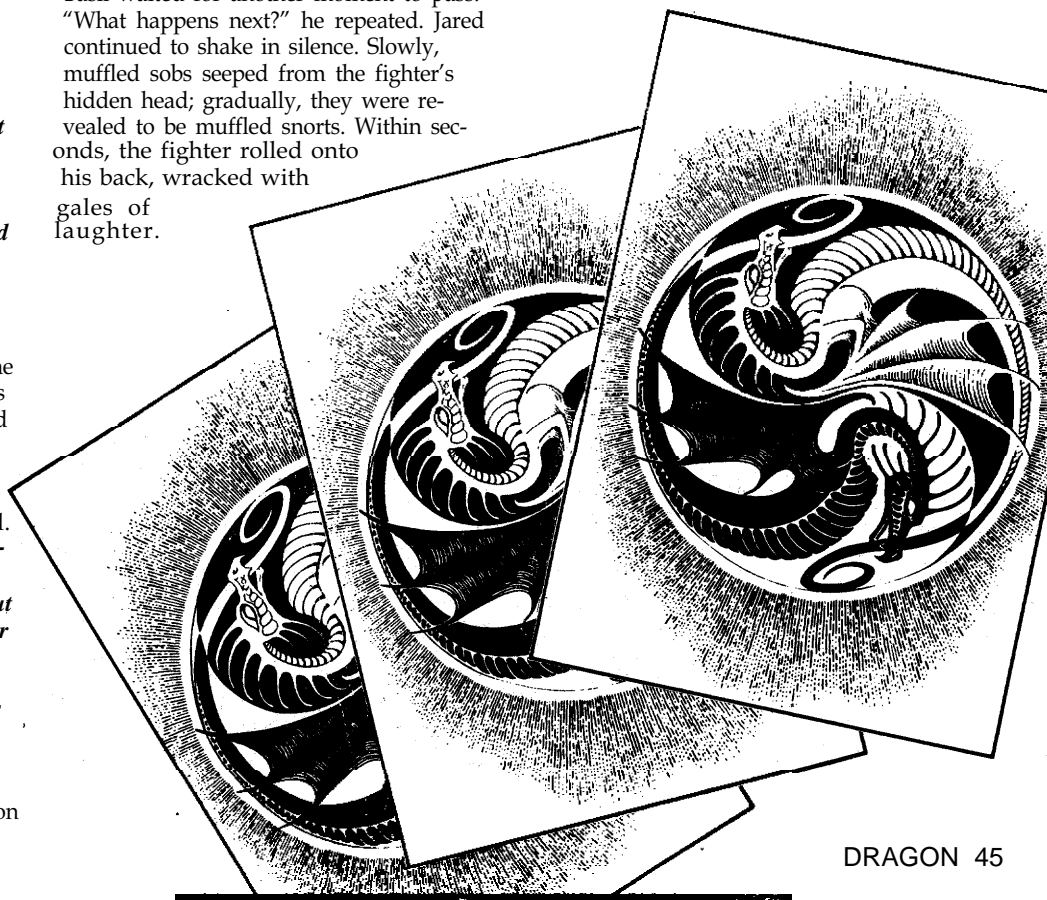
"Wait a minute!" the fighter shouted. "I was only joking. I didn't mean anything by it! Where's your sense of humor?" Basil continued his incantations and gesticulations. He ignored the prone and pleading fighter, only glancing at him briefly to chastise with his eyes.

Jared scrambled to his feet. Suddenly, inspiration came to him. "There's a point!" he shouted. "I was making a point!"

The mage's words trailed off into nothingness. He stared at the fighter for a long, uncomfortable moment. "Well," he said, "I'm waiting. Don't waste my time or I'll pick up reading where I left off!"

"Uh, the point is that the cards have no effect unless you announce how many cards you'd like to draw, then pull them from the deck one at a time."

Basil slammed his spell book shut with an echoing thud. Jared smiled sheepishly. "Sorry," he offered.



Basil maintained his scowl. "I grow tired of your sophomoric pranks." He made no motion to sit again. "Continue."

"Right. As I was saying, the cards in a *deck of many things* are enchanted to act independently of one another, never in concert. This makes it possible to flip the deck over, look at the cards all at the same time, and suffer no penalty. Of course, in that case, all the cards appear blank. We discovered this early on. In the course of hunting for information on the deck, we were fantastically lucky and found several *decks of many things*. Most of these were 13-card vellum decks, although we did find two 22-card ivory decks, one of which you have now. In any event, the standing joke in our party was to pull a card without announcing the pull, then show it to an unknowing friend or party member. Of course, the card was always blank, though the victim of the prank seldom realized it immediately. It was always good for a few chuckles."

The pen, forgotten until now, came to a halt. Basil grunted to himself and looked down at the scattered cards. "Something is amiss," he said. "These cards are blank."

"True enough. As I said, the cards remain blank until the possessor announces the number of cards he intends to pull: one, two, three, or four. He can even announce that he wishes to pull them all."

"All? Is that wise?" Basil righted his chair,

slid it to the table, and seated himself.

Jared took the hint that it was time to get down to business, and he sat down, too.

"No, but it is possible. You see, the purpose of the deck is to allure—its ability to entice greed. The deck is one of the most perfectly random magical items known to this world; it does out good as well as bad, equally and unequivocally. The more you pull from the deck, the better your chance of being burned. But the beauty of the deck is in its balance. One pull and you're wallowing in wealth; the next sees you roasting in the Inferno." The thought triggered a memory. *Vanel, you little weasel.* Jared's smile broadened to a grin. *I told you not to be too greedy. You should have listened to me for once.*

Basil broke the fighter's amused reverie. "You lost a party member, I assume!"

Jared's smile melted like a halfling in Hades. "Yes, we did—our dear friend Vanel. I'll miss the little wea—, uh, fellow."

"The keys, of course, are in the luck of the draw and in knowing when your luck is about to run out. Vanel, the halfling who was our scout, lacked both. We warned him of the inevitable consequences of drawing too many cards from his deck. He refused to listen. The fool was caught up in the lure of easy success, but fate paid him back in spades."

"What happened to him?"

"All told, Vanel drew from his own deck

about six or seven times, and he was obscenely lucky. It was staggering. While watching him, we discovered that once a card is pulled from the deck and its effects have occurred, often instantaneously, the card goes blank. The card must then be returned to the deck in order for the pack to continue working its enchantment. If the card is not returned to the pack, the deck is useless; any cards pulled from that point on are blank and nonmagical.

"We feared for Vanel's life, and in a moment of stupidity, we hid his deck. In turn, that night, he broke into our mage's backpack and stole another deck, one of the two complete ivory sets. We found later that he then pulled the Donjon card. According to records found by Tomas, our mage, the Donjon card signifies imprisonment by some spell or creature."

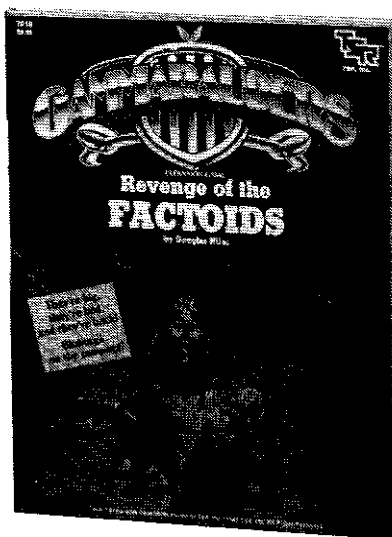
"And is this not the case?"

"Well, it depends on the kind of deck found. I'll explain the difference between the decks in a moment. Anyway, when we arose the next morning, we found Vanel gone. At first we assumed that some creature had attacked him during the night. Later, however, we discovered the ivory deck was missing. We then assumed that his card-pulling greed was to blame, but we had no way of checking—that is, until later. We had usually limited ourselves to drawing only one card from any deck per day; this we did with greater rigor follow,

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ing Vanel's disappearance. Then, on the following day, Granick, our cleric, pulled a card from his own deck. The result was enlightening."

"How so?"

"Granick drew the Knight. This card grants the holder the services of a minor but experienced fighter—in this case, our very own Vanel, fresh from the confines of Hades."

Basil frowned. "Wait. I'm confused."

"So were we, at first. After talking with Vanel, however, everything became quite clear. According to the halfling, he had indeed pulled the Donjon card and had been transported instantly to Hades, where he found himself the target of much abuse." Jared barely kept from smiling. "There were others there as well—all suffering the same torments for the same bad draws. According to Vanel, these people would remain in Hades until someone wished them back to the Prime Material plane or until some other card pull resulted in a need for their person or services. In this case, the Knight card called for the services of a minor fighter. Vanel, being a warrior as well as a thief, fit the bill and was transported back to our party to serve our needs. Needless to say, Granick found many uses for Vanel. . . more than the little fellow served our party in his initial membership."

"It would be of great assistance if I could

talk to this Vanel. He may have learned more about the deck—and about the Outer planes—than he told you."

"Would that it were possible. As I said, Vanel is no longer with us. He suffered an unfortunate mishap in combat and is probably once again roasting on a spit in Hades even as we speak. His curse seems quite intact."

"Of course. Your party has a high turnover rate, if I recall correctly."

"True enough. It's our payment for high adventure." Jared did smile this time, and Basil rolled his eyes. "In any case, Vanel did prove to be of some use before his untimely departure, and he even contributed a few answers to our quest for knowledge. For example, although he was transported to Hades, Vanel informed us that the true power for the *deck of many things* comes from the plane of Concordant Opposition; this he learned from a knowledgeable sage who had suffered a similar fate of imprisonment."

"According to this sage, the powers of Neutrality are at the core of the deck's power, and the enchantments of such decks come from the plane of Concordant Opposition. As Vanel discovered, any magical items, treasures, and the like that are lost or gained as a result of the deck go to or come from that plane. Items that are lost are stored there, where they are used by the gods of luck, depending upon their

needs or desires. Items gained by pulls from the deck come from this point of storage—a realm so full of wealth and magic that it would make even the richest of adventurers drool with envy and greed." Jared unconsciously licked his lips.

Basil toyed with a blank card. "And these gods of luck—they are the powers responsible for the *deck of many things*?"

"It would appear so. As forces of true Neutrality, such beings seem likely to benefit from the dissemination of such items in this world."

"To what end? Why introduce something as random and potentially dangerous as a *deck of many things*? Surely there must be a motive?"

Jared smiled broadly, knowing he had the mage's curiosity piqued. "There is. The purpose behind the *deck of many things* is to encourage risk. The god Vergadain, for example, is a gambler. His followers are dwarven rogues who wish for luck. What better opportunity for luck—albeit both good and bad—than from the *deck of many things*?"

Basil stroked his beard as he digested this bit of information. "And these gods are responsible for distributing these magical items in our world?"

"Not entirely. They create and supply the decks, but a worldly force actually distributes these items. It's simple. Look at the box in which the deck is protected. See the

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### Lesser 13-Card Deck Results Table

Card	Result
Sun	Gain one beneficial magical item worth up to 2,000 xp.
Moon	One <i>limited wish</i> is granted but must be used within one day.
Star	Gain one point to prime requisite ability.
Throne	Charisma increases by one point.
Key	Gain access to a genuine treasure map.
Knight	Gain the service of a 2nd-level fighter.
The Void	The drawer's soul is captured by the card (as per the <i>trap the soul</i> spell), and the card instantly <i>teleports</i> itself to the most dangerous monster's lair or NPC's home within 100 miles. A <i>wish</i> can recover the card; a <i>limited wish</i> only reveals the card's current location. The drawer's material body vanishes as well; burning the card frees the captured drawer (but causes the deck and broken card to vanish).
Flames	Enmity arises between the card holder and a character of similar class but opposite alignment. A monster may also be chosen. The being will have levels or hit dice equal to twice that of the drawer's level.*
Skull	Card holder is attacked by a wraith with 43 hp. If anyone besides the card-drawer attacks the wraith, another wraith (with 43 hp) is summoned to attack the helper, and so on.
Ruin	Lose half of all real wealth immediately.**
Euryale	- 1 penalty to all saving throws vs. petrification for five years.
Rogue	A random henchman or hireling will turn against the drawer, as per the usual version of this card. However, this effect may be broken with a <i>remove curse</i> spell cast upon the affected NPC.
Jester	Gain 5,000 xp or one additional draw.

\* For a multiclassed player, use the highest-level class.

\*\* This does not include magical items or possessions other than currency.

faced on the sides of the box? They're leprechauns. The entire concept of the deck—risk, fate, the punishment of greed, and the reward of extreme luck—fits in perfectly with the nature of those mischievous imps. We took two of our decks from leprechaun lairs. Some elven or faerie god must have supplied those particular ones."

"I see. You said something earlier about there being two types of decks?"

"Correct. Actually, there are three types of decks, though one is merely an abridged version of another. The simplest form is a low-power 13-card deck. These decks are made of vellum and have fairly weak rewards and punishments. The lesser 13-card deck is found in a leather pouch rather than a carved box. Aside from these differences, this lesser deck is identical to the others."

"As for the more powerful decks, there are two sorts of them: another 13-card deck and the full 22-card deck. I have listed the inventory of these decks in the notes before you; it would be easier if you look at them after I leave—which should be soon, I fear?"

"Good enough. I have two final questions, however. My notes indicate unique properties for several cards. We have already discussed the Donjon card. Tell me about the Void, the Jester, the Fool, and the Idiot cards."

Jared sighed audibly. He was tired and wanted only to get his payment and leave. "The Jester is an interesting but deceptive card. Not only does it offer a gain of experience, it offers two more draws from the

deck. The deception is that most people drawing this card opt to draw the other two. Tomas proved this point. His first draw after the Jester was the Gem card; this only encouraged his next draw all the more. Unfortunately, his luck was fleeting. The next card out of the deck was the Idiot. It is a brief step from jester to idiot, both in our world and in the *deck of many things*.

"Upon drawing the Idiot card, Tomas immediately lost a substantial portion of his intellect. As with the Jester, Tomas received two additional draws if he so chose. Tomas failed to learn his lesson, though, and proved himself the greater fool by drawing once more from the deck."

"I thought you said he had two draws," Basil interrupted.

"He did, and he opted to take both. Unfortunately, the first card he drew was the Void. He wasn't the same after that."

"What happened?"

"The Void card, much like the Donjon, severely punishes the card holder. In this case, the possessor's body functions, but his soul is imprisoned on the plane of Concordant Opposition. As when the Donjon card is drawn, the deck disappears, presumably returning to the plane of Concordant Opposition!"

"And what of Tomas?" It was more a professional curiosity than anything, as Tomas was a fellow mage. "What did you do with his body?"

"Of what use is a mage who can't cast spells?" Jared grinned openly at Basil's dawning horror.

"Surely you didn't just let him wander mindlessly. Not even you could be so callous as that."

Jared shrugged and laughed. "Oh, we found a number of uses for him—probably more than he offered in his former incarnation. He now helps us check for pits, traps, that sort of thing!"

Basil was appalled. "Damned inconsiderate, if you ask me." Basil turned to the still-scrawling pen and reread his notes. "And what of the Fool? What can you tell me of that?"

"If there is any single card that best personifies the deck, it is the Fool. Not only is the holder punished by a loss of experience, he is forced to draw twice more from the deck. I was the victim of the Fool. Fortune, however, made up for it in my next two draws."

Basil nodded, then turned to scan his notes. Jared leaned forward, hopeful of leaving. The mage ignored him for a moment, setting the pen to the side and flipping back through his notes. Jared cleared his throat. "Are we finished?"

Basil looked up from his work. "Hmm? Finished? I suppose so." He returned to his reading. Jared rose from his seat, fidgeted, and stood by the desk, waiting. Basil looked up from his notes once more, disgruntled by the interruption. "Is there something you need?" he asked.

"Payment would be nice," Jared responded. The mage nodded slowly. It was a routine they went through with every service. Basil turned to the shelf behind him, whispered a couple of words, and pulled open a drawer. From it, he produced a small pouch of deceiving weight and tossed it on the table.

"You can count it if you like," the mage suggested.

Jared grinned. "Unlike you, I'll take your word for it." The mage ignored the remark. Jared pocketed the pouch and reached over to scoop up the scattered plaques. Basil's bony hand stopped him.

"If you don't mind, I'll keep these cards."

Jared glared at the wizened mage and saw greed glittering in his old, milky eyes. "But this is my personal deck," Jared pleaded. "It's never been used!"

"Nevertheless, I would like to keep it. Consider it an expense, a part of our arrangement!" Basil pushed the fighter's hand away from the table.

For a moment, Jared considered striking the mage, scooping up the cards, and bolting for the door. But striking any wizard, especially an old and slightly paranoid one, was not wise. Then, too, his arrangement with Basil was difficult and tenuous enough without the addition of battery to worsen it. The decks had taught a few lessons, some of which Jared had learned. The foremost lesson was that no magical item was worth dying for. Life was far more precious.

Jared stared down at the plaques and flipped a few over one last time. Then, with a snarl, he swept his cloak around



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him as he headed for the door.

"Again," Basil jibed as the fighter slammed the door, "I thank you for your services." With a smile of intense self-satisfaction, the mage returned to his reading.

The inside of the Belching Balrog Bar was dark and dusty. Nevertheless, Jared knew where to look; the party always sat in the back. He saw Tomas first; his red locks of hair and vacuous gaze made him an unmistakable landmark in any setting. Jared shuffled through the crowd, took a seat at the table, and ordered mead from the barmaid. The others in his group were already well into their third and fourth drinks.

"So," Renick asked, "did you get the gold?" It was his traditional first question after such sessions. Jared nodded. "How did it go?"

The barmaid set the mead before Jared, who quickly took a gulp and coated his beard with foam. "Quite well, except I lost my new deck."

"Lost it? How?"

"The old geezer decided to keep it for himself. Said he needed it for research."

"Research!" Renick laughed. "No doubt he's pulling cards right now."

Jared smiled. "Perhaps."

Renick looked at Jared curiously. "Maybe he'll draw the Donjon. That'd serve him right, eh?"

Jared's smile grew. "It's doubtful he'll find it."

Renick leaned forward, his tilted gaze and twisted smile digging for facts.

"There's something you're not letting on about," he said. "What's so amusing?"

Jared reached into his cloak as foam dripped from his beard. Grinning toothsomely, he tossed a single ivory plaque onto the center of the table. It clattered momentarily before landing face up, blank.

"You see," Jared said, "he isn't playing with a full deck."

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> It is believed by some that the most powerful *deck of many things* (the 22-card ivory deck) has a special, magical allure. A character looking for the first time at a deck of this nature must make a wisdom check on 1d20 or be entranced by the deck for 1-4 rounds. In addition, characters so affected are more likely to draw from the deck. (DMs should use discretion; it is never advisable to force a character to do something his player would rather not have him do.)

<sup>2</sup> The *deck of many things* is known to many races by many names. For example, the leprechauns (the distributors of many decks) refer to it as the "Deck of Fools." Dwarves, who generally avoid such random magicks (in spite of Vergadain's involvement), refer to it as the "Deck of Curses." To many lawful religious orders, it

is known as the "Deck of Chaos"—a misnomer, since the deck is the product of true Neutrality. Nevertheless, clerics, paladins, and other devotees of these religious orders avoid these items unless allured by the deck (see note 1). But not all names for the *deck of many things* are disparaging. Gnomes, who are noted for their love of gambling, refer to it as the "Deck of Fate" or the "Deck of Luck."

<sup>3</sup> Either type of wood might be used to make a case for a *deck of many things*; both hold magical dweomers quite well. Cases made of other unusual woods are possible.

<sup>4</sup> If an attempt is made to pull cards without first announcing a number, the cards turn up blank and powerless. Once the number of cards to be drawn is announced, other characters may pull from the deck in place of the initial character, thereby assuming the number of pulls initially announced. Any character who announces his intention to pull a new number of cards from a deck "erases" any previous number announced, so long as that previous number of draws was not completed; this makes it possible for one deck to pass through many hands. As stated on page 167 of the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the deck disappears once a number of pulls equal to the currently announced number is reached. Note that elective and mandatory draws (as with the Jester, Fool, or Idiot cards) may not be transferred to other characters. Any attempt by another character to draw during this elective or mandatory period turns up blank, powerless cards. The deck remains in this state until the previous card holder makes his mandatory draws or relinquishes his right to his elective draws.

When a deck disappears, it goes back to the god who made it, who then places the deck into circulation again by distributing it to an appropriate agent (leprechaun, thief, gambler, monster, etc.) If a Balance card is drawn, the deck does not disappear, although the deck must be forfeited—either given to another character, sold, or left behind. Until the deck is given up, any card drawn from the deck is blank and powerless.

If someone announces that he will draw *all* of the cards from a deck, he is immediately compelled to do exactly that. Nothing will break this compulsion, and the character is obviously doomed. No *wish* will ever reverse the effects of the deck in this event.

<sup>5</sup> The gods of luck need not be entirely Neutral themselves; but they all encourage risk-taking. See the deities in *Legends & Lore* for details.

<sup>6</sup> This lesser deck offers results that differ from those listed on page 166 of the AD&D® 2nd Edition *DMG* for the *deck of many things*. See the Lesser 13-Card Deck Results Table for details. Ω

## Editorial

*Continued from page 5*

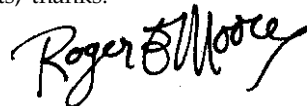
work well together (see DRAGON issue #103, "The Centaur Papers," and DRAGON issue #115, "The Ecology of the Harpy"), but more often we just pick out the best such item and return or discard the others. Sometimes we discard *all* duplicates to avoid overkill on a particular topic or to avoid dealing with the situation. (We rejected all samurai and ninja classes sent to us for years before the AD&D® *Oriental Adventures* tome came out simply because we knew no one would be pleased with anything other than an "official" version of either class.)

We have a very healthy respect for proper usage and fairness, and we believe the majority of our readers share the same respect. Everyone takes pride in creating something entirely on his own—well, almost everyone.

The extreme was reached by the writer who sent a short story to AMAZING® Stories a few years ago. The story was quite good and was on its third or fourth reading when it was discovered that the story was a plagiarized copy of Arthur C. Clarke's "The Nine Billion Names of God." One word had been changed early in the tale, but otherwise it was identical to the original. We won't discuss the legal horrors that befell the "author" of the story, nor the academic horrors that befell the student who plagiarized "The Ecology of the Minotaur" from DRAGON issue #116 and turned it in to his high-school teacher for an assignment. His teacher was already familiar with the AD&D® game and called our offices to ask about the story.

Borrowing, independent invention, and copying will always be around, but steps can be taken to reduce their effects. Writers can consult the appropriate legal sources to protect their rights to their materials, and we'll keep our records in order and count on our readers to look for things we might miss. With a little effort, we can share the best of our readers' creative works to benefit the entire role-playing hobby.

But please, don't send any more brown, gray, rainbow, stone, rock, or purple dragons to us. We have lots, thanks.

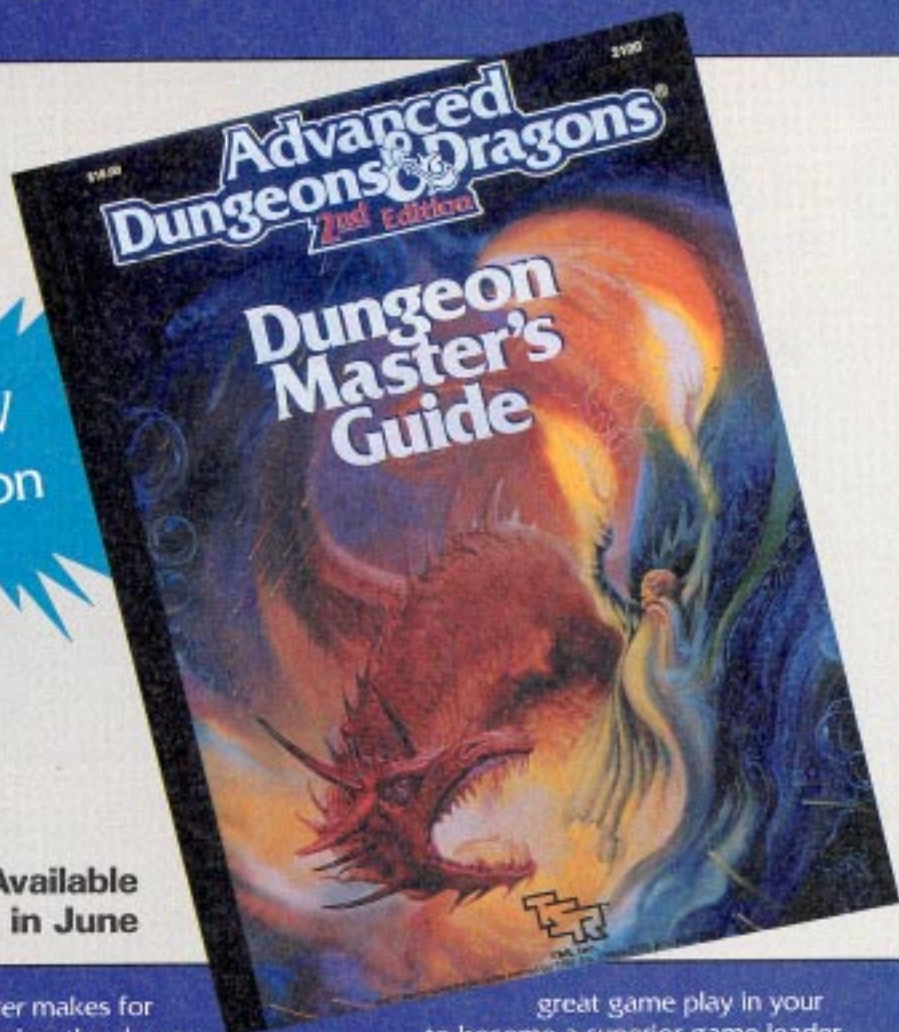




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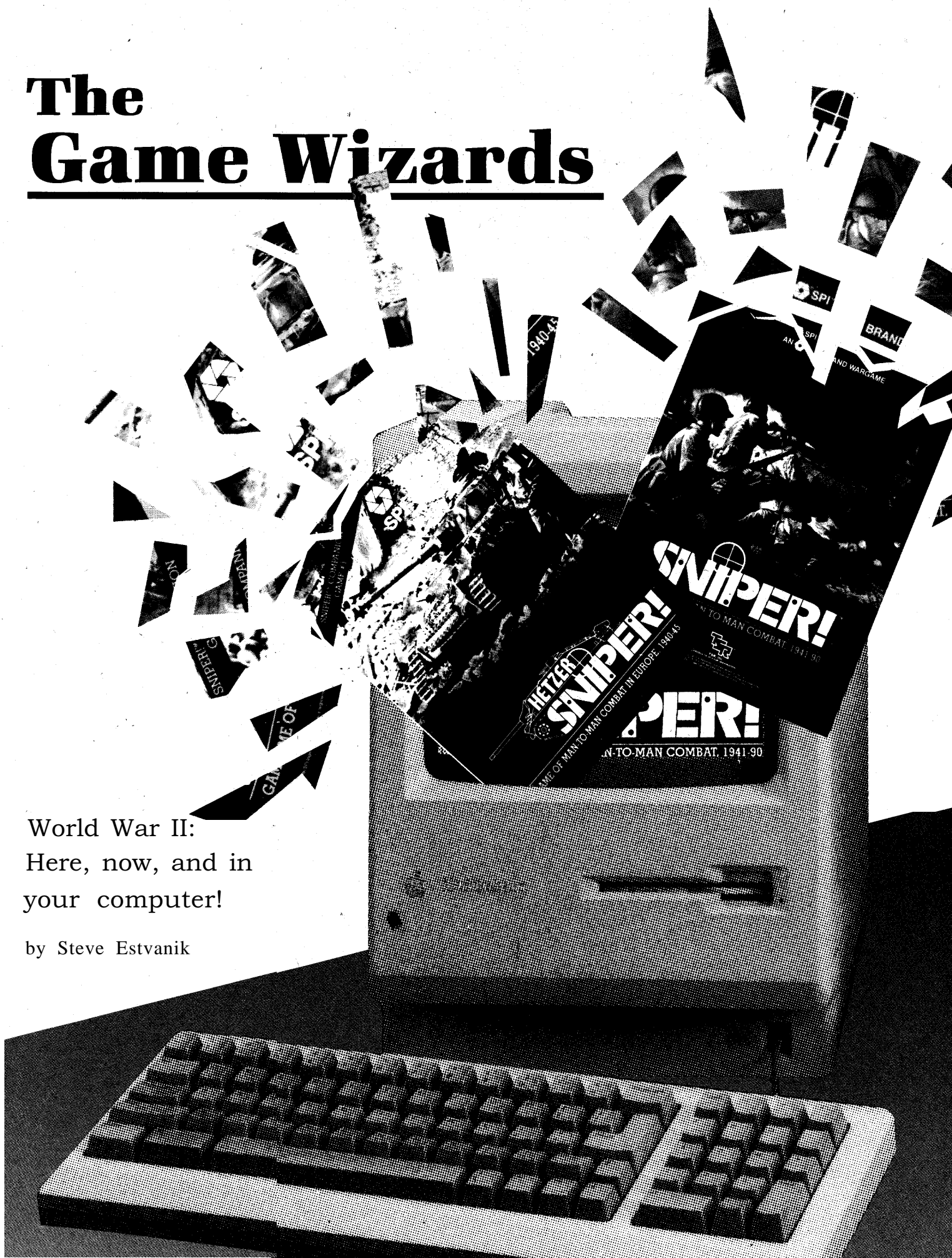
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# The Game Wizards

World War II:  
Here, now, and in  
your computer!

by Steve Estvanik





*Christmas comes to the Ardennes. Your tiny squad steals warmth from sputtering fires amidst the ruined cloisters of a small abbey. Then the soothing crackle of the fire is interrupted by one of your two forward spotters, returning with word of a German attempt to infiltrate your position. Shortly thereafter, firing breaks out. You move your squad forward to investigate, arriving to find the other sentry wounded and pinned by heavy weapons fire from the vicinity of a small hut. Deploying the rest of the squad, you start the tedious and dangerous game of crawling through the abbey's gardens. The deadly hide-and-seek game ends abruptly when a figure rises from the hedges and breaks away. Your best rifleman tracks, aims, fires, and brings the figure crashing down in the brush.*

*The wounded German somehow regains the gardens safety and slips into its dark embrace. You split your team, sending two men to track the wounded man while the rest of your squad turns its attention to the Germans firing from the cover of the gardener's hut. You send your machine gunner forward, covered by a crossfire from the rest of the squad. Once he's in position to provide support for the squad, you send in the squad. Your grunts crash into the hut—but find only one wounded German. This wasn't the main group! Where are the other infiltrators? As you search for the rest of the German patrol, you hear new firing breaking out from the area where your lone sentry watches in the orchard to the south. . . .*

So begins another SNIPER!™ computer game, as adapted for the world of electronic games on the CompuServe Information Service. I converted TSR's SNIPER!™ board-game series into a multi-player, online computer game, combining war-gaming strategy with role-playing emotional impact. Players from around the country can access CompuServe using almost any microcomputer with a modem, usually through local phone connections. Once on CompuServe, you can find other gamers with similar interests in the various forums, or go directly to the games themselves (just type GO SNIPER at any system prompt).

### The Saloon

You start as a recruit in the Sniper Saloon & Salad Bar, a friendly place where you can pick up the local gossip, brag about your wins, and explain your defeats. Here you can also challenge other players from around the country to a SNIPER!™ game. If no one else is available, you can play the computerized opponent to hone your skills or try some new tactics. For the raw recruit, a friendly drill instructor waits in Bootcamp to show you how the game is played. In addition, you can check to see if anyone has beaten your best scores by examining the Halls of Fame. Finally, extensive keyworded help is available to answer your questions about the game.

The game was designed to be easy to play. Even if it's your first time, you can play a game and try the commands. If you make a mistake, the program will show you what your command should have been. This is a big advantage over board games, as you don't have to read through pages and pages of rules before beginning play. As you become more proficient, you can try the less-used commands or learn the subtleties of the commands you already know.

In addition to playing games, you can conduct reconnaissance. This feature lets you watch any of the games in progress, so you can pick up pointers from the veterans or gain insights into the skills of your future opponents.

### The weight of command

The SNIPER! game is straightforward. You have a small squad of soldiers under your command. You play the Germans or the Americans, somewhere in western Europe during World War II. There are two basic missions:

**Patrol:** This is one of the most common types of squad-level infantry combat. Two opposing squads, Alpha and Bravo, meet in no-man's land between their front lines. Both squads are on general patrol with the primary goal of gathering information. The firefight that results is usually brief. Both sides want to sweep through the area and get away with enough men to make a useful report of the encounter.

**Infiltrate:** In this case, the Alpha force must cross from one side of the map to the other, exiting the map at Bravo's Victory Point area. Bravo must try to stop Alpha.

Since the game is played in real time, you never have to wait to give commands. The syntax (how each command must be input into the computer) may look forbidding at first, but it's actually easy to remember. (If you don't remember it, the computer will show you the proper syntax for your command.) Commands include EVade, F!re, HE!p, MAP, MOve, RADio, S!ghting, TRuce, and more; each has its own special syntax and options. For example, when you F!re, you show which of your soldiers will fire, then you choose between targeted or directional fire. Targeted fire requires the code letter of the enemy soldier you want to shoot. Directional fire only requires the direction in which you want to aim.

### Playing the game

The online SNIPER!™ game is continually updated. Each command takes a variable amount of time to be executed, so orders are "stacked" for each soldier. This lets you give multiple commands to one or more guys, then turn your attention elsewhere. Of course, as we'll see later, there may be additional problems if you split your group too many ways.

Real-time movement and action are two major differences you'll notice if you've played the SNIPER! board game before trying the online game. Most board games and many computer games use some sort of pulsed or sequential movements. It's difficult to make a reasonable simultaneous action game without a computer. For board games, the best that can be done is to allow players to write orders and then execute all orders at the same time. A real-time game has a completely different feel to it. Things are constantly happening. You never need to "wait for your opponent. Instead, you have your squad carry out your plans, reacting to the enemy's moves as you become aware of them. However, this necessitated a redesign of some of the original game's features. Gone are the pulses, rounds, and other stepwise parts of the game. Recovery phases are gone, too, but in a real battle, the two sides don't stop for several minutes while people run around to help allies recover from panic. Instead, when a soldier panics, he recovers at a later time largely dependent on his panic rating (an individual trait of your soldiers).

Another major change was the shift to a square-grid map. Since the computer doesn't mind the extra calculations, diagonal and sideways movements are easy to calculate correctly. Thus, while your squad faces one direction, your men can move in several other directions relative to their facings. This lets you do things such as fall back while maintaining covering

## SNIPER!™ Computer Game: Sample Screen and Sighting

### Legend

& = trees  
 n = hedges  
 # = building wall  
 + = interior wall  
 ' = clear outdoor space (period)  
 ' = interior space (apostrophe)  
 - = window (hyphen)  
 ; = border (semicolon)

### Sighting for your troops

(arrows indicate individual facing)  
 1 sights A, B, D, F, G  
 2 sights B  
 3 sights E, G  
 4 sights all, but can shoot at none of them

### Sighting for your opponent's troops

(slashes indicate individual facing)  
 A sights 1, 4  
 B sights 1, 2, 4  
 D sights 1, 4  
 E sights 3, 4  
 F sights 1, 4  
 G sights 1, 3, 4

```

- 1 - - - - - 6 - - - - 1 1 - - - - - 1 6 - - -
K ; & & & . . . . . n . . .
L ; . & & . . . . . o . . . . . n . . .
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P ; . . . & & A. -<I<2 ' ' + ' ' + '
Q ; . D \ . . . . B \ # ' ' ' ' ' + '
R ; . . . . . F# - # # #<3 # # # #
S ; . . . . .
T ; . . . . G \ . E \ . . . . .
U ; . . . . . 4 > . . . . .
V ; . . . . .
  
```

fire against anyone coming after your retreating squad.

Perhaps one of the nicest aspects of a computer game is the elimination of dice and tables. The information is still there for study, but you don't need to read and absorb it in order to play. It's much easier for a novice to start the game.

### Nuts and bolts

In the CompuServe version of the SNIPER! game, one of the most important concepts is that of activation. This is a rough measurement of a soldier's responsiveness and initiative, based on his training and motivation, and it serves as an indicator of the probable time it takes a soldier to perform an action. Activation is a continuous, real-time function in the online SNIPER! game—if you have your soldier wait for a minute, he waits for one minute. A unit's responsiveness and training vary with its nationality, and activations vary by individual. Though you cannot predict a soldier's precise performance in the game, you'll learn that an Activation 2 soldier will perform much better on average than an Activation 5 soldier. You'll give the essential tasks to the high-activation guys, and let the slower soldiers perform less vital tasks.

Panic ratings are assigned to individuals by nationality, based on historical parameters. Panicked soldiers normally fall to the ground and remain there for a randomly determined amount of time. They can't do anything until they recover, so they are very vulnerable. The one bright spot is

that your opponent can't tell which of your men have panicked. However, a panicked soldier may bolt if he's frightened badly enough, causing him to run madly in a random direction.

### New features

The online SNIPER!™ game has *real* hidden units. No longer will you be able to watch what your opponent is doing with his counters. You don't even know where he starts on the map; you only know his men are somewhere in front of you. This is especially nerve-racking in the Infiltrate scenarios, in which the entire Alpha squad can exit the map without ever coming into contact with Bravo.

It's easy to coordinate movement on a gameboard, where you can see all the units at once. In online SNIPER! games, though, your view is limited; so you face another tough choice. You can keep your squad together and see everything that's going on, but you risk getting flanked or even taken from behind. Or you can spread out, perhaps forming two or three fire teams—but while you're giving orders to one team, another may be ambushed. The game becomes a balancing act as you seek to keep all teams active and healthy. The successful leaders achieve this balance. For the successful ones, there are fame and promotions. For the others, there's the Eastern Front!

Another area that received treatment different from that in the board game is the concept of sighting. Now, any soldier

can sight. Sightings only last for a short time, though; you'll see enemy soldiers briefly, then they'll disappear again unless you can maintain a line of sight (LOS) to them. This is more realistic than the situation in board gaming in which you can always tell where the enemy is because of the use of cardboard counters. (A "blind" game helps recreate this fog of war, but the process of searching still reveals much about where the searching units are and which areas most interest the searching player.)

When the computer controls the information about both sides, you can have true fog-of-war situations—units appear from behind a hedge, fire, then drop back. If you manage to wound an enemy soldier, you don't know how quickly you should follow up. If he panicked, he will be unable to respond when your men move in to finish him off. On the other hand, he might be waiting there for you, hoping you'll make a better target. (The reverse can be true, too—your entire squad may have panicked, but the enemy won't know this. All the enemy will know is that none of your squad members are moving or firing. A crafty player can create lulls like this on purpose to lure the enemy forward.)

This method of sighting makes for an extremely tense game. Some of the scenario maps are modeled after the hill villages of Italy, with twisted streets and tiny alleys with close-packed buildings that usually have interconnecting passageways. Clearing a block of buildings is not easy when you don't know the exact position of every defender. Even if you see a sniper fire at you, he can be far away by the time you get your units into place. You're forced to move from street to alley and from room to room, carefully sighting and shooting as you move in each new defensive position. An opponent with enough nerve might let you pass his covered position, then attack from the rear. You never really know how secure your position is.

### Coming attractions

One of the pleasures of working with an online game is that the program itself can evolve, based on player feedback and comments. Rules, scenarios, reports, and





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maps can change to allow the game to grow with its players. Some changes will be made available to all players. Other, more advanced rules may only be available after a certain level of rank is achieved in the game by a player.

There are also the maps. In the initial release of the SNIPER! computer game, there are six scenarios grouped around the two basic missions. The maps are unique, each including terrain features such as schools, churches (complete with cemeteries), a monastery with cloisters, orchards, stables, country houses with gardens and hedges, and small villages with winding streets and tight house-to-house problems. In future versions of the game, more maps will be available, and eventually players will be able to create their own maps. In addition, players will be able to influence the terrain to some extent. The addition of grenades and other explosives means that some terrain will be destroyed. Smoke and fire will complicate your sighting problems, and when the smoke and fire pass, there will be rubble where once a cottage or cornfield stood. You will even be able to play a game in which a bombing raid is conducted before the game starts, so that the maps are different every time you play.

Smoke will be generated from any explosion (and lots of it will be generated by smoke grenades). Each game will have a wind direction (and possibly wind velocity, too, so the smoke will drift. Smoke will be shown on the map as red asterisks that cover almost anything that's in that sector. If smoke covers a sighted enemy unit, you'll see him for a short time—then he'll disappear. Your units will show up through the smoke, possibly colored red to indicate they are enveloped in smoke.

### Signing up

For more information about the CompuServe Information Service, call toll-free: (800) 848-8199. You can also write to: CompuServe, 5000 Arlington Centre Blvd., PO. Box 20212, Columbus OH 43220.

*The firing to the north crescendoes, then diminishes while' the sentry peers into the night. Then, without warning, bullets ricochet off the stone wall behind him. The squad has been flanked, and he's now the only one who can stop the German penetration. He squeezes one last bit of cover from the wall and checks his ammunition. The enemy will be coming soon. Their covering fire begins. . . .*

Ω

## Forum

*Continued from page 32*

This is in response to Karen S. Garvin's "A Horse of a Different Color" article (issue #141). As a miniatures painter, I find "Through the Looking Glass" invaluable. Karen's discussion of the color of horses is no exception.

There are, however, a few points she seems to have overlooked. There is a sixth group of horse coloration: the albino. True albinism (pink eyes and a total absence of pigmentation) doesn't occur in horses, but any horse that is born white or almost white is called an albino. The most common form of albino is a cream-colored horse. These cream-colored albinos tend to breed true (they pass their color on to their offspring), while many white albinos do not. The eyes of albino horses may be dark brown, light brown, or blue "glass!" Another coloration is dun, which is yellowish-brown to mouse-gray, with a dark or black mane and tail, dark points, and an eel stripe down the spine. (Buckskins are a subgroup of duns.)

Likewise, under the category of gray horses, Karen left out perhaps the most striking coloration—one that is relatively easy to duplicate on a miniature. A gray horse is born black or dark brown and gets lighter with age. Dapple-grays are lightly spotted in gray and white patterns, giving them a mottled appearance. These dapples may be thought of as white spots with ill-defined edges on a gray background, or as gray rings on a white background. Some dapple-grays are almost uniformly dappled from head to toe; others are lightly dappled on the neck and shoulders, with a blanket of darker dapples on the rump. Dapple-grays may have light or dark manes and tails and might have dark points on their legs and muzzles.

To get this effect on a miniature, start out with a coat of white paint on the entire horse. For a lightly dappled horse, merely dab all over with light gray paint, in a random but fairly even pattern. This will give the horse a subtle mottled appearance. For a more striking and darker dapple-gray, start with a slightly darker gray. Mottle the face and neck with light stabs of gray paint on the white coat. As you work toward the rear of the horse, continually but gradually darken the shade of gray. When you get to the haunches, begin carefully painting tiny rings, leaving small white spots showing through. This will give the horse a distinctly dappled appearance. Continue the dapples down the legs, letting the dapples blend into a solid gray on the lower halves. Dark dapple-gray horses are likely to have dark gray manes and tails and dark or black points. Light dapple-gray horses are more likely to have light manes and tails. Most dappled horses will have dark brown eyes, although blue is possible.

Other horses may be dappled as well. While a gray's dapples are its normal coloring and will change only as it gets older and the gray slowly turns white, dapples on other horses may come and go with the seasons. Bay horses, for instance, often get dappled coats during the early summer. These dapples are a sign of a healthy coat and may disappear later in the summer as the horse's skin becomes sunburned. Chestnuts, buckskins, and cream albinos may also get dapples. For a dappling of any color, use the same techniques as for a gray; simply darken the color of paint you used for the main body

and dab it on as dapples. Lightly dappled solid-colored horses tend to have most of their dapples on their haunches. Some horses may be heavily dappled over the entire body.

When putting markings on horses, remember this: The pigmentation that causes white hairs may also cause blue eyes and light-colored hooves. One horse I know has a small streak of white jutting out from his blaze to cover one eye; it looks like a tear, and the eye is a startling blue. The horse's other eye is brown. Horses with white markings on their legs will often have light hooves; the hooves of horses with dark points will be dark. Some hooves will be streaked light and dark in correspondence to white spots on their otherwise dark legs. (In her discussion of Appaloosas, Karen mentioned that "Appaloosas usually have pink and black vertical stripes." I assume she's referring to their hooves. Some buckskin or dun horses, however, have horizontal black stripes on their upper legs, much like a zebra has.) Most horses' hooves aren't black, unless polished or painted to look that way. They tend to be horn-colored, ranging from a creamy pinkish color to a dark grayish brown. Karen's advice to use coral pink or a very dark gray to paint the hooves works for any color horse.

Pinto coloring will also affect mane and tail. Where white patches meet the mane or tail, the white coloration will be continued. Manes and even tails can thus be light and dark in patches as well as the main coat. Appaloosas will often have streaked tails and even manes to match their spots.

Another color type that's relatively easy to render in a miniature is the roan. A roan has a uniform sprinkling of individual white hairs on a brown, reddish, or black coat. Some roans have white mixed in with their entire coat; others have patches of roan on a solid-colored coat. Dry-brushing with white can be used to turn an otherwise dull horse into a roan. Care must be taken not to put the white on in spots or streaks, however.

As for the specific merits of horses of certain colors, it's all a matter of fashion. The Spaniards bred many spotted horses (the ancestors of the Appaloosas were bred by the Nez Percé Amerindians), which were much sought after in Europe until fashion dictated that riding such showy horses was vulgar. Cowboys thought that dun-colored (buckskin) horses were the hardiest, so they bred for that color as well as for stamina and hardness. This produced many dun horses of high quality. Napoleon never rode a horse that wasn't gray. But the truth of the matter is that color is not a reliable indication of quality. One of the chestnuts I know is the complete opposite of the "high-spirited and temperamental creatures" Karen mentioned. But that's not to say that color doesn't affect riders' choices of mounts!

My advice to painters who wish to have truly extraordinary horse miniatures is this: Find a book or calendar with color photographs of horses and take your inspiration from that. The range of coloration and markings is inexhaustible and can turn a "plain old, boring brown" into a truly outstanding miniature.

Ann Dupuis  
Brighton MA

Ω





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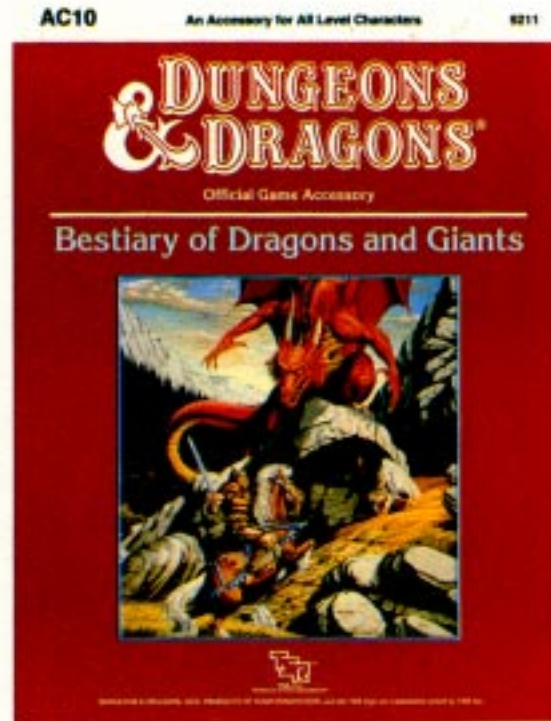
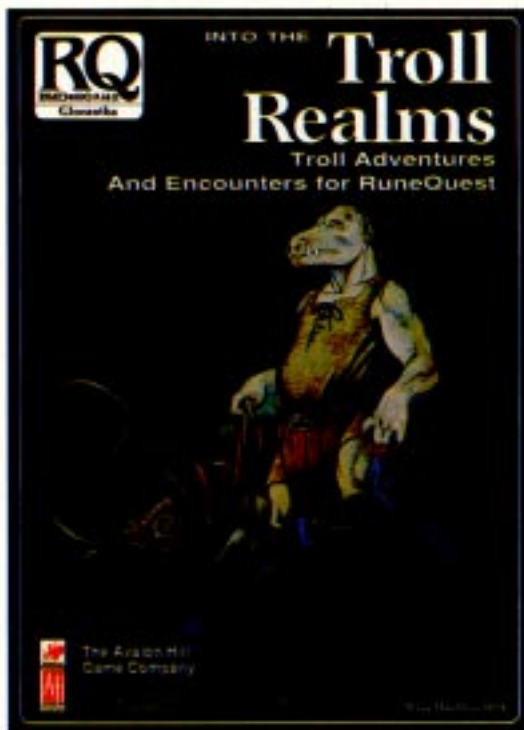


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# Role-playing Reviews

The monsters are coming! The monsters are coming!

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Monsters have always been an integral part of fantasy role-playing games. At the most basic level of presentation, monsters provide ready-made antagonists for the player characters to cross swords with or blast with their magic spells. Everyone remembers with fondness his first adventure, when he traded blows with the evil orcs or mindless undead that lurked in the local dungeons. In the first few gaming sessions, the physical descriptions of your opponents, coupled with the knowledge that they are going to chop your character into pieces unless you get them first, suffice to maintain your interest. They're orcs, right? They are up to no good, and they hoard the gold and magical items that your character wants.

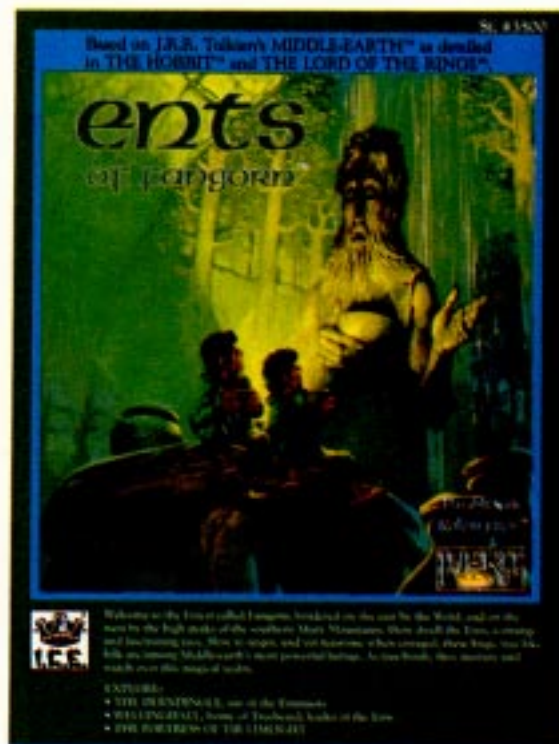
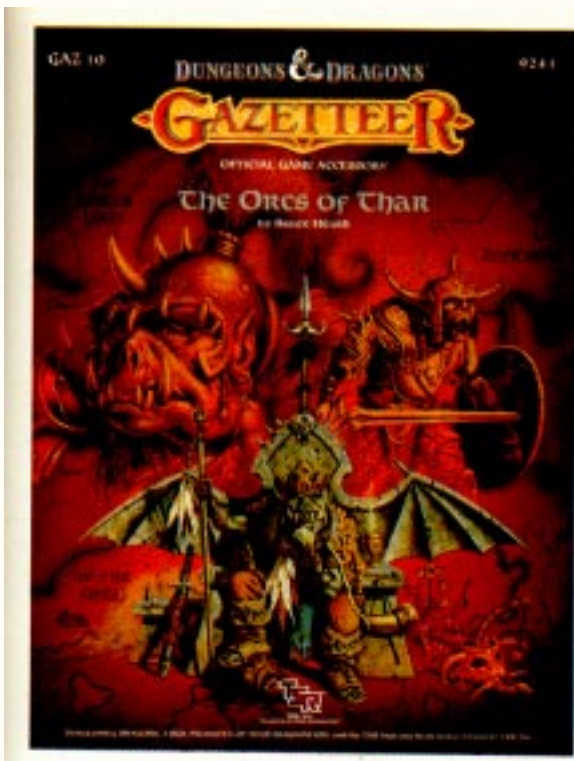
As time goes on and you gain more experience with the rules, the simple joys of monster bashing begin to wane. Players begin to look for more in their monsters than a series of statistics. Monsters with well-defined personalities and motivations help fill this need, and so does the use of narrative adventure structures in which the adventurers feel that they are playing a pivotal role in the development of a campaign or a single adventure.

Over the years, fantasy role-playing has developed tremendously. The large number of background supplements and sourcepacks now available are witness to our desire to find out more and more about the worlds in which our characters adventure. Campaign supplements are

now an established part of most companies' new releases. The majority of products focus on humans and demi-humans, providing background on how people live in the various fantasy worlds. Over the years, a few products have taken a similar look at the cultures of some of our favorite monsters. Gone are the days when a paragraph or two on each monster would cover all our gaming needs. Now we look for details on how these creatures live and breed, and why they act as they do.

This month, we look at some products that feature monsters of one sort or another. Each of the products approaches its subject from a different angle, showing some ways monsters can be portrayed within fantasy role-playing games.





### Ents of Fangorn™

A MERP™ game supplement

48-page book

Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc.

\$12.00

Design: Randell E. Doty

Editing: Coleman Charlton

Cover illustration: Angus McBride

Interior illustrations: Liz Danforth

J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth® is a world rich in background and myth, and is one of the most developed fantasy worlds ever published. With its tales of epic struggles between Good and Evil, and the more mundane but no less gripping stories concerned with the struggles of individual elves and men, Middle-earth is more than just a gaming setting. Considering the depth and detail already present there, it comes as no surprise that I.C.E.'s MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE-PLAYING™ (MERP) game should boast a large number of campaign supplements. Of these, the *Ents of Fangorn*™ supplement offers a detailed look at Tolkien's ents.

Many tales abound in Middle-earth concerning ents. Some portray ents as dangerous monsters that slay all who enter their forest; others believe ents are extinct creatures of legend. The people bordering Fangorn Forest are wary of entering its alien and menacing interior. Only orcs risk battles with ents.

The ents are the treeherders of Fangorn Forest. Being large, treelike creatures themselves, the ents care for the trees of their forest. But time has not been kind to the ents. As men and orcs have spread across the lands of Middle-earth, they have chopped down large areas of the forest to feed their fires and make room for their

settlements. The once-mighty forest of Fangorn has been greatly reduced. Many of the ents are themselves turning "treeish," preferring to stay in one place and sleep. But not all of the ents of Fangorn Forest are as friendly as Treebeard, the old ent in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. Other ents are more violent in their outlooks, preferring to slay intruders rather than talk to them.

Fangorn Forest is also home to the huorns, or tree spirits: creatures that lie somewhere between ents and trees. Most huorns are quiet and docile, but a few are bent on destruction. These huorns are a danger to all who encounter them, including ents.

*Ents of Fangorn*™ is a good example of how to portray monsters in an interesting style, while still staying true to the splendor and learned feel of Middle-earth. It does so by presenting ents and their environment in the form of straightforward descriptions. The main source of inspiration is, of course, the writings of Tolkien, particularly the chapter in *The Lord of the Rings* where the two hobbits, Merry and Pippin, first encounter Treebeard. The information provided by Treebeard about the ents, including his story of the entwines, is faithfully reproduced in this product. In addition, further insights into ent life and culture are extrapolated from the available background. The supplement makes for interesting reading and portrays the ents as a deeply motivated race with an ancient history. The rich legends and stories, which Tolkien did such a masterful job of integrating into *The Lord*

*of the Rings*, are used in this supplement to further define the background of Fangorn Forest.

The background sections on the ents of Fangorn are relatively complete and cover all the major areas of interest concerning ents, Fangorn Forest, and the forest's environs. The maps and illustrations are of high standard and do much to enhance the atmosphere of the work.

*Ents of Fangorn*™ is less successful in its handling of the adventure sections, which are particularly thin when it comes to presenting narrative elements. Detailed descriptions of orc-infested dungeons form the major part of these adventures. The dungeon descriptions are reminiscent of the early days of adventure design, when suitably tooled-up parties would raid the lairs of local monsters. The two adventures dealing directly with ents are very skimpily outlined, giving no feel for how to handle encounters between PCs and ents. In fact, all of the adventure outlines are short on character interaction and role-playing.

Also, the unique atmosphere of Fangorn Forest is hardly used at all. This is a pity, as Fangorn Forest is a rich setting that, in the hands of a skilled adventure writer, would provide some memorable gaming sessions. Instead, random encounter tables are used to handle a party's passage through Fangorn Forest. The tables are okay if you like that kind of thing, but don't expect any colorful or useful staging tips. Just roll to see what the PCs run into, then hit them with it.

**Evaluation:** *Ents of Fangorn*™ is a useful

product for GMs who like their monsters depicted in a scholarly style. This is done remarkably well while staying true to the writings of Tolkien. As a book on ents, *Ents of Fangorn*™ has many uses outside of its MERP™ setting, but it would have benefited from more development, particularly in showing how this product could be used to stage and run adventures. *Ents of Fangorn*™ is useful for its background, but if you are after a source of adventures, you are advised to look elsewhere. This supplement is available from Iron Crown Enterprises, Inc., PO. Box 1605, Charlottesville VA 22902.

#### *Into the Troll Realms*

A RUNEQUEST® game supplement

48-page booklet

The Avalon Hill Game Company \$9.95

**Design:** Greg Stafford and Sandy Petersen

**Editing:** Lynn Willis

**Cover illustration:** Steve Purcell

**Interior illustrations:** Daniel Brereton

**Cartography:** Charlie Krank

This booklet takes a markedly different approach than *Ents of Fangorn*™ in its treatment of monsters. Here, the emphasis is very much geared to a narrative style of presentation. By describing trolls in their natural habitat and by allowing PCs to interact with them through role-playing, rather than through violence, *Into the*

*Troll Realms* clearly shows how trolls can be used as colorful and interesting NPC's.

*Into the Troll Realms* offers little in the way of hard background facts on trolls; that is left for the forthcoming *Trollpak* supplement, an update of a supplement previously published by Chaosium in 1982. In fact, *Into the Troll Realms* is itself an updated part of that previously published work. It is to Greg Stafford's and Sandy Petersen's credit that *Into the Troll Realms* can be extracted from a larger work and still be well written and useful.

*Into the Troll Realms* contains three detailed adventures and three smaller encounters that can either be played on their own or integrated into the larger adventures. The smaller encounters may also be used in a variety of ways, and the designers offer many suggestions as to how PCs came to be involved in the first place. Instead of getting a bunch of randomly generated monsters that rush at the party, we get encounters that have lives of their own.

The first encounter details a troll caravan, which is evidence that the RUNEQUEST® game's trolls are not the unthinking brutes that many adventurers might assume them to be. We meet a troll merchant and his helpers as they travel with their caravan of riding and pack bugs. This is followed by an encounter with some assassins, then we get a firsthand

look at a trollkin horde. This latter encounter is excellent; it builds steadily in atmosphere and gives us neat and evocative images of how trollkin think and act. Surprisingly, this is achieved in less than one page of text.

Now we get to the real meat of the package. Many player handouts with factual and false information regarding trolls are available to the PCs at the start of the first two adventures, from the PCs' employers and other sources. These well-written background materials can also be used to form the basis of some short role-playing encounters between the possessors of the information and the PCs.

The adventures are of a uniformly high quality and emphasize role-playing over combat. That's not to say that PCs won't find plenty of opportunities to engage in combat, but they'll miss out on some great role-playing encounters if they stir up the trolls unnecessarily.

I'd like to tell you more of the details of the adventures, but that would only detract from your fun should you ever use them. I'll just say that the encounters are excellent examples of how to stage and present adventures. Groups that enjoy chatting with interesting NPCs will find lots of ways to amuse themselves.

As an added bonus, *Into the Troll Realms* comes with the rules for playing Trollball, an ancient game much loved by trolls. The

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objective is to carry a live trollkin over the goal line more times than any other team during a game. It's kind of like rugby football, but with a live "ball" that runs away from the players if given the chance. In the event that the trollkin dies during the course of the game, another trollkin is snatched from the spectators to take its place.

**Evaluation:** It's good to see that material for Chaosium's RUNEQUEST® game is again becoming available, particularly when the material is of such high quality. *Into the Troll Realms™* should be in everyone's gaming collection. Grab a copy for inspiration and to enjoy some excellent monster-oriented encounters. *Into the Poll Realms™* is available from The Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Road, Baltimore MD 21214.

### GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*

D&D® game Gazetteer  
48-page DM's Book, 48-page Players' Guide,  
large 2-sided color map, one sheet of  
game counters, and a 6-panel cover  
TSR, Inc. \$9.95

**Design:** Bruce Heard

**Editing:** Gary L. Thomas

**Cover illustration:** Clyde Caldwell

**Interior illustrations:** Jim Holloway

**Cartography:** Dave Sutherland

*The Orcs of Thar* is the tenth in TSR's series of D&D® game Gazetteers. Each Gazetteer details part of the D&D® game's Known World, providing information on culture, society, history, geography, economics, and prominent NPCs of a given nation. On the whole, the Gazetteers are excellent and in many ways surpass recent releases in the AD&D® game line.

The Gazetteers have also made a significant contribution to the rules of the D&D® game—not in a gratuitous way (rules are not added for the sake of adding new rules) but in order to enhance the background and flavor of a particular setting. New rules have been added to deal with character skills, mechanics for handling sea and overland trading expeditions, new character classes, and several new types of magic: Glantrian, runic, and shamanistic, as well as the magic of the merchant princes of Minrothad, the elves, the half-lings, and even the dwarves. To allow players and DMs of the AD&D® game to get in on the fun, recent Gazetteers have also included guidelines on converting the Gazetteers for use with the AD&D® game.

With the appearance of *The Orcs of Thar*, the D&D® game returns to its roots by allowing players to take on the roles of monsters: dirty, smelly, depraved humanoids, the kind of scum that players love to hate. When originally published in 1974, the D&D® game gave some very skimpy guidelines on using monsters as player characters. When new editions appeared, these rules disappeared, and the D&D® game became decidedly human and demi-human oriented. Now, *The Orcs of Thar*

gives the opportunity to play the bad guys in a detailed and humorous campaign.

The Broken Lands is where *The Orcs of Thar* is set, but many of the module's rules and background details are readily portable to other settings where humanoids live. The material is fun to read and informative, and *The Orcs of Thar* does an excellent job of describing the lifestyles of orcs and other humanoids. The Gazetteer is also humorously illustrated by Jim Holloway; anyone who has seen West End Games' PARANOIA™ game will be familiar with Holloway's fun-filled art, and here he does an excellent job of capturing the flavor of humanoid life.

So, what do we get in *The Orcs of Thar*? First comes the Players' Guide, providing an introduction to the Broken Lands and a humanoid character generation system for players and DMs. The Players' Guide gives us the history of the various humanoid races as seen through their own eyes. It then describes the current situation in the Broken Lands with a look at the 10 tribes, their beliefs, and the areas they inhabit. Next are new rules for generating humanoid player characters, including kobolds, goblins, orcs, hobgoblins, gnolls, bugbears, ogres, and trolls. All of these creatures are capable of increasing in experience levels, all the way up to the dizzying heights of 36th level. To maintain game balance, the larger creatures start off as younger members of their race and must earn experience points before they become fully grown monsters, as detailed in the D&D® rule books. For example, an ogre begins its adventuring life as a Youngster with only 2d8 + 1 Hit Dice; a troll begins as a Whelp with 3d8 + 1 Hit Dice. On the other hand, the weaker monsters, such as goblins and orcs, start life as fully mature adults. As all monster types adventure, they gain additional experience levels that bring increases in Hit Dice, saving throws, and combat abilities. The system handles these different types of creatures in a smooth and integrated manner. Being big has its advantages, since you start with more Hit Dice than the other creatures, but it takes you far longer to gain additional Hit Dice than it does for the lowly kobolds, goblins, or orcs.

To help players get into their new roles, there are tables and suggestions for generating height, physical appearance, and outlook. All this makes for very well-rounded characters with distinct personalities. As in other Gazetteers, various skills are available to further add-depth and interest to the characters. Optional rules cover many of the more humorous elements of humanoid role-playing. Humanoids don't like shiny new weapons and armor; beat-up, rusty equipment makes you look mean and fierce, but it might break or fall apart in the middle of a fight.

The information in *The Orcs of Thar* is also valuable to DMs running conventional campaigns. Player characters, once they get to medium levels of experience, are

frequently scornful of the threats posed by humanoid opponents. As a consequence, humanoids are encountered only in very large numbers or not at all. With these new rules, humanoids are going to earn a lot more respect from human and demi-human adventurers. That bunch of orcs up ahead could easily be a party of 8th-level NPCs out for some action. Are you sure you want to mess with them?

Humanoids are renowned for their love of battle and mindless slaughter, and for acting in an obnoxious fashion. To help them maintain such high standards of behavior, *Thar's Manual of Good Conduct* has been prepared. This comes as part of the Players' Guide but is intended to be pulled out of the booklet, chopped up, and stapled into a smaller booklet that describes life in the humanoid army. This humorous booklet gets players and DMs into the right mood for engaging in humanoid role-playing.

The Dungeon Master's Booklet continues with the same overall flavor as the Players' Guide. Here, the DM gets the real history of the humanoids and the details on the major NPCs active in the Broken Lands. It also includes new rules for playing shamans and wiccans. These nonhuman spellcasters were first described in the D&D® Master Set; they are the clerics and magic-users of the humanoid races. By dedicating themselves to one of the humanoid

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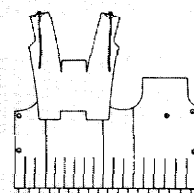
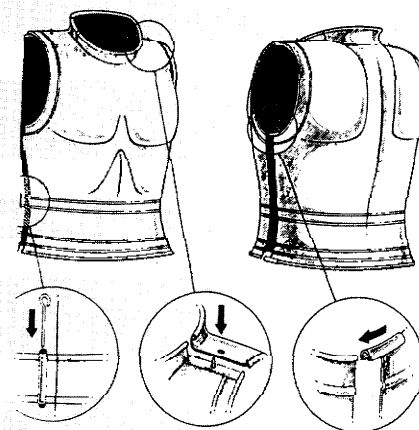
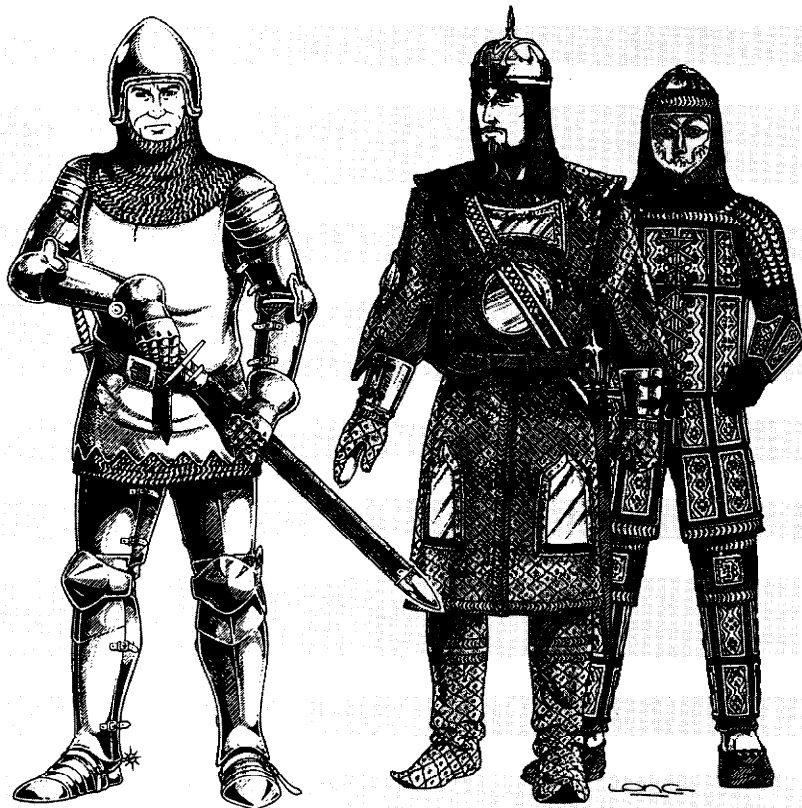
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Immortals, humanoids can gain spell-casting abilities.

The DM is provided with plenty of information about the best way to stage and present humanoid adventures, along with a large number of adventure outlines and one full-blown adventure. The adventure outlines do a superb job of capturing the flavor and atmosphere of humanoid adventuring, with plenty of opportunities for groveling and attacking the hated humans. There's even Oenkmarr, a detailed orcish city for humanoids and humans to explore, as well as the rules for *tlachtli*: a ball game played in Oenkmarr. This is similar to soccer, but played with a rubbery ball in an area resembling a squash court. *Tlachtli* players carry wooden clubs that they use to beat their opponents senseless.

A board game is also included in *The Orcs of Thar* "Orc Wars" is set in and around the Broken Lands and features a power struggle to see who'll be the top humanoid. It's good fun. "Orc Wars" first appeared in DRAGON® issue #132; the game's counters in *The Orcs of Thar* are printed on heavier stock than was used in the magazine, easing their handling and making this Gazetteer a great value for the money.

**Evaluation:** *The Orcs of Thar* combines neat monster descriptions and back-grounds with a colorful and humorous narrative style of presentation. Couple this with its high-quality graphic presentation, and you end up with a product that no one should be without. *The Orcs of Thar* is wonderfully conceived and executed. Even if the idea of having humanoid characters doesn't appeal to you, the background material in *The Orcs of Thar* still makes it a valuable contribution to your campaign. Miss this one at your peril.

### AC 10 *Bestiary of Dragons and Giants*

A D&D® game supplement  
64-page booklet, 2-panel folder, and a  
Dragon Spell Generator

TSR, Inc. \$8.95

**Design:** James Ward, Warren and Caroline Spector, Steve Perrin, John Nephew, Thomas Kane, Gary Thomas, John Terra, Deborah Christian, Ray Winninger, Rick Swan, Vince Garcia, Bob Blake, Scott Bennie, and Bruce Heard

**Editing:** Deborah Christian

**Cover illustration:** Larry Elmore

**Interior illustrations:** Wanda Lybarger and Roger Raupp

**Cartography:** Dennis Kauth and Ron Kauth

This anthology, dedicated to dragons and giants, takes a look at how these high-powered monsters live, work, and relax. The book kicks off with an overview of the lifestyles of dragons and giants, followed by short adventures that feature the various giants and dragons. The adventures take place in different locations and are written for a wide variety of character levels.

The *Bestiary of Dragons and Giants* adds little to our knowledge of dragon and giant lore. It doesn't set out to greatly expand the information already available concerning dragons and giants, but instead redefines it slightly and provides a ready source of adventures that can either be played as stand-alones or dropped into an ongoing campaign. Of special interest are the game aids that come with this product.

The inside of the cover folder shows the relative sizes of the various huge monsters. The monsters are artfully rendered and are a great aid when it comes to describing these creatures to player characters. In case anyone doubts that storm giants are really big, you can flash this picture at him and let him see that even a 6'-tall human fails to come up to a storm giant's knee. But even a storm giant looks short compared to an adult red dragon.

To help DMs generate spells for dragons, the Dragon Spell Generator has been included. This nifty device requires a bit of construction, but once completed, it can be used to determine which spells the various normal dragons and the powerful dragon rulers prefer. It also comes complete with the statistics for each type of dragon, thereby avoiding any referencing of the rule books. This can be a great bonus when you consider that the D&D® game rules are spread across a total of nine books.

**Evaluation:** As an anthology, the *Bestiary of Dragons and Giants* is quite bitty. But since its major role is to make available a wide variety of adventures about monsters, this is less of a problem. This is a book to dip into for ideas or to find a suitable adventure at short notice, and less a work to be read from cover to cover. If your prime concern is to have a ready source of adventures available, then the *Bestiary of Dragons and Giants* is a useful product. As a source of detailed background information, as found in *Ents of Fangorn* or *The Orcs of Thar*, the *Bestiary of Dragons and Giants* adds little to our knowledge of these creatures.

### Short and sweet

GURPS® Ice Age game, by Kirk Tate. Steve Jackson Games, Inc. \$7.95. A game centered around cavemen and woolly mammoths? The GURPS® Ice Age game takes this unusual subject and does a first-class job of turning it into a credible and detailed setting, including lots of background information and a gaming environment that makes a distinct change from other settings. This book gives you the lowdown on early man, rules for using these characters in a GURPS® game, shamanistic magic and spells, and details on how to set up a prehistoric campaign. The included adventure is suitable for play over 2-3 sessions and does an admirable job of capturing the flavor of life at that time. The GURPS® Ice Age game is also a handy sourcebook for GMs running time-travel or lost-worlds adventures. This one

is available from Steve Jackson Games, Inc., Box 18957, Austin TX 78760.

TSEI *Web Of Deceit*, by Bob Kern. TSR, Inc. \$8.95. This 64-page book is the first in a three-part series for the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game. It pits the player characters against the evil schemes of the WEB organization. The action takes place on the fictitious Caribbean island of San Cristobal. With over half the book dedicated to describing San Cristobal in a colorful and game-oriented style, *Web of Deceit* has a very loose and free-flowing flavor. Instead of forcing the GM to quickly make up areas and NPCs when the PCs head out to explore parts of the island, the GM can turn to the section describing the part of the island in question and use the encounters and NPCs listed there. The second part of the book is dedicated to the adventure proper. When combined with the background material, it adds up to a very impressive piece of espionage role-playing.

*Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual*, by Rick Stuart and John Terra. FASA Corporation. \$15.00. Players of STAR TREK®: The Role-Playing Game and fans of the new *Star Trek* series will find the major changes and advances made in the *Star Trek* universe described here. The book goes into great detail on uniforms, insignias, starships and their weapons, the Ferengi Empire, and how the older aliens of the original series and movies have changed in the intervening years. Updating the STAR TREK® game to include information from the new television series is made easy with this book, and devourers of *Star Trek* trivia will be kept pleasantly engaged. *Star Trek: The Next Generation Officer's Manual* is available from FASA Corporation, P.O. Box 6930, Chicago IL 60680. Ω

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GC1



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# THE ROLE OF Computers

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## Of prophecies, candles, and killer canaries

The voting for the Beastie Awards continues, but for only a few more issues. We'd like to hear from you regarding your favorite computer game and the system version you played. Include your name and address for vote verification. The Beastie Awards are our way of recognizing outstanding accomplishments in the field of computer gaming. Send your vote to: The Beastie Awards, 179 Pebble Place, San Ramon, CA 94583. Become part of an ongoing tradition: Vote for your Beastie!

### Reviews

#### Computer-game ratings

X	Not recommended
**	Poor
***	Fair
****	Good
*****	Excellent
	Superb

#### Activision

(distributed by Mediagenic)  
P.O. Box 3048  
3885 Bohannon Drive  
Menlo Park CA 94025  
(415) 329-0800

#### Prophecy

MS-DOS version \$39.95

Employing a marvelously effective magic system, *Prophecy* is one of the latest fantasy role-playing games to arrive for PC/MS-DOS computers. We reviewed the game in its EGA mode and are delighted with its on-screen color, animation, and graphics. *Prophecy* is bound to please most gamers, despite one or two minor

drawbacks. The game can be played using either the keyboard or the joystick. The key to *Prophecy* is learning to avoid conflict at times to complete your quest.

Combining arcade action and role-playing skills, the game starts when you find the citizens of CrissCross, your hometown, are slaughtered. You recall the words of an ancient prophecy that predict a hero will appear to vanquish Krellane, the villain, and his Empire. Perhaps you are that hero!

Leaving CrissCross, you make your way to a church for the guidance necessary to complete the prophecy. Adversaries block your route, and you must fight with only a shield and gauntlets. Through the judicious use of magic, you can win through to the church.

"Seek, my child, the goblin crown of mind absorption," states one priest. "Return it to a church, and more guidance will be given. Go now to the right alcove and pray for transport? Following the priest's advice, you are told that once you have been magically transported to the goblin capital city of Gobar, there is no easy way back to CrissCross. You are then sent on your way.

As you journey through Gobar, you realize that discretion is always the better part of valor. Many of the goblin guards that appear on one screen simply cannot keep up as you move to another screen. Through careful use of your joystick, you can quickly enter a screen, note the position of stronger opponents, then withdraw. Then you can reenter the screen at a better place. You can also change weapons to better attack certain opponents.

*Prophecy* is not copy-protected, so it can be installed on a hard disk drive. The game includes both 5.25" and 3.5" disks. If you don't have a mass-storage device,

the game is playable from the floppy disks, but some disk swapping is required during the game. *Prophecy* supports CGA, EGA, VGA, MCGA, and Tandy 16-color graphics boards.

One of the most pleasing aspects of *Prophecy* is that you can save the game at any stage of play. The **CONTROL S** dual keypress is required. Before leaving one screen we found this keypress was the best action to take. Should the next screen prove to be more than a match for your character, you can enter **CONTROL L** and reload the saved game. You can also control the game's speed, turn the sound on or off, and activate the joystick or keyboard control at any time.

The joystick is by far the easiest method for moving your character. To activate whatever object your character is holding (such as a sword, bow, or potion), press the first joystick button. To retreat quickly, press the second joystick button. If you don't have a game card installed in your PC/MS-DOS machine, you can use the numeric keypad to move the character. Your character will continue to move in the direction of the last keypress until you press the "5" key to halt, then enter the next direction command.

Other keyboard controls include:

The "A" key, space bar, or first joystick button: Attack, using the item in your character's hand (be certain you have (E)quipped your character appropriately).

The "R" key: Review the last message (great for those times when you forgot to take notes).

The "L" key: Search for traps in the immediate area.

The "O" key: Opens doors, chests, gates, etc. (if you are using the joystick, simply moving toward the gate or chest opens it).

The "M" key: Memorize spells. Enter the Magic screen, which shows 10 spells your character has memorized. Each spell number corresponds to one of the 10 function keys on your computer. The screen shows the name of the spell and the number of spell points it costs to cast. When you press the function key corresponding to a spell, the spell goes off in the direction your character faces. The higher your level, the longer your spell lasts. To memorize a new spell (there are 31 spells), you simply move the cursor to a spell that you wish to replace. Press **RETURN**, then type the name of the new spell and press **RETURN** again. You can also enhance a specific spell by adding a prefix to the spell's name. For example, the prefix **Kru** means that, when cast, the spell will affect 13 squares (watch out for backslash!).

The "E" key: Accesses the Equip screen, where you can alter your character's armor and weaponry. Because your character can only have five items in use at one time, and because your weapons needs change a lot, you'll use this screen often.

When you enter the throne room of the Goblin King to retrieve the goblin crown



of mind absorption, note that there are three powerful enemies to overcome in this room and that your character is still a novice. Think carefully before jumping into the fray. After the fight, you must find your way back to the stairs you used when you entered the city. The stairs will take you to the next adventure.

The game also possesses its share of dark humor. For example, in the tax office, some of the books to be found on the shelves are titled C.O.D./Cash or Die, I.R.S./Infernal Revenue Service, and U.P.S./Universal Peasant Servitude.

When you start a new section of the game, you are asked to identify the creature displayed on-screen by matching it with one pictured in the user's manual. The published pictures of these beasts are rather blurry and not easy to identify. You must type in the creature's correct name, not the name you'd think was the creature's true identity. For example, a rather bearlike nastie is described on page eight as Helf (wolflike, carrying a bowl, Lord of Ertaxia. You'd think to enter the word "Helf," but you'd be wrong. You must enter "Lord of Ertaxia." If you don't correctly identify the creature after two attempts, the game locks and you must reboot the PC.

Some lack of planning is apparent in some creatures you might encounter. For example, an evil archer was awaiting our character in a room with three walls laid out in a rough T shape. Upon entering the room, our character was protected by a small wall. That didn't stop the archer, who immediately began firing arrows into the wall—arrow after arrow after arrow. Not only would a half-intelligent archer wait until he saw his target, but there is no way that archer could have an unlimited supply of arrows. Your character's arrow count limits you to the number of arrows you are carrying, so why not limit the opposition as well? And to continue firing into walls is a rather futile gesture.

We enjoyed playing *Prophecy* If you enjoy arcade-style games with a hint of adventure, *Prophecy* is a good purchase. The game does not require much thought, and there are no exasperating puzzles to solve. There are 28 animated characters, more than 60 weapons to use, and seven dungeon levels—more than enough goodies to keep your joystick from stagnating. This is a good game for beginners in computer gaming or for those who have some experience in fantasy role-playing games but want a little more action-based adventuring. Activision gives PC/MS-DOS users an adventure game for their micros that supports the adage that there *are* good games for IBM micros and clones.

**Mindcraft Software, Inc.**  
(distributed by Electronic Arts)  
2341 205th Street, Suite 102  
Torrance CA 90501  
(415) 571-7171



*Prophecy:* A true hero never gets a break.



*Prophecy:* Lovely scenery may hide terrible foes.



*The Magic Candle:* You're deep in the woods, when suddenly.



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### The Magic Candle

MS-DOS version

\$49.95

As if by magic, here is another excellent PC/MS-DOS adventure game for IBM micros or compatibles. The *Magic Candle* exemplifies a new approach to an otherwise overpopulated genre of computer gaming and is well worth investigation by any PC/MS-DOS user. Available in formats for PC/MS-DOS machines and the Apple II family for \$49.95, and the Commodore 64/128 computer for \$39.95, *The Magic Candle* is an enormous adventure that spans the entire continent of Deruvia. Not copy protected, the game uses a common method of ensuring that only authorized owners play the game (a word must be entered from a specified page number and column from the user's manual).

The forces of darkness have gained footholds in Deruvia. The player's goal is to somehow halt a magic candle from burning out. Once the candle is extinguished, an evil being named Dreax will escape from the candle to wreak havoc on Deruvia. You have accepted King Rebnard's call for a hero, and it's up to you and five stalwart companions to prevent the influx of peril into the lands.

The game initially places you in the role of Lucas, but you can rename this character as you wish. You must select five companions from many volunteers. All have various skills and talents, and only after careful selection will you be able to adventure forth with some degree of competence. The list of volunteers includes elves, humans, dwarves, mages, halflings, rangers, and more, all with interesting personalities, possessions, and talents. Note that Ziyx, the final volunteer, is probably the greatest wizard who ever lived in Deruvia; he has the Book of Sabano.

For our initial adventuring party, we selected Lucas (who owns a short sword), Nehar, Sakar, Ziyx, Eflun, and Alhan. With two wizards able to cast two varieties of spells, and with Nehar and Alhan able to fire arrows at the opposition, both Lucas and Sakar can then handle hand-to-hand combat with those who penetrate our wilting fire and magic blasts. However, all action in *The Magic Candle* requires energy. You'll be quite surprised at how quickly one's energy can dissipate, especially in combat.

Fortunately, there are two major methods by which you can increase a character's energy. The first is by having a mage cast an Energy spell on each character (but only after he's cast it upon himself first), and the second is by eating the Sermin mushroom. Other goodies that can enhance a character's capabilities include potions, dried leaves, and seed pastes.

Other items that you'll find handy range from rope (to help you get through those mountains) to pearls (quite useful as a trading item). Lockpicks, boots, shovels, a lens (for reading scrolls), and blankets are all available at stores.

Another goodie packaged with the game

is a four-color map that shows the major areas of interest in this land. Remember that every move requires energy, and when night falls, one of the best ways to restore depleted energy is to sleep. With one member of your party on watch, any sneaky opponents will be spotted before they reach the party.

One of the most admirable features of *The Magic Candle* is the ability to split your party into different groups. Each group can then explore or work without waiting for other groups to complete other tasks. For example, should you find a job for Alhan at Port Avur, he can (D)ivide from the party. You can then place your highest-charisma characters in another two-member party to investigate the possibilities around town, speaking to all they encounter. The remaining three party members can purchase supplies at various stores. If specific training schools are found for various members of your questing party, those members can be separated from the main group to undergo their training. In Port Avur, your fighters, wizards, and archers will find training schools, and the training can be undertaken to the benefit of the entire party without wasting time. And time is valuable; in the upper right hand corner of the screen, you'll be constantly reminded of the number of days remaining before the magic candle totally melts and releases Dreax.

The game screen is divided into four information areas. The main screen graphically represents the area where your party is located. In a town, you'll note individual buildings and nonplayer characters. When traveling, you'll be offered a broad view of the region and, should an encounter occur, the picture will zoom in to a more personal graphics level.

The Command screen reveals the commands that are currently active for your particular screen and are accessed either with the cursor keys or your joystick. The more interesting commands include:

**ATTACK:** This command only works if you are confronting one of the Minions of Darkness. However, you'll feel foolish if you haven't DRAWN your weapon first!

**BEGIN:** This is the command for activating a rest period. It also allows you to select a divided group in case you wish them to do something while others are resting or learning spells. When you access BEGIN, the time begins to tick by until you press the spacebar, ending the rest period. Should you be resting on the trail when an encounter occurs, you'll be awakened to protect yourself.

**CHANT:** Applicable for magic spells that can be learned by talking with many of the NPCs. Your party's survival is dependent upon proper spelling.

**EAT** What you have to do to ingest mushrooms, potions, food, and so on. If you don't eat, you don't survive.

**FIX:** Weapons get dull in combat, and sometimes an axe handle might break.



This command allows you to repair weapons and hone them to a near-perfect state.

**FLEE:** One heck of a way to escape from particularly obnoxious monsters. Unfortunately, it eats up energy levels.

**FORMATN:** Short for formation, this command rearranges the members of your party. Highly useful for putting fighters up front and spell-casters in back.

**LEARN:** Your wizards need this command to learn the available spells.

**MAGIC:** How you cast an active spell that has been RECALLED.

**RECALL:** A magic-users must RECALL a spell before it can be cast.

**VIEW:** A bird's-eye view of your quarter of Deruvia, with a blinking dot showing where your party is currently located.

The Information section is in the upper right hand corner of the screen and has six subsections. Here, you'll read the current date and time and see whether it is light or dark outside. Every five minutes, the time changes. This is called a "click." Data regarding your party's current position is next. If you're inside an edifice, you're notified of your current level; if you are outdoors, longitude and latitude are shown. Also revealed are the number of days remaining before the magic candle has melted away, leaving the land at the mercy of Dreax. A party formation box shows you the current positions of each of the six members of the party.

The last graphic box is the Status Summary area, where the current action direction is always highlighted. Also within this area is a description of the party's current location. This is always helpful, since your party can not only travel on foot, but by ship or through teleportation.

If you want to check out the current statistics for any party member, you simply enter the number of the character you wish to investigate. Be sure to remain aware of the health indicator, since your characters can become tired or exhausted if they don't obtain enough rest or food while traveling and fighting. The second screen for each character reveals his inventory, including coins, food, and up to 23 different objects. Also shown are any spell books in that character's possession.

*The Magic Candle* contains dwarves, elves, halflings, men, and wizards. Professions include carpenter, fighter, gem-cutter, knight, mage, mercenary, metal smith, ranger, and tailor. Several towns offer employment for those who possess certain skills.

*The Magic Candle* is a very harmonious adventure that requires the player to control every movement of the characters. You can divide your party for additional investigations, question many nonplayer characters, and become embroiled in an adventure that will require many hours to complete. Despite graphics that are less than state-of-the-art (even in EGA mode), *The Magic Candle* is an addictive game and will provide PC/MS-DOS gamers with weeks of exciting entertainment. Mind-

craft has certainly furthered the cause for game development in the IBM and compatibles arena.

## News and new products

### Broderbund Software

17 Paul Drive  
San Rafael CA 94963-2101  
(415) 492-3200

Broderbund Software has released *Wibarm* for PC/MS-DOS computers. Pronounced "WE-barm," this is Broderbund's first entry into the category of action role-playing games. While very popular in Japan, this genre is relatively new to North America.

The game features high-speed arcade action combined with puzzle-solving depth. In the game, the player must recapture Government City's orbiting power plant before it explodes and pulverizes the planet. The Minister of Power, Dr. Bester, has suddenly disappeared and malignant monsters have seized control of the plant. More than 30 monsters will be encountered. To be successful, the player must master *Wibarm's* three-phase form, complex dual-level weapon system, and psycholink amplification. The player must race through one mazelike city after another and go far into space, constantly battling a menacing menagerie of loathsome monsters while using 10 different weapons of increasing power. The program is priced at \$39.95 and supports EGA and CGA graphics. *Wibarm* is packed with one 5.25" disk and one 3.5" disk.

### Cinemaware Corporation

4165 Thousand Oaks Boulevard  
Westlake Village CA 91362  
(805) 495-6515


Cinemaware Corporation has released *The Kristal*, a 3-D interactive stage production for home computers. Based on *The Kristal of Kronos*, an original stage musical, this science-fiction epic brings the look and feel of a Broadway performance to home computers. High drama and humor, abound as the player takes on the role of Dancis Frake, a space pirate who seeks the long-lost Kristal of Kronos. Emerging from a timeless dream with no memory, Dancis must discover the secrets of his past as well as his future on this colossal adventure. *The Kristal* defies categorization as it includes elements of graphic adventure, space exploration, and arcade action. Scores of lifelike animated characters interact with the player, providing clues to the quest. If a spaceship is acquired, the player can travel to planets throughout the galaxy on his search to locate the mysterious Kristal. When the going gets rough, action abounds, as numerous adversaries attempt to obliterate Frake and his plans to save the universe. Intense swordfighting encounters and heated space battles are just part of the action.

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**TSR, Inc.** **RP**

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This game is available for Commodore Amiga and Atari ST computers for \$49.95, with a PC/MS-DOS version available later at the same price.

#### **Epyx, Inc.**

600 Galveston Drive  
Redwood City CA 94063  
(415) 368-3200

Just released by Epyx is *Devon Aire in the Hidden Diamond Caper*. Set in mysterious Crutchfield Manor, this is the first discovery-genre game that requires the player to extensively interact with a number of objects in the household to solve the puzzle. Lady Crutchfield III has hired cat-burglar extraordinaire, Devon Aire, to find the collection of precious stones that her eccentric (and deceased) husband Montague hid in the manor. This might seem like a simple task for a man of Devon's talent, but the manor is huge and the floor plan defies explanation. There are surprises around every corner, such as secret passageways, hidden doors, barricaded entrances, and numerous dead ends. Killer canaries and mutant pig-mice, the results of failed genetic experiments, stalk the rooms. The game is now available for the C64/128 and Atari ST computers. It will be offered in formats for PC/MS-DOS machines, the Apple II computer family, and Commodore Amiga computers during the fourth quarter of this year. The suggested retail price for the C64/128 and Apple II is \$29.95, for PC/MS-DOS machines is \$39.95, and the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga prices are \$49.95.

"Technoidcolorgrossarama" is the latest development in action/strategy games from Epyx. One such game is *Axe of Rage*, a game that has it all: barbarians, a princess, fast action, an evil sorcerer, gruesome monsters, a noble and heroic quest, and a sense of humor. The player chooses the character of either Gorth the Barbarian or Princess Mariana. Their quest is to find the evil sorcerer Drax and stop him from shrinking humankind's brain capacity in an attempt to throw civilization back millions of years. Gorth/Mariana's weapon is the Axe of Rage, which must be wielded with might and accuracy. From a simple high or low chop to flying neck chops, points are scored for each successful blow, depending upon the difficulty and execution of the move. This is currently available for the C64/128 computer for \$34.95. Future versions include PC/MS-DOS micros (\$39.95), and the Commodore Amiga and Atari ST computer (\$49.95).

## **C**lue corner

#### **Pool of Radiance** (SSI)

In the slums, use plenty of Sleep spells. Small monsters have an annoying habit of swamping low-level PCs with sheer numbers. Sleep usually works against every thing that has one hit die. For the best

start, there is a hidden treasure in the NW corner. Get it for a boost in experience. Under Kuto's wall are some catacombs where bandits lurk. The leader of this band, Norris the Gray, is tough; the easiest way to kill him is to throw Sleep and Hold Person spells at those around him, holding him safely in the middle of that group. Then kill him with your archers. In Mendor's library, it is easiest to take out the scepter with Magic Missiles, as they automatically hit their target.

Once you have the treasure in the Textile House, get it past the thieves under the wall. It contains a magic item.

In Kovel Mansion, there are a number of hidden treasures. Search for them.

When you meet the nomads, agree to fight with them against the kobolds. You'll obtain lots of treasure.

When fighting the goblins, first take out the wyvern. Then, after the third wave of kobolds, exit and rest outside the caves.

In the temple of Bane and the wealthy quarter, search for hidden treasure.

In the buccaneer's den, get the pass from the man by the wall.

In Zhentil Keep, get into one of the barracks after the alarm rings. After slaying the guards, keep ramming against one of the end walls. This will limit the number of troops accompanying the leader to about a dozen.

In Stojanow Gate, it is easiest to sneak through and rest in the towers after you fight the ettins.

In Valhingen Graveyard, take out the groups of undead and the specters in the towers one by one.

You can also reproduce items such as magic armor and other valuable items such as Wands of Lightning and Necklaces of Missiles. First, load the saved game. Second, remove a character (not the character with the item you wish to reproduce). Put another character in the removed character's place. Give all the items to this added character. Then, remove this character and turn off the game. Repeat until you have enough items to keep the party well stocked.

Aleck S. Johnson  
Claremont CA

#### **Ultima V** (Origin)

Watch out for the keep in the mountains west of the Bloody Plains: all three Shadowlords might be present at any time!

When in Cove, talk to a fighter at the healer's at midnight. You will gain a clue to the location of the Mystic Arms of the Avatar.

The Glass Sword, which will keep a Shadowlord from bothering you if you happen to meet one, is hidden in a clearing in the Serpent's Spine Mountains.

A Spiked Collar will protect you from the pendulum in Blackthorne's Castle.

The Crown of Lord British is in the top floor of Blackthorne's Castle. The Crown can protect the wearer from ANY magical attack, no matter how powerful.



The Scepter can zap any lock on any door or chest and is hidden in the Underworld.

The diary that comes with the game should be carefully read. Follow the diary's directions. Where the skiff was, it still is, as are the bodies of the three knights.

Favorable characters to incorporate into your party include:

Katrina (5th-level fighter, New Magincia); Geoffrey (3rd-level fighter, Buccaneer's Den);

Captain John (Underworld, in his ship);

Mariah (3rd-level mage, Lycaenum);

Julia (2nd-level bard, Empath Abbey);

Gwenno (3rd-level fighter, Britain); and

Dupre (3rd-level fighter, comes with a two-handed sword and good armor, Bordermarch).

Characters you should not incorporate into your party include:

Toshi (1st-level bard, Empath Abbey);

Maxwell (1st-level fighter, Serpent's Hold);

Gorn (3rd-level fighter, Blackthorne's dungeon); and

Saduj (4th-level bard, Lord British's castle).

Saduj is rather a rotter. When you enter combat with another creature, he will try to kill all members of your party. He poses as a gardener in British's castle.

You know not to take food from fields or tables, but that doesn't apply to robbing houses. Search bookcases, barrels, fruit trees, stumps, dressers, vanities, and trunks. In Blackthorne's bedroom, for example, there are about six Summon Daemon scrolls. In Moonglow, you'll find one Negate Time Scroll, Cure Poison (red) in the healer's bedrooms, Healing Potions (yellow) in healer's rooms, and Resurrection Scrolls.

Search the graveyard in West Britanny and you'll come up with a Resurrection Scroll and a Regeneration Ring.

If you are lucky enough to find trolls under a bridge, fight them. They give you experience, gold, and sometimes gems.

If you ever meet ettins, fight them, unless there are more than four or you are not in tiptop condition. They give a Summon Daemon Scroll and a Resurrection Scroll. They can also give you bags of gold and sometimes a Spiked Collar.

If you meet dragons, try to leave. They can summon daemons, and then the daemons are the major threat. If you go into combat with a dragon and win, you can get enough treasure to satisfy your financial needs for a long time. Magic Bows are also in dragons' chests.

For those who aren't quite up to dragons, reapers serve well. They can be very dangerous, so fight with caution; use some Vas Flam spells first, then concentrate your missile attacks on one of them and fight both. They can give lots of cash.

If you meet wisps, get away. They are far too dangerous.

Try to stay away from water creatures, as they offer no treasure after they've

been eliminated.

There is an Ankh hidden in Cove.


If you wait by a Moon Gate until it sinks into the ground, search the area. There will be a moonstone there that corresponds to the Moon Gate. Get the moonstone and bury it (by using it); when it comes time for the Moon Gate to rise, it will rise in the spot where you buried the stone.

Sometimes the armorer in the Buccaneer's Den is in a good mood; when you sell him items, he gives you triple normal price.

Find a sextant with Pirate Dave in a lighthouse.

Amanda Gupta  
Pasadena CA

That wraps it up for this issue. Our thanks for your interest in this column, and we hope we are reviewing the games you wish covered. If not, let us know. Until next time, game on!

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**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL GAME CONVENTION!**




A game convention is the perfect place to make new friends who enjoy the same hobbies you do — whether you like boardgames, role-playing games, miniature wargames, or just shopping around. If you've never attended a game convention before, please check out the Convention Calendar feature in this issue for the game convention nearest you. Take some of your own gaming friends along, too — and make it an experience to remember.

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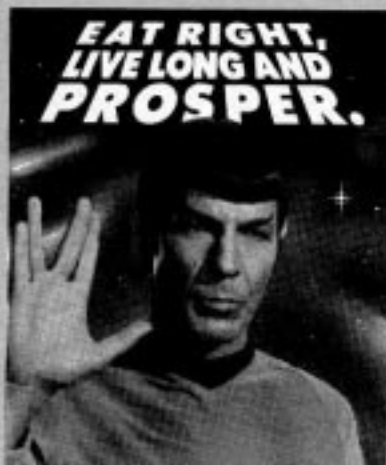
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by Jim Bambra

# Around The World In 3 6 Levels

Exploring the D&D® Gazetteers  
(without getting lost)

**"Yeah, sure. The D&D® game? It's all about going down holes in the ground; whacking the monsters, and grabbing their treasures. Once you've done it often enough, you go up a level. You get tougher and tougher, and go down deeper and deeper holes. The monsters get bigger and bigger, and one day you wake up as an Immortal. It's gross; how can you take 20th-level characters seriously, never mind 36th?"**

Is this what the D&D® game means to you? If so, think again, because the game is much, much more.


For a long time, the D&D® game has taken second place to the AD&D® game. The D&D® Basic Set gave guidelines for running classic dungeon adventures. With its clearly presented systems, it served as an ideal introduction for newcomers entering the world of fantasy role-playing. However, while guiding players and DMs through their first adventures, it lacked a consistent campaign setting in which to base future adventures. The world surrounding the dungeon existed only in an abstract sense: It was a place you went to be healed between adventures and to buy more monster-bashing equipment.

The arrival of the Expert Set went a long way toward rectifying this situation. It opened up the great outdoors, allowing characters to move around aboveground and interact with the many diverse peoples populating the world. As they progressed in level, characters were able to settle down and build strongholds. But many gamers, instead of continuing their characters into the realms of Expert play, opted for the more detailed and complex systems of the AD&D® game.

The reasons for this were many and diverse. The AD&D® game was perceived as being more "solid" and "real!" It offered more dramatic settings and opportunities for character development. TSR, Inc. supported the AD&D® game more than the







D&D® game, offering adventure modules galore, a campaigning area in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting, and the steady flow of hardback rule books focused the spotlight firmly on the AD&D® game. But all was not quiet on the D&D® game front.

The Companion Set, while primarily dealing with characters of levels 15-25, contained lots of information relevant to lower-level characters. Specialist character classes appeared; the druid (a subclass of the cleric), and the paladin, the avenger, and the knight (all subclasses of the fighter) were all available to characters of 9th level and above.

The founding of a stronghold and the development of its surrounding territory was given detailed treatment in the rules on dominions. Dominions could be clearly defined and made an integral part of a campaign. As well as clearing out the evil monsters which lurked in their new holdings, characters could become involved in developing and expanding the lands under their control.

While characters could still participate in dungeon and wilderness adventures, they could also lead armies using the Companion Set's War Machine rules. This set of abstract rules made it possible to maneuver armies around the countryside and fight large battles in an easy and systematic fashion. If world domination was one of your character's goals, then the War Machine gave you the opportunity to indulge in warfare to your heart's content.

With the extra material of the Companion Set, the D&D® game suddenly developed into a very comprehensive system, offering opportunities and systems that the AD&D® game had only hinted at. The development of the D&D® game did not end there, either.

The Master Set described life at the megalevels of play: 26th-36th. Characters were shown how they could strive for and achieve Immortality. The day-to-day life of a high-level adventurer was concerned more with founding a dynasty, traveling to other planes, and becoming involved in the epic struggles that threatened to tear the world apart, rather than with the accumulation of loot and power.

Detailed rules for becoming highly skilled in various weapons meant that a character's combat options mushroomed dramatically, including skills at disarming, deflecting missile attacks, and inflicting additional damage. These extra abilities were available to lower-level characters too, so there was no need to wait until 25th level to gain all this new stuff.

After Master-level play, characters could continue their adventuring careers by shaking off their mortal forms and becoming Immortals. This was a whole new ball game. The Immortal Set marked a character's progression into the cosmos, as earthly forms were left behind and characters soared into the vast beyond. The PCs' world was merely one of many, and its significance dwindled rapidly.

While all this development was taking place, the game world grew slowly. It started in the Expert Set and module X1 *The Isle of Dread*. A world map, accompanied by a few paragraphs on each country, loosely defined the adventuring lands. The world was sketchy in the extreme, leaving DMs to flesh out the vital details needed to bring it to life. As time went by, various modules introduced new areas and developed others. The land of Norwald first appeared in module CM1 *The Test of the Warlords*. Norwald formed the basis for the published Companion and Master adventures. The ancient enmity between the empires of Thyatis and Alphatia provided plenty of opportunity for characters to engage in epic struggles.

The Companion Set, while opening up Norwald, set aside attention on the "Expert World." It was assumed that the Expert World was deserted by Companion-level PCs as they ventured north into Norwald for high-level challenges.

Then the Companion and Master PCs came back to the Expert World (now the "Known World"), and great changes took place in the realms of the D&D® game. The background to the D&D® game's Known World is being expanded dramatically. Countries that were previously described in only a paragraph or two now get the full treatment. Each country has been developed into a detailed setting for characters of all levels, with notes on local economics, culture, society, and politics, and with lots of adventure ideas to show how you can use all this new stuff.

## The Gazetteers

The D&D® game Known World is being showcased in a series of Gazetteers. The following gazetteers are available:

- GAZ1 *The Grand Duchy of Karameikos*;
- GAZ2 *The Emirates of Ylaruam*;
- GAZ3 *The Principalities of Glantri*;
- GAZ4 *The Kingdom of Ierendi*;
- GAZ5 *The Elves of Alfheim*;
- GAZ6 *The Dwarves of Rockhome*;
- GAZ7 *The Northern Reaches*;
- GAZ8 *The Five Shires*;
- GAZ9 *The Minrothad Guilds*;
- GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*;
- GAZ11 *The Republic of Darokin*; and
- GAZ12 *The Golden Khan of Ethengar*

In addition, a boxed set describing the warring empires of Thyatis and Alphatia, *Dawn of the Emperors*, is scheduled for release in August.

The benefits to both DMs and players of a developed campaign world are tremendous. The Known World acts as a backdrop to adventures, providing color and a meaningful rationale for adventures. While base greed can be used to motivate characters, it pales in comparison to the thrills gained from undertaking an epic quest to save the local populace from death or imprisonment.

A developed setting also provides great scope for role-playing, as the player characters deal with the setting's inhabitants

on a day-to-day basis. The DM can create adventures by drawing on the worlds political and geographic backgrounds. These adventures will be infused with a greater importance than those that simply start the PCs outside of the dungeon entrance. NPCs encountered in one adventure can reappear later in the campaign, helping the DM to maintain consistency and providing friends and enemies with which the PCs can interact. The PCs' actions affect more than their immediate surroundings, and their struggles can take place within a coherent setting. Almost everything a player character does has some influence on the world. Whether Basic-level adventurers clear out a horde of goblin raiders, or Master-level characters thwart the schemes of some powerful Immortal, their actions shape the world and make it a believable place in which to adventure.

Without a world setting to draw upon, the DM is placed under an immense burden. The DM must define territorial boundaries, populate the lands of the world, create the beliefs and practices of the inhabitants and, at the same time, design adventures to challenge the player characters. This cannot be done overnight; it takes long hours of careful design work—work that many DMs simply don't have the time to do. The availability of ready-made settings goes a long way

toward reducing the work load.

The Gazetteers take the crushing burden of world creation off the DM's shoulders, and they do so without asking the DM to surrender any creativity in the process. A DM armed with the Gazetteers is able to draw on the background to create some truly memorable adventures. The DM is not restricted by the contents of the individual Gazetteers. It's your world, and you can do what you want with it.

Whether you like what you read or not, the Gazetteers serve as a springboard to the imagination. If you don't like something, go ahead and change it. If something strikes you as ill-defined, simply develop it until it matches your requirements. The Gazetteers provide the raw material, and you can work this into any finished product desired. So what's the D&D® world like?

### The Known World

Two great empires dominate the Known World: Alphatia and Thyatis. Their wars shape global events, and their spies and envoys fuel existing political tensions everywhere.

The mighty empire of Alphatia is the oldest in the world. It lies to the east of the main continent, across the Sea of Dawn. Alphatia is ruled by a council of 1,000 36th-level wizards and, as can be expected, it relies on its impressive magical abilities to impose its will.

The empire of Thyatis is currently 1,000 years old. Since its founding, Thyatis has expanded rapidly and has clashed with Alphatia on more than one occasion. Thyatis is ruled by a triad of powers—theocratic, magical, and military—all headed by an emperor, Thincol the Brave. Thincol possesses a keen soldier's mind, but he also has a reputation for being cruel and merciless—traits that he employs to great effect. Many of the Empire's battles have been won through treachery and deceit, and Thincol's spies and agents can be found fermenting dissent throughout the Known World.

An uneasy balance of power exists between the two empires. Neither empire is keen to wipe the other out, but minor wars occur frequently in outlying areas. Alphatia, with its vast array of magical abilities, has won most of these small wars but, undaunted, Thyatis still continues to flex its might.

While the mighty empires continue to glare at each other across the Sea of Dawn, life goes on as normal in the minor states of the world. Not as yet directly threatened by the machinations of the great powers, these states have their own internal concerns to occupy them, concerns that are many and diverse. The states of the first four Gazetteers will serve as examples.

**The Grand Duchy of Karameikos:** The state most closely tied to a great power, Karameikos is ruled by the Thyatian

noble, Duke Stephan Karameikos.

Exchanging his ancestral lands 30 years ago for sole sovereignty of an undeveloped Thyatian colony, Duke Stephan is now attempting to transform Karameikos into a developed state. Many Thyatian nobles have accompanied Duke Stephan to his new lands, where they now impose their will upon the native Traldarian peoples. Following a bloody and unsuccessful rebellion, the Traldarians have come to accept their new rulers. Baronies have been granted by Duke Stephan to many of his Thyatian followers, but large tracts of land remain undeveloped and unallocated.

Largely a wilderness setting, Karameikos is a good setting for low-level adventures. Here, low-level PCs can make names for themselves, and in time they may even be given a land grant by the Duke. Until that day, adventurers will be kept busy clearing out the monsters that lurk in the forests and mountains of Karameikos.

**The Emirates of Ylaruam:** This desert land was the home of Al-Kalim, the prophet and divine leader of the Ylaruam peoples. Now worshiped as an Immortal, Al-Kalim gave the people of Ylaruam their codes of conduct and the dream of the Desert Garden. One day, the desert will bloom and all the prophet's people will benefit from its fruit.

Within the Emirates of Ylaruam can be found desert warriors, cultured city dwellers, merchants, and the mighty efreet. A code of personal conduct and honor marks the people of this land. No social interaction takes place before certain rites and customs have been performed. Etiquette is very important, and it is disgraceful to press any kind of business before the required formalities have been carried out. This is a culture where outsiders are at a distinct disadvantage. Ignorant of the ways of the peoples (and also being unbelievers), outsiders are faced with some great role-playing challenges as they try to avoid offending the locals.

This land of burning sands offers adventures in the mold of the Arabian Nights—battling evil efreet, discovering lost cities buried under the desert, and becoming involved in duels of honor. True followers of Al-Kalim respect and follow the code of the *Nahmeh*, the sacred book. By 'keeping the *Nahmeh's* teachings in their hearts, true believers can expect to rise to positions of power and be honored guests throughout the Emirates.

**The Principalities of Glantri:** A land where magic use is a developed art is sure to be a fascinating place, and Glantri certainly is. To be a cleric in Glantri is to court death, for clerics are outlawed. (The punishment for breaking the law is death.) The land of Glantri is ruled by powerful mages. As a consequence, magic and its effects are everywhere. *Continual light* spells illuminate Glantri City at night, and invisible stalkers are frequently encountered going about their masters' business. Guilds of monster hunters and monster



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Glantri has great potential for magic-users. They can enter the Great School of Magic and learn new spell-casting techniques. These techniques allow students to cast spells while moving, to conjure companion creatures or familiars, or to become so fast at spell-casting that they are able to cast spells in combat before initiative is rolled.

These impressive abilities are only some of the basic techniques practiced at the Great School of Magic. By entering one of the seven specialized and secret orders that operates at the school, students have access to further special abilities. These include the crafts of Alchemy, Dracology, Elementalism, Cryptomancy, Illusionism, Necromancy, and Witchcraft. The crafts, however, are not freely available. A sponsor must first be found, and entry to one order precludes access to all of the others.

Magic-users will also find that the Great School of Magic holds the key to political power. No one may become a noble in Glantri without being at least a 9th-level magic-user. Power is there for the taking, if you know how to wield it effectively.

Glantri is unusual in other ways, too. Vampires and werewolves are common, as are Scottish and French refugees from a parallel world with similarities to medieval Europe. Vampires and werewolves may be nothing new in D&D® game campaigns, but where else are they actually part of the ruling elite? Where else does a real Immortal dabble directly in the affairs of the land?

At the high levels of state, the noble families constantly vie with each other for political supremacy. The means are often exotic, and political intrigues galore make Glantri an exciting, if dangerous, place.

**The Kingdom of Ilerendi:** These 10 islands are the holiday isles of the Known World, and the Kingdom of Ilerendi caters to all holiday tastes. Player characters can find lots of different ways to amuse themselves; they can sip cocktails by the sea, bask in the sun, go on safari, or visit an adventurers' theme park!

Adventurers looking for a kingdom for a year should check out Ilerendi. Each year, a group of adventurers compete to become the monarchs of the kingdom. At the end of the Annual Royal Tournament, the highest scoring male and female contestants are acknowledged as the islands' rulers. Adventurers may compete each year, so it is possible for proficient adventurers to continue to rule from year to year. Those who don't do well enough to become the rulers of the isles may become members of the Adventurers' Club. Club members are expected to go on quests and aid the kingdom in times of need. This makes the club a good source of adventures and assures that Ilerendi always has a ready pool of experienced helpers to deal with any problem at hand. To maintain their memberships in the Adventur-

ers' Club, characters must compete in the Royal Tournament each year—but as this could result in one of them becoming the king or queen, it's hardly a problem.

More traditional adventures can be found on and around the Ilerendi Isles. Pirates ply the seas and hide out in secret coves. A few of the islands are troubled by undead spirits and another two islands are off-limits. Finding out why, and then going to explore these islands, will provide quite a few exciting adventures.

As can be seen from even a brief survey of a few of the Gazetteers, the lands of the Known World possess their own unique cultures and societies. Each country has distinctive traits that set it apart from the others, and these diverse backgrounds add a new dimension to role-playing.

Instead of simply meeting a fighter, PCs can encounter Hazad Al-Rammam, Defender of the Faithful and Scourge of the Infidel, a name that conjures up visions of exotic cultures and a fanatical devotion to his religion. To handle Hazad Al-Rammam, player characters have to tread carefully to avoid offending his sensibilities. To do so, they need some knowledge of the society of the Emirates of Ylaruam. Without this knowledge, the player characters may make some social blunder that results in them exchanging a potentially powerful ally for a powerful enemy.

Similar problems can occur in Glantri. Usually, no one thinks twice about slaying a werewolf or disposing of a sleeping vampire. "Quick, smash the stake in before it wakes up! Vampires and werewolves are monsters, aren't they? They deserve to die!" But if the vampire or werewolf is actually a leading noble of the realm, there will be a horde of relatives and their retainers out to get you. You'd better think twice before accepting what appears to be a simple mission to end the "werewolf menace." The person hiring you could easily be doing so for political reasons, getting you to do their dirty work while setting you up to take the rap for a political assassination.

Just in case you thought things might be a bit more clear-cut in Karameikos, consider a situation in which a local lord is oppressing the peasants and carrying out unspeakable acts in his castle. Looks like a job for a bunch of adventurers—except that the noble in question is Duke Stephan's cousin. Going into the evil lords castle to put an end to his evil schemes may win you the friendship of 'the oppressed peasants, but the Duke is not going to be pleased that you've bumped off one of his relatives.

Ilerendi, the holiday kingdom, is no less an intriguing place for adventurers. Schemes and counterschemes are woven in this pleasant locale. Everything is not always as it seems. Beware of adventures offered to you on a plate; an apparently straightforward mission may involve you in any number of subtle plots. Then again,

it may be as straightforward as it appears. Only time will tell.

Loaded with intrigue, politics, and colorful NPCs, the Gazetteers provide the background that the DM need only flesh out. But, it's not only the NPCs who benefit from the Gazetteers; player characters can also be just as colorful and detailed.

## Characterization

Demi-human characters have always had their own special abilities and traits to set them apart from the other races. Human PCs, however, were rarely differentiated by beliefs and culture, with only alignment serving as a guide to how a character should act. Now PCs can have real backgrounds and origins as well. They need never again be simply two-dimensional killing machines. The Gazetteers provide all the essential information needed to bring adventurers and their homelands to life.

The background gives characters a sense of belonging. Characters can have proper origins, families, and friends. Physical appearances, cultural traits, styles of dress, lists of common names within an area: All of these help to define characters and make them more than just a set of statistics. Using these guidelines, a player character from one country is going to be different in outlook and appearance than one from another land. Characterization can also be greatly varied within a country. Just because your characters come from the same land doesn't mean they have to be exactly the same. People from the same town in our own world vary greatly, and this is also the case in the D&D® game Known World.

**Local beliefs:** Each Gazetteer describes the local beliefs of the people who inhabit the lands in question. Players should know of these beliefs, even if they do not adhere to them. As the Gazetteers are primarily designed for DMs to use, it's not a good idea to let the players read all of them. The DM should hold a private briefing with each player and pass the information on, either verbally or by showing the player selected and photocopied bits of the Gazetteer. By being selective in what's given out, the DM can tailor each character's knowledge of the campaign background.

For example, human characters from Karameikos can be of Traldarian descent, Thyatian descent, or of mixed blood. The DM may either pick the characters' backgrounds or allow them to roll on the character background tables. Once a group's background has been determined, the DM can then inform the characters of their general appearance. Traldarians tend to be fairly small, with a light build and a pale complexion. Thyatians are larger than Traldarians, but coming from a cosmopolitan background, they tend to be diverse in their appearance.

Once racial type has been determined, it's a simple matter to give the character a

home area and then to decide on what a character knows about the area. A Traldarian from a remote area may have had little or no contact with the Thyatian overlords, and would thus be ignorant of their beliefs and culture. He would, however, be very knowledgeable about Traldarian beliefs and culture. This character would be provided with the history of Karameikos, and with information on the Traldarian Church and Traldar beliefs. A Thyatian character would know all about the history of Karameikos from the side of the Thyatian overlords. Such a character might, however, be totally ignorant of Traldarian beliefs and simply believe the people to be uncouth barbarians. A character of mixed blood, as well as having the physical traits of both races, would know about both cultures. She would be conversant in the teachings of the Church of Karameikos and the Traldarian Church. If these three characters meet, they could role-play the meeting, thus drawing on their knowledge of the land. Each culture could then find out about the other during play.

Characters do not have to adhere to the ruling beliefs of their culture; they could play atypical characters who reject all of their society's beliefs, or accept the majority while rejecting others. They may decide that another culture has aspects that they would like to copy. Anything is possible.

All that's needed to achieve this is some basic background knowledge for the players to use. Alternatively, the PCs could all take on the role of Thyatians and discover the Traldarian beliefs by interacting with NPCs. Or they could be all Traldarians: Some might accept their Thyatian overlords, while others might go out of their way to cause trouble.

Whatever method is chosen, there are vast opportunities for PCs to interact with each other and with NPCs. By drawing on their own backgrounds and physical appearances, players have lots of hooks around which to build their characters. They need never again be merely Fred the Fighter from the village down the road. They will be Karameikans of every possible sort.

Demi-humans, depending on their origins, could be ignorant of the ways of the humans, or be conversant with the basic background. I favor keeping demi-humans in the dark about human ways; that way the demi-humans can discover a world which is as alien and as exciting as the darkest dungeon.

The prevailing social trends will do much to shape a character's development. Glantrian citizens tend to pursue magic above all else. Ierendians, whether from native stock or from one of the many immigrant continental families, are fun-loving adventure seekers. In Karameikos,

the concerns of characters revolve around carving out the land from the wilderness and gaining political status. In Ylaruam, religion and honor dictate most of a character's actions.

Each Gazetteer provides plenty of guidelines and rules to assist DMs in creating the tone and texture of the land. Adventure outlines show how adventures can be easily created out of the background. Once the players start developing their character's personalities in play, you'll find that adventures begin to start of their own accord. There's nothing quite like well-defined characters and a good background for creating subplots all over the place. Defined characters tend to have interesting motivations, and they'll often adventure for other reasons than just to grab the loot.

Family ties always make for good adventure openings. Only the most heartless character is going to refuse a request for aid from a family member. A mission to rescue one's kinsman from an evil vizier makes for a much more interesting adventure than merely being asked to rescue some unknown messenger from the vizier's dungeon. If the kinsman is killed and the vizier flees before the adventurers arrive, vengeance will be a high priority for the bereaved PC. This is the kind of motivation that players love and that makes a DM's job that much easier.

Characters may even be from overseas. They will still need some background on their home areas, but they will be more or less ignorant of the new land before them! What holds true in their own land may not apply in another country. By interacting with the inhabitants, the foreigners will slowly discover the local ways. Role-playing encounters are enriched, and a whole new area of play is opened up.

Travelers arriving in the Emirates of Ylaruam will have to adjust to the fanciful speech of the inhabitants and to their rigid customs. The suspicion directed at all unbelievers must also be overcome. Citizens of the Emirates who visit Karameikos will discover a land where social graces and honor are unimportant. The players can then role-play their characters' amazement at the uncouth ways of the infidel.

### Room to grow

As a general rule, low-level campaigns are best set within one area, allowing the characters to become familiar with it and establish their local reputations. Once characters are conversant with a setting, they will treat it as home, making any threat to that home very meaningful. Just because the campaign is set in one area, there's no reason not to have the PCs encounter Ylaruam traders, Glantrian wizards, and Ierendian adventurers. Any visit to a busy port can involve an encounter with an interesting foreigner. The PCs could uncover the schemes of a Glantrian wizard, or discover a Magian Fire Worshiper from Ylaruam attempting to open a

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gate to the plane of Fire.

Another good use of the Gazetteers is as a backdrop to a more wide-ranging campaign. This can involve PCs of any level. All that's needed is a reason for them to travel. This can be a simple desire to see what life in the next country is like, or part of an epic, continent-spanning campaign. The following are adventure outlines that may be developed as a means of drawing PCs to distant lands.

*The runaway:* A nobleman's younger son has run away from home. His distraught parents engage the adventurers to bring him back. The adventurers must follow the son's trail into a neighboring state and convince him to return home. Extra complications can easily arise if, for example, the son has fled to Glantri and the adventuring party contains one or more clerics. While searching for the son, the clerics have to avoid being discovered by the Glantrian mages.

*Young and in love:* A nobleman's daughter has eloped with the son of a village blacksmith. The two young lovers board a vessel and travel to a distant land, where they gain the protection of a powerful NPC who refuses to let them be taken back home, either for sinister reasons or out of a desire to protect them. The adventurers can try to persuade the foreign NPC to change his mind, or they can attempt to take the young lovers back by force. Either way, the PCs must deal with the local customs and become familiar with the new country. The young couple may even decide to slip away from their protector and head for another land.

*The emissary:* The adventurers could be appointed as emissaries and sent on an important and delicate mission to another country. While enjoying the status of emissaries, the adventurers also have to ensure that they do not bring their own nation into disgrace, Module X10 *Red Arrow, Black Shield*, although set 200 years after the current date of the Gazetteers, involves the characters in just such a mission. In this module, the adventurers travel from country to country in an attempt to gain allies in the Known Worlds first world war.

*The repo men:* A magical item has been stolen from a powerful Glantrian noble who hires the adventurers to repossess it. The adventurers must travel to a neighboring country and attempt to retrieve the item from the thief. To add extra spice, the thief could have been hired by an important NPC who does all in his power to retain the item, even going as far as framing the adventurers for a murder or another robbery.

*Frying tonight:* A group of Magian Fire Worshipers from the Emirates of Ylaruam are attempting to open a number of gates to the plane of elemental Fire. These gates are situated in remote areas of various countries. If the gates are opened, large numbers of fire elementals will enter the Prime Material plane and wreak havoc

throughout the Known World. The characters can discover the existence of this plot and then travel around the world dealing with the Fire Worshipers. Adventures can revolve around attempting to prevent the opening of the gates and to close any that have already been opened.

*Fifth column:* Thyatian agents are engaged in fomenting unrest in a number of countries. They plan to destabilize the countries in question, giving Thyatis an excuse to invade. The adventurers can learn of this plot by various means and then seek to expose the agents' schemes.

*Murder most foul:* A murder has been committed and the murderer, or a witness to the murder, has recently left the country. The PCs must track down the murderer or witness and bring him back (or at least interview him). This may prove to be a delicate task, especially if the person is of high rank in his own country.

### Choosing a setting

With all the settings available, the DM has a wide range of choices in the tone and location of his campaign. Each Gazetteer also has a number of special rules that are usable in the other settings. Kara-meikos has a simple skill system that can easily be expanded to cover other cultures. Ylaruam has its own skill system and a ready-to-use village that characters from other cultures can explore. Glantri's special magic system can be made available to non-Glantrian magic-users by having a teacher from the Great School of Magic set up a school in another country of the Known World. The way in which Glantri's mages react to this could form the basis for a number of adventure sessions, as they set out to close down the renegade school. Glantri also offers variant rules for creating magical items and spells. This system can easily be used by magic-users seeking to expand the magic powers at their disposal. If large naval battles are something you've always wanted to run, then a copy of *The Kingdom of Ierendi* will be invaluable, as it contains excellent rules for conducting sea battles, including ship counters representing each nation's fleet. Later Gazetteers offer even more variety.

### Conclusion

The Gazetteers are a long overdue addition to the D&D® game. They greatly increase the role-playing potential and add great depth to any campaign's background. There are plenty of good ideas in the Gazetteers, making them great assets to any fantasy campaign. Whether you play the AD&D® game, the D&D® game, or another fantasy system entirely, the Gazetteers have something to offer for every one. Your adventures need never again take place against a vaguely defined fantasy background. The world is now rich, diverse, and above all, fun.

# YOU'RE LOOKING AT A LETHAL WEAPON.



Fact is, more Americans may die by the fork than by any other weapon. That's because so many of them use it irresponsibly. Like to fill up on high-fat, high-cholesterol foods. Foods that can load the blood with cholesterol, which can build up plaque in their arteries, increasing their risk of heart attacks and threatening their lives. So next time you pick up a fork, remember to handle it as you would any other weapon. For self-defense, not self-destruction.



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WE'RE FIGHTING FOR  
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"We're fed up, and we're not going to take any more!" The bad guys marshal their forces for the assault on Retirement Village.

# Through the Looking Glass

## Urban renewal at Retirement Village

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With the 1989 GEN CON® games fair (and all of its miniatures events) on the horizon, it seemed like a good idea to present a lively fantasy miniatures battle. "Retirement Village" was offered as a short but active event at the last major Gamefest given by our club, the Gamemaster's Guild of Waukegan. The scenario could accommodate up to 10 people (one gamer per adventurer or group of monsters). It was

designed to be a thinking-gamer's battle as well as a slugfest. The outcome depended upon skill, luck, and good military planning.

The chief planner and judge for this event was our club president, Chris Clark. Chris designs products for his own company, Inner City Games; he has created many smooth-running but slightly devious scenarios. This one was no exception.

In this scenario, the monsters are simply

tired of being kicked around. They live in their lairs and gather the belongings of those interlopers who burglarize and terrorize the monsters' happy homes. Nevertheless, because the monsters do away with those home-wreckers, they are the "bad guys"! Those craven adventurers who loot and pillage the monsters' caverns are the "heroes"!

But the monsters have discovered the whereabouts of one of the first groups that looted their lairs and started the stream of vandals. Maybe if this group is destroyed, the honor of the caverns will be redeemed and further adventuring will be discouraged!

The battle report that follows is a combination of players' action reports and the after-game report by Chris Clark. While I have changed and shortened some of the text, I present you with what I think is an amusing battle.

### Scenario set-up

Modified BATTLESYSTEM™ supplement rules for the AD&D® game were used for this scenario. Some variations in the AD&D® game rules were also applied that were used in the local campaign. Due to aging effects on the retired characters, some of their statistics were not in line with AD&D® game norms.

The battleground for this scenario was a 6' X 8' table covered with a green felt surface, with one large forest and some small hills. There were no rivers but there were several thickets to limit movement. In addition, there were several small clumps of trees scattered around the area.

In recreating Retirement Village itself, the setting should consist of no more than four or five buildings. We used Greenfield's 15mm Inns as our primary structures, with two medieval buildings to





"But the good guys are *supposed* to beat up the monsters!" The aging heroes (and their young allies) prepare their town's defenses.

round out the town. We picked Greenfields products because they are well made and light, as well as easy to paint.

The village should be set up in the northwest corner of the board, with the woods to the east exactly two movement turns away. The adventurers start in the buildings in town, and the monsters start on the edge of the eastern woods. Reinforcements for the adventurers should start just behind the woods to the south, only five and a half turns away from Retirement Village.

The figures we used included those from Minifigs, Heritage, Ral Partha, and Grenadier; many of the figures are no longer in production. The figures can be in either 15mm or 25mm scale. See your local hobby store for assistance. You can substitute new monsters or characters, but balance the new figures' powers to fit the scenario.

#### Forces of "good"

**Army 1—Heavy lancers (16):** AC 2 (men in plate mail with shields), 3 (horses with plate mail barding); MV 18" (9" charge bonus may be used once); zero-level fighters on medium war horses (HD 2 + 2); hp 7 (each man), 11 (each horse); #AT 4 or 1: Dmg 1-8 (sword)/1-6/1-6/1-3 or 2-12 (medium lance); AL LG (men), N (horses).

**Army 2—Medium swordsmen (6):** AC 4 (chain mail with shields); MV 9" (4½" charge bonus may be used once); zero-level fighters; hp 7 (each); #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (sword); AL LG.

**Army 2—Medium spearmen (6):** AC 4 (chain mail with shields); MV 9" (4½" charge bonus may be used once); zero-level fighters; hp 7 (each); #AT 1; Dmg 1-8 (spear) or 2-16 (when set against charge); AL LG.

**Army 3—Heavy infantry (9):** AC 2; MV 6" (3" charge bonus may be used once); zero-level fighters; hp 7 (each); #AT 1; Dmg 1-12 (pole axe); AL LG.

**Bartholomew the Bard** (human): AC 5 (*leather armor* + 3 and *ring of protection* +3); MV 12"; Bard14; hp 56; #AT 1; Dmg by weapon type (unarmed) or spell use; S 10, I 8, W 12, D 7, C 10, Ch 7, Co 9; AL NG; Charm ability 24%; Age 59; magical scroll containing *fireball*, *ice storm*, and *cloudkill* (one use each; roll vs. intelligence on 1d20 for scroll use).

**Dula the Dwarf** (dwarf): AC 3 (-2 to be hit by giant class; plate mail); MV 6"; F9; hp 48; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1-8 (heavy crossbow, 12" range) or 1-6/1-6 (hand axe, can attack twice); S 10, I 8, W 5, D 9, C 9, Ch 9, Co 8; AL CG; Age 296; hand axe and heavy crossbow.

**Skyle the Bold** (human): AC 2 (*plate mail* + 1); MV 9"; F10; hp 45; #AT 1; Dmg 2-9 (axe); S 9, I 9, W 8, D 10, C 6, Ch 9, Co 12; AL LG; Age 85; *battle axe* +1.

**Amana the Raider** (half-elf): AC 2 (*chain mail* +2 and shield); MV 12"; Ran8; hp 29; #AT 1; Dmg 2-9 (spear); S 9, I 9, W 7, D 7, C 9, Ch 10, Co 7; AL CG; Age 201; can cast *faerie fire* (roll vs. intelligence on 1d20); *spear* +1.

**Moose** (human): AC 0 (*plate mail* +2 and shield); MV 9"; F10; hp 80; #AT 1; Dmg 2-9 or 2-13 (sword); S 9, I 6, W 10, D 9, C 9, Ch 6, Co 5; AL NG; Age 79; long *sword* +1.

#### Forces of "evil"

**Kobolds** (10): AC 7; MV 6"; HD ½; hp 3 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; AL LE; MM/57.

**Gnolls** (12): AC 3; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 11 each; #AT 1 or 2; Dmg 1-12 or i-6/1-6 (arrows); AL CE; MM/46.

**Bugbears** (10): AC 5; MV 9"; HD 3 + 1; hp 22 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1-12; AL CE; MM/12.

Troll: AC 4; MV 12"; HD 6 + 6; hp 48;

#AT 3; Dmg 5-8/5-8/2-12; SA attack three opponents at once; SD regenerate 3 hp/round; AL CE; MM/97.

**Namor, the giant troll:** AC 4; MV 12"; HD 8; hp 62; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16; SD regenerate 2 hp/round, must be burned for 10 hp damage before being slain; AL CE; FF/90.

**Ogre:** AC 5; MV 9"; HD 4 + 1; hp 23; #AT 1; Dmg 1-10; AL CE; MM/75.

**Yulo, the umber hulk:** AC 2; MV 6"; HD 8 + 8; hp 64; #AT 3; Dmg 3-12/3-12/1-10; SA *confusion* gaze weapon used on any one opponent within 6", use once per melee round; AL CE; MM/98.

#### The battle

Bartholomew sat alone next to his second-floor window, idly gazing at the verdant woods outside of town. As he sat, he rocked, his bones creaking only slightly louder than the runners of his rocking chair as they touched the hardwood floor. Bartholomew had been reminiscing about the day 40 years ago when he and his friends went adventuring in the Dark Caverns. That fateful day had shaped the fortunes of his youth. He and his friends had destroyed the evil creatures dwelling in the Dark Caverns and carried home riches and wealth in volumes almost beyond belief. Even considering the four decades that had passed, Bartholomew fancied he could still take on a savage monster or two. Why, he could—

Bartholomew blinked. There was something at the edge of the peaceful woods. No! An ogre and a troll and a veritable army of monsters! Bartholomew shot from his chair and raced down the stairs to the street. He had to warn the town!

Namor, the giant troll, urged his troops on. Now, with the town in sight, nothing could forestall his vengeance. Forty years ago, Namor's father had died, bloody and

An aerial view of the "Retirement Village" playing area, with the village and heroes on the lower right, the monsters (in the woods) on the lower left, and the heroic armies in the distance.



crippled in his arms, babbling obscenities about a murderous party of human adventurers who had invaded the caverns his family called home. At that moment, Namor resolved that he would give all future adventurers pause before they marauded through his cave system again. It was time for a lesson to be taught.

In a far greater universe, the bounds of which were beyond the ken of both Namor and Bartholomew, four humans speculated on the potential futures of a group of brightly painted miniatures dispersed over a variegated-terrain playing board. Linda and John Rosen controlled the forces of good, while Milt Levenberg and Jason Hainer ran the forces of evil. Milt and Jason chuckled as they pushed the figures of a horrendous band of hideous monsters within striking distance of the sleepy, unsuspecting town. In one more turn, there would be a holocaust!

Linda and John, surveying with some apprehension the advance of the evil minions, hurriedly arranged for reinforcements, led by the sons and daughters of the retired adventurers residing within the town. Unfortunately, it would be several turns before these forces arrived. Bravely, John assembled Dula the Dwarf, Skyle the Bold, and Moose near the town wall to make a desperate stand using missile weapons. Their chances were slim, but the melee might stall the attackers for a time. Suddenly brightening, Linda rolled a die. With grim determination, she grasped the figure of Bartholomew and placed him once again in front of the second-floor window of the inn.

Racing to the street, Bartholomew called loudly for his aged friends—Dula the Dwarf, Skyle the Bold, and Moose. In the old days, these three had been deadly with

the long bow and crossbow. As the aging party approached, Bartholomew quickly informed the group of what he had seen. Taking command, Moose turned to the others and shouted, "I'll get da bows and meet youse guys at da town wall!" Feeling helpless, Bartholomew raced back up the stairs to his second-floor room. Near panic, he rifled through the papers on his desk. Suddenly, a scroll caught his attention. It was that old fireball scroll he had been saving for a special occasion. If only he could remember how it worked! Racking his brain, Bartholomew probed his senile memory; suddenly, the process was made clear to him. Chanting confidently, Bartholomew grasped the scroll firmly and pulled back the sash on the window.

Namor bellowed an ancient battle cry as he exhorted his troops to press their attack on the town. Another hundred yards and they'd be within the wall, free to wreak havoc among the townspeople. A small volley of arrows came from the town wall to harry the attackers, one of them striking and killing a kobold in the

front ranks. Laughing uproariously, Namor yelled at the defenders. "Hey, you got one!" Then from the corner of his eye, Namor noticed a small, red streak hurtling down on his group from the second-story window of the town's dilapidated inn. He jumped quickly to the right and flattened himself to the ground as the world exploded in a flash of fire and light.

The forces of good surveyed the scene with satisfaction. Against all odds, the fireball had worked. Their satisfaction, however, was short-lived. One after another, the monsters somehow managed to avoid the blast. Only a small number of the attackers were struck. With a sigh of regret, John pulled his figures back from the city wall, leaving only Dula the Dwarf to stem the onslaught. The forces of evil, as John had hoped, mistook this as a sign of weakness and pressed the attack, glee fully anticipating bloodshed. Seeing this, John concealed his mirth. Let them gloat, he thought; we have a plan. . . .

Namor stood up and dusted himself off. So, the enemy had magic! Still, the effects had not been that bad. All of the kobolds had been fried, and just about everyone had gotten a little roasted, but the marauders were, for the most part, intact. Namor would simply use a little more strategy. Motioning for the gnoll troops to come forward with their bows, Namor glanced over to the town wall to examine the strength of the defense. Unbelievably, the defenders were deserting the wall, leaving the town undefended! One gnarled old dwarf was now the remaining obstacle between Namor's army and their prize. Shouting orders for the gnolls to provide covering archery fire, he bellowed a shout of victory and ordered his troops to charge. Now was the time to bring on the



A new type of tent peg? No, just the half-elf Amana, following the sledgehammer blows of one of the local monsters.



little surprise he had prepared for this town. Raising his arm in a prearranged signal, Namor motioned to an umber hulk to begin tunneling under the town inn.

Skyle the Bold and Moose looked with dismay at the monsters advancing on the town. Although Bartholomew's unexpected *fireball* had made a spectacular display, it appeared to have barely scratched the main elements of the attacking army. "We can't hold da wall against dem guys!" Moose hollered to his comrades.

"I agree," said Skyle. "Come with me. I have a plan? Grabbing Moose's elbow, Skyle turned and ran toward the town tavern.

"I'm staying," Dula shouted. "I may get killed, but there's going to be some well-feathered gnolls here before I'm through." With no small effort, Dula cocked his heavy crossbow and loaded a bolt. There was a heavy *ping*, a short hiss, and a gnoll was down on the field. Rapidly, another bolt was loaded and another gnoll wished he hadn't made the trip. "Take that, ya rotten bums!" Dula cackled, recocking his crossbow for another shot. Gnolls, trolls, and an ogre swarmed toward the wall as Dula took careful aim. He knew he was having an effect, but how long could he hold off such a large force?

Skyle raced into the tavern, dragging Moose along behind him into the supply room. He remembered many late-night

card games played by the light of flickering lamps that used—there they were!—flasks of oil! Grabbing an armload of flasks and several cleaning rags, Skyle sped from the tavern across the street to the town's inn. Moose, following suit, grabbed some flasks and hurried after him.

But a figure stood at the door to the inn, holding a vicious-looking 6' spear. Startled at first, Skyle then recognized his friend, Amana the Raider.

"I'll hold them at the door!" Amana cried. "See if you can help Bartholomew. He's looking for other surprises in his bag of tricks." Motioning for Moose to follow, Skyle took the stairs two at a time while rapidly stuffing cleaning rags into his oil flasks. If he could get to a window on the second floor.

Linda regarded the figure of Bartholomew with hope. Once again, she rolled a die. Once again, against all odds, the result indicated success. . . .

Bartholomew was ready to tear out his hair. He had found another scroll in his belongings and had rushed to the window, certain he could vanquish the invading army. To his dismay, he found that he couldn't even make out the title on this scroll. Suddenly the magic came back to him—he remembered how the spell worked! Concentrating on the open area just outside the town wall, he intoned the arcane passages of the scroll. With a thun-

derclap, an *ice storm* rained down on the battle below.

Yulo, the umber hulk, ambled over to the stone wall of the town's inn and regarded it with his four green eyes, flexing his monstrous claws. So *these are the creeps who stole our family heirlooms so many years ago*, he thought. *I think it's time we stress-test this little town of theirs.* He bent down and literally dove into the ground, claws tearing through rock and earth as if through cloth and paper. A stream of stones and debris flew behind the monster as vengeance drove him on.

Skyle fumbled with the candle next to the second-floor window. Running up two flights of stairs had left him winded. He never remembered the inn stairs being quite so long. Finally, the wicks he had placed in the two flasks of oil caught fire. Aiming carefully, he dropped them on Namor's head far below. "Try regenerating this!" he chortled as the troll writhed and fell, his head a mass of flame.

Moose was glad he had decided to help Amana fend off the intruders at the door of the inn, for things were not going well there. Three gnolls, two bugbears, and a giant troll now faced them, and Amana had been badly hurt on the monsters' first charge. Then the giant trolls head burst into flame, and it fell and rolled on the ground. Glancing upward, Moose noticed

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Skyle grinning at him from a second-floor window.

Bartholomew staggered and gasped. For some reason, the whole inn was beginning to shake. Grabbing his last scroll, he ran for the stairs leading to the first floor.

The forces of good scrutinized the scene with mounting alarm. Many monsters had died, but there were still too many left alive for a group of over-the-hill adventurers to handle. Reaching for the figures of Dula and Skyle, John had them retreat from the fray. If only they could buy one more turn, then the reinforcements would arrive—enough cavalry and men-at-arms to cow a horde twice the size of that which they currently faced. "I've got one more ace up my sleeve," whispered Linda as she reached for a 20-sided die.

Though things were going well for them, the forces of evil were dissatisfied. The monsters could still escape if necessary, and a sharp lesson still needed to be taught here. Although the umber hulks burrowing would undoubtedly cause the collapse of the town inn, the cavalry would arrive the following turn. Milt reached for a gnoll figure.

Dernak, the gnoll, got an idea. He knew that retreating meant dying ignominiously at the hands of Namor, but that did not mean he wanted to face the swords and spears of the bloody-handed adventurers at the door of the inn. Chuckling maliciously, Dernak sparked a torch into guttering life. Jogging to the tavern, he dipped behind the bar and soon had a merry blaze licking at the ceiling. Racing out the back door, he followed a similar procedure at the stables. This would make big points with Namor when they got back home! Turning to search for still more buildings to burn, Dernak spied a short figure near the town wall; it pointed something at him. Dernak's last thought as the crossbow bolt slammed through his chest was that he had never really liked older humanoids; their meat was too tough and stringy and—

Dula decided it was time to retreat. He had skewered another gnoll with his crossbow but barely had the strength to reload it. He would hide in the stables where the enemy could only come at him one at a time. Shooting another gnoll by the stable door, Dula hunched down to run across the open space between the buildings. From the other side of the town wall, however, came the sounds of many running feet. Dula braced for an attack—but it was the army, commanded by Moose's son! The town was saved! But what was that smoke coming from the stable?

Namor got up from the ground and slapped the soot from his face. The fire had hurt him badly, but he didn't care. He entered the fight again and searched for an opening to deliver a death blow. Without warning, the inn in front of him began to crumble. With an ear-splitting groan, the building lurched at a crazy angle,

shuddered, and collapsed in a pile of smoky rubble. The monstrous shape of Yulo erupted from the ruins, engaging the human fighter called Moose. Seizing his opportunity, Namor swung his heavy club over his head.

Panic-stricken, Bartholomew read his scroll again for the *cloudkill* spell. But something went wrong—nothing was happening! Moose and Amana were fighting off savage monsters, and Skyle was going to help. The tavern and the stables were raging infernos. Bartholomew turned and ducked into the town hall. As he looked out the window of the building, he saw the giant troll strike Amana in the head. The force of the blow was so great that it drove Amana knee-deep into the dirt of the town square. With a scream of anguish, Bartholomew tore his worthless scroll to pieces and flung it to the floor. . .

The forces of evil congratulated each other on their master stroke. The town was mostly destroyed, and one of the adventurers had died a swift yet painful death. Although the cavalry was now entering the north side of town, the forces of evil had accomplished their purpose. It was time to retreat. . .

Namor quickly gathered his troops together and headed for the welcome darkness of the forest. Though they hadn't killed all of the thieving murderers, they had levelled the town and left a mangled corpse as a warning. Namor felt sure that the next generation of adventurers would think twice before choosing his cave system for a "day of fun"!

Late in the evening, Bartholomew surveyed the wrecked town through tear-streaked eyes. Skyle, Moose, and Dula had returned home with their children, but his friend Amana lay in the cold earth at his feet—a heavy price to pay for all their past glories.


Let us hear about your own miniatures battles, and let us know what you think about the ones you see in this column. Comments and requests for further information should be sent to: The Gamemaster's Guild of Waukegan, 1411B Washington Street, Waukegan IL 60085 (halfway between Chicago and Milwaukee). Or call us at: (312) 336-0790. You might find me at the miniatures-events area at the 1989 GEN CON® games fair.

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# Watch Your Step!

by Thomas M. Kane

Mines and traps in the TOP SECRET®  
and TOP SECRET/S.I.™ games

*Edwin saw no guards. He could, however, see the crash site ahead under the predawn sky. The tilted tail fin pointing at the heavens, a twisted wing wrapped around a tree, the dull black fuselage — the wrecked plane was surprisingly intact. But no guards. Why?*

*Clutching his pistol, Edwin left the safety of the bush and started out into the tall grass, moving slowly and keeping low. You'd think that a crashed spy plane would draw all sorts of attention, he thought, but there wasn't — oops. He froze — then saw the object ahead was just a sign. How'd I miss that? Edwin crept forward until he could translate what it said.*



# DANGER! MIDPOINT OF MINEFIELD!

*Edwin closed his eyes and gripped his pistol until his hand turned white. There was no point in turning back now.*

*When he opened his eyes again, he crouched down and stared hard at the ground in the dim morning light. Then, with infinite caution, he continued his journey toward the plane wreck. He had come a long way. He had a long way to go.*

Both the TOP SECRET® and TOP SECRET/S.I.™ games give general descriptions of land mines, but neither includes any details on them. This article describes the uses and effects of different land mines (as well as other traps) for either game system. Note that the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game has rules on page 16 of the Administrators Guide which replace part of the "Finding them first" section herein; the rules on page 16 can also be used to see if a victim is caught by other traps.

For the most part, this article applies to campaigns using the TOP SECRET game. If you use the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game, simply treat all of this article's references to Physical Strength as STR, Coordination as REF, and Deactivation or Military Science/Weaponry AOKs as Demolitions skill.

## Mines and fuses

Mines come ready for use with their own fuses, but fuses can be purchased for building custom-made traps. For example, a charge could be wired some distance from the fuse so that the mine simply scares its victim. A string of explosives can be linked to one fuse and laid in a line, so that the mines will destroy a column of troops behind the victim. A land mine is often anchored with an extra fuse so that the mine goes off when it is lifted. Demolitions experts prefer to make their own mines to get exactly the right charge and fuse for the job. A character with a Military Science/Weaponry AOK above 60 can attach a different fuse or triggering device to any standard mine.

The tables in this article describe assorted land mines and fuses. They measure damage based on the explosive equivalent in pounds of plastique, except where otherwise stated. An Administrator should use the Complexity score when agents attempt to disarm a mine. The Complexity score is added to or subtracted from the

agent's Deactivation score. A mine triggered by "pull" uses tripwires; "pressure" mines are buried and go off when stepped on. When a range of triggering pressures is listed (for example, the M14 mine, which goes off under 20-35 lbs. pressure), the user simply chooses the degree of sensitivity he wants.

The United States and the Soviet Union make most land mines. Information on Soviet mines comes from the U.S. Army's "Mine Card Soviet." The GTA 5-10-10 mine card describes American mines.

Unless otherwise noted, one disarms a fuse by inserting a nail or rigid instrument into the safety hole, cutting any tripwires, and unscrewing the detonator. American mines (not fuses) usually contain dials which can be set to arm or disarm them.

## Soviet fuses

**MUV:** This fuse appears to be a thin metal tube, with thinner appendages at each end and a ring to which tripwires are attached to keep the charge from going off. A nearly identical fuse exists: the UV.

**Table 1**  
**Types of Mine Fuses**

Fuse	Length	Complexity	Triggered by:
<i>Soviet</i>			
MUV	5"	0%	2-lb. pull*
MV-5	3.5"	+10 %	26-lb. pressure
VPF	3"	+25 %	2 1/2-lb. pull
<i>American</i>			
M1	3'	0%	3- to 5-lb. pull
M1A1	3"	0%	10-lb. pressure
M3	5"	+25 %**	6- to 10-lb. pull
M5	6"/6"	+15 %**	special

\* The tripwire pulls off a cap, releasing the striker. It is possible to remove this cap and attach the fuse to a line so that *relaxing* the pressure detonates the mine.

\*\* A character needs tools, such as a lockpick set, to disarm this type of fuse.

**Table 2**  
**Types of Land Mines**

Mine	Weight (lbs.)	Explosive equivalent (lbs. plastique)	Complexity	Triggered by:
<i>Soviet</i>				
TM-38	11.4	6.5	- 50%	500-lb. pressure
TM-41	12	8.6	- 20%	400-lb. pressure
TMB-2	15.4	11	0%	26-lb. pressure
TMB-8	17.6	13	0%	26-lb. pressure
YaM-5	14.5	11	- 10%	300-lb. pressure
<i>American</i>				
M14	3.5	10 oz.	0%	20- to 35-lb. pressure
M15	30	22	+ 25%	300- to 400-lb. pressure
M16	8.25	special	+ 10%	special
M18A1	3.5	special	-	remote control
M19	28	21	+ 20%	350- to 500-lb. pressure
M21	18	10.5	0%/30%	special
M-23	11	special	0%	special
M24	special	special	special	special
M25	3.5	special	0%	14- to 26-lb. pressure
M49A1	3.5	special	+ 10%	1-lb. pull

**MV-5:** The MV-5 is a metal pipe with a plunger. One can disarm it simply by lifting the MV-5 from its charge and unscrewing its cap. The Soviets make a plastic version of the MV-5, called the MV-5K.

**VPF:** This fuse works underwater. It is a tiny steel device with several clamps and a ring for tripwires.

#### American fuses

**MI:** The MI is simply a metal tube with a tripwire ring.

**MIA1:** This tiny metal pipe contains several screw eyelets so it can be attached to an explosive. Its trap consists of a disc with three upward-pointing prongs. When something crushes these prongs, the fuse detonates.

**M3:** An M3 fuse detonates when pulled and released. It is very dangerous to disarm. The M3 is a steel pipe with one tapered end. The tripwire is attached to a small winch.

**M5:** The M5 appears to be a metal box. It goes off when lifted or jostled. The M5 can also be set to detonate when it is squeezed and released. This latter type is placed under a weight of 5 lbs. or more. When a victim lifts the weight, the mine blows up. This latter fuse type could also be used to make the mine arm itself when an enemy soldier steps on it, then go off when the victim lifts his foot.

#### Soviet mines

**TM-38:** Looking rather like a suitcase, the TM-38 is a metal box with an X cut in the top to weaken the metal. It is about 9" X 9" in size. Impact or pressure crushes the mine's lid, triggering the fuse. The TM-38 is usually booby-trapped; it often contains devices which detonate the mine if it is lifted, if the cover is removed, or if the fuse is taken out. TM-38s are never disarmed in the field.

**TM-41:** This is a metal can about 1' wide. The two handles on a TM-41 make it look like an old-fashioned chamber pot. A TM-41 has a pressure cap that can be loosened by twisting; then the fuse can be pulled out. However, TM41 fuses often stick—and pulling can set off the mine. Two

similar models exist, the TM44 and TM46.

**TMB-2:** This thick, round mine often rots in moist soil. For game purposes, there is a cumulative 10% chance per week that a TMB-2 will disintegrate. The TMB-2 is made of asphalt-impregnated cardboard. Its fuse can be screwed out. Another Soviet mine, the TMB-1, is nearly identical.

**TMB-8:** Except as noted in Table 2, this mine can be treated as a TMB-2.

**YaM-5:** The YaM-5 is a wooden, box-shaped mine that explodes when its lid is crushed. To disarm it, an agent removes the nail or wooden peg from the striker, opens the lid, and takes out the fuse. The Soviet use many similar mines with different explosive charges.

#### American mines

**M14:** Turning the arming dial frequently on an M14 may cause the dial to wear out and become stuck in an armed position. Each time an agent adjusts the dial, there is a cumulative 5% chance that it will stick. This mine is a steel disc with several tabs.

**M15:** The M15 looks like a smooth, steel disc.

**M16:** The M16 mine bounds into the air and explodes, firing steel shrapnel in all directions. No arming dial is used with the M16; its fuse is simply screwed in. The M16 looks like a soup can and can be set to explode from pressure of 8-20 lbs. or from a pull of 3-10 lbs. on a tripwire. An M16 inflicts damage as a fragmentation grenade.

**M18A1:** The M18A1 is often called a claymore mine, and it is usually detonated by remote control with an MI or M3 fuse. Claymores are placed in a triangular pattern, with a row of three mines closest to the enemy, two more mines behind them, and one beyond that. The mines are 150' apart. An operator sits in a foxhole behind the minefield, detonating each row of mines as the enemy approaches it. Characters can set unmanned traps with the M18A1, using tripwires and fuses. This mine sprays 700 steel balls over a range of 820', across a 60° arc. Anybody within range suffers the effect of 1-10 gunshot

wounds. Claymores are rectangular, metallic, and appear slightly bent. Most are painted blue and labeled "front towards enemy!" Each stands on four wire legs. In Vietnam, the Viet Cong were known to reverse M18A1 mines so that they sprayed the operator.

**M19:** An M19 cannot be armed or disarmed without a special safety fork. The U.S. Army packages M19 devices with the fork attached. If an agent attempts to operate an M19 without a fork, its Complexity score is - 40%. This mine is plastic and shaped like a square box.

**M21:** This round mine has no arming dial; a fuse is simply screwed into the metallic mine itself. Two fuses are available, one which goes off under 290 lbs. of pressure, and the other (an upright rod) which fires the mine when brushed. The latter tilt-rod fuse will also detonate if the mine tilts 20°, which makes it perilous to disarm the mine. When the tilt-rod is employed, use the second Complexity figure in Table 2.

**M-23:** The M-23 is a highly restricted chemical-warfare device. It and its cousin, the MI, can be set for pressure detonation or remote control. Any of the poisons in the TOP SECRET™ rules can be used with an M-23. The M-23 is a round disc of thin metal with a raised lid in the center, having three stripes on one side.

**M24:** An M24 does not explode; it fires a missile. To use it, one camouflages a missile launcher near the area to be trapped and places a discriminator where the victim will pass. The discriminator looks like a loop of wire and is attached to the missile launcher by a cable. It can be set to fire at either tracked or wheeled vehicles. The effects of the missile are as per the descriptions of personal missile launchers in the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game's Equipment Inventory (page 5), in the TOP SECRET™ Companion (page 61), or in Desmond P. Varaday's article, "Now, That's Firepower!" in DRAGON® issue #102. The missile always hits. It is simple to dismantle an M-24, the act requiring no Deactivation check.

**M25:** These mines are sometimes nicknamed "Elsies." They cause 1 point of damage when stepped on and can penetrate a tire. An Elsie is a pointed metal device with a wire handle and no arming dial. One simply pushes the M25 into the ground to set it. The wire handle makes it easy to pull up.

**M49A1:** This is an automatic flare, not a weapon. It is attached to a post. The M49A1 illuminates an area 330 yards in radius. Characters who look directly at the flare will be blinded for 1-10 seconds. Anybody within 20' of the M49A1 must roll below his Willpower score to avoid looking at it.

#### Finding them first'

Avoiding traps and mines is the name of the game here. Whether driving or walking, an agent can detect mines by rolling

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his Observation score or lower on 1d100; this check must be made every 100'. Observation is incorrectly described on page 3 of the TOP SECRET™ Companion it equals one-half the sum of the agent's Willpower and Knowledge traits. A mine detector always detects metallic mines. Any other metal detector adds 30% to the user's Observation score when hunting for metal mines. To look for mines, an agent must move at one-quarter normal speed. An agent who is unaware of the presence of mines or moves faster through a minefield than he should must roll his Coordination or below on 1d100 every 10'; failure means he triggers a mine. Sometimes, of course, these rules will not apply. For example, if an agent attaches a tripwire to a door, opening the door detonates the mine — no dice need to be rolled.

To disarm a mine, a character must roll his Deactivation score or below on 1d100. If the roll is above the Deactivation score, the mine stays armed, and the agent must check his Deactivation again to keep the charge from firing. An agent may make only one attempt to disarm a given mine.

When U.S. Army personnel breach a minefield, 35 enlisted men, one noncommissioned officer, and one officer are required. The lead man operates a mine detector or probes with a stick. A soldier crawls behind him, laying tape to mark a

safe path and covering mines with a small dome. The NCO comes next. Two soldiers follow him and dispose of any mines; they also probe for mines the mine detector missed. A few mines are disarmed, but most are set off from safe ranges with a grappling hook. Sometimes the Army uses a powerful explosive to detonate a discovered mine. A back-up mine-detector operator comes next, then a radioman. The rest of the unit follows to replace any casualties suffered.

### Other traps

Land mines are only one way to entrap an area. Wooden punjee stakes are treated as caltrops, described on page 60 of the TOP SECRET™ Companion. The Viet Cong often poisoned punjee stakes with excrement and filth. A wound caused by such a device festers unless treated with antibiotics, and the victim loses 2-20 points of Physical Strength and Coordination. Medical treatment restores this damage at a rate of 1 point per day. Without treatment, 1-10 points in each ability will be regained, at a rate of 1 point per week.

Another trap-type weapon of the Vietnam War is tanglefoot. This is a mesh of barbed wire with gaps about as large as a human foot, strung along the ground and hidden in mud or water. A victim's feet will slide between the wires and be caught. An agent may escape tanglefoot by spending 1-10

seconds carefully removing each foot. If the victim is running when captured, the barbs inflict 1 point of damage.

The Geneva Convention banned razor wire for use in warfare, but prisons use razor wire extensively, and secret installations might employ it. An agent takes 1 point of damage each time he brushes against razor wire. When cutting through razor wire, an agent must roll his Coordination or lower on 1d100. Otherwise, the wire lashes the agent as it springs away, inflicting 2 points of damage.

Secret agents are not issued military weapons, and that includes land mines. This is why no prices are listed for the individual traps and mines described herein. However, these weapons are not much deadlier than standard explosives. On a special mission, the Administrator may release these devices to agents, and enemy NPCs can be expected to use them. So, watch your step!



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# CONVENTION CALENDAR

## Convention Calendar Policies

This column is a service to our readers worldwide. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines **must** be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on standard manuscript paper. The contents of each listing must be short, succinct, and under 150 words long.

The information given in the listing **must** include the following, in this order:

1. Convention title and dates held;
2. Site and location;
3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
4. Special events offered;
5. Registration fees or attendance requirements; and,
6. Address(es) and telephone number(s) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.

Convention flyers, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements will not be considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Unless stated otherwise, all dollar values given for U.S. and Canadian conventions are in U.S. currency.

**WARNING:** We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that over a quarter of a million readers worldwide see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility.

Copy deadlines are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. Thus, the copy deadline for the December issue is the last Monday of October. Announcements for North American and Pacific conventions must be mailed to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. Announcements for Europe must be posted an additional month before the deadline to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Limited, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom.

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to either Anne Brown or Roger E. Moore at TSR, Inc., (414) 248-3625 (U.S.A.). Questions or changes concerning European conventions should be directed to TSR Limited, (0223) 212517 (U.K.).

❖ indicates an Australian convention.

\* indicates a Canadian convention.

✪ indicates a European convention.

\* Indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

### CAPITOL-CON V, August 5

This year's convention will be held at the Prairie Capital Convention Center in Springfield, Ill. Featured events will include hoard, miniatures, and fantasy role-playing games. Registration fee: \$4.00. Write to: Bill Wilson, 99 Cottonwood Drive, Chatham, IL 62629; or call: (217)483-5797.

### Y-FEST, August 5-6

This gaming convention will be held at the Wick Park Community Center, Park Ave. between 5th Ave. and Elm St., in Youngstown, Ohio. Events include RPGA™ Network AD&D® tournaments, with BATTLETECH®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, WARHAMMER FANTASY®, WARHAMMER 40,000®, and other miniatures and role-playing events. Gaming fees are \$5 per day or \$7 for both days. Write to: Breastplate Hobbies, 3002 Center Rd., Poland OH 44514; or call: (216) 757-9791.

### HOUSTON FANFAIR, August 12-13

This fantasy festival, which will be held at a hotel to be announced, will draw 600-800 attendees and will offer 60 dealers tables and 15 guests. Features will include a video room, Japanimation, programming, gaming, an open con suite, a masquerade, an art show, filksinging, and more. Admission is \$5 for Saturday, \$4 for Sunday, and \$6 for both days. Write to: Bulldog Productions, P.O. Box 820488, Dallas TX 75382; or call: (214) 349-3367.

### COLLECTOR'S EXPO, August 18-20

This collector's show is held semiannually at the Eastgate Mall on Brainerd Road, just off Interstate 75, in Chattanooga, Tenn. Show hours are 10 A.M. to 9 P.M. on Friday and Saturday, and noon to 6 P.M. on Sunday. Guests will include representatives from Marvel Comics. Events will include an AD&D® tournament (which begins Friday and ends with final rounds on Sunday); an ongoing DRAGONLANCE® board game; a TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES® event; workshops on gaming and comic-book and baseball-card collecting; a miniatures-painting contest; video showings of *Star Trek* bloopers, X-Men cartoons, and more; an auction hosted by our own Freddy Krueger (with proceeds going to the American Cancer Society); slide shows; and a Saturday-night costume contest. Admission to this show is **free!** The entire mall is the showroom area. It will include: comic books; baseball cards; *Star Trek*, *Dr. Who*, and *Blakes 7* memorabilia; Japanese animation; gaming; and other related items. Dealers' tables are 8' long; only 50 are available. Prices for these tables vary with the number of tables a dealer desires.

Write to: Amazing World of Fantasy, 2518-C Shorter Avenue, Rome, GA 30161; or call Dana Pinkard (show chairperson) at: (404) 235-2179; or Patrick Swinford at: (404) 234-5309.

### ECONOMYCON II, August 18-20

ECONOMYCON II will be held at the Plaza de Fiesta, 2740 S. Alma School Rd., Suite #18, Mesa, Ariz. Admission is free. Events include BATTLETECH® AD&D®, and BATTLE FOR MOSCOW® tournaments, and a painted figures contest with prizes. Other games will include WWII micro-armor®, WARHAMMER FANTASY® miniatures battles, a WORLD IN FLAMES® campaign game, and open gaming. Send an SASE to: Roaming Panther Game Co., 2740 S. Alma School Rd. #16, Mesa, AZ 85202.

### GATEWAY '89, September 1-4

STRATEGICON will sponsor this convention at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. All types of family, strategic, and adventure board, role-playing, miniatures, and computer gaming will be offered, as well as flea markets, an exhibitors' room, auctions, seminars, demonstrations, and special guests. Write to: STRATEGICON, P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808; or call Diverse Talents at: (213) 420-3675.

### NANCON 88-XI, September 1-4

NANCON 88-XI will again be held Labor Day Weekend at the Ramada Northwest Crossing, 12801 N.W. Frwy., Houston, Tex. Numerous events this year will include two AD&D® events, with SQUAD LEADER® BATTLETECH®, PARANOIA® TWILIGHT 2000®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, 15mm Napoleonic, STAR WARS®, HARPOON®, and CHAMPIONS® games. Send an SASE to: Nan's Games & Comics Too, 2011 S.W. Frwy., Houston, TX 77098.

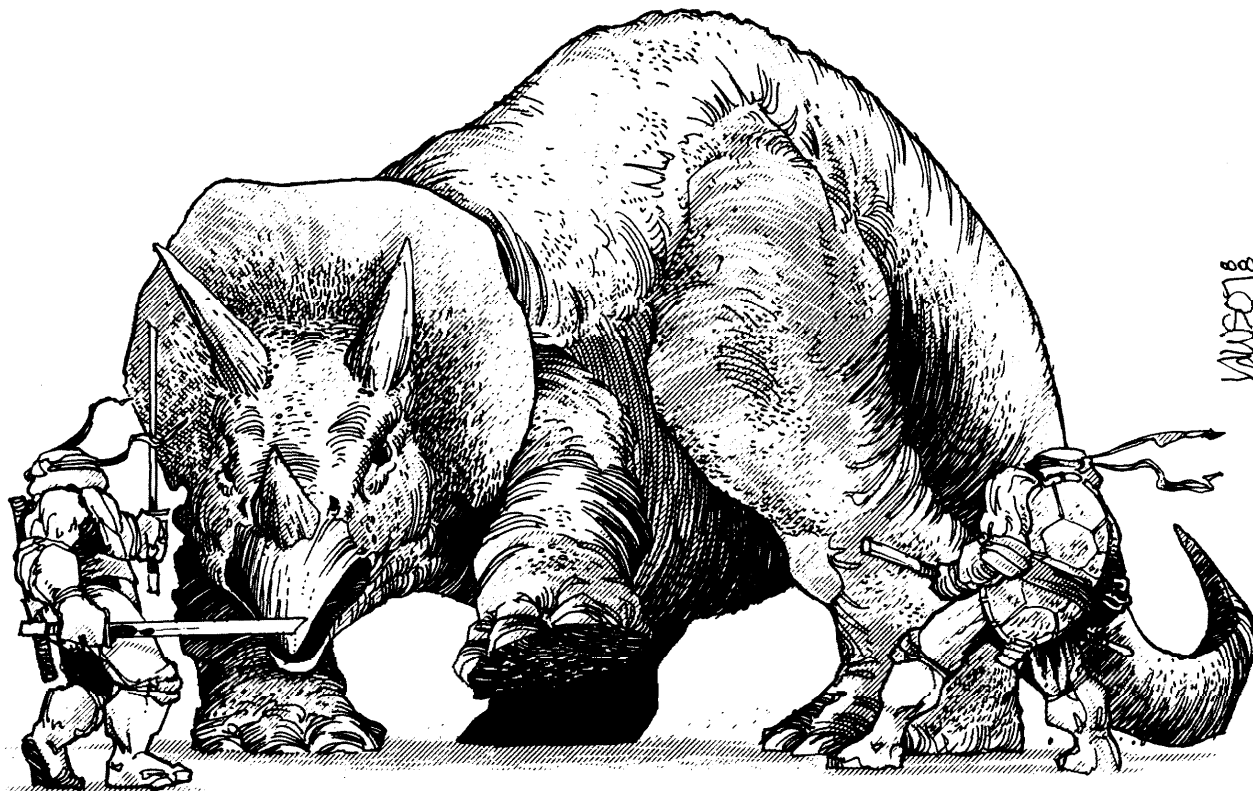
### TACTIKHAN '89, September 1-3

The Denver Gamers Association and Worldwide Wargamers present TACTIKHAN '89, held at the Ramada Hotel, Westminster, Colo., on September 1-3, Labor Day Weekend, 1989. Gaming of all kinds, official RPGA™ Network tournaments, the Puffing Billy tournament, and an auction will be offered. Miniature events will be staged by the Colorado Military Historians. Registration is \$14 for the weekend until August 25, and \$17 thereafter. Write to: Denver Gamers Association, P.O. Box 11369, Denver, CO 80211.

### AMERICAN GAMES FAIR, September 8-10

Communications, Conferences & Exhibitions Ltd. presents this premier event, rescheduled from earlier this year. This show will be held September 8-10 at the Roosevelt Hotel (45th Street and Madison Avenue). This event is the first consumer and trade show for the games industry to be held in the New York area. A program of special events and entertainment will run throughout the duration of the fair. Highlights include: prize-winning RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournaments and RPGA™ Network PARANOIA® tournaments; an open-





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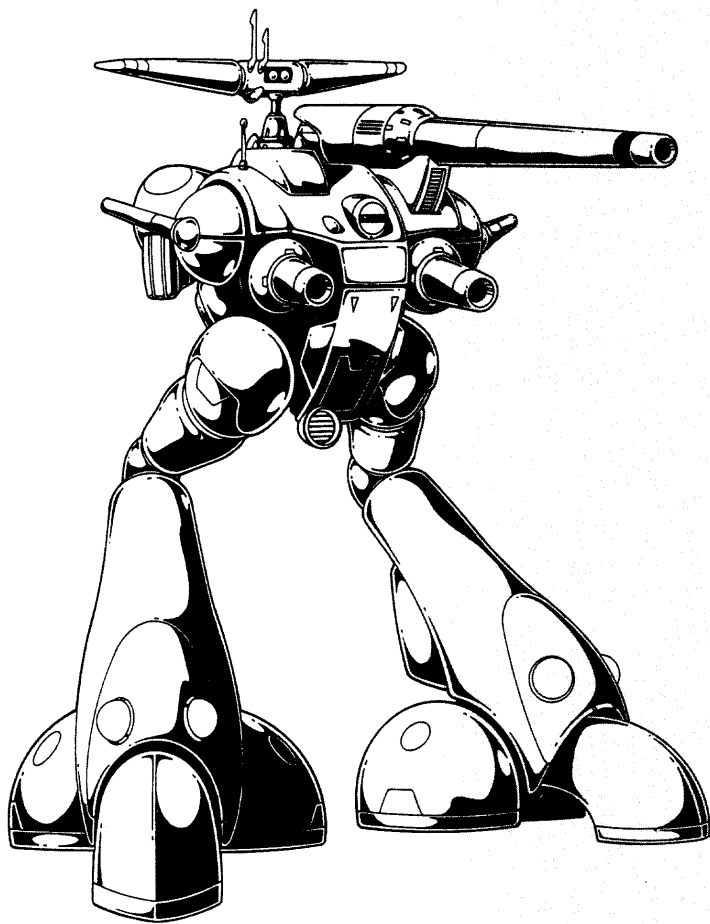
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# ROBOTECH™ the Adventure Begins

Since the publication of ROBOTECH II: The Sentinels™, we have been deluged by inquiries asking if this will be the last of the Robotech™ RPG books. *Absolutely NOT!!*

We have three Robotech™ books in production at this very moment and all three will be out by summer. The first is the **REF Field Guide** (available now), there are also **Return of the Masters** (Invid/Sentinels setting) and **Lancer's Odyssey** (working title subject to change). Watch for 'em!

## NEW!! The REF Field Guide

The REF Field Guide is a technical journal and adventure book.

As a technical journal it presents valuable data and diagrams available only to REF soldiers. How to suit up in CVR-3 body armor, REF Bases complete with floor plans, the transformation sequences for the Cyclone, Alpha, and Beta, and much, much more. Depicted by original model sheet artwork most of which has never seen print anywhere.

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**ROBOTECH™ Book II: The RDF Manual.** More combat vehicles, more data, high-tech bandits, wastelands, character sheets, and floorplans for the Prometheus II and the Daedalus II. *Sourcebook:* **\$7.95. Please add \$1.00 for postage.**

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#### **AUSTIN FANFAIR, September 8-9**

Over 60 dealers' tables, 15 guests, and over 700 convention-goers will be in attendance for this fantasy festival, which will be held at a hotel to be announced. Features will include a video room, Japanimation, programming, gaming, an open con suite, a masquerade, an art show, filksinging, and more. Admission will be \$5 for Saturday, \$4 for Sunday, or \$6 for both days, and will be available at the door only. Write to: Bulldog Productions, P.O. Box 820488, Dallas TX 75382; or call: (214) 349-3367.

#### **MIRACLECON '89, September 9**

This gaming convention will be held at the Shenango Valley Civic Center, on the corner of Pitt Street and Shenango Avenue in Sharon, Pa. Featured events will include an AD&D® tournament, an auction, a miniatures-painting contest, a dealers' room, and other role-playing and miniature games events. Registration fees are \$5 at the door. There will be no separate event fees. Write to: Timothy A. Riley, 308 West Church Street, Urbana OH 43708; or: 7855 Elm Street SE, Masury, OH 44438; or call him at: (513) 653-7848.

#### **VALLEY CON 14, September 9-10**

This science-fiction, fantasy, and comics convention will be held at the Days Inn Conference Center at 600 30th Street South in Moorhead, Minn. Activities will include video rooms, an art show and auction, a hucksters' room, panels and demonstrations, a banquet, and many gaming events, including STAR TREK®, RUNE-QUEST®, ROLEMASTER®, SPACEMASTER®, STAR WARS®, DR. WHO®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, and AD&D® games. Send an SASE to: VALLEY CON 14, P.O. Box 7202, Fargo ND 58108; or call: (701) 232-1954.

#### **KETTERING GAME CONVENTION September 10**

This convention, sponsored by Kettering Parks and Recreation Division, will be held at the Rose E. Miller Recreation center, 3201 N. Marshall, Kettering, Ohio. Games will include CIRCUS MAXIMUS®, RISK®, NUCLEAR WAR®, FAMILY BUSINESS®, LIARS DICE®, CONSPIRACY®, MONOPOLY®, Pictionary®, TRIVIAL PURSUIT®, UNO®, CLUE®, SCRABBLE®, YAHTZE®, AGGRAVATION®, EUCHRE®, and fantasy role-playing games. A game auction will also be featured. Hours are 12:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.. Admission is \$0.50 for children 12 and under, \$1.00 for 13 and older. Write to: Bob Von Gruenigen, 2013 Gay Dr. Kettering, OH 45420.

#### **SIOUX CITY WARGAMES IV September 15-17**

This gaming convention will be held at the Marina Inn in South Sioux City, Nebr. Featured events will include RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN®, DIPLOMACY®, ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER®, SPEED CIRCUIT®, CAR WARS®, AXIS & AL-

LIES®, EMPIRE III®, JOHNNY REB®, HARPOON®, CHAINMAIL, WWII and modern microarmor, and science-fiction games, among others. Special room rates will be available to conventioners. Admission to this event is free. Write to: SIOUX CITY WARGAMES IV, ATTN: Dave Patch, 1600 Pierce, Sioux City IA 51105.

#### **COLONIAL CITY GAMEFEST 1989 September 16-17**

The Mt. Vernon Gamers Association will hold the 7th Annual Colonial City Gamefest at the Mt. Vernon Memorial Building, East High St., Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Games will include AD&D®, HARN®, TWILIGHT 2000®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, GLADIATORS®, CIRCUS IMPE-RIUM®, and historical miniatures games, including WWII HO-scale armor, microarmor, micronaval, ACW, and colonials games. Also included will be WARHAMMER FANTASY® and WARHAMMER 40,000®, and 25mm CHAINMAIL games. Sunday will include the ever-popular Battle of Mt. Vernon 1862. The convention will also feature a miniatures painting competition, auction, retail vendors, and demonstration games. Hours are: Saturday, 10 A.M. to 11 P.M.; Sunday, 10 A.M. to 11 P.M. Admission: \$5 for the weekend, preregistration only; \$3 per day at the door. Write to: Colonial City Gamefest, c/o Mt. Vernon Gamers Association, P.O. Box 1184, Mt. Vernon OH 43050.

#### **1989 CALGARY GAMING CONVENTION September 22-24** \*

Hosted by the Canadian Wargamers Group and the University of Calgary, this convention welcomes all gamers. This three-day con will include games and miniatures events, such as SYSTEM 7®, KREMLIN®, SHOGUN®, WORLD IN FLAMES®, ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER®, BATTLETECH®, and CIRCUS MAXIMUS® games. Write to: The Canadian Wargamers Group, 207 Bernard Drive N.W., Calgary, Alberta, T3K 2B6 CANADA.

#### **CONTACT-7, September 29-October 1**

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the Ramada Inn, located on Hwy. 41 North in Evansville, Ind. Andrew J. Offutt will be the guest of honor; other guests will include George "Lan" Laskowski, Rick Dunning, and Arlan Andrews (toastmaster). Events include RPGA™ Network sanctioned gaming, closed-circuit television programming, an art show, a dealers' room, and a 24-hour hospitality suite. Membership is \$15 until September 1; \$20 thereafter. Write to: CONTACT-7, P.O. Box 3894, Evansville, IN 47737-3894; or call: (812) 853-5730.

#### **COUNCIL OF FIVE NATIONS 15 October 6-8**

Hosted by the Schenectady Wargamers Association, this convention will be held at the Ramada Inn in Schenectady, N.Y. A number of RPGA™ Network events are planned, including a Master's Level AD&D® tournament. There will also be several other AD&D® game tournaments and single-round events. Other events will include BATTLETECH®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, CIVILIZATION®, DIPLOMACY® (Youngstown 10-player variant), CHAMPIONS®, CAR WARS®, RUNEQUEST®, and various other role-playing, board, and miniatures games. The convention will also feature a miniatures-painting contest and games auction. Advance registration will be \$10 for the weekend, or \$15 at the door. To receive a preregistration booklet (mailed in August), send an SASE to: Eric Paperman, Con Director, 418 Vliet Boulevard, Cohoes, NY 12047.

Room rates for this event are \$60 a night for double occupancy and \$75 a night for quad. For information about lodging, contact the Schenectady Ramada Inn at: (518) 370-7151.

#### **DRAGON CON '89, October 6-8**

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the OMNI International Hotel and Convention Center in Atlanta, Ga. Guests include Anne McCaffrey, Wes Craven, Michael Whelan, Andrew Greenberg, Margaret Weis, Tracy Hickman, Gary Gygax, Richard Garriott, Robert Asprin, Lynn Abbey, and Larry Elmore. Preregistration (through September 15) is \$30. Fantasy role-playing, strategic, miniatures, and computer gaming will be featured in over 100 tournaments. Other events will include four tracks of workshops and panels, masquerade shows, an art show and print shop, video rooms, art and consignment auctions, a con suite, and more. Send an SASE to: DRAGON CON '89, Box 47696, Atlanta GA 30362. You may also purchase your advanced membership by VISA or Mastercard by calling Tevex, toll-free, at: (800) 456-1162.

#### **SUNCOAST SKIRMISHES '89, October 6-8**

SKIRMISHES presents the ninth-annual presentation of this gaming extravaganza. This event will take place at the Holiday Inn-Ashley Plaza, 111 West Fortune Street, in Tampa, Fla. Room rates are \$50 for one to four people. Events will include: AD&D®, TRAVELLER®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, CAR WARS®, Napoleonic miniatures, SEEKRIEG®, and other games; board gaming; a KILLER® tournament; and dealers. Registration is \$18 for the weekend; send your fees to receive a program booklet. Write to: SKIRMISHES, P.O. Box 2097, Winter Haven, FL 33883; or call: (813) 293-7983.

#### **TOLEDO GAMING CONVENTION 7 October 7-8**

The seventh-annual edition of Northwest Ohio's largest gaming convention will be held at the University of Toledo's Scott Park Campus. This year we will have over 140 events, including: role-playing, strategy, tactical, board, and miniatures tournaments; two auctions; demonstrations; painting contests; and dealers and exhibitors. Featured this year are AD&D®, BATTLETECH®, WARHAMMER 40,000®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, GURPS®, STAR WARS®, ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER®, AXIS & AL-LIES®, and SPACE: 1889® events. In addition, there will be nonstop movies and open gaming. Send an SASE to: TOLEDO GAMING CONVENTION 7, c/o Mind Games, 3001 North Reynolds Road, Toledo OH 43615.

#### **QUAD CON, October 13-15**

The RiverBend Gamers Association will sponsor QUAD CON '89 at Palmer Auditorium, 1000 Brady St., Davenport, Iowa. Special room rates are available at the Best Western Riverview Inn by calling 1-800-528-1234 or (319) 324-1921. Games will include AD&D®, D&D®, BATTLE-TECH®, RECON®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, CAR WARS®, STAR TREK®, MARVEL SUPER HEROES®, GURPS®, GAMMA WORLD®, TRAVELLER 2300®, TWILIGHT 2000®, TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES®, MERP®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, DR. WHO®, DC HEROES®, ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER®, CIVILIZATION®, DIPLOMACY®, and AIR SORTIE® games. Other events will include microarmor, a painting contest, multievent ancients-to-future combat tournament, and a costume contest (no weapons, please). Preregistration is available August 1 (\$7 weekend, \$3 per day) but must be received by October 1. At-

the-door fees are: \$10 weekend, \$5 per day. Send a #10 SASE to: RiverBend Gamer's Association, P.O. Box 8421, Moline, IL 61265.

#### **NECRONOMICON '89, October 20-22**

NECRONOMICON '89, a science-fiction, fantasy, and horror convention, will be held at the Ashley Plaza Holiday Inn in Tampa, Fla. Guests of honor will be George Alec Effinger (author of *When Gravity Fails*) and artist Tom Kidd. Other guests include Richard Byers (author of *Fright Line*) and Richard Louis Newman (author of *On Wings of Evil*). Membership rates are \$15 until September 15, and \$20 at the door. One-day memberships are available at the door only. Hotel room rates are \$50 for single to quad occupancy. Activities will include author and artist panels, a fan cabaret, a masquerade, a Batman 50th Anniversary Trivia Quiz, autograph sessions, an art auction, a late-night dance, an Ygor party, and whatever else we can come up with by convention time. Write to: NECRONOMICON '89, P.O. Box 2076, Riverview, FL 33569; or call: (813) 677-6347.

#### **NOTJUSTANOTHER CON, October 20-22**

The Science Fiction Conventioneers of U. Mass. (SCUM) will hold its fifth NOTJUST-ANOTHER CON in the Campus Center of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Guest of honor is Oscar-winning filmmaker Mike Jittlov (*The Wizard of Speed and Time*). Membership rates are \$13 through October 1; \$15 from October 1-19; and \$17 at the door. Send an SASE to: SCUM, RSO 104 SAO, U. Mass., Amherst, MA 01003; or call: (413) 545-1924.

#### **QUEEN CITY GAMES '89, October 20-21**

QUEEN CITY GAMES '89 will be held at the Cincinnati Technical College, Cincinnati, Ohio. Events will include BATTLETECH\*, STAR FLEET BATTLES\*, and microarmor games, with an RPGA™ Network tournament, role-playing, miniatures, door prizes, seminars, and a costume contest. Write to: Cincinnati Adventure Gamers, Q.C.G. '89, P.O. Box 462, Cincinnati, OH 45201; or call: (513) 542-3449, 1:30-6:00 P.M.

#### **MILEHICON 21, October 27-29**

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the Executive Tower Inn in Denver, Colo. Robert Bloch will be the guest of honor; Forrest J. Ackerman will be fan guest of honor; and Simon Hawke will be toastmaster. Events will include: literary and scientific panels; an art show and auction; exhibits; a Critter Crunch (offensive and defensive robot competition); videos and movies; filk programming; an expanded gaming area; a costume contest; and a masked ball. Room rates are \$47 for single or double occupancy; \$52 for triple or quad occupancy. Dealers' tables are \$35 until October 1, then \$40 until October 27. Registration fees are \$20 until October 15, or \$22 at the door. Write to: MILEHICON, P.O. Box 27074, Lakewood, CO 80227; or call: (303)426-0806.

#### **WARGAMER'S EXPO, October 27-29**

This expo will be held at the Holiday Inn Baymeadows, 9150 Baymeadows Rd., Jacksonville, Fla.; phone (904) 737-1700. This new and exciting convention will deal in many aspects of fiction, from science fiction to histories to comics. Events will include a costume party with contest, dealers' room, and all types of gaming. Preregistration is \$15, or \$18 at the door. One-day rates will be available. Write to: Xeno's, Wal-Mart Center, 103rd St., Jacksonville, FL 32210; or call (904) 777-9366 from 10:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. Mon.-Fri.

#### **AU GAMERS CONVENTION**

##### **November 10-12**

The Au Gamers are proud to hold the largest fantasy role-playing convention in New Jersey at the Sheraton Tara Hotel, 199 Smith Rd., Parsippany, NJ. Events will include RPGA™ Network-sponsored tournaments, charity game, costume contest, dealers' area, miniatures painting contest, and more. Prizes will be awarded for best players and best gamemasters. For reservations, call (201) 515-2000, ext. 5800. Mention the convention to receive special room rates. Registration fees before Oct. 20 are \$7 per day or \$18 for the weekend. After Oct. 20, rates are \$8 per day and \$20 for the weekend. Registration at the door will be \$10 per day. Write to: Steven M. Scheel, Oakwood Village, Bldg #26, Apt #9, Flanders NJ 07836, phone (201)927-8097; or John Moir, 361 Vandervier Ave., Somerville, NJ 08876, phone (201) 725-1257.

#### **SCI CON II, November 10-12**

This science-fiction and gaming convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Executive Center in Virginia Beach, Va. Artist guests of honor are Ron Lindahn and Val Lakey-Lindahn. Special guest is Frank Kelly Freas. Events will include panels, readings, video presentations, a costume contest, an art show, gaming, and more. Memberships are \$15 until September 30, or \$20 at the door. Huckster tables (which include one membership) are \$75 until October 1; any tables available after that point will be \$100. Send an SASE to: SCI CON II, Dept. DR, P.O. Box 9434, Hampton, VA 23670.

#### **ARMISTICE CON '89, November 11-12**

This gaming event will be held at the Horizon Activities Center in North Olmsted, Ohio. Special events will include TRAVELLER\*, CAR WARS\*, BATTLETECH\*, DIPLOMACY\*, microarmor, and AD&D® game events, as well as Napoleonic miniatures, board and role-playing games, a miniatures exhibit, a miniatures-painting contest, and 24-hour gaming. Registration fees are \$12. One-day passes will be available for \$7. Write to: ARMISTICE CON '89, c/o Horizon Activities Center, 30395 Lorain Road, North Olmsted, OH 44070; or call Dave Smith or Fran Haas at: (216) 779-6536 during business hours.

#### **GAMESCON (UK) '89, November 11**

This gaming convention will be held at the Laindon Community Centre, Basildon, Essex. Dungeon masters and players are required for AD&D® games competition. Contact Chris Baylis by calling tel. 0268-419933 or write to 67 Mynchens, Lee Chapel North, Basildon, Essex SS115 5EG, UNITED KINGDOM.

#### **PENTAGON, November 11**

The Northeast Indiana Gaming Association will host the fifth annual PENTACON gaming convention in the Grand Wayne Convention Center in Fort Wayne, Ind. Games will include an RPGA™ Network AD&D® tournament, BATTLETECH\*, CAR WARS\*, CHAMPIONS\*, CIVILIZATION\*, DARKUS THEL\*, MORROW PROJECT\*, and SPACE: 1889\* games. Other features are a painting contest and dealers' area. Send an SASE to: N.I.G.A., P.O. Box 11146, Fort Wayne, IN 46856.

#### **UMF-CON, November 11-12**

This role-playing and war-games convention will be held at the Student Center of the University of Maine in Farmington, Maine. Events will include TOP SECRET/S.I.™ and AD&D® games, DIPLOMACY\* competitions, miniatures, board games, and contests. Also planned is another

murder mystery. Admission is \$5 per day and \$2 per game. Send an SASE to: Table Gaming Club, c/o Student Life Office, Student Center, 5 South Street, Farmington, ME 04938.

#### **UCON '89, November 17-19**

This role-playing and strategy gaming convention will take place in the Michigan Union at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Events will include: live role-playing; dealers' tables; a movie room; a costume contest; an AD&D® tournament; and CIVILIZATION\*, STAR FLEET BATTLES\*, DIPLOMACY\*, and THIRD REICH\* games. Write to: The Michigan Wargaming Club, P.O. Box 4491, Ann Arbor MI 48106.

#### **DALLAS FANTASY FAIR, November 24-26**

Featuring over 140 dealers' tables, more than 60 guests, and over 2,000 attendees, this fantasy event will be held at the Marriott Park Central, 7750 I-635 at Coit Road in Dallas, Tex. Attractions will include two 24-hour video rooms, Japanimation, 24-hour gaming, four-track programming, a masquerade, an open con suite, an art show and auction, a charity auction, artists' and writers' workshops, autograph sessions, filksinging, dancing, an amateur-film festival, a talent show, and more. Admission is \$15 for all three days in advance, or \$20 at the door. Single-day admissions may be purchased at the door; prices are \$8 Friday, \$10 Saturday, and \$8 Sunday. Write to: Bulldog Productions, P.O. Box 820488, Dallas, TX 75382; or call: (214) 349-3367.

#### **MACQUARIECON '89, December 8-10**

The Macquarie University Role Playing Society will host Australia's largest role-playing convention on campus at Macquarie University, Sydney Australia. Events will include AD&D®, PARANOIA\*, CALL OF CTHULHU\*, JAMES BOND\*, TRAVELLER\*, STAR WARS\*, M.E.R.P.\*, WARHAMMER\*, SPACE: 1889\*, JUDGE DREDD\*, boardgames, Freeforms, and others. Registration is \$30 Australian for the weekend or \$3 Australian per session with a \$7 registration fee. Write to: M.U.R.P.S., P.O. Box 1577, Macquarie Centre, North Ryde NSW 2113, Australia.

#### **CHATTACON XV, January 12-14, 1990**

CHATTACON XV will be held at The Chattanooga Choo-Choo, Chattanooga, Tenn. Accommodations are \$60 flat, \$85 for sleeper car suites. Guests will include Michael P. Kubec-McDowell, Robert E. Vardeman, David Cherry, Danny Gill, Wilson "Bob" Tucker, Stan Bruns, and Dick and Nicki Lynch. Registration: \$18 until Dec. 1, 1989; \$25 thereafter and at the door. Send an SASE to: CHATTACON XV, Box 23908, Chattanooga TN 37422; or call: (404) 591-9322 (no collect calls).

#### **JACKSONVILLE SKIRMISHES '90**

##### **February 9-11, 1990**

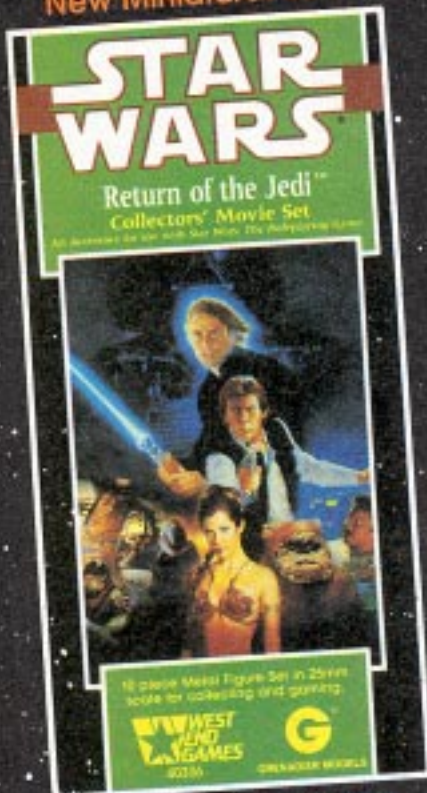
SKIRMISHES presents this role-playing and war gaming convention at the Jacksonville Motel on the Riverwalk, 565 South Main Street, in Jacksonville, Fla. Room rates are \$52 for one to four persons. Events will include AD&D® game features, along with TRAVELLER\*, STAR FLEET BATTLES\*, CAR WARS\*, and SEEKRIEC\* games. Other events will include board gaming, a KILLER\* tournament, dealers, a miniatures-painting contest, demonstrations by the SCA, and many other role-playing and historical events. Hotel reservations may be made by calling (904) 398-8800. Registration is \$18 for the entire weekend. Send your registration fee to receive a program booklet. Write to: SKIRMISHES, P.O. Box 2097, Winter Haven, FL 33883; or call: (813) 293-7983.



# STAR WARS®

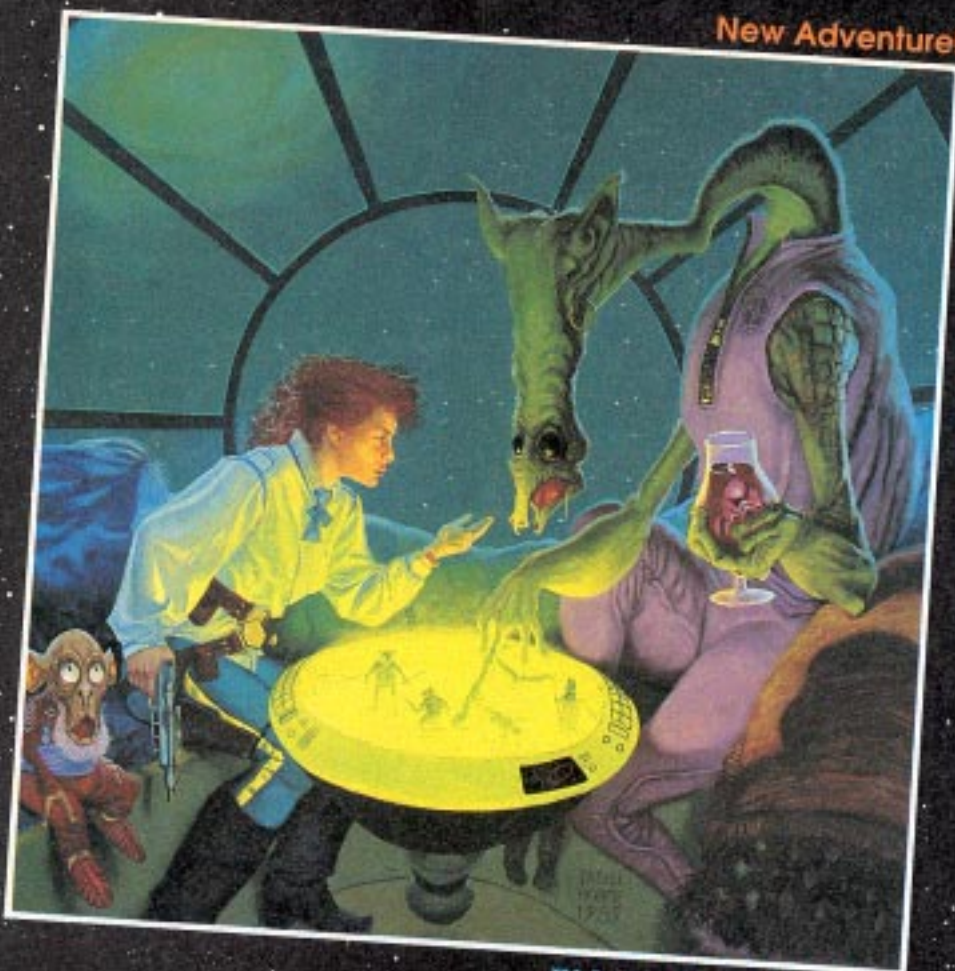
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- ☐ Battle for the Golden Sun
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- ☐ Riders of the Maelstrom

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- ☐ Star Wars: The  
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# DRAGONMIRTH

by Walt Hackensmith

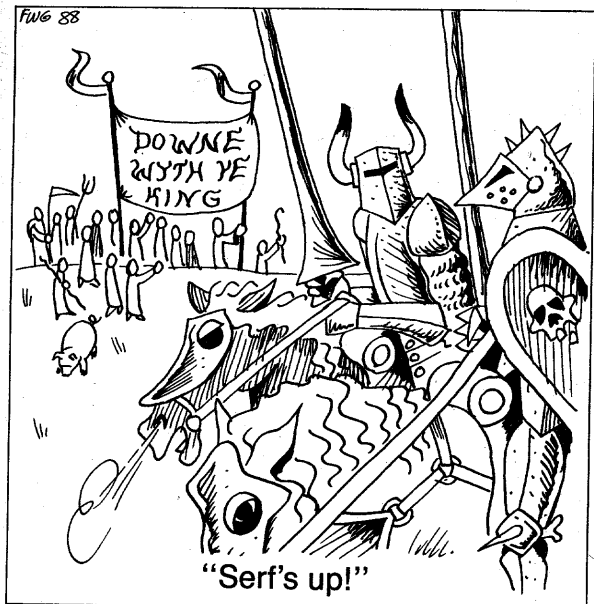


"Boy, I'll tell you! It just doesn't get any better than this!"

by Joseph T. Pillsbury







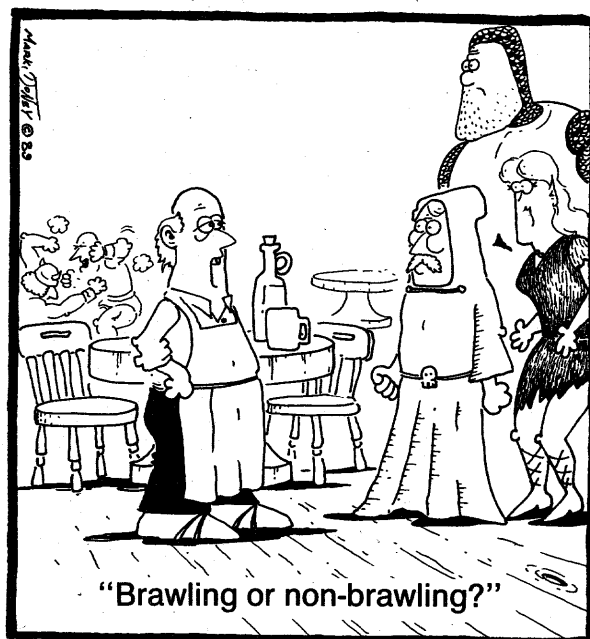
by Frank Gunter

by David King

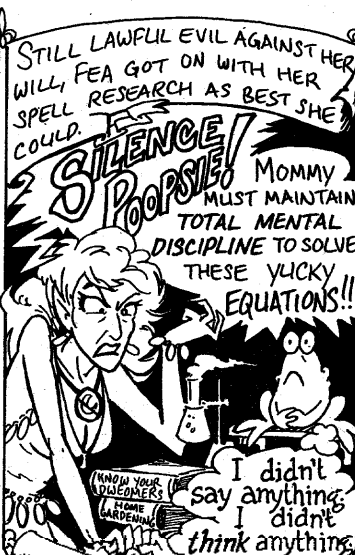
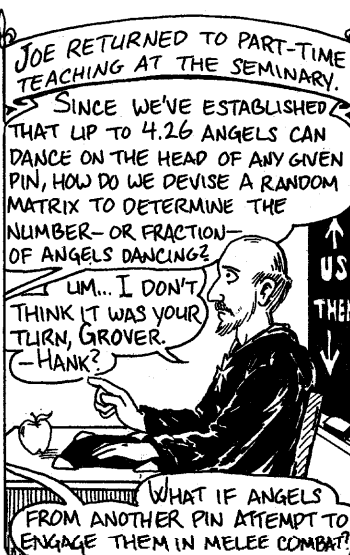


by A. J. Toos

"Why didn't you tell me this helmet isn't machine washable?"



by Mark Doney



by Chris Adams and Barbara Ward



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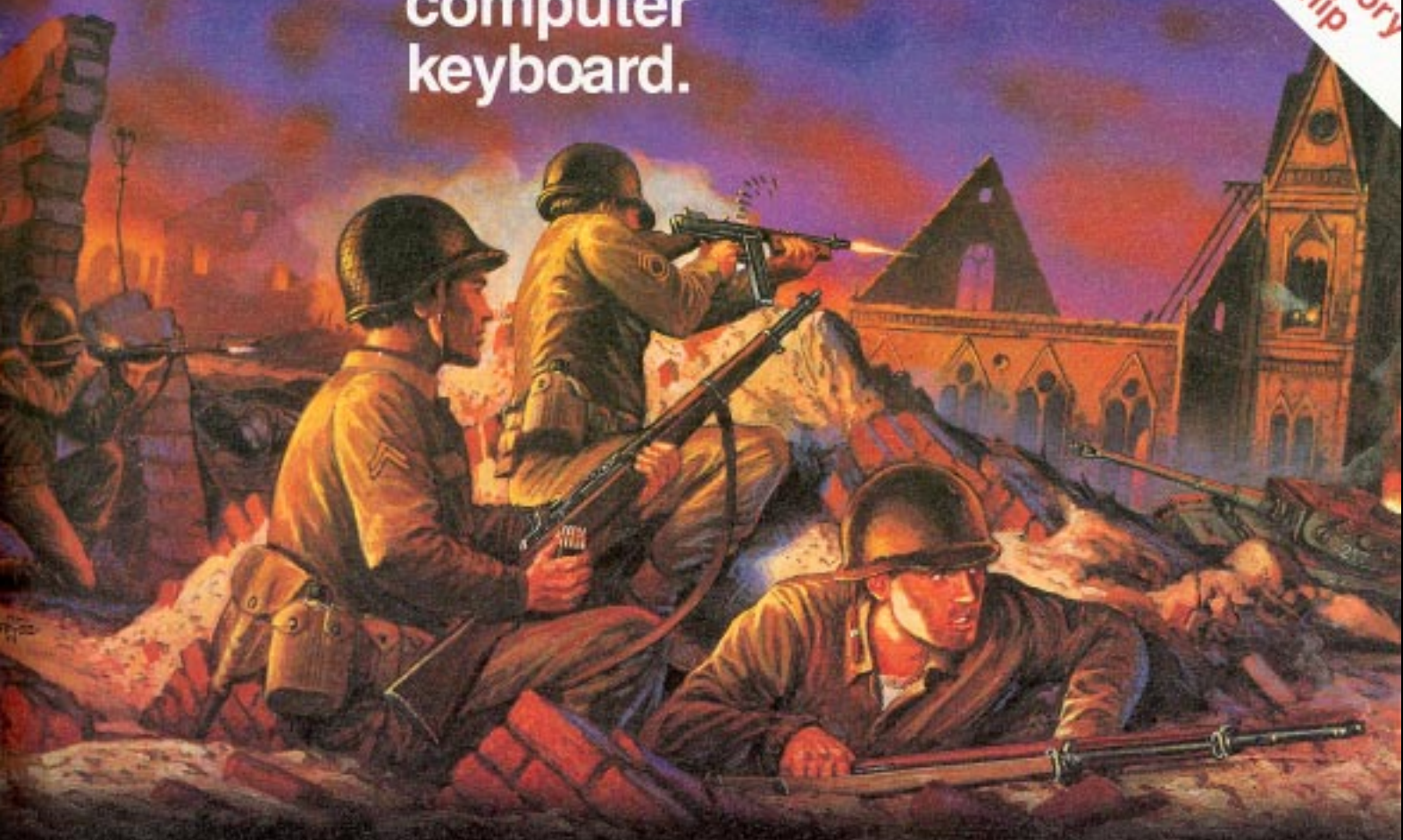
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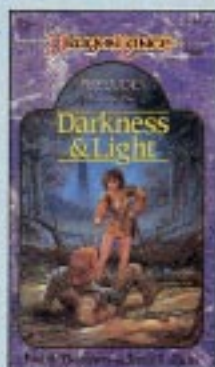
# Before they were heroes...



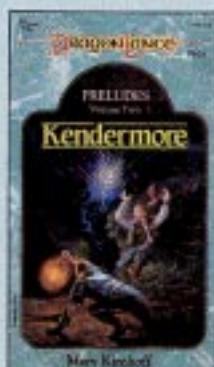
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