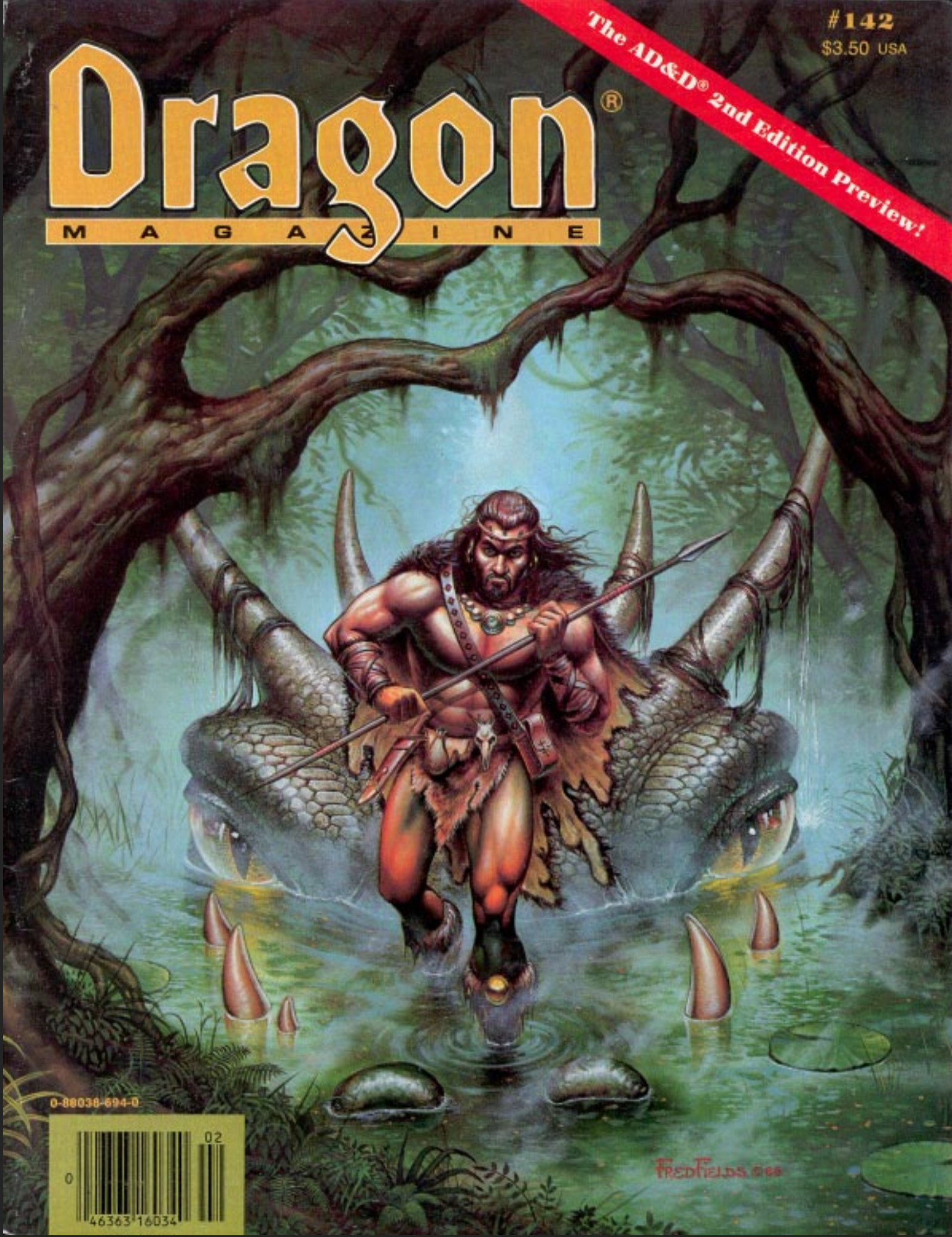


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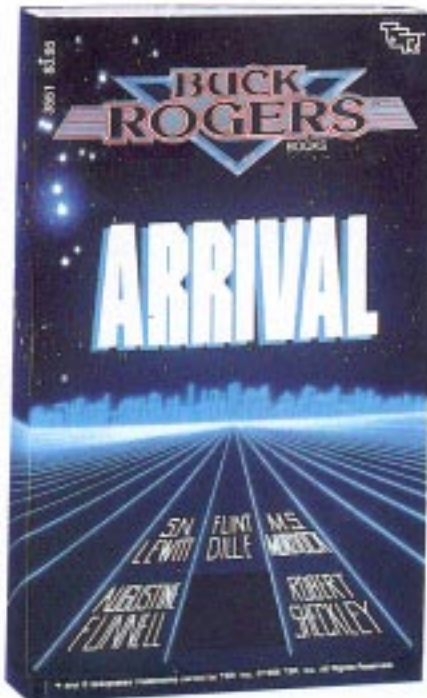


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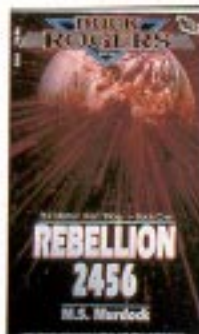
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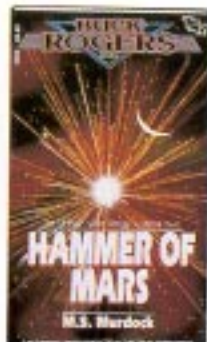
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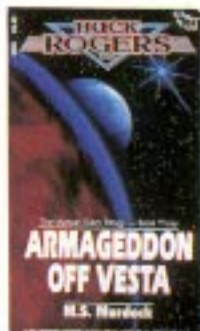
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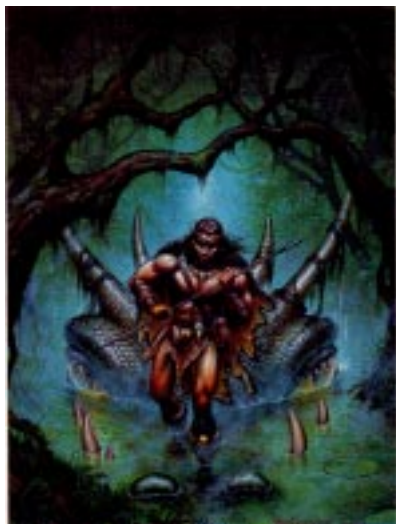
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COVER

What you don't know *can* hurt you (if it doesn't simply eat you), as cover artist Fred Fields reveals this month. His painting also reveals the dangers of adventuring alone – especially in a swamp when you have great confidence in yourself but little else.

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.

Hits & misses

Dear Dragon:

Would you repeat "Good Hits & Bad Misses" from one of the previous magazines? One of my friends had it and was showing it to me. I thought that it was a good thing.

Robert Collins
Mollala OR

Carl Parlagreco's "Good Hits & Bad Misses" (issue #39) was, if memory serves, the only critical-hits article that this magazine has ever run. It has also been requested a number of times by readers, and if we ever do another Best of DRAGON Magazine Anthology, we will keep it in mind. As a general rule, we do not approve of critical-hit or critical-fumble systems, as they annihilate opponents of the PCs too easily (and often annihilate the PCs as well). Many critical-hit systems are also in questionable taste, being too graphic to be enjoyable.

Grateful readers

Dear Dragon:

I was pleased to note the citation of several older works of literature in the article "The Ungrateful Dead" by Tom Moldvay (issue #138). However, his reference to Samuel Johnson's "17th-century dictionary" is mis-stated. In fact, Dr. Johnson's *A Dictionary of the English Language* was first published in 1755, which places it well into the eighteenth century. A minor error, of course, but we in the profession of English have to have *something* to do. Now, does Jerry Garcia know about that title?

James Campbell
Notre Dame IN

Dear Dragon:

I especially enjoyed the article by Tom Moldvay in DRAGON issue #138, "The Ungrateful Dead." There was obviously many hours of research put into it. It was also well written.

There were two errors in the final copy. I hope you will make corrections:

The stats on the gelloudes (page 30) list "Damage/Attack" as 1-4/1-4/1-6/1-6. In the text, claw damage is stated as 1-6 hp each, and talon damage is 1-8 hp each. Which is correct?

The stats on the spirit-ghoul (page 31) list "Damage/Attack" as 3. Shouldn't this be a range? Phred Cain
Princeton IN

The "Damage/Attack" for gelloudes should be 1-6/1-6/1-8/1-8. The "Damage/Attack" for the spirit-ghoul should be 1-3/1-3/1-6, as per the ghoul.

Dear Dragon:

I really enjoyed "The Ungrateful Dead" article from issue #138, and I plan to use those monsters in my campaign. What are the experience point values of these undead?

Eric Robertson
McMinnville OR

The experience-point values for the monsters were not part of the original article. Because calculating experience-point values is very time-consuming, we did not include them.

Snarfed!

Dear Dragon:

In issue #139, "SnarfQuest" was on [episode] #62. In issue #138, it was on [episode] #60. What happened to "SnarfQuest" #61? Please respond!

Scott Shepard
Cottoes NY

No episodes of "SnarfQuest" are missing. The numbering system was fine through issue #138 (episode #62). Issue #139's episode was labeled #60, and issue #140's episode was labeled #62 again; the numbering system continues from that point. The numbering system has been corrected in this issue's episode (#66).

The three best

Dear Dragon:

I felt compelled to compliment the following articles, which appeared in DRAGON issues #135 and 136: "When Game Masters Go Bad," by Sherri Gilbert; "The Mix-&-Match Module," by Marcus L. Rowland; and especially "Fifty Ways to Foil Your Players," by Jape Trostle. Although all are fine articles, the last is probably the best I've seen in any gaming magazine.

Ideas such as foils move us away from psychopathic, greedy, and often moronic "adventurers" who feel out of place above ground or out of the fray. This article is a shining example of how to turn a campaign into interactive fantasy rather than wholesale slaughter.

These articles are also excellent due to their compatibility with all FRPGs. Not all of your readers use AD&D® game material. These articles make the magazine more universal.

Mark Horsford
APO NY

We enjoy running articles that are applicable to a wide range of role-playing games. Many "generic game" articles are too vague to be of use, but we'll look for those that have lots of specific and useful information.

2nd Ed KOs TOC!

Translated, the headline above reads: "The inclusion of the AD&D® 2nd Edition game preview in this issue of DRAGON® Magazine knocked out our original ideas on what to put into the table of contents." We had planned to devote this issue to the AD&D *Oriental Adventures* lands, with part two of David E. Martin's "The Marvel®-Phile" as well, but we'll run them both later (our apologies to all concerned). What we are presenting now is far more important.

Included in this issue of DRAGON Magazine is an in-depth preview of the coming revision of the AD&D game system. You'll find information on why the revision was done, what it will look like, and what it includes (and what it doesn't include). The designers and editors will tell you exactly what to expect. (It is obvious that you should only expect the best.)

The AD&D 2nd Edition game will change very little that we are already doing in DRAGON Magazine. The original and revised editions are still the same game, though the AD&D 2nd Edition game is more carefully edited, better organized, offers more options, and has improved game mechanics. (By the way, the revised *Player's Handbook* will be out in March of this year, and the *Dungeon Master's Guide* will be available in May, with the monster selections following quickly thereafter.) As David "Zeb" Cook himself noted in DRAGON issue #121 (page 13), "anything you liked in First Edition is legal in Second Edition." Thus, nearly all of DRAGON Magazine's AD&D game articles can be used with either edition, so all players will benefit.

Take the time to see where your favorite game is going. And while you're at it, enjoy the rest of this issue, too.



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.

Being an avid player of magic-users in the AD&D game, I am dismayed to see articles in "Forum" suggesting rules to help magic-users survive lower levels more easily. It seems that that idea of benefits and limitations, or game balance, has been forgotten. The limitations, in the case of the magic-user, are 1) not being very powerful at low levels and 2) dying easily at low levels. But, the benefits from these sacrifices, if the character survives, are great indeed. Survival means the magic-user has the ability to use powerful spells that can kill with a word, annihilate an entire army on command, and control entities from [outer planes] while forcing his will upon them. I can't imagine the resulting chaos in a world where almost all magic-users (including NPCs, as common sense would dictate) survived to high levels and had these powers, quite literally, at their fingertips.

I believe that magic-users should be rolled up according to the *Players Handbook* and not modified to allow easier survival, because the limitations of the class are more than adequately balanced out at high levels.

Eric Parish
West Lafayette IN

Unfortunately, here's another letter about the magic-user's dilemma (the popular thought that we should make magic-users more powerful to survive early on). To help my PC, my DM started letting him have special bonuses and find scrolls throughout most dungeons. As a result, I have the ultimate PC at level 20. All others are at my mercy, and my party must watch as my PC destroys monsters too powerful for the others but just right for him. After three years, I must finally remove my character from the campaign in all fairness.

Dain A. Muller (issue #135) saw the problem I have. To avoid the frustration and disappointment I had, start low-level PCs in dungeons that have fewer dangerous encounters and more riddles, puzzle-solving, and ways to coax players into correct playing of the rules. Give experience points for solving certain situations. Gradually add more traps and danger until you can run a more regular campaign.

The mentor of one magic-user could have an illusion-using dungeon set up with minimal real damage. True experience could be awarded because the party would be gaining knowledge. Eventually, the magic-user would be powerful

enough to begin other low-level adventures without the rest of his party suffering.

Jason Kasper
Buffalo WY

About experience-points for treasure: Experience should be given as follows: 1) If the treasure is integral to the adventure; 2) If a person is progressing, level-wise, slower than everyone else is, through no fault of his own; or 3) If the character is a thief and takes the treasure without violence.

Jim Amos
Whitehouse TX

I agree with David Argall's statement in issue #136 that some source of PC experience besides monster-bashing is needed. However, I cannot agree with his defense of the "gold equals experience" system. Why should ascetic monks, scholarly sorcerers, and pious clerics be forced to act like materialistic money-grubbers? The money-related experience system makes the game revolve around the idea that only treasure is worth adventuring for. The paladin who undertakes a holy quest to destroy an evil foe is out of luck unless said enemy has a rich treasury to loot.

If adhered to, this system also results in huge amounts of cash in the hands of PCs. The DM, of course, wants to take the cash away from the PCs. Consequently, we have massive inflation problems, with every service or item that PCs might want being ridiculously overpriced (*DMG* training costs come to mind).

In short, the "gold equals experience" approach - far from being a useful though illogical simplification - generates more problems than it solves and does not solve any problems well. In some campaigns, including my own, it has been replaced by a system which increases the experience award for defeating monsters. I also give experience points for clever play, problem-solving, and the accomplishment of goals or tasks. Most of these systems are vaguely defined and rely heavily on DM judgment rather than hard-and-fast rules. However, they're still an improvement.

Alan Clark
Vienna VA

I am writing in response to David Argall's letter in issue #136. His "Forum" article gives "good reasons why we give experience for magic and treasure." The only "reason" he gives is for "some source of experience besides killing monsters." He describes in-play training as "dull, to be kept in the background where it won't interfere with the game," and that such training should be "off camera where we are not bored by it." He goes on to say that giving experience for other actions can be tremendously complex and would favor one class over another. This, all of it, is absurd!

When we speak of other sources of experience, we should broaden our view of the question to look at the whole picture. Why would giving experience points for casting spells, picking pockets, opening locks, or successfully

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using skills unbalance the game or favor one class over another? A fighter fights; that is where the majority of his experience comes from. Thieves, clerics, and magic-users would be at an extreme disadvantage when traveling solo and not counting on that "group experience for monsters killed." A fighter fights; a thief opens locks, picks pockets, and finds traps; a magic-user casts spells and applies his greater intellect to difficult situations; a cleric casts spells and often acts as a secondary fighter for the party or (as quite often occurs) is almost as protected as the magic-user because of his ability to heal. The druid is in the same boat as the cleric.

But why limit experience allocation to those aspects of the game? There are other areas in the game that challenge the player as well as the character, like the solving of problems and riddles, and the quality of role-playing. These things are worth consideration, and since there is an infinite amount of possible situations to consider, it would not be feasible to construct a method of distributing those experience points. It must be left up to the impartiality of the individual game master.

The simple fact that we are playing a role-playing game must be kept in mind when we term things as boring or not. The fact that something is boring is a problem for that game master and the way he runs his game. How can one spend the money for training and not spend the time for training? While I do not want to get into an argument over realism, I must insist that this hardly seems realistic.

I have been playing the AD&D® game for 10 years and have in that time played so many different role-playing games that I don't care to

count them, but my real love has been and always will be the AD&D game. I have found that money is its own reward, not to be given out in unbalancing proportions. This also goes for magic. The fact that a fighter gets a magical sword doesn't make him a better fighter; in fact, if he used that sword at all times, he could quite possibly become dependent on that sword to give him the edge in a battle instead of working on his own personal edge, so why give him experience? Does a *dagger* +2 make a thief better at opening locks or finding traps? It would be absurd to think so.

Robin D. Brock
Columbia MD

Up to a point, David Carl Argall's case [in issue #136] is quite accurate. That point comes in games in which experience points are almost exclusively generated by combat. In such games, experience is the only thing that matters; money exists for new weapons, spells, armor, and training to go up in level.

I personally think the additional spells, training, armor, and weapons are sufficient to almost eliminate the risk of a character getting killed before he can acquire sufficient experience points, but I concede that even killing a Duke of Hell provides scant experience points when divided up among a party of eight PCs and four henchmen. If a DM wants to boost the overall experience a party gets by adding in treasure, it's his campaign.

The problem is that more sophisticated campaigns shouldn't be locked into a fight-treasure-experience cycle. Any campaign that encourages creative thinking, role-playing, teamwork, or tactical planning over monster-

bashing should find ways to reward such things or reduce the rewards for successful mayhem.

My letter in issue #122, which started the whole issue rolling, made allowances for giving experience for appropriate methods of spending (or even losing) money. One suggestion that came my way after that was from a DM who permitted PCs to pay for refresher courses from the people who trained them to advance in levels. The PCs didn't go up levels, but they did pick up experience points from this training. The DM's rate was 1 xp per 2 gp spent, but that could be reset to the traditional 1 xp per 1 gp rate if a DM wants.

Actually, David Argall hurt his case with the comparison to Joe Louis. The record of unbroken heavyweight boxing victories is irrelevant. What is the typical survival rate of PCs who fight appropriate level monsters going by the rules? Excellent to incredible. Realistically, losing an individual combat doesn't result in the death of a character. Most characters are in negative hit points and heading toward death - but not dead - when they drop. Only the dumbest monsters will finish off downed opponents while other party members are still attacking them. Unless the party fights for an awfully long time after that, someone will get to the fallen member(s) in time to provide some sort of healing. Add the fact that most PCs end up with the best armor and weapons they can get ASAP, and the PCs soon become the few beings of their own levels who can hit their own armor classes!

When I wrote my earlier letter, I didn't include any of my own solutions to the problems I brought up, like changing the weight of a coin from 10 to a pound to 100 to a pound, so the coin weighs a little more than twice the weight of a dime and has few of the problems found with the standard gold piece. I also look at the adventure before the players go through it and calculate a ballpark figure for the experience the PCs would get individually if they fare as expected (call it a passing grade). That figure becomes the base experience reward for that adventure. Individual members, or the whole party in some cases, may receive higher or lower amounts depending on how well or how poorly they did.

Characters who are not supposed engage in direct combat aren't penalized because they didn't fight this or that monster; they weren't supposed to fight under this system anyway. If your character is there and doing his job competently, he has earned the passing-grade amount of experience points.

Players have incentives to try and do more than the bare minimum here, and have a better chance of doing it just by being in character. Nor is a party that is somewhat large overpenalized because a fixed number of experience points are added for slaying monsters; gold and magical items are divided by the number of characters. I'd adjust the base value down if more characters were involved than I had anticipated, but the bottom line is: "This is the amount of experience points your character earned, based on what he was able to do," not "This is your share of all the experience points my calculator says you guys got."

S. D. Anderson
Whittier CA

Some time ago, several people wrote in about getting rid of level limits for demi-humans. They said the limits were balances for demi-humans' inborn advantages and longer life-spans. This is not the case. These upper-level limits were put in place not to balance extra abilities or long

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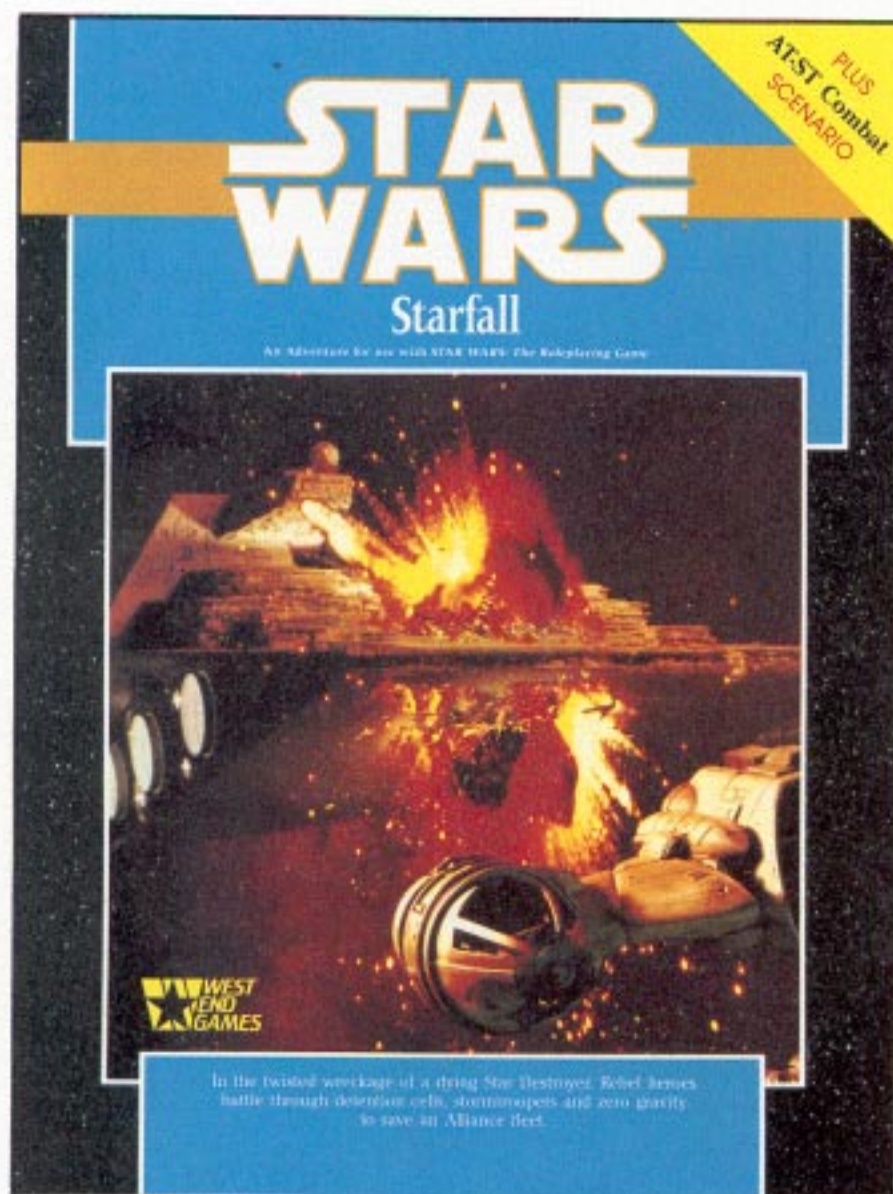


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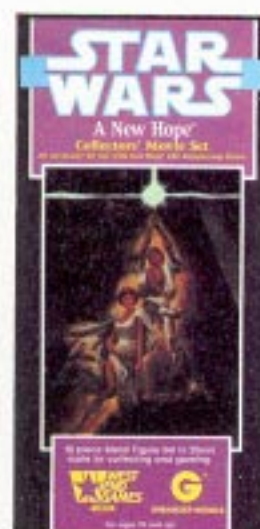
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lives, but rather to balance the option of advancing in more than one profession simultaneously. Multiclassed characters are the main reason we see so many dwarves, elves, gnomes, and such in adventuring parties.

Those who run single-classed demi-human characters are getting the short end (no pun intended), however. They can only advance a mere two levels higher than their multiclassed counterparts. We can soften this restriction by allowing unlimited advancement for single-classed demi-humans at an across-the-board [experience-point] penalty of 20-25%. This keeps demi-humans from dominating the game while making single-classed demi-humans attractive.

While on the subject of multiclassed characters, I would like to respond to the suggestion of not allowing multiclassed fighters weapon specialization. Why not? This makes multiclassed fighters more desirable. As a way of limiting the power of this choice, you can rule that a multiclassed fighter can only specialize in weapons allowable to the weaker (or weakest, in the case of triple-classed characters) class and by limiting multiclassed clerics to blunt weapons. Under this system, cleric/fighters would only be allowed to specialize in (and use, if you want to go that far) clerical weapons; cleric/fighter/magic-users would only be allowed to specialize in the staff and sling! Note that this applies to multiclassed characters only; dual-classed characters are handled differently.

Another place where changes could be made concerns armor use – an area which, unfortunately, receives little attention except in arguments over the existence of banded mail! Everyone who is not expressly forbidden by the rules to do so will want to wear plate mail, and with the advent of *Unearthed Arcana*, I'm certain that cavaliers aren't the only ones running around in field plate. Multiclassed thieves cannot perform their abilities except in certain armor, however, and it also might be wise to limit multiclassed magic-users to certain armor types; say that anything over chain mail restricts movement too much for spell-casting. Likewise, cancel the surprise bonuses and spell-casting for rangers and penalize bow use in splinted or banded armor or better. The idea is to increase the diversity within the party and enhance the role-playing opportunities.

Marc Sanders
Peekskill NY

Will the AD&D 2nd Edition game include a concept similar to the perception ability score in issue #133 ("Notice Anything Different?")? Although it might complicate surprise, other systems might be better defined, such as tracking (rangers and barbarians), detecting back attacks (barbarians), and several thief functions. If surprise dice are changed to 1d10 (or a larger die), both dexterity and perception would have modifiers with the larger die giving a more precise range.

The sentinel NPC class (way back in issue #89) would be easier to use by making it a normal fighter with high perception scores (16 +), with other special abilities added using proficiency slots (such as parrying and blindfighting).

If a new spell, perceive, is added, spell-casters would have a semidivinatory spell of great versatility. Perceive would temporarily add 1-4 points to the recipient's perception score (cf. *strength* spell). This could be a substitute for *penetrate disguise* and *detect life*, which, according to issue #42 of POLYHEDRON™ Newszine, will be cut from the AD&D 2nd Edition game. A disguised thief could get a spell

cast on him that would hinder perception of his identity (*overlook*, the reverse of *perceive*?) and, if he was truly concerned with the cover, *non-detection* as well. *Perceive* would also be useful to spell-casters who lack the level for casting *find traps* or *find the path*, or who simply don't know these spells. Of course, since it would only be a first- or second-level spell, it would not find everything, since the user would still rely on his own senses and reason.

Timothy Emrick
Granville OH

Occasionally, players complain that the ability of some undead to drain levels is too powerful – one has to kill hundreds of wights in order to offset the effects of being hit just once by one wight, and restoring levels by magic is much harder than bringing dead characters to life.

Yet I believe that this terrifying power is entirely justified and has a place in the game. The reason is just this – terror. The walking dead strike fear in the hearts of the most hardened heroes of fantasy literature, and the fear of losing hard-earned experience levels simulates it very well. In my campaign, I've had 6th-8th level characters descend into an aboleth lair, negotiate with overwhelmingly superior forces of kuo-toa, and stand guard as an NPC wizard conjured a major demon. Yet these brave adventurers ran in terror at the first sight of a vampire and scrambled for their precious one-shot magical items when the party cleric failed to turn a wight.

This fear of the living dead is very genuine and is much better than the sanity checks Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU® game uses when the Investigators are confronted by the supernatural. Thus, although the AD&D game is not intended to be a horror game, horror is brought into play in AD&D games much more effectively than in the game that is meant to be a horror game.

Ilya Taytslin
Albany NY

I recently finished reading the "Forum" letters written by Gregory Scott and David Howerly [issues #134 and 137, respectively], and I feel I must disagree with their thoughts on the fighter class. I completely support the idea that fighters are becoming a dead class, their subclasses being much better characters to play – but only if you look at it their way.

The fighter class attracted me when a dead campaign was resurrected last summer. I created a new character, a fighter, because the class of my old character, the bard, was a crock. My PC started at 3rd level, about two levels below the average party level, and worked his way up to a 5th-level fighter before the campaign died once again. Throughout the entire time, he was not a thug or a soldier; he was a fighter. He had no need to work for anybody and did not quite feel inclined to. He picked up jobs as he wandered the land searching for a lost friend of his, until he joined a group of adventurers at a tournament. There was no desire to put him into a role like scout, knight, mercenary, or whatever. He may have become a privateer like others in the group, if it wasn't for the death of the campaign. Any fighter could fit into any of the areas filled by its subclasses, except for the ranger, who needs to be modified so he cannot be a walking-tank-type scout. (Whoever heard of secretly tracking an elusive enemy in a loud, clanging suit of plate mail, anyway?) If my fighter would ever be

Continued on page 61

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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, P.O. 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.

This month, "Sage Advice" covers a potpourri of questions on various exotic topics related to the AD&D® game - from tarrasques to spaceships, and from psionics to the sizes of bags and boxes.

How long will a dragon stay subdued?

A dragon remains subdued indefinitely, as long as the subduing party clearly has the upper hand. An unintelligent dragon whose alignment is not diametrically opposed to its captor's alignment and which is weaker than its captor is unlikely to attempt escape as long as it is treated well (given its own treasure hoard, fed well, disciplined firmly and frequently, and allowed a small measure of freedom). Intelligent, spell-using dragons are disloyal even if relatively weak and dangerous if they believe they are as strong or stronger than their captors. Such a dragon spends every moment scheming to escape or to slay its captor and usurp his holdings.

Is a wish necessary to kill a tarrasque? Is it necessary to reduce it to -30 hp? If the wish is necessary, does the creature get a saving throw? Does the user get moved to a time when the tarrasque is dead or nonexistent (as suggested in the *Players Handbook*)? The tarrasque's attacks are listed as 1-12/1-2/2-24/5-50/1-10/10; isn't the 1-2 attack a bit weak for this monster? The description states that the creature can rush only once per turn; does this prevent the thrusting attack of its horns?

The tarrasque is not slain until it is reduced to -30 hp and a wish is used. The wisher suffers no ill effects, and there is no saving throw given to the tarrasque. The "1-2" attack is a misprint; it should read 1-12 (the two 1-12 attacks are from the creature's forelimbs). The creature can attack with its horns at any time; the only

rush effect is an extra 6" of movement.

Is the hit-point rating for the hangman tree correct? At 61 hp a year, a 151-year-old tree would have 9,211 hp and a one-year-old tree would have a minimum of 69 hp.

This is a misprint; the hit-dice rating is 6, + 1 hp per year. A 151-year-old tree would have 6 HD + 151 hp.

What does the beholder's anti-magic ray do?

It functions as an *anti-magic shell* in ray form. That is, all magic, from spells or magical items, ceases to function while within the ray.

Why do demon princes hide their amulets on the Prime Material plane where PCs can find them? Why don't they keep them on the Abyss, out of a PC's reach?

Demon princes hide their amulets all over the multiverse, not just on the Prime Material, since they are as much at risk in the Abyss as anywhere else from both plane-traveling adventurers and other demons.

I believe there is an AD&D module that takes place aboard a spaceship. Which one is it?

The module is entitled *S3 Expedition to the Barrier Peaks*. It has been out of print for some time but might still be available through your local retailer. This module was reprinted with three others as part of *S1-4 Realms of Horror*, now in print.

Is the Temple of Elemental Evil bigger than the *Players Handbook*?

Maybe. The entire Temple of Elemental Evil, with its attached dungeons and out-erworks, is considerably larger than a whole case of *Players Handbooks*. On the other hand, T1-4 *The Temple of Elemental Evil* is 128 pages long, but so is the *Players Handbook*. While the latter sports a hard cover, the former comes with a booklet of maps; neither feature increases the page count, and the two product's shipping weights are about the same.

How are psionic strength, psionic points, defense points, and attack points related? How does the expenditure of attack and defense points reduce psionic strength?

Psionic strength is determined when a character is created. A character has a

maximum of one attack and one defense point per point of psionic strength. Psionic strength is a constant, representing the character's maximum psychic potential and his relative power in psionic combat; it is never reduced except through the reduction of ability scores or similar mishaps. Attack and defense points represent the finite amount of psychic energy available to the character at any given time. Note that the use of psionic abilities require both attack and defense points (see the *Players Handbook*, page 111).

When a character acquires a psionic discipline that uses a level of mastery, is the effective level of mastery equal to the character's current level?

No. When a character first acquires a discipline, the level of mastery is level one, the character's experience level notwithstanding. Thereafter, the level of mastery increases each time the character gains a new level.

Is the thief's hear noise ability continuous, or does it require concentration? Is the ability strictly limited to listening at doorways?

The *hear noise* ability is neither automatic nor continuous. The thief must quietly concentrate on hearing noise; if he is wearing a helmet, he must take it off. A thief is not limited to listening at doors; he can hear faint sounds from any source.

Where are the weapon proficiency rules in the AD&D game? The index in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* is wrong.

The index is right. The page numbers in the index are printed in two type faces (as explained on page 228); the boldface entries refer to DMG page numbers, and the regular entries refer to *Players Handbook* page numbers. The entry for "Weapons, Proficiency" is given as pages 36-37 (note the regular type, indicating the *Players Handbook*). Additional proficiency rules can be found in *Unearthed Arcana*, pages 18 and 26.

What does "c" mean? It's most often used in front of a weapon's length in the *Players Handbook* (page 39).

This is an abbreviation for the Latin word *circa*, or "about." This is used to indicate that a number or date is approximate.

How do you pronounce "drow"?
It rhymes with "cow."

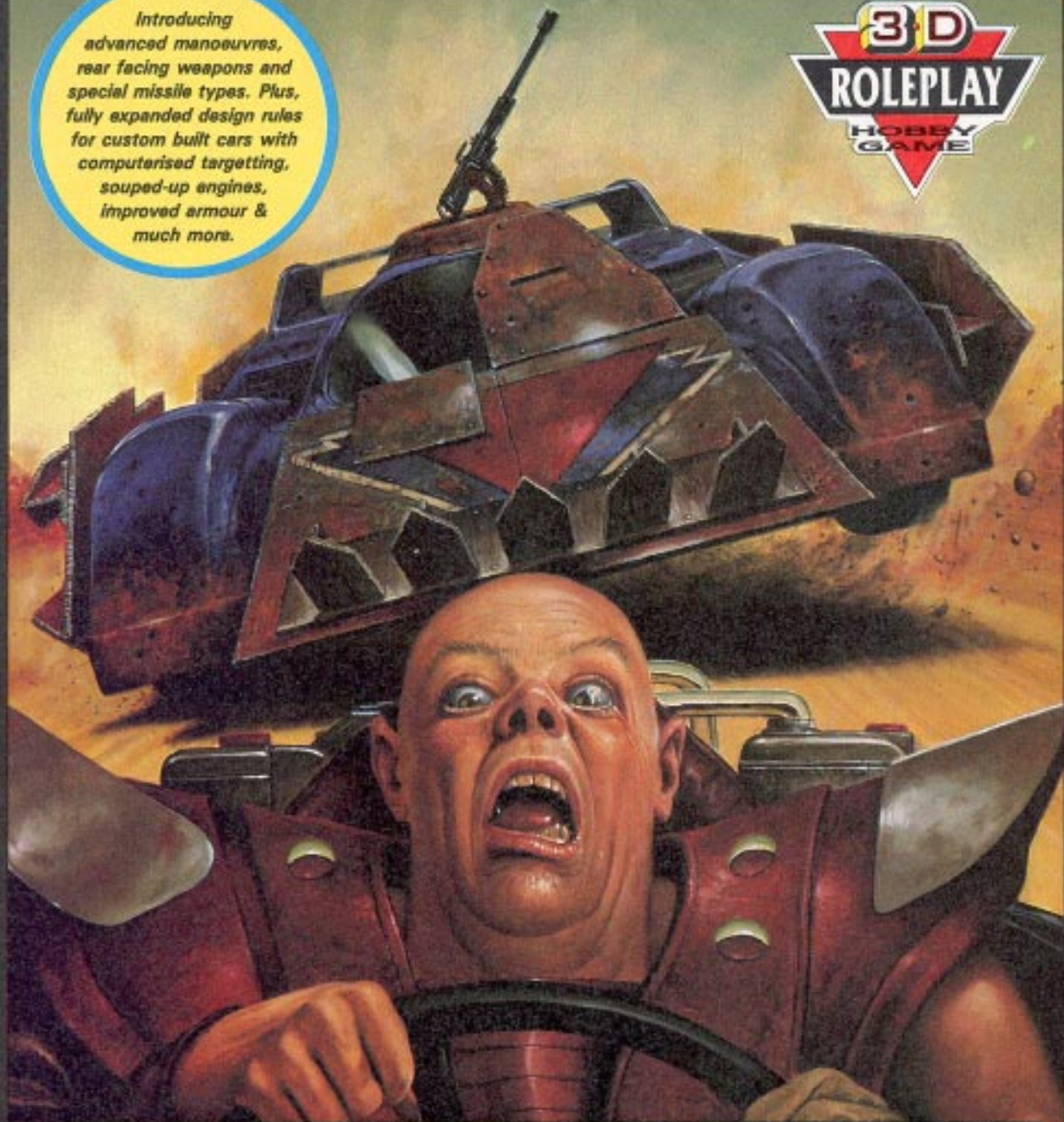
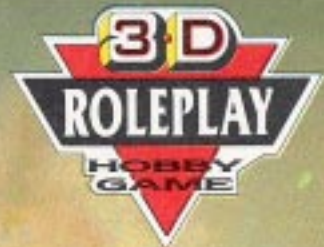
In the AD&D game, do gems and jewelry have to be sold before a character can get experience for them? The DMG seems to indicate that they must be converted into gold pieces first. The DMG also refers to conversion into a trans-
Continued on page 71

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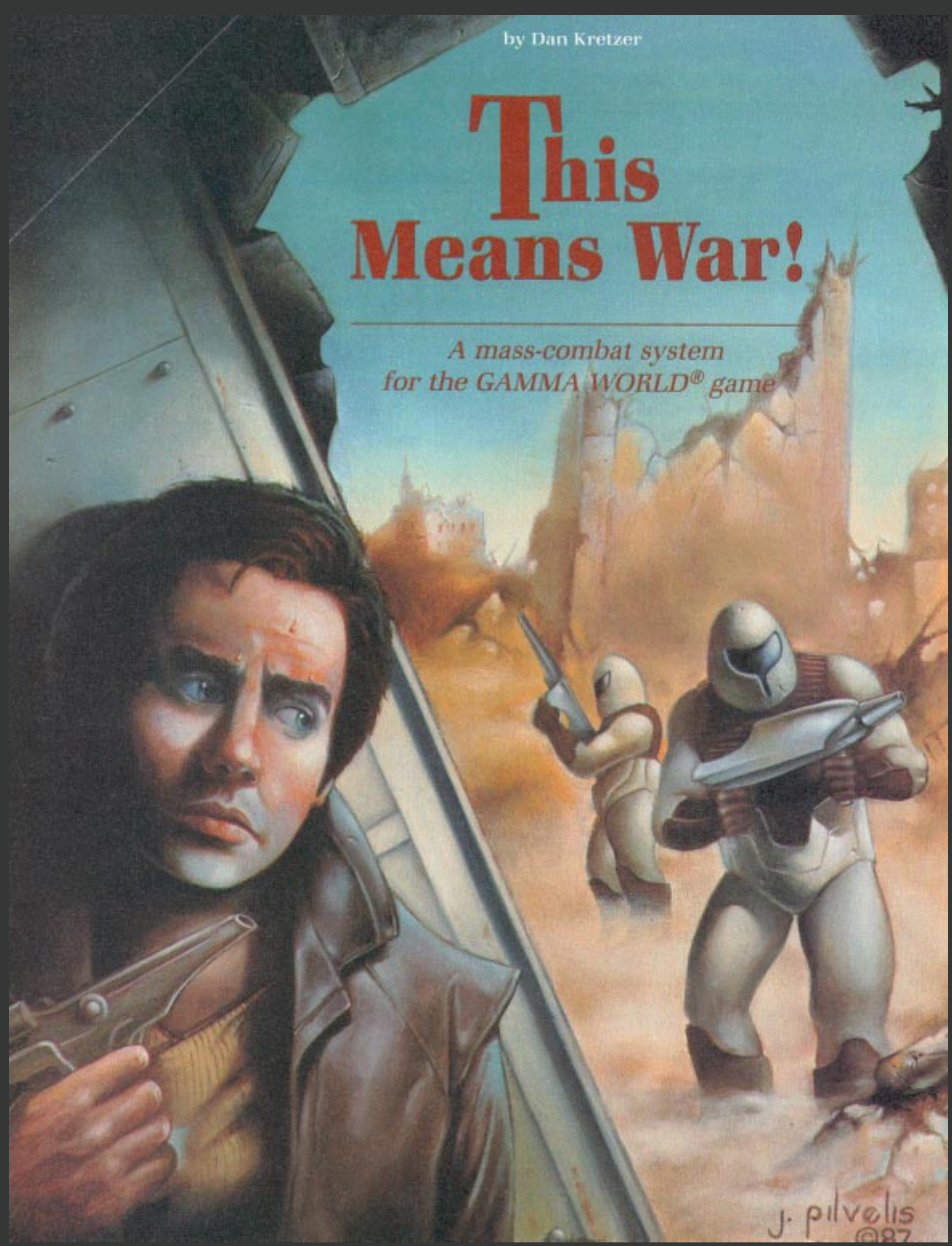
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*A mass-combat system
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In a world as unstable and hostile as that of the GAMMA WORLD® game, large-scale battles are unavoidable. Rival Cryptic Alliances like the Purists and the Mutationists, or the Restorationists and the Seekers (or the Red Death, which fights everyone) guarantee enough warfare to keep an entire continent in conflict. But there's more mass combat where that came from. You also have rival tribes, cities, races, bandits, and religious fanatics. War itself is what made the Gamma World possible, and it stands to reason that it would be a part of any campaign.

The incorporation of mass-combat rules into GAMMA WORLD games can provide new challenges for those characters who have come to a higher level of play. Some of the campaign goals listed in the GAMMA WORLD rule book could directly involve the characters as leaders in a war. Uniting barbarian tribes, defeating tyrannical lords and their followers, and taming the wilderness are all goals that suggest the necessity of some form of mass combat. The following system takes the GAMMA WORLD third-edition rules and uses them to create a way of simulating mass combat in the game.

Battle rank

Each force of combatants is assigned a battle rank (BR) by the GM. The BR is calculated in the following way:

1. Find the average Rank of each soldier, not counting leaders, by finding the average hit dice of a typical soldier. For example, 20 hoops (HD 15) and 40 badders (HD 6) make up a force. Add all their hit dice $[(20 \times 15 = 300) + (40 \times 6 = 240) = 540]$ and divide the total by the total number of soldiers $(540/60 = 9)$. The result is a base BR 9. Treat each vehicle the battle force has as one soldier and average its hit dice into the BR; do not count drivers or gunners as soldiers in this case. (This latter rule applies to ships in naval battles, too.)

2. Modify the base BR according to the leader's abilities. Treat the leader's Rank as an ability score on the Ability Modifiers table on the back of the third-edition rule book, and add its modifier to the BR; do the same with the leader's charisma. Add 5 to the BR if the leader has *military genius* capability. For example, the leader of the hoop/badder force mentioned earlier is Rank 7 (- 1) and has a charisma of 16 (+ 2). The BR of the force after this modification is $[(9 - 1) + 2 =] 10$. If the leader has *military genius capability*, the BR is 15. If the leader is a mutant, use his hit dice instead of his Rank to determine the force's BR modifiers.

3. Determine the Tech Level of the average weapons and armor used by the soldiers, using the following table:

Tech level	Modifier
I	-5
II	-2
III	0
IV	+2
V	+5

To determine each soldier's individual Tech Level, average the Tech Levels of his weapons and armor, rounding fractions up toward the figure for weapons. If a soldier has a laser gun and wears either chain mail or no armor, he is Tech Level III; the use of Tech Level III or IV armor would make him Tech Level IV.

For example, let's say that the hoops in our example all have rifles (Tech Level III) and the badders all have crossbows and morning stars (Tech Level II), with appropriate armor for their Tech Levels. The average Tech Level comes out to be $[(20 \times 3) + (40 \times 2) \div 60 =] 2.33$, which we round down to Tech Level II, so 2 is subtracted from 10 for a BR of 8. If the hoops all had Tech Level IV gear, the average Tech Level would be 2.66, which becomes Tech Level III for no penalty.

If a battle force's soldiers have no weapons, subtract 10 from their BR unless they have claws or other such innate weaponry (treat these as Tech Level II). If the soldiers have ranged combat mutations (*radiation eyes*, *hands of power*, etc.) and no weapons, treat them as Tech Level III.

4. Find the average number of beneficial offensive or defensive mutations the average soldier has, and add that number to the BR; subtract the average number of defects. For example, the empathy of badders would be fairly useless in a battle (+ 0), but hoops have *transform metal to rubber* and *leap* (the abilities of *telepathy* and *mass mind* would not be particularly useful in mass combat). Thus, the average number of combat mutations is 0.66, which is rounded up to 1. Based on this figure, the BR goes back up to 9.

5. Modify the above BR figure for the army using modifiers for various combat situations, including terrain, unusual combat conditions, strategy, artillery and siege

equipment, fatigue, hunger, morale, health, and troop ratios. These modifiers are listed in Tables 1-4, respectively.

Fighting the battle

When the BRs of the two engaged forces are finally modified, the troops are ready to fight the battle. Battle is conducted by rolling on the ACT Table on the back of the third-edition rule book, referencing the modified BR on the top column. The result is that force's battle result. The players commanding each force roll dice on this table. The result factors (RFs) are then compared and read as follows:

RFs equal: If RFs are equal, the force with the higher BR wins a Pyrrhic victory (see below). If both the forces have equal BRs, the fight is a draw (see below).

RF +1: If a force's RF is one higher than the other's, that force wins a marginal victory.

RF +2: If a force's RF is two higher than the other's, that force wins a tactical victory.

RF +3: If a force's RF is three higher than the other's, that force wins a minor victory.

RF +4: If a force's RF is four higher than the other's, that force wins a major victory.

RF +5: If a force's RF is five higher than the other's, it has achieved complete victory.

RF +6: If one force rolls Red and the other rolls Black, the Black-rolling force is put to rout.

Battle result descriptions

When a force loses soldiers, 75% of them are dead, 20% are captured (or killed, if the winner doesn't want prisoners), and 5% flee and never rejoin their force.

Draw: The two forces both lose 30% of their soldiers, 15% more each are considered injured, and both forces must retreat.

Table 1
Terrain and Special Conditions

Condition	Modifier
Terrain is favorable for specific force	+2
Terrain is not favorable for specific force	-2
Force is attacking from a covered area (e.g., a forest) or down a hill	+3
Force is attacking into a covered area or up a hill	-3
Force is landing on a beach	+2
Naval force is attacking land force	+2 for naval force, -2 for land force
Force is airborne	+5
Force is on sand, snow, or mud	-3
Force is in a radioactive zone and is not immune to radiation	-2
Force is wading through water or fording a river	-3
Force has cover during a firefight	+3
Entire force has infravision or ultravision during a night battle	+4
Naval force is in very shallow water	-2*
Naval force must maneuver in reefs	-4*

* Applies only if the majority of the ships are large or are submarines.

from the field of battle.

Pyrrhic victory: Both forces lose 40% of their soldiers and 20% are injured, but the Pyrrhic winner does not have to retreat from the field.

Marginal victory: The winner loses 30% of his soldiers and 10% are injured, and he holds the field. The loser loses 35% of his soldiers and 20% are injured.

Tactical victory: The winner loses 25% of his soldiers and 15% are injured. The loser loses 40% of his soldiers and 30% are injured.

Minor victory: The winner loses 25% of his soldiers and 10% are injured. The loser loses 50% of his soldiers and 40% are injured.

Major victory: The winner loses 20% of his soldiers and 10% are injured. The loser loses 60% of his soldiers and 35% are injured.

Complete victory: The winner loses 15% of his soldiers and 5% are injured. The loser loses 75% of his soldiers and 25% are injured.

Rout: The winner loses 1% of his force and 5% are injured. The losing force is

completely destroyed. Those not killed are captured or flee in different directions.

Other combat results

Identity of soldiers: Casualties from a battle are assessed in proportions equal to the number of soldiers in the force and their hit dice. Using the hoop/badder army example, suppose that 50% of that force is lost in a battle. Since badders have fewer hit dice than hoops, they should have suffered more casualties in proportion to their comrades; multiply the number of survivors in the army by the ratio of badder hit dice to hoop hit dice $[(30 \times (6 \div (6 + 15)))]$, rounding to the nearest figure. The same is done for the hoops $[(30 \times (15 \div (6 + 21))]$. This leaves only nine badders and 21 hoops. Similar proportion equations can be worked out for forces composed of many different types of soldiers and vehicles.

Holding the field: Unless the battle was a draw, the winner stays on the field of battle. The loser must move at least one mile away from the winning army in the opposite direction from which the attack

came.

Injured soldiers: Injured soldiers heal in one week. If the force has many medical artifacts, injured soldiers can be healed in one day (at the GM's discretion).

Vehicles: If any vehicle is lost, it is considered to be destroyed and useless. If a vehicle is "injured," it remains damaged unless there is a specialist mechanic in the force.

Prisoners: Each force leader should decide if his army takes prisoners. If it does, 20% of all the soldiers that the losing force "lost" are taken prisoner. Prisoners do not try to escape except in isolated cases, and they can be made to carry supplies and do manual labor, such as building bridges, hauling heavy artillery, or chopping down trees. Prisoners must be fed in order for them to do work.

PCs in combat: PCs are never killed as a result of a battle dice roll. If 90% or more of the PC's force is injured or otherwise becomes a casualty, the PC is also injured, but only at the GM's discretion. PCs can be captured or become lost if the GM wishes.

Troop morale: The morale of a force is equal to the average morale of its soldiers. For every victory, morale climbs 2 points; morale drops 2 points with every defeat. If the army is hungry or tired, morale drops 1 point.

Mixing forces: If two or more forces are mixed, do not bother with recalculating a BR for the entire mixed group. Instead, treat them as separate forces, and divide the opposing force into as many groups as there are forces in the mixed army. For example, a force of 100 jagets (BR 9) and a force of 50 mutated humans (BR 12) join together to attack an army of 100 androids (BR 15). The player controlling the androids decides that 40 will fight the humans and 60 will fight the jagets. This gives you two different battles even though the forces may be hopelessly mixed together. The GM should use a similar system when two mixed forces fight each other.

Battle time: The time elapsed during a battle is determined by finding the average number of soldiers in the two conflicting forces. The battle will take a number of minutes equal to that average troop number (see also "guerrilla war" under optional rules).

Fortified positions: A fortified position is any place in which a force remains immobile and has some type of fixed defense set up. The fortified position described on the modifier table represents a lumber wall. If the fixed defense is made of stone, defenders get a +5 bonus and attackers get a -5 penalty. If the fortification is made of a metal alloy other than duralloy, the bonus/penalty is + 8/- 8, and siege equipment only deletes the attacker's penalty, not the defender's bonus. If the structure is made of duralloy, the bonus/penalty is +10/- 10; in this case, siege equipment reduces the penalty to - 5.

Firefights and melees: All of the rules

Table 2
Strategy, Artillery, and Seige Equipment

Condition	Modifier
Force has laid an ambush in terrain making it easy for the orce to hide	+ 4
Force is defending a fortified position	+3*
Force is attacking a fortified position	-3*
Force is armed with artillery or explosives	+ 4
Force charging through open terrain at an immobile enemy	-3**
Force is bunched together	+3
Force is attacking from more than one direction	-2
Force is attacking with surprise	+3
Force has enemy's accurate battle plan	+ 4
Force is attacking enemy while the enemy is camping	+2
Naval force has one or more submarines with torpedos	+3
Naval force is attacking through minefield	- 4
Naval force is attacked by air	-5
* These values are negated if proper seige equipment is used by the attackers against the fortified position.	
* * This value is negated for flying forces.	

Table 3
Fatigue, Hunger, Morale, and Health

Condition	Modifier
Force is fatigued	- 4
Force is suffering from hunger or thirst	-3
Force fought another battle within 24 hours of the current battle	-2
Morale is below 4	-3
Morale is above 12	+ 4
For every 5% of a force that is injured	-1
Troops are heavily burdened on the average	-1
Troops are unburdened on the average	+1



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Table 4 Troop Ratios

Ratio	Modifier
1:1	+ 4
10:9	+ 2
5:4	+ 4
10:7	+ 6
5:3	+ 8
2:1	+ 10
5:2	+ 12
10:3	+ 14
5:1	+ 16
10:1	+ 18
More than 10:1	+ 20

above assume that the battle is waged exclusively with either ranged weapons or with melee weapons. If one force has ranged weapons and the other has only melee weapons, however, the force without ranged weapons must take a -2 RF penalty on its battle roll, and the number of soldiers lost or injured rises by 25 percentage points per category (or as many of these 50 points as can be allowed). The melee-weapon force is routed if 100% of its soldiers are lost or injured. If there is no way for the melee-weapon soldiers to get at the ranged-weapon soldiers (say that the melee-weapon soldiers are on a boat), then the melee soldiers can cut losses by retreating immediately, for a loss of only 2-20% (ranged-weapon soldiers take no losses). If retreat is impossible, the melee-weapon soldiers are automatically routed with no roll made.

Example of a battle

The hoop/badder force from our earlier example (BR 9) is marching through a grassy field when it is set upon by an army of 100 hawkoids (BR 5, average leader, Tech Level I weapons, two combat mutations). Assume that the hawkoids are attacking from the air (+5), and have surprised the hoops/badders (+3), but have no other advantages: The hoops/badders were marching in tight formation and

were bunched together when the battle started (+3). The troop ratio is 100:60 or 5:3, for a +8 modifier for the hawkoids. Modified BRs are now 12 for the hoops/badders and 21 for the hawkoids.

The dice are rolled, and the results are 64 for the hawkoids (a Yellow result on the ACT) and a 26 for the unfortunate hoops/badders. The hawkoids have won by 3 RFs, so they gained a minor victory, with 20 hawkoids lost and 10 hurt. This leaves 80 hawkoids with 12.5% of them injured; the injury figure is rounded down to 10% injured, and a -2 modifier for all upcoming combats is applied until all are healed.

The Hoops/badders lose 60% of their soldiers, so 36 of the 60 are lost. Likewise, 35% are injured, leaving all the remaining soldiers, save three, hurt. To add to all this, the force must retreat from the field in any direction (as the attack came from above).

Maintaining an army

Movement: Armies travel at the same speed a party of adventurers would travel unless the entire force is traveling by vehicle. If every soldier is riding a vehicle, they travel at the vehicle's speed. Fatigue slows a marching army to 75% normal speed. If more than 30% of the soldiers are injured, marching speed is slowed to half the usual value. Any force with prisoners or without pack animals to carry supplies will travel at half speed, too.

Supply lines: If there is a route from the army to a friendly base with access to massive amounts of supplies and means of transporting them, the force can maintain a supply line. This prevents pack animals or soldiers from having to carry as much, leaving soldiers free to fight and move quickly.

Guerrillas who are in areas where foraging is impossible can make small hits on existing enemy supply lines. If the guerrillas do so, they will not be able to take amounts of supplies sufficient to hurt the main force.

Morale: If a force's morale ever drops below zero, and there are still enough soldiers in the army for it to be considered

a force, it will automatically dissipate and cease to exist as a unit. If morale rises above 25, there is a 75% chance that other men from surrounding areas will come to join up for either payment or patriotism. Each day that the force's morale is above 25, it will gain 1-6 soldiers who will have Rank, equipment, and mutations so as not to change the force's BR.

Payment: A mercenary soldier usually charges 1 gold piece per day per Rank. If situations are extremely dangerous, he may charge more. PCs who raise mercenary armies must be able to handle such financing. Once soldiers cease to be paid, they leave, with but one exception: If the force is that of a city, tribe, Cryptic Alliance, or similar group of individuals, it will fight without pay as long as the soldiers believe they are furthering their group's cause or defense. A PC can always count on people to resist if their homeland is invaded or raided.

Encampments: As a general rule, a force must rest for 12 hours and can travel for 12 hours each day. An eight-hour stretch of rest is made at night, with an hour devoted to setting up camp and an hour devoted to breaking the camp down. Such camps are vulnerable to enemy attacks but are necessary. A midday rest of two hours requires no camp, only immobility.

Optional rules

Tactics: A force using specific tactics receives a +4 BR bonus if the opponent is not using tactics. If both forces use tactics (encircle, strike and move, charge blindly with force, etc.), then both get a +2 bonus unless the GM decides that one tactic is exceptionally effective or ineffective; the force with the weaker tactic then gets a -2 penalty while the other force gets a +2 bonus. For example, if one force is attacking blindly against another force with no tactics, the first force will get a +4 bonus. But if the second one was trying to encircle the first, then the GM might decide that the charging soldiers will run deep into a jam. The GM then gives the encircling group a +2 bonus and the charging force a -2 penalty.

Guerrilla warfare: If a force has a lot of terrain to defend, it may wish to fight another force with guerrilla tactics and so becomes a guerrilla force. Guerrilla forces are most effective against conventional forces, though two forces can fight with guerrilla tactics against each other.

The advantages of guerrilla war are as follows:

1. The guerrillas do not subtract from their BR for their own Tech Level.
2. Mutations that would help in a guerrilla war but not in conventional one (such as *camouflage*) will be counted as battle-relevant mutations for guerrilla troops. The GM must decide which mutations are useful ones in this case.
3. If a guerrilla force is native to the combat area, it gets a +5 modifier to its BR.
4. The number of soldiers lost and

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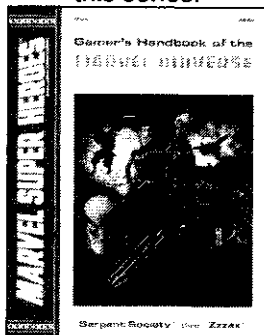
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injured is cut by half for guerrilla forces.

5. The troop-ratio advantages are each cut by half.

However, guerrilla warfare has the following disadvantages:

1. There can be no positive modifier for the leader's abilities except for his Rank.

2. For each day of combat waged, a guerrilla force suffers a - 1 BR penalty due to fatigue and exposure.

3. Supply lines (see below) cannot be established.

4. The guerrilla force is always split up into groups of 10 or fewer soldiers, so communication suffers. Specific tactics cannot be used by guerrillas, and orders to move or attack take three days to get to all of the troops in an area.

5. No guerrilla force can route any other force, but guerrillas can be routed by conventional forces.

The requirements for guerrilla war are as follows:

1. The guerrilla war can only be waged in mountains, forests, ruined cities, jungles, or rocky areas. Flat, open terrain makes guerrilla warfare impractical. However, if both forces are waging guerrilla war, then any terrain will do.

2. The guerrillas may not use vehicles except for small cars or motorcycles. If at sea, guerrillas can use small boats.

3. The guerrillas must have some way of getting food and water. If they are native to the area, they can get these things easily. Otherwise, they must carry supplies or forage any food. If the area does not have any natural food sources in it or the enemy does not have supply lines to raid, the guerrillas will run out of carried rations and the guerrillas will suffer from starvation.

The battlefield covers a much larger area in a guerrilla war than in a conventional one. The GM and players roll separately each day to find how many soldiers on either side are lost or injured, subtracting that amount from the army totals and modifying BRs as necessary. A fatigued guerrilla force may choose to rest a day by not engaging the enemy; this is called evasion. If the guerrilla leader elects to evade, conventional forces spend the day hunting the guerrillas and will kill 1-6% of them. If both forces are guerrillas, nobody will be caught on an evasion day. Evasion days do not count for actual battle days, and they allow complete rest for guerrillas. Remember that it takes three days for a guerrilla force to receive orders, so if a leader elects to evade, he will not be able to do so for three days.

At any time, a guerrilla force can elect to gather together as one large force. This takes three consecutive days of combat time to get the orders out and three consecutive evasion days to gather at a designated place.

Playing out a guerrilla war can take hours of real time. There are many exciting adventures that PC guerrillas and leaders can have during this time while

the large-scale fighting rages on. If PCs manage to do something on their own that affects the enemy's BR, the BR should be lowered for the next day's roll. Commando raids, sabotage missions, and spying make good guerrilla-war adventures.

The GM should have a good idea of the general locations of conventional forces while a guerrilla war is on. The guerrillas will be scattered around, but knowing the location of a large force will help guerrillas create logical tactics, such as blowing up a bridge before a conventional force can cross it (or while a conventional force is crossing it) to buy more time for the guerrillas. Conventional forces may move around the combat area and split into smaller groups while waging war normally. Even if a conventional force is split up, combat rolls are still treated as involving one battle.

If a conventional force wants out of a guerrilla war, it simply leaves the area. If the guerrillas want out, they must take three days to notify their troops and one day to leave.

Special effects on soldiers: The GM should use his best judgment in administering any special problems or effects that might occur during a war. For example, if a force (for whatever reason) is struck with a widespread illness, look up "Sickness" on the referee's screen. It states that a PC gets a -2 CS in combat and moves at half speed, for 1-6 days. Thus, the entire force receives a -2 to its BR and moves at half speed for 1-6 days.

Boarding actions: The previous game rules easily accommodate naval battles in which ships attack each other from a distance. Sometimes two ships move closely enough for marine crews to attempt boarding actions; in such cases, each ship is given a BR determined by calculating the BR of the combatants on the ship, not counting the ships as vehicles. The winners get control of the other ship, and the losers have to bail out in life boats and hope for the best.

No retreat: Whenever this command is given by the leader of a force before the battle starts, the GM must check the force's morale. If the morale check is passed, the force will not retreat from the field if beaten by the first set of dice rolls. The victorious force must fight the loser in a second round of fighting, but at + 1 to its BR. If the "no retreat" force is beaten again, its leader may order "no retreat" again; and if the morale check (now made at - 1) succeeds, the force fights again (but the previous victor now gets a + 2 to its BR). With each subsequent defeat, the victor gains a + 1 to its BR and the loser gets a - 1 on its next morale check; these penalties are cumulative. Note that both sides in a battle can declare "no retreat" and thus fight down to the last mutant.

Experience and Status levels: To determine the experience points gained by a leader during a battle in which he is victorious, add up the total number of all the

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enemy soldiers that were lost or injured, multiply this number by the enemy's average Rank, and subtract a value equal to the number of the leader's soldiers that were lost or wounded multiplied by their average Rank. Leaders who lose a battle gain no experience.

If a character leads his community's army to victory or defends his town against invaders, he gains two Status levels. If he loses such a battle, he loses two Status levels, if there's still a town left to make the reduction mean anything.

Long-range missile strikes and bombing: Some forces, usually the dishonorable or smart kinds, will get access to fiendish weapons like surface missiles or bombs. If missiles are launched at a force, the victims cannot do much about it. Each non-nuclear missile that hits will kill $1d10 + 5$ soldiers and injure twice that many, or destroy one vehicle and wound $2d10$ men (firer's option as to which). A Red attack result means that the attack did double damage, and a Black result means the missile exploded before being launched.

Bomb-droppers are another story. If there is a skywatching lookout for the target force, that force will be able to fire on any bombers flying overhead. Bombers must fly lower than 100 meters in order to have any chance of hitting their targets under "eyeball guidance," unless they have some advanced targeting mechanisms.

Antibomber fire should be allowed for five turns before a bomb may be dropped (remember to subtract for range and target movement). Bombers must roll dice to hit their targets. A colored result means the bombers managed to get the same effects as a missile strike (see above). A Red result means that the bomb did double damage, and a Black one means the bomb exploded before being dropped.

Fission bombs are another story. If a plane or dirigible manages to get directly above a force and drops a fission bomb, it will wipe out 90% of the force, with the other 10% receiving major injuries taking two weeks to heal; any PCs will survive, but just barely. Aircraft carrying fission bombs must maneuver for 10 turns before having position and must be below 100 meters in altitude; this gives the victims of the bomb a fair chance to scatter or shoot it down. If a force is ordered to scatter during a bombing or missile strike, the damage sustained will be halved. Dirigibles, because they cannot move quickly to escape the bomb's effects, have a 90% chance to be destroyed on the bomb run.

Mixed-up forces: Sometimes a military force has soldiers of all races, Ranks, and Tech Levels. Determining the BR for such a force is impossible; instead, just use a BR of 10 for mixed-up groups of this kind (assuming a mid-level Rank, some mutations, and a Tech Level average of III), then

modify this by the abilities of whoever is leading the force.

Conclusion

Mass combat can be a useful, challenging, and exciting part of a GAMMA WORLD campaign. You may choose to use the rules as they are presented here or change them to your liking. However you use them, they can be of tremendous value when running an ongoing campaign world.

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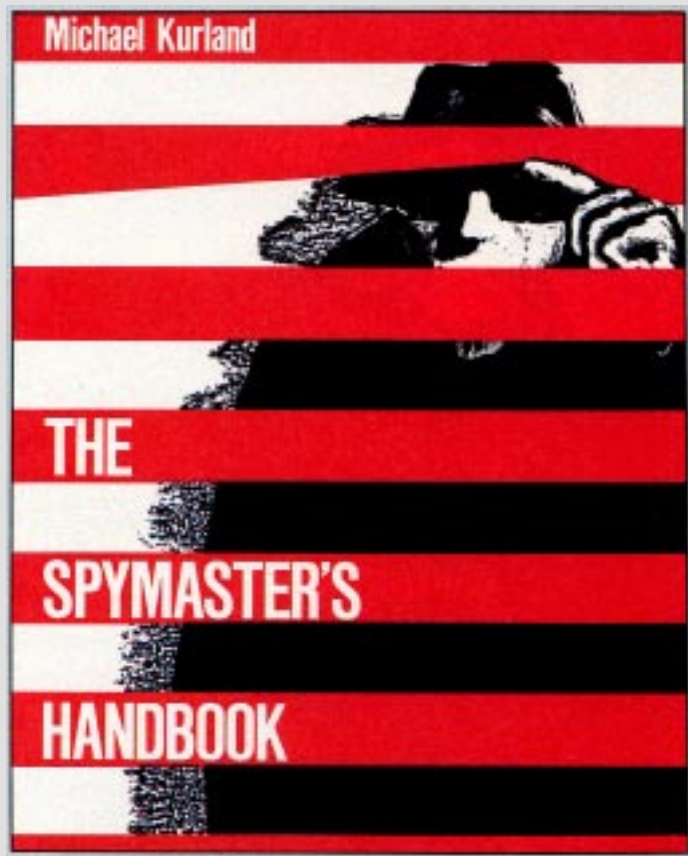
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Espionage role-playing looks deceptively easy. After all, if you've seen a few James Bond movies, watched some episodes of *Mission: Impossible*, and paid attention to the last year's worth of newspaper headlines about the CIA, you know how the spy game works. Right?

Wrong. Everyone knows TV and cinema spies are far more glamorous than real intelligence agents, but few people realize that newspaper coverage of the CIA's adventures in Central America conveys an image of espionage that is almost as sharply removed from reality.

This is where Michael Kurland and *The Spymaster's Handbook* come in. The best espionage role-playing is, or should be, grounded in a solid, basic understanding of the real world's intelligence-gathering business, and Kurland's book is one of the most accessible and informative guides to spycraft you're likely to run across.

The most critical test of any textbook lies in the quality and organization of its information, and Kurland passes it handily. He begins by giving readers a working vocabulary of intelligence terms - words real CIA staffers use - and makes some important distinctions in the process. (There's a difference between espionage and intelligence, and there are more kinds of intelligence than you can count on one hand.) And who makes up a spy agency's staff? Kurland has the answers and the job descriptions down cold. An intriguing test allows readers to evaluate their own potential as professional spies; it should also be a valuable aid as gamers design PCs for espionage campaigns.

The handbook, though, is not simply a collection of lists. Kurland is careful to explain how the various elements of intelligence-gathering interact, and a host of lively footnotes ably document the strengths and liabilities of the various human and technological techniques he describes.

Yet, while Kurland's tome is certainly a solid textbook, his writing is orders of magnitude above traditional "textbook dull." The aforementioned footnotes are an appropriate illustration: Kurland uses them to expand and comment on issues discussed in the main text, and the device creates an extra, personalized sense of dimension in the material. A recurring framework applies much of the spy lore to the Marx Brothers' nation of Freedonia, but Kurland's humor is wise and understated, and the overall tone of the book combines a healthy dose of common sense with a mild-mannered sense of the absurd. While Kurland treats his subject with seriousness and respect, his outlook is firmly upbeat and positive - an unusual characteristic and a refreshing one.

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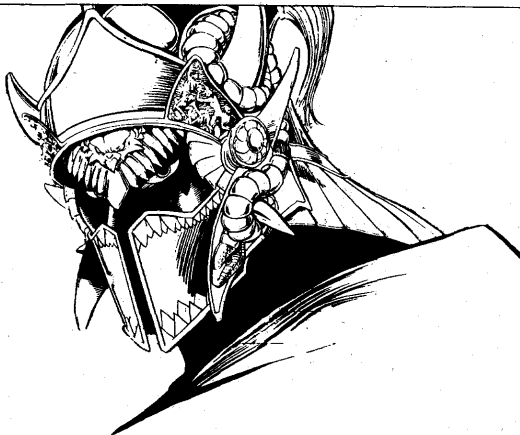
sections devoted to historical spies and intelligence operations. Though the depth of the individual segments varies (a chapter on Benedict Arnold goes into remarkably fascinating detail, while one on the Elizabethan spymaster Sir Francis Walsingham is unaccountably brief), Kurland's stories are well told and well chosen, aptly conveying the subtle strategic nuances of the situations he describes.

Only two aspects of the manual are less than satisfying. One of them is the concluding chapter on codes and cryptography, which is surprisingly unoriginal. The material presented is accurate and practical but not terribly inspiring, and it ignores electronic cryptography almost completely; Kurland does, however, correctly recommend David Kahn's *The Codebreakers* as the essential resource for those seeking more depth in this area. The other disappointment is comparatively trivial but no less irritating; the cover art and contents page are positively garish and heavy-looking, in sharp contrast to the graphically smooth and well-illustrated interior of the handbook.

But then, perhaps that's intentional. As Kurland stresses, spies are supposed to be inconspicuous, and certainly no one would expect a volume as unglamorous in appearance as *The Spymaster's Handbook* to be such a useful repository of espionage lore. The manual is highly recommended for enabling spy gamers to add realism to their campaigns and for giving all readers a better insight into real-life intelligence than newspapers and spy fiction usually provide. Ω

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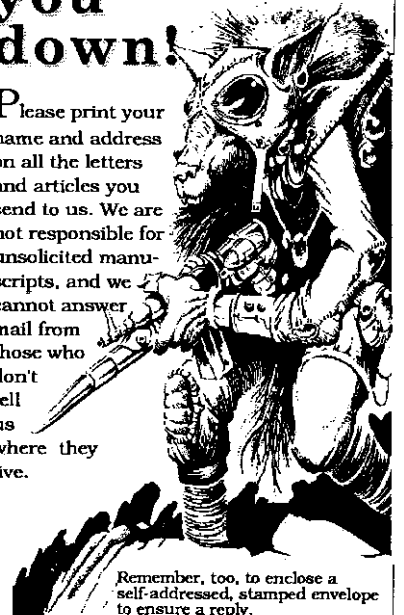


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by Tony Jones

The Ecology of the Kech

What evil lurks in the heart of the forest?

Taken from a lecture series given by the esteemed naturalist and sage Oparin, on the subject of dangerous creatures of the woodlands:

The kech is another of the foul fiends that make the woods a dangerous place

for inexperienced adventurers and travelers. The physical appearance of the kech is perfectly suited to an arboreal life. Its leathery skin is green, ranging from a light, silvery green similar in hue to the underside of a leaf to the deep green of

oak leaves, and this coloration makes it possible for a kech to remain unnoticed in the trees. A kech also possesses long arms and legs, complete with handlike feet, which make it easy for it to move from tree to tree as does a monkey.

Male and female keches are similar in appearance, although the female is smaller and lighter in color. Adult males are 5-6' in height and weigh 120-150 lbs. Adult females stand upright at 5' and weigh close to 100 lbs. Both genders are lithe and well muscled, and can walk upright as well as race on all fours. A kech's face is very humanlike (perhaps keches are some accursed offshoot of the human race that became adapted to living in the trees), but the eyes are blood-red in color and pupilless, and the mouth is filled with many blood-letting fangs. Also, the nose of the kech is smaller than a normal human's - almost unnoticeable - and the ears can only be distinguished from the rest of the head by close scrutiny. Although mammalian, a kech has only a few traces of hair on its body.

Keches are wily creatures made infamous by the many snares and traps they set to capture careless and unsuspecting prey, much like those human trappers use to catch the small fur-bearers on which the trappers make their living. These snares are nearly impossible to detect by any but skilled woodsmen and druids. A kech often covers its hunting territory - an area of indeterminate size which



Illustrations by David Zenz

includes several well-traveled paths, roads, and animal trails – with as many as a half-dozen of these traps. And the more kech found in the same area (for these creatures are commonly found in groups), the larger the hunting area and the greater the number of pitfalls present.²

However, keches do not fully rely on the various traps and snares they set to catch all their prey. They actively patrol their hunting areas looking for suitable prey (of the human variety) most of the day and night, resting only in the heat of the day and the middle of the night. Keches never attack a group of four or more individuals unless the group looks particularly weak, unobservant, or careless. If the keches possess two-to-one odds in their favor, they may attack any human gathering. Keches will try to separate larger parties into smaller ones by various means, attacking the smaller parties separately. Their hunting territories are always heavily forested, for keches are excellent climbers and stay in the trees as much as possible.

One of the keches' favorite ways to separate larger groups is to mimic the sounds of a human in trouble – a ploy that some companions and I learned about firsthand during an expedition to investigate these beings. A kech will call for help in a local human tongue, seeking to lure victims into traps and ambushes. These cries are remarkably realistic but can be distinguished from actual human voices by careful listening and attention. While studying these creatures, our party witnessed the death of one of our retainers, who fell into a covered pit when he rushed to aid another retainer whom he believed was screaming in distress. The crier turned out to be one of a pair of keches. While I cannot urge that cries for help be ignored, travelers must use the utmost caution when these creatures are known to be about an area.³

Keches can stalk prey silently in the deep forests (although they can still be heard by thieves and elves if an attempt is made to listen closely). In addition, keches are difficult to track as they leave false tracks and use other such ploys to avoid being followed. Because of their leaflike skin and silence, keches often succeed in attacking their victims with surprise.⁴ By hiding in the branches of trees, a kech can drop on an opponent from above, knock him off his feet, and bite and claw at him; this is the keches' favorite method of assault.⁵ Keches also use their prehensile toes to hang from limbs, using their claws as victims pass underneath. Keches sometimes rush victims on the ground in an effort to kill or disable one or two of them, fleeing with their prey before the victims' allies have a chance to retaliate.

Keches normally choose to disable prey, clawing and biting at the faces and necks of victims rather than killing them outright. This is especially true of attacks against humans, whom kech prefer to

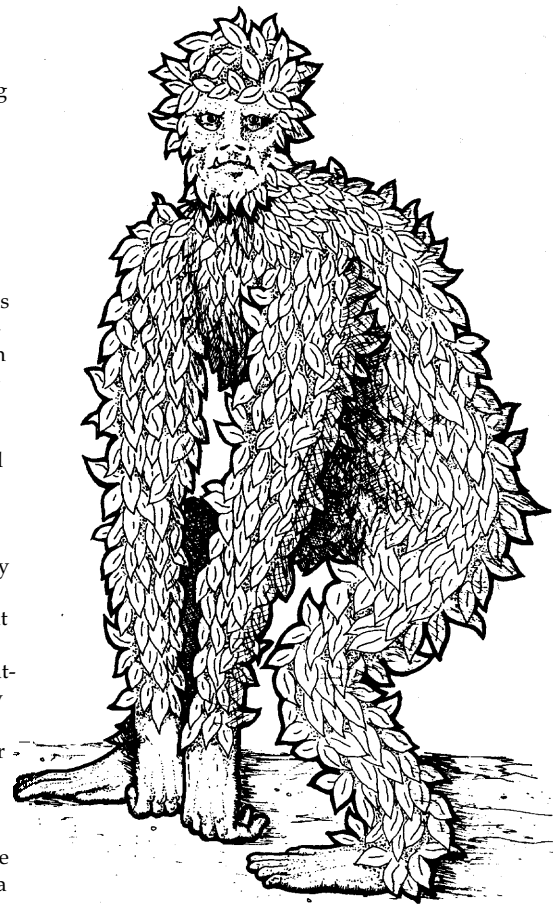
torture before killing and devouring.⁶ Once an opponent is disabled, the kech moves on to attack another foe, returning to kill the incapacitated one after other victims present are also incapacitated. Keches rarely kill more prey than necessary for survival, but their hatred for humans is so great that they kill as many humans as possible without endangering themselves.

Keches are extremely evil and rapacious creatures who view nearly all other creatures as food – especially humans, whom they seek to kill, maim, and destroy without restraint. The reason for this hatred can only be speculated upon; perhaps it has something to do with man's disregard for the forests or with some ancient feud between man and kech. The only creatures keches are known to associate with are su-monsters. These associations rarely last more than a week or two because of the chaotic nature of the su-monsters, but during this time the number of raids on human settlements nearby increases greatly. Whole villages have been destroyed by the combined might of the two.⁷

Although intelligent, keches hardly ever use tools or weapons of any sort, preferring instead to use subtlety and brute strength to kill prey. Keches speak a language that seems totally incomprehensible to outsiders. The language of the kech is a tongue filled with much chittering and whistling, sounding for all the world like squirrel's chatter. Scholars have spent many years studying captive keches in an effort to understand them, but have managed to translate only a few words thus far. Keches can also speak a few words of Common learned from those they have captured or overheard previously. Being intelligent creatures, keches never continue fighting if the odds turn against them or if they are sorely wounded. They will even flee their lairs if attacked by overwhelming numbers, leaving behind all their treasure.

Small groups of keches sometimes band together for mutual protection and for greater ease in dispatching foes. Such groups are led by the largest male, who decides where the traps are placed and which victims the group attacks. The group contains an equal ratio of females to males, with only a slight male plurality in some cases. These groups infrequently raid forest settlements of humans for victims. These raids are lightning-quick forays in which the keches quickly kill up to a dozen victims and carry them back to their lairs deep in the woods. Because these raids always take place in the depths of the night, it is even harder to avenge those carried away.

The lair of a band of keches is always deep in the forest and surrounded by many traps and places for ambushes. Those foolish enough to follow a kech back to its lair rarely return. The lair itself is a crude structure made of tree limbs lashed together with vines to provide



protection from the elements. Keches remain in the same general area and use the same home for no more than a year; this reduces the chances of both overhunting the surrounding area and being discovered in their lair. The treasure found in a kech lair is gained mainly from that kech's previous victims and is scattered about the lair along with the bones, clothing, and other belongings of their victims. Keches do not value treasure as such, although they use it in their traps to catch greedy humans.

Keches are not prolific creatures, thankfully. Male and female keches mate about once every three years in the spring; permanent mating pairs are not formed. The young, usually one but sometimes two, are born the following spring. All females help care for the young, but the males provide only protection for them and do not help in any other way. Young keches grow very slowly; it takes 20 to 25 years for them to grow to full size, whereupon they become capable of reproduction themselves. According to the records of several adventurers, no more than four young keches have ever been found in the lair at one time, regardless of the number of adults also present.⁸ Keches are long-lived creatures, however, which is one of the few things that saves them from eventual extinction. Females average about 150 years, while males often live to be 175 years old. With age comes cunning and cleverness, making the older keches the most dangerous of all.

In summary, keches can be dangerous

foes, especially for unwary and inexperienced adventurers. Even seasoned adventurers respect these foes for their cunning and cleverness. And it is doubtful they will ever cease to trouble mankind as long as there are forests for them to inhabit.

Footnotes

¹The snares set by a kech should be treated as those created by the third-level druid spell snare. Also, the other types of traps used by keches are 90% undetectable by most characters. Druids and rangers, however, subtract 5% for each level they have when trying to detect traps set by a kech.

²A single kech covers as many as 20 square miles of forest a day when searching for prey. For every other kech in addition to the first, add another 10 square miles of forest covered, though the kech will travel together in a single group and will not cover the whole area every day.

³Keches are good mimics, being extensively familiar with the sounds humans in trouble make. Using this talent, they often succeed in luring victims to their deaths. The base chance for a kech to successfully mimic a cry for help is 90% minus 5% per intelligence point of the-victim. If the kech is successful, NPC victims are attracted to the direction of the voice, believing that some human is in trouble. Otherwise, the victim simply hears creature screaming.

⁴Thieves may detect the approach of keches on a successful listening roll; elves

have a 15% chance to hear them, and gnomes (so rare that they are often forgotten about, even by sages) have a 20% chance. A kech's base chance of surprise is about 83%, but if the attack takes place at night, it becomes 95% (surprising 19 out of 20 times). The reduction by half of all chances of tracking a kech applies only to those with tracking skills (rangers, barbarians, etc.). All others have only a 10% chance to successfully track a kech.

⁵Unsurprised characters must make a successful dexterity check on 1d20 to avoid being struck by a falling kech, which makes a single "to hit" roll at +2 for the attack. Surprised characters are not allowed a dexterity check. Any character fallen upon is immediately knocked to the ground, with the kech automatically clawing and biting the victim (no "to hit" roll required). In addition, the character must make a saving throw vs. paralysis or be stunned for 1-2 rounds more; a successful saving throw means the character can scramble back to his feet the following round. Failure also means the character remains prone and is at -4 to hit and damage. The attacker, on the other hand, is at +4 to hit for the number of rounds determined above. This applies only to keches attacking from above and not to keches surprising opponents while on the ground. Falling attacks are made from a height of 5-30'.

⁶Whenever the kech's modified "to hit" roll is four or greater than the number

required, or when a natural 20 is rolled, there is a 40% chance the kech has hit its opponent in the face or throat for the following effects (roll 1d20):

1d20	Effect
1-3	Both eyes blinded
4-7	Left eye blinded
8-11	Right eye blinded
12-17	Face hit
18-20	Throat torn open

Blindness caused by an attack is permanent unless healed by magic. A damaged throat causes the loss of 1-6 hp per round until the blood loss is stopped or until the character dies. A face hit leaves scars that permanently reduce the victim's comeliness by one.

⁷There is a 15% chance that 2d4 summons are also found any encounter with four or more keches.

⁸Kech young are born with 1 HD and are about 1' tall. For every six years following birth, a kech gains 1 HD and grows 1'. Keches with less than 4 HD are agile and fast, but are unable to attack opponents. After that time and until they reach adulthood, they can claw for 1-2 hp damage and bite for 1-4 hp damage. Otherwise, kech young are exactly like adults in appearance and (unless they are less than one year old) have the same innate abilities. There will rarely be more four young in a kech lair at any one time. Ω

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Role-playing Reviews



Tripping the the tabletop fantastic

Toy soldiers are lots of fun. They look neat, and you can zoom them around and have pretend battles with them. I don't expect a lot of argument here. Most of you had a lot of fun with toy soldiers when you were kids, and, if you managed to avoid the compulsory growing-up exercises of post-adolescence, you can probably still have lots of fun with toy soldiers.

Fantasy miniatures wargaming is an excellent excuse for playing with toy soldiers, even if you are an adult. In fact, considering the expense of purchasing lead miniatures, the patience and skill necessary to paint them, and the complexity of fantasy miniatures wargaming rules, fantasy miniatures wargaming might be a bit intimidating for prospective beginners. Getting into fantasy miniatures wargaming is not as easy as getting into role-playing games or getting into fantasy or historical board gaming. There are a number of daunting obstacles for the would-be fantasy tabletop gamer.

First, you need lots of lead figures – hundreds of expensive lead figures, A rulebook, pencil, and paper get you started in fantasy role-playing, and one game box gets you started in fantasy or historical board gaming. But tabletop miniatures require those metal miniatures. Those of us familiar with role-playing games are used to man-to-man combat systems, where fights with more than 10 participants can be pretty cumbersome, and where large-scale melees are nightmarish and difficult to conduct. Most fantasy miniature wargame rules are designed for large-scale combat with 100 to 300 figures on the table at a time. Medium-scale miniatures systems handling 20- to 100-figure conflicts (called "skirmish" rules) are available for science-fiction settings (Games Workshop's WARHAMMER™ 40,000 and FASA's BATTLETECH® games are good examples); oddly enough, they are not available for fantasy settings.

As mentioned earlier, you need lots of expensive lead figures. Second, you have to paint all those figures. Board games are purchased ready to play, and role-playing games require a lot of preparation for the game master, though he can purchase adventure and campaign packs to lighten that burden. The players, on the other hand, only have to roll up one character each. With tabletop miniatures, however, you have to paint all the toy soldiers first.

Finally, because fantasy miniatures wargamers have been such a tiny slice of the fantasy gaming pie, most game publishers have devoted little energy to developing well-designed, well-presented fantasy miniatures game systems and supplements. There are jillions of interesting, moderately well-designed role-playing and board games around, but you won't find a lot of shelf space devoted to tabletop miniatures in your local hobby shop.

Does this sound intimidating? It is, actually, but things aren't really as bad as all that. Take the imposing expense of minia-

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tures. There are now plastic miniatures (suitable for beginners) available at a fraction of the cost of metal miniatures. Four examples come to mind: Games Workshop's *WARHAMMER Fantasy Regiments* (60 figures for \$22.95), *Skeleton Horde*, and *Space Marines*; and FASA's *BATTLE-TECH Plastitech* (16 robots for \$10.00). Some miniatures companies also offer reasonably priced starter units and multiple packs of metal figures, or occasionally offer discounts on older items. Clearances of discontinued figures at conventions are another source of cheap lead.

Miniatures are relatively expensive, but (for some of us, anyway) they sure are worth it. As the miser thrills in handling his lumps of precious metal, so do miniatures hobbyists thrill to the hoards of lead they amass. Aside from the impulse to hoard heavy metals, there is also the collector's impulse – a compulsive disease afflicting many hobbyists. There are lots and lots of really nice-looking miniatures, smartly sculpted and rich in fantasy flavor. For those of us who have discretionary income and imaginations irrevocably deranged by fantasy literature, we just *have* to have this stuff.

About the intricate and time-consuming art of painting miniatures: To my utter amazement, it is nowhere as difficult as I once imagined it to be. I always thought you needed an inhumanly steady hand, a trained eye for form and color, and the patience of a saint. Well, all of those things would sure help, but they aren't necessary. It's incredible how much of figure painting is simple technique – some standard concepts and procedures for basic painting, and some nifty cheap tricks for achieving special effects that strike the naive eye as miraculous. To prove this, see Jeanne McGuire's "Through the Looking Glass" column on painting undead guys in *DRAGON*® issue #138. Skeletons are an excellent choice for beginning painters because of their maximum of appeal and minimum expenditure of sweat. And there is something else worth noting about painting miniatures: It is a handicraft, just like quilting, macrame, and model-building. It's wonderful to exercise your eye-hand coordination in shaping a beautiful object, and a well-painted figure is a joy to behold and a pleasure to see admired in the eyes of your friends.

Finally, regarding the dearth of decent miniatures rules systems: Two fantasy tabletop rules systems are reviewed herein. Both are quite good, and one of them is being vigorously supported by a major game publisher. Both provide excellent opportunities to place handsomely painted fantasy miniatures in serried ranks and march them with fanfare and pageantry across the tabletops into epic conflicts between the forces of law and chaos, good and evil. The miniatures rules described below have all this and more: squabbling, scabrous orcish hoards; resplendent elven hosts; soaring flights of

dragonkind; and dead guys on parade.

"Your orders, general?"

"Toy soldiers! Forward, march!"

CHAOS WARS™: Rules According to Ral For Miniature Fantasy Battles

28-page booklet, four reference sheets, and a four-page painting guide

Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc. \$11.95

Design: Bob Charrette, Charles Crane, and Richard Smethurst

Several years ago, Ral Partha, a well-known United States miniatures company, distributed a free, four-page set of medieval tabletop rules called "The Rules According to Ral for Medievals." (A coherent four-page set of wargaming rules is a minor miracle in itself.) The system was simple, clearly presented, and quite playable. However, these rules weren't a fantasy miniatures system, and fantasy was the hot genre, not medieval historical wargaming. So, although "The Rules According to Ral" was in many ways a notable achievement, it remained little more than a charming curiosity.

The current boxed edition of the *CHAOS WARS* game is a development of the original medieval system for fantasy tabletop wargaming. These rules are intended to provide a beginner with a simple, inexpensive introduction to miniatures wargaming, or to provide experienced tabletop gamers with a quick evening's worth of gaming.

Ease of scenario design: Veterans of role-playing games and board wargames are likely to be unfamiliar with one of the big hassles of miniatures gaming: designing scenarios with balanced opposing forces. In role-playing gaming, there is less emphasis on competition; in board gaming, the sides are balanced by the designer. But for tabletops games, designing a fair fight between two fantasy forces is pretty tricky. Most games have point-cost systems for comparing forces, but working out the point costs for troops, heroes, wizards, and monsters is an annoying chore.

In this department, the *CHAOS WARS* game is relatively painless. The point-cost system is quick and simple. Also, the game includes four scenarios with complete troop rosters, which are excellent practical examples of the application of the point-cost system for balancing forces. As to how reliable this point-cost system is in providing balanced forces, that's another question. My suspicion is that spell-casters are too cheap, but I can't be sure without abundant play-testing experience. In any case, since this system is more for beginners and informal friendly games, it's not such a big deal if the sides aren't perfectly balanced, as long as everybody has fun.

Rules presentation: The presentation of the rules is clean, concise, and well structured. The rules themselves are limited in number, fairly simple and coherent in concept, and relatively unencumbered with special cases and exceptions.

Examples and diagrams clarify the rules where necessary. The presentation of the point-cost system is a little too concise (initially, I found some undefined references puzzling), but with patience and common sense, I figured it out on the second pass. Again, being able to refer to the examples of point-cost rosters in the scenarios was a big help.

Because the rules are so simple, they are neither very specific nor explicit. In play-testing, we frequently had to interpret the intent of the rules where specific circumstances were not explicitly covered in the rules. For example, in the first scenario it states: "Archery fire may not be directed against aerial units except in clearings" Hey, if archery against aerial units is no good in the woods, how about spells? We decided the woods obscured aerial units from sight, but we might easily have decided the opposite.

A certain amount of ambiguity is to be expected with any miniatures system, but a cheerful tolerance for it and a friendly atmosphere for resolving such issues are necessary for enjoying this game. Gamers accustomed to more explicit systems may initially be disconcerted by the absence of many familiar miniatures rules conventions, such as restrictions on maneuvers and formations. All things considered, the intent of the rules is clear, and a dispute can usually be settled by specific reference to some part of the text, since the game is presented in accordance with the common conventions of wargaming rules language.

Pace of play: The pace of play of the *CHAOS WARS* game is fairly brisk. The spell-casting segment of a turn is more involved than in any other fantasy miniatures system I've ever played, partly because spell-casters can cast a number of spells each turn and partly because the statement of intent to cast alternates between opposing sides, with resolution of effects made after all spells are cast. With a couple of high-ranking spell-casters on each side, spell-casting can take some time; likewise, it requires careful note-taking for smooth resolution after spells have been declared.

Movement, on the other hand, is swift and none-too-subtle. Units, creatures, and characters zoom across the table, slam into one another, and sit and whack away until one opponent is eliminated or runs away. Unlike other miniatures systems I've played, there are no careful maneuvers, changes of formation, wheels, or preparations to charge. Terrain effects are significant but uncomplicated. Tactical maneuvers don't require precise adjustments or fine judgments of rules and circumstances. Essentially, you just move toward another unit, then shoot or fight.

The flavor of combat is less decisively dramatic than in other systems I've played, mostly because the rout of a unit does not trigger morale tests in neighboring units. In Ral Partha's rules, the resolution of each engagement doesn't affect the overall

tactical situation on the table, while the breaking of a single unit can signal a decisive shift in the game in most other systems. In this sense, Ral Partha's rules don't produce the dramatic, satisfying battle climax that is the feature of the best wargames and miniatures systems.

Fantasy flavor: For fantasy troop types, the special abilities and disadvantages according to race are not fancy or detailed, but they are appropriate and satisfying. Individual heroes, wizards, and monsters are rather imposing compared to regular units, perhaps as befits a Conan-style heroic fantasy atmosphere, but this is less appealing if you prefer more gritty, human-scale table warfare.

The nicest fantasy feature of Ral Partha's rules is the treatment of magic. Spell-casting is abundant in this system and full of tactical subtlety. Each spell-caster has a limited number of spell points, but he can use them all each turn rather than once per game. In addition, a spell-caster can throw several different spells in each turn, being limited only by his number of spell points. Defensive magic can be cast to protect units and individuals from opposing spells, further enriching the spell-caster's tactical choices. All spell-casters work from the same spell list, and all magic-users can use all the spells on the list. As a result, although there is little differentiation among spell-caster abilities in the basic game, there are a lot of spells to work with. (There are special necromancy and summoning advanced rules which give wizards of those specialties a more distinctive flavor.)

A note for experienced tabletop gamers: As far as I can tell, this magic system could be grafted directly onto the Wargame Research Group historical tabletop rules [*see mention of this game at the end of this article*]. I have no suggestions for creating the point-costs of such spell-casters in the WRG – that needs to be determined by play-testing – but the basic magic rules concepts are quite compatible with WRG mechanics.

Campaign setting: This game system takes place in a universal conflict called the Chaos Wars. An interdimensional rift has been torn in the fabric of space and time. Wizards and demons skilled in navigating this rift can travel to any place and to any time. The concept is appealing – an interdimensional war involving troops and heroes from the historical past and the science-fiction future, as well as standard fantasy troops, monsters, wizards, and warriors. Unfortunately, the treatment of this appealing concept is not fully realized in the CHAOS WARS game, nor is it followed up in subsequent supplements. From scattered, undeveloped references throughout the text, you sense a lot of neat ideas that got away.

For example, the game comes with a blister pack of five figures – a warrior, a cyborg operative of the Rim Patrol, a wizard, a swashbuckler, and a Soviet sen-

try armed with an AK-47 – collectively referred to as “The Press Gang.” The figures are nice and the concept of a team of cross-time recruiters is clever, but the Press Gang does not figure in any of the scenarios in the rule book, and the reference sheet concerning the Press Gang only hints at their intended function in tabletop play. Also, there are numerous references to “dimension-roving mercenary bands known as the Free Companies,” but no descriptions, explanations, or appearances of these bands are made in the scenarios.

The scenarios: The four scenarios included in the rule book are among the best features of the game. In one sense, providing scenarios for miniatures games is always problematic, since they are of limited utility unless you just happen to have the mix of figures needed in the scenario – a very unlikely event. However, the inclusion of scenarios is valuable for a number of reasons.

First, developed scenarios can be good examples of how to set up your own tabletop scenarios – how to arrange terrain, how to establish point costs and balance sides, and how to design victory conditions. For beginners, seeing a variety of different table layouts, battle rosters, and victory conditions is especially important in developing a sense of how miniatures wargaming works.

Second, tabletop scenarios can be exciting and inspiring models for home-grown scenarios and campaigns. The first scenario, “The Destruction of Benden Woods,” is particularly good. This scenario features an elven force defending sacred, magical “Heart-Trees” from an invading force of orcs and beastmen. The battlefield is almost completely wooded, giving the elves a decided advantage in movement, but this tactical advantage is balanced by the liability of having to defend the 11 magical trees from attack.

Not having the specific miniatures listed for the scenario wasn't a big problem. I didn't happen to have the beastmen or knights mounted on bumblebees called for in that scenario, but because the battle roster included detailed charts of abilities and point costs for all the units, characters, and monsters, it was relatively easy to substitute some skeletons for the beastmen and some WARHAMMER 40,000 space elves with jump packs for the knights on bumblebees. (Boy, did the interdimensional rift concept come in handy here or what?)

Finally, scenarios can show by example the best features of a game system and campaign setting in a way that text can never achieve as effectively. For example, one scenario, “The Doom Legion Marches to War,” features an army with demonoids, lizardmen, and skeletons fighting shoulder to shoulder with colonial British and modern American and Russian infantry, gangsters, and a robot. The statistics for these exotic units are listed in the troop roster and serve as examples for gamers who

want to set up their own mixing pot of cross-time warriors.

Evaluation: The CHAOS WARS game is a simple, fairly clean, nicely presented set of fantasy miniatures tabletop rules. Quick and easy to learn and play, this game is most suitable for beginners who want to get their feet wet or for experienced fantasy or historical miniatures gamers who just want an occasional evening of fast-and-dirty fantasy tabletop warfare. The rules themselves are admirably clever and coherent, but probably not detailed or specific enough to satisfy experienced miniatures gamers. The fantasy elements are well served, particularly the magic treatment, which is exceptional. The four scenarios included are excellent models of fantasy tabletop conflicts and effective examples of scenario and army composition. The campaign concept, an interdimensional war across rifts in space and time, is imaginative and inspiring. Though the game itself is unfortunately sparse in its development of this concept, gamers and campaign builders may be very excited by the possibilities this theme presents for blending fantasy, science-fiction, and historical elements in tabletop conflicts. In all, considering quality and value for the money, the CHAOS WARS game is highly recommended for experienced and prospective tabletop gamers.

As a final note, available through your local hobby shop or by mail from Ral Partha, are two one-sheet Ral Partha “War Bulletins” containing CHAOS WARS fantasy tabletop scenarios. The address is: Ral Partha, 5938 Carthage Court, Cincinnati OH 45212.

WARHAMMER™ FANTASY BATTLE, 3rd Edition

304-page hardbound book
Games Workshop Ltd. \$34.95
Design, development, and editing: Bryan
Ansell, Richard Halliwell, Rick Priestly,
and Jim Bambra

If you're serious about fantasy tabletop gaming, WARHAMMER FANTASY BATTLE (WFB) is probably your only choice. The basic and advanced game rules offer most of the wargaming features associated with serious historical miniatures gaming, in addition to the magical, heroic, and role-playing elements necessary for a satisfying fantasy setting. The WARHAMMER campaign world, with its distinctive races and nationalities, rich campaign background, and epic themes, is an ideal setting for many fantasy scenarios and campaigns.

The WFB systems are elaborate, modular, comprehensive, and endlessly supplemented. The rules are designed to be formal, detailed, and explicit, though an ambivalent attitude toward rules lawyers and lack of polished, formal wargaming language make reading, learning, and referencing the rules harder than it might be. The systems have been tested over years of friendly and competitive play, and

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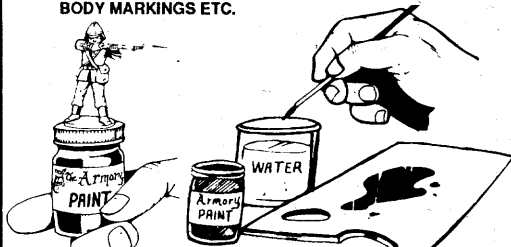
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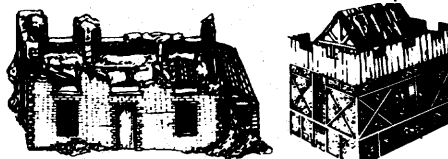
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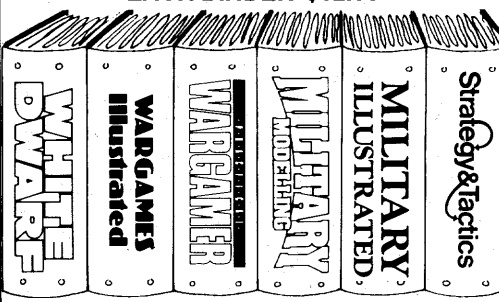


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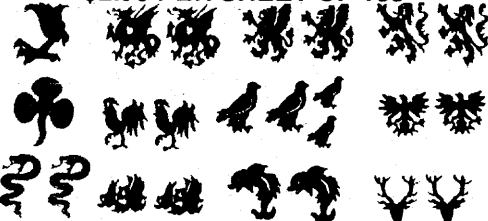
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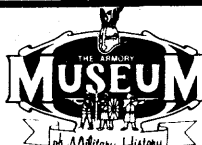
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the successive editions of WFB and the series of hardback supplements and articles in White Dwarf (the Games Workshop magazine) are abundant evidence of a commitment to develop and enrich the systems and campaign setting.

Third edition: How is the third edition different from the second edition? Well, to start with, the third edition is an enormous hardback that includes a new and excellent introduction to assembling and painting armies, and an introduction to dressing tables for war (an invaluable feature for beginners). The third edition also adds new options and complexity to all phases of tabletop conflict – maneuver, command control, psychology, combat, special rules for exotic weapons, war machines, fantasy beings and races, and so on. The third edition also greatly expands its treatment of the WARHAMMER campaign setting, including and elaboration of material extensively described in WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLE-PLAY (see DRAGON issue #124, “Role-playing Reviews”). There is a new scenario, complete with player information sheets and troop roster pullouts, and plenty of new Battle Magic spells for your wizards.

Game preparation: There’s no point in learning fantasy miniatures rules unless you have miniatures to push around and a nice table on which to do so. The introduction offers plenty of practical advice and techniques for painting and table-dressing, and it is accompanied by nice, big, appetizing color pictures of what things will look like when you own several hundred lovely painted figures and several boxes full of pretty table scenery.

The rules: There are two rules sections: basic and advanced. The basic rules are fairly complicated, dense, and intimidating. The presentation is well illustrated with diagrams and examples, and the text is friendly and conversational, but the text is certainly wordy, too, and the structure and organization are not well designed for scanning and reference. In this respect, the second edition, with its simpler rules and more open layout, is easier to read, learn, and reference. The rules concerning formations, maneuvers, and charges are more detailed and have more options in the third edition, and the treatment of routs is improved. Otherwise, most of the systems remain essentially similar to the second edition. These systems are tolerably simple and coherent, once you’ve studied them and played a few times, but learning the rules requires patience, tenacity, and dedication.

A lot of the material in the advanced rules is simply adorable chrome – refinements beginners don’t need to know to enjoy fantasy tabletop gaming. These nifty bits provide some of the great charm of WFB. For example, there are a number of charming special troop types: goblin fanatics who whirl cannonballs like derbies and plow into enemy and friendly units with devastating effect; and the

Chaos ratmen’s Warp-Fire Throwers, fantasy flamethrowers broadcasting torrents of Primal Chaos to warp and distort victims with loathesome mutations.

But a lot of the stuff in the advanced rules seems pretty essential to the basic game – a point-cost system, for example, to balance sides in a conflict, and the character-models rules (that is, rules for individual characters as opposed to units), without which you have no mighty-thewed barbarian heroes or fireball-tossing wizards. Although beginners can ignore the fancy details of special-weapons rules, war machines, and chariots, they still need to plow through a lot of advanced rules before they can set up their first fantasy tabletop scenarios. For example, even the scenario provided in the book presumes knowledge of the character-models rules.

Finally, regardless of my whining about pages and pages of complex rules, I realize I just have to have all this stuff. It’s neat. There’s sure a lot of it, and I wish it were easier to digest, but now that I’ve got it, I wouldn’t settle for anything less. No other fantasy miniatures system offers a fraction of the detail and color that WFB offers. And the system works. I particularly like the new rules that permit fancy maneuvers if the unit or leader passes his leadership test. I also admire the system for setting scenery for competition games, which also provides a quick and serviceable layout for off-the-cuff Saturday night games. And I’m especially glad that someone decided to quadruple the point cost of skeletons – they’ve always been too cheap relative to their effectiveness on the table.

Magic: There are lots and lots of spells, as well as many kinds of wizards (battle wizards, demonologists, necromancers, illusionists, and elementalists) and plenty of magical devices, complete with point costs. The variety of spell effects and the spell-point limits imposed on spell-casters make efficient tactical use of magicians and magical devices difficult to master, but their flavor and charm in fantasy tabletop warfare will be immediately evident, even for beginners.

WARHAMMER campaign setting: Here, my enthusiasm for WFB is unqualified. This stuff is great. Most of the familiar fantasy races and monsters are represented – orcs, elves, dwarfs, halflings, ogres, giants, and so on – but their vague stereotypes are transformed into vivid identities through distinctive appearances, cultures, and behaviors. WARHAMMER orcs are adorably crude and blithely murderous. Dwarf society produces a peculiar, suicidal character type known as the Trollslayer, a dwarf who paints his bare torso, sports an orange Mohawk haircut, and seeks death in combat with a troll as a vocation. Giants are provided with an enchanting selection of special attack modes: stomp and grind, pick up and squash, pick up and eat, jump up and down, yell and bawl, and so on.

There are a number of fantasy beings peculiar to the WARHAMMER setting: the Skaven (CHAOS WARS game Ratmen), the Fimir (one-eyed giant brutes), and the Slann (Aztec warrior frogs). And the greatest fantasy resource of the WARHAMMER universe is the Realm of Chaos – a blanket rationalization for the most bizarre and demented horrors imaginable.

Part of the vividness of the WARHAMMER setting comes from the steady stream of metal miniatures produced by Games Workshop. The marketing advantages associated with publishing miniatures games to support miniatures sales is evident to even the most naive consumer, but the real appeal of mutually supporting miniatures games systems and miniatures designs should not be overlooked. When skillfully and enthusiastically executed, a linked game system and campaign can greatly enhance the value of a miniatures line to the consumer, and vice versa.

The scenario: One scenario is provided, an ambush of a force of elven cavalry and archers by a horde of orc and goblin warriors and wolf riders. The scenario and set-up instructions themselves are detailed, clearly presented, and charming. Cut-out counters are provided for those who don’t have the appropriate miniatures at hand – that is, for most of us, since I know relatively few gamers with 32 painted elven cavalry figures lying around. The player handout sheets offer colorful narrative introductions (the orc sheet being presented in the risible WARHAMMER orcish-cockney-bully-boy dialect), summarize the tactical situation, explain the table and deployment, and provide detailed troop rosters.

What is not provided is a listing of the point costs of the units and character models – a bad thing, since the victory conditions are defined in terms of point values, and because it ruins the scenario as an practical illustration of setting troop costs for a beginner. The scenario is also more involved than an ideal introductory scenario, requiring lots of figures and knowledge of some advanced rules. After the extensive beginners’ introduction to painting miniatures and table layout, I’d have expected some practical advice on setting up scenarios, with several examples of varying complexity, from a simple rookie skirmish to a sprawling, epic battlefield as a challenge and inspiration to the veteran gamer.

Evaluation: The major reservations I have about WFB concern its presentation. The text is dense and wordy. The wealth of diagrams is good, but their captions aren’t always clear. The abundance of photos, illustrations, and paintings is often visually stimulating, but many of these graphics are of marginal or negligible relevance to the accompanying text. The black-and-white photographic reproduction is surprisingly poor.

However, WFB offers the most comprehensive and full fantasy-flavored tabletop

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If the card is missing, write to the RPGA Network, P.O. Box 515, Lake Geneva, WI, 53147.

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miniatures systems and campaign settings available. Because of the bulk and awkwardness of the rules presentation in the WFB volume, it is not a quick or easy system to learn, though the basic systems themselves are not particularly complicated. Nonetheless, the payoff is considerable. The rules produce a satisfying, moderately fast-paced table action, with all the bells and whistles necessary to satisfy fussy wargamers and excitable fantasy gamers. The fantasy campaign setting is simply super. The series of revised editions, supplements, and magazine support articles indicates that Games Workshop is interested in and capable of catering to the gamer's appetite for new features, refined editions, and elaborated fantasy campaign materials. For someone contemplating a major investment of time and energy in painting armies and learning rules, this is of considerable importance.

WARHAMMER™ ARMIES

176-page hardbound book
Games Workshop, Ltd. \$34.95

Compiled and developed: Nigel Stillman,
Rick Priestly, Matt Connell, Richard
Halliwell, and Brian Ansell

The presentation of WARHAMMER ARMIES, by contrast with WFB, is exceptional. The layout is good-looking, well organized, and well structured, with effective graphic cues for reference. The illustrations are keyed to the subject matter. The color photographs are invaluable painting guides for their individual troop types – particularly the spectacular two-page color photographic treatments of sample Bretonnian, Skaven, Chaos, and orc armies, presented unit by unit, with point values listed for each. Within each troop type, the individual unit types are presented in an identical, graphically explicit format, each accompanied by an illustration of a representative of that unit type. Other graphic features include 13 full-color paintings of troop types, standards, and shield designs, and numerous black-and-white illustrations of shield and banner designs scattered through the text as fillers.

Rules supplements and revisions:

The most significant rules modifications concern changes in point values for character models and elite units, reducing their costs to encourage their use on the table, and wholesale reevaluation of spell-point costs for wizards. The spell-point cost revisions are quite significant; for example, most first-level Battle Magic spells are considerably cheaper, and some gross higher-level spells (like Create Magical Bog and Vorpall Hurricane of Chaos) have been doubled in cost. Another valuable improvement is the four-page pullout, "Rules Summary and Reference," a comprehensive summary of the sequence of events during a game turn – something that would have been greatly appreciated in the basic game.

Other attractive supplemental features include: rules and optional attack modes for Elven Wardancers (a unique acrobatic warrior-troubadour troop type); rules that let wizards magically bind hosts of monsters, chaos beasts, and ethereal beings to their bidding; and imaginative new abilities for magical weapons, armor, standards, and musical instruments. Also, a bestiary section describes 14 new creature types, including black orcs, rat-ogres, unicorns, and war boars.

Army lists: The army lists themselves detail troop types and point values for 11 major fantasy armies: Dark Elves (sinister, high-class bad guys), Wood Elves (typical forest-loving archers), High Elves (fancy high-fantasy aristocrats), the Army of the Empire (late Medieval Teutonic types), Bretonnians (chivalric Frenchmen), Chaos (beastmen and Chaos knights), Skaven, orcs and goblins (boar and wolf riders, orc warriors, and goblin skirmishers), dwarfs (tough, fearless troopers-supported by fancy war machines), Slann, and Undead (necromancers, skeletons, and so on). The addition of bound hosts as permitted troop types is a clever and easy way to add swarms of fantasy monsters to tabletop conflicts. In this fashion, bears, boars, ghosts, wights, dragons, and such can be appended to a fantasy army.

WARHAMMER ARMIES also provides lists for smaller allied or mercenary units of other fantasy troop types – Fimir, pygmies, halflings, zoats, ogres, giants, Nipponese, Norse, etc. – in addition to smaller units of the major troop types listed above. These allied or mercenary units can be attached to a larger major army. I like this idea a lot, since it permits you to collect and paint a variety of fantasy types for your own army. On the other hand, the rules for allied and mercenary units make me suspicious of their value on the table. Allied and mercenary units are liable to go bad on you in various circumstances, and I'm not comfortable about buying and painting an army that is likely to turn on me in the middle of a battle. I'm also not persuaded to believe that the tactical advantage of mixed troop types balances the troop unreliability created by these mercenary and allied rules.

For each army, the number, character, and outfitting of each unit or hero type is specified and given a point cost. There is also a handy, step-by-step introduction explaining how to use the army lists to select the figures, units, and characters for your own WARHAMMER army.

Evaluation: The clarity and appeal of the WARHAMMER ARMIES volume is effective and refreshing. The rules supplements and troop lists will be greatly desired and admired by WFB gamers. For newcomers seriously interested in fantasy miniatures, or veteran tabletop gamers looking for a complete fantasy system, WFB is a recommended purchase, and WARHAMMER ARMIES a highly recommended first supplement.

Other tabletop systems

Other fantasy tabletop systems and supplements of interest include:

Chainmail: These simple tabletop medieval and fantasy miniatures rules are the granddaddy of the D&D® game, with systems familiar to anyone who's played the latter. Chainmail is available as a collector's item from the TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop [P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147].

AD&D® BATTLESYSTEM™ supplement: This is a right-minded, clean, component-rich, and unconvincing adaptation of AD&D and D&D game systems for tabletop gaming. The wargaming-style unit-combat rules are well presented and playable, and a good mix of counters is provided for those with modest miniatures collections. But I have little faith in the provisions for adjudicating the myriad magical effects of AD&D or D&D games on the tabletop, and little faith in the proposed system for creating point costs for armies. This a promising package, but without a simpler, cleaner application of magic and fantasy feel, I cannot recommend it for beginners.

Rules According to Ral for Medievals: These four-page guidelines are for medieval historical tabletop warfare. Remarkably simple, these rules work! *Rules According to Ral for Medievals* is available from Ral Partha for 25 cents (see address listed earlier).

Wargame Research Group Rules: The WRG rules are sure-enough Ancient and Medieval tabletop wargaming guidelines for serious tabletop historical gamers, being complex, detailed, and wargaming-explicit. The sixth edition has notes for fantasy adaptations. The 7th edition revised is excellent, with new rules emphasizing maneuver and command control.

WARHAMMER 40,000: These rules are for science-fantasy tabletop wargaming with a campaign setting combining fantasy races (orks and stunts) and fantasy themes (the taint of Chaos and demonic entities) with fantastic futuristic weapons and hardware. Included is a skirmish system which produces an emphasis on individual figures rather than units of figures. This is a good choice for tabletop beginners with limited budgets of time and money for purchasing and painting figures.

WARHAMMER SIEGE: These rules provide guidelines for conducting tabletop siege warfare. They are well organized and clearly presented in wargaming rules style. WARHAMMER SIEGE may be used with WFB and WARHAMMER 40,000 systems.

Realm of Chaos: This is a WFB and WARHAMMER 40,000 supplement detailing the endless multiplicity of mutations, abilities, and derangements of the Servants of Chaos. These rules include troop lists and acres of charts.

Ω

TSR PREVIEWS

NEW PRODUCTS FOR JANUARY

GAZ10 *The Orcs of Thar*

D&D® Gazetteer
by Bruce Heard

Orcs are rude, crude, and socially unacceptable, which is why everyone likes them. Learn more about your favorite monsters in this 96-page Gazetteer for the D&D® game's Known World – and get an updated version of the ORC WARS board game that appeared in DRAGON® issue #132, as well as a player-character generator for orcs, goblins, gnolls, and more!
Suggested Retail Price: \$9.95/£6.50
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Lords of Darkness

AD&D® module anthology
introduced by Ed Greenwood

Bring the undead to life! This 96-page sourcebook and adventure anthology pits your player characters against every sort of undead in existence, in scenarios for every level of PC. Visit graveyards, tombs, ruins, and places you never dreamed you'd meet the undead. All of the scenarios are set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting but may be adapted to other campaigns.
Suggested Retail Price: \$8.95/£5.95
Product No.: 9240

Mad Monkey VS the Dragon Claw

AD&D® FORGOTTEN REALMS™/

Oriental Adventures module
by Jeff Grubb

Two rival gods of the Orient declare war, and their martial-arts minions are in the front lines – with the player characters caught in between! This 64-page module will challenge all *Oriental Adventures* PCs.
Suggested Retail Price: \$7.95/£5.95
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DRAGONLANCE® Saga Heroes novel
by Michael Williams

Galen Pathwarden certainly had no idea he would be forced to serve for a year as a knight's squire. He also hadn't planned to face the horrors of the journey on which his master, a Knight of Solamnia, led him – through shape-changing swamps, across illusion-trapped plains, and into the Scorpion's Nest, the lair of the ultimate illusionist.
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AD&D® DRAGONLANCE® module
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by Douglas Niles

The bioborgs just keep getting bigger and better! The most bizarre science-fantasy board game is now even more bizarre with the addition of this expansion game, featuring new rules, maps, factoid cards, and mutant monsters. And watch for the GAMMARAUDERS™ comics from DC Comics, available now!
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by Lots O' People

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by Douglas Niles

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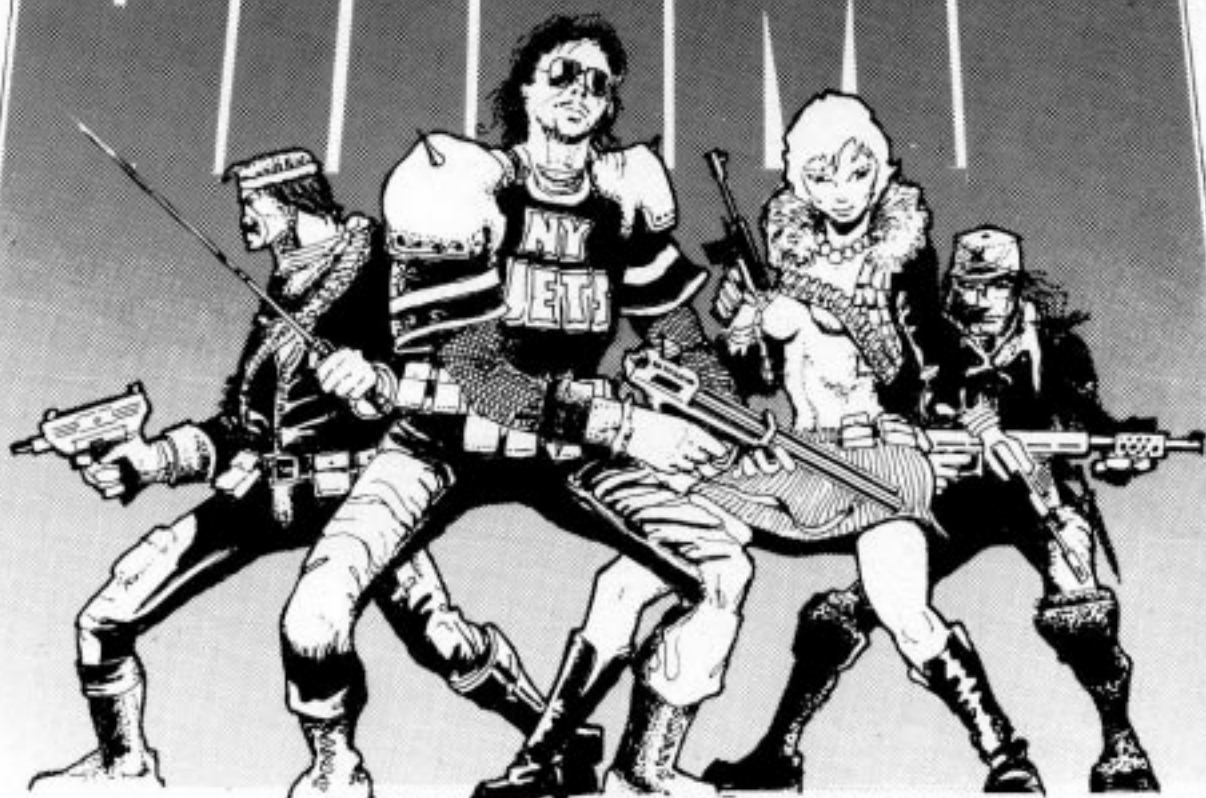
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The Role of Computers

Fight dragons and sink carriers with MS-DOS

We continue to receive requests for more information about IBM micro-computer entertainment software. Home and business users are buying MS-DOS (Microsoft Disk Operating System) computers by the thousands, mostly due to the low prices of IBM PCs, XTs, ATs, and clones. Also of consumer interest are the new families of speedy, number-crunching 80386-based machines and the new IBM Personal Systems/2 (PS/2) computers. Software developers and publishers are finding new wealth in PC/MS-DOS-based software. We'll cover some MS-DOS games in this month's column. All MS-DOS reviews were done on the Tandy 4000 personal computer.

PCs require video boards to run any of the various IBM graphics modes. Sometimes a game won't run on your computer because it only handles monochrome (black and white) colors, but several products enable PC users to run color graphics games even with only an installed monochrome card.

John Houghtby Jr. of Shabbona, Ill., told us about a program called *Softgraf* from Sunrise-Littleton Technology Group, 15200 Shady Grove Road, Rockville MD 20850. This little \$29 software program (add \$2 shipping and handling) allows a PC to function as though it were a color system. The program is compatible with all Hercules-compatible video boards. With it, different colors appear as varying shades of one color on your monitor. This program works with self-booting games!

More help came from Sergeant Michael Hardee of Copperas Cove, Tex., who explained that there are programs on many bulletin board systems that make color games playable on monochrome PC systems. These are public domain programs usually available at no cost to users unless the bulletin board itself charges an access fee. Sergeant Hardee writes:

"The three files usually appear under one file name: SIMCGA.ARC. (The ARC extension refers to a file-compaction system that enables large files to be code compressed for faster downloading and uploading. ARC files must be UNarced using an appropriate program!) After you UNarc this file onto a disk, you name the three files SIMCGA.COM, SETCGA.COM, and SETMONO.COM. These files will only work after the computer is rebooted with DOS. If a user wishes to play a color game, he must execute SIMCGA.COM first. You execute the SETCGA.COM file, and you can start the game. When you finish the game, activate the SETMONO.COM file, and the computer returns to normal monochrome graphics mode."

One last change to our column's format. We received a few letters from readers saying that they don't want easily readable game hints. The "Clue corner" will stay at the end of the column, with a warning not to read any further if game hints aren't appreciated. We hope we can assuage those few who complain about the hints and still keep the majority tipped as best we can.

Reviews

Computer-game ratings

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

Interstel

(distributed by Electronic Arts)
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo CA 94404
(415) 571-7171

Empire

MS-DOS version ***** \$49.95

We thoroughly enjoyed Empire in the previously released versions for the Apple II family, Macintosh, and Atari ST computers. Now the game is available for both IBM micros and the Commodore Amiga, and each is truly worthwhile. All versions that we have tried are similar in screen presentation, except for the target-sight cursor on the Commodore Amiga. The MS-DOS version supports many graphics cards, including monochrome, CGA, and EGA. The keyboard and mouse are also supported. Both 3½" and 5¼" program disks are in the box.

Interstel uses a currently popular method of copy protection for Empire. You must enter a word from an indicated page and line number in the manual. If the word entered is correct, the game allows you to play; if not, you're kicked out of the game. We have expressed our distaste for copy protection before, so we won't bore you with it again. The game's copy protection does lower its overall rating.

One small error in the manual states that a cruiser's initial production time is 42 turns. It's actually 36 turns. For those running the program on a Tandy computer (as we did), hitting the BREAK key locks up the game. Some Tandy users might also be able to use their joystick in mouse mode. We used a mouse and found this to be a smooth interface for this game.

By setting certain switches when you boot the game, you can decide what mode you wish the game to start in. For example, entering "Empire/I" forces the game into EGA graphics mode, and "Empire/K" activates only the keyboard as the I/O device.

Drop-down menus access all play commands as you build your armies and navies to defeat human or computer opponents. As many as three players may play simultaneously. The save-game option is always accessible from the main menu. The game offers Army, Fighter, Destroyer, Troop Transport, Submarine, Cruiser, Aircraft Carrier, and Battleship units. Each unit has its own special strengths and

weaknesses. It doesn't take long for a strategist to learn how to effectively command each unit to its maximum efficiency. For the IBM, *Empire* is a well-ported version by Interstel and earns high marks for playability, ease of use, and dollar value.

Data East USA

470 Needles Drive
San Jose CA 95112
(408) 286-7074

Ikari Warriors	****
MS-DOS version	\$39.95
Karnov	**** 1/2
MS-DOS version	\$39.95

PC gamers can really get hands-on arcade excitement with these MS-DOS-translated versions of Data East's popular coin-operated arcade games. Both games have a superb arcade feel with an IBM or compatible equipped with an EGA or a Tandy computer with the Tandy graphics board. Although the detail with these boards is not as crisp nor as colorful as the original coin-operated versions, you won't notice any difference after a few minutes of play. One or two players can participate in either game.

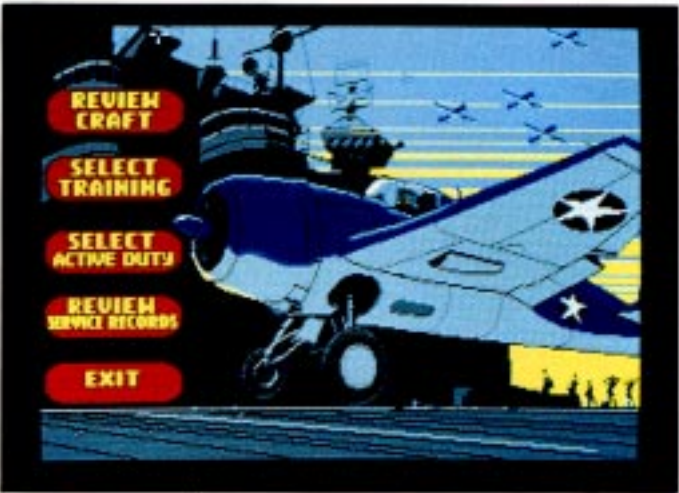
Of these two games, *Karnov* most closely retains the feel of the coin-operated version. One major change with the micro-computer version of *Ikari Warriors* is the limited scope of sideways movement. Do you recall the horizontal-scrolling capabilities of the coin-operated version as you shot and grenaded your way through the enemy forces? With the PC-translation, movement is strictly vertical. This does not afford your on-screen hero the same opportunity to avoid incoming grenades, bullets, and rockets as offered in the coin-operated game. You'll find yourself hopping all about the screen, trying to remain calm and select your targets while avoiding incoming fire.

Either the keyboard or a joystick can be used to control your character. As with the coin-operated original, you can enter tanks when they are flashing on screen (only make certain you find the fuel necessary to keep these armored helpmates moving). Rocks and walls are also helpful in stopping bullets, but they don't offer much protection from grenades. The joystick mode is by far the most enjoyable way to play this arcade game.

Karnov is our favorite of the two reviewed offerings. In it, a fireball-throwing Russian must battle a huge dragon to capture the Treasure of Babylon. This is a fantastic arcade game. The dragon has descended upon a village to wreak havoc with its treasure in hand. Unfortunately, the dragon has evil minions to prevent the hero Karnov from defeating the dragon and returning the treasure to his own people. Karnov can use 10 devices in his quest, ranging from boots that double his jumping range to a shield that protects him five times from death. Many options are hidden and can only be



Karnov: A dinosaur and one darn tough Russian.

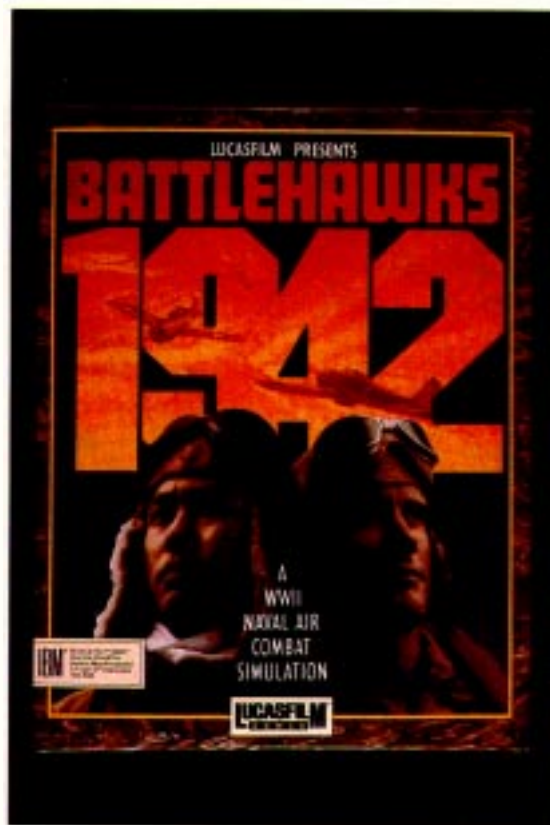


Battlehawks: The calm before the storm.



Battlehawks: A 20,000' dive into hell.

Battlehawks: One plane, one carrier, one survivor.



retrieved when the hero is wearing special glasses. One scene requires Karnov to use swimming goggles to go underwater. You can use either the joystick or keyboard to control Karnov; we found the joystick the most acceptable method.

Data East has nicely ported *Ikari Warriors* and *Karnov* to the MS-DOS world; these are enjoyable arcade experiences. Neither game may be copied, and you must boot your system with the game disk in drive A. Fortunately, Data East has seen fit to include both 3½" and 5¼" disks in their product packages. The games support Tandy, CGA, EGA, MDA, and HGC graphic modes. They are also available for the Commodore 64/128 and the Apple II computer.

Konami, Inc.

815 Mittel Drive
Wood Dale IL 60191
(312) 595-1443

Contra

MS-DOS version \$39.95
*** ½

Rush'n Attack

MS-DOS version \$34.95

Gamers take note: You must keep your original game disk for these games in drive A, as Konami games are copy protected. This protection scheme is uncalled for today. *Contra* simply refused to cooperate with our Tandy 4000 computer. Not only did the HDINSTALL.EXE program on the game disk *not* install the game on the hard disk drive (because the required subdirectory could not be created), but the game could not be run from drive A either. The

system simply locked up upon entering "Contra". Such being the case, *Contra* is a game you should avoid.

The same situation did not occur with *Rush'n Attack*, which arrives on two 5¼" floppy disks. This is a great arcade game that would rate higher were it not for the copy-protection scheme. As a first-rate guerilla, you're behind enemy lines trying to free prisoners of war. There are enemy guards to dispatch, helicopters to avoid, and attack dogs to eradicate. One or two players can use either the keyboard or a joystick to move the on-screen commando. The joystick is the most enjoyable way to play the game. Keep a sharp eye for enemy soldiers attired in white: They've got special weapons that will come in handy if you can obtain them. Always displayed are your current number of lives and carried weapons. By jumping or lying down when necessary, you can avoid some incoming enemy fire.

Neither of these games comes in 3½" disk format. All MS-DOS Konami games support CGA, EGA, and Tandy graphics modes. Other Konami arcade games include *Jackal*, *Boot Camp*, *Gradius*, *Jail Break*, and *Iron Horse*. They are also available for the C64/128, and a few are for the Commodore Amiga.

LucasFilm Games

(distributed by Mediagenic)
P.O. Box 2009
San Rafael CA 94912
(415) 662-1966

Zak McKracken and the Alien

Mindbenders

IBM, C64/128 versions \$44.95, \$34.95

Battlehawks

IBM micros version \$49.95

LucasFilm Games is responsible for the smash-hit *Maniac Mansion*. The team at LucasFilm incorporated an easy-to-use interface in that game that enables players to command the action through point-and-click procedures. They have advanced this method of command with *Zak McKracken*. Additionally, LucasFilm has incorporated enough surprises in the game to inspire any gamer with at least 50 hours of intriguing (and often humorous) play.

This game has some basic niceties that many other PC/MS-DOS/OS/2 game developers have overlooked. The IBM version supports Tandy, EGA, CGA, MCGA, and Hercules graphics modes. Second, not knowing what type of disk drives the player has, the company has thoughtfully included both 3½" and 5¼" game disks in the game's package. A joystick, mouse, and keyboard are all supported.

This is a good game, though not an exceptional game. Playing the role of Zak McKracken (ace reporter and hack writer for the infamous tabloid, *The National Inquisitor*), you set out to interview a two-headed squirrel. You end up investigating a worldwide epidemic of stupidity caused by alien invaders. By solving clues, commanding a variety of characters, and manipulating on-screen tools, you solve the adventure.

The game has the feel of a motion picture. You are treated to fades and dissolves into cut-away scenes that enhance play. The sound effects, however, are only mediocre. The colors on our Tandy 4000 machine were crisp and absolutely superb in presentation.

The interface we found most enjoyable was the mouse. We pointed the mouse cursor to items on screen and used the keyboard to enter the actual commands. The first five keys on the left-hand side in each of the three letter-key rows of the computer keyboard activate all commands. The single-letter commands do not make any sense until you realize that LucasFilm designed them to be friendly with the keyboard layout. Players accustomed to single-letter commands that comply with past game commands will need a few minutes to readjust their thinking.

The puzzles that proliferate the adventure are good, but not innovative by any means. An intriguing puzzle occurs during an airline flight; it deals with both the bathroom and the microwave. Also, when you finally meet that dual-headed squirrel, be prepared to dig deep.

There are a couple of drawbacks to the game - certainly nothing to prevent your enjoyment of the adventure, but drawbacks all the same. For example, when you do locate the squirrel in the northwest, you might decide to walk toward a particularly scenic mountain. Suddenly, without any warning, you are halted and cannot



AVALON

THE KNIGHTS OF THE AVALON

The Chronicles of 'THE KNIGHTS OF THE AVALON' is a fantasy-based Play By Mail game from JADE Games, where players seek to establish, through trade, colonisation, politics, religion and conquest, empires.

For a free start up write to
JADE Games with future
turn costs from as little as
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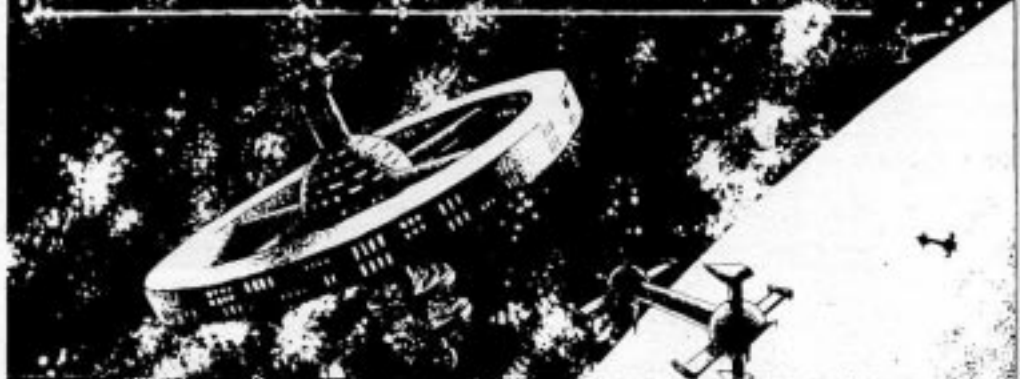
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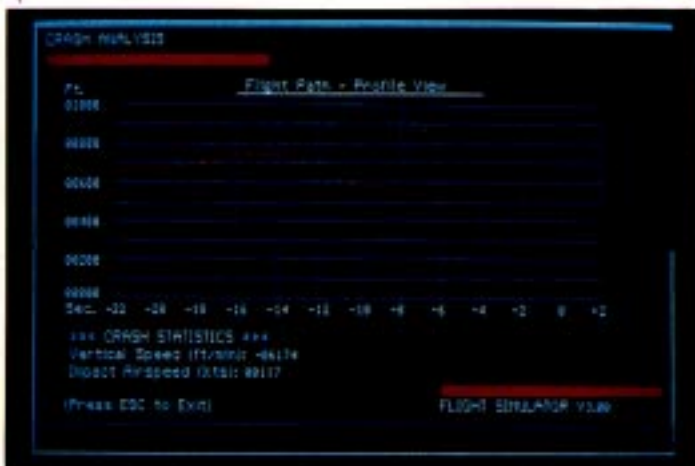
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Microsoft Flight Simulator; Version 2.0: From warm skies . . .



Microsoft Flight Simulator; Version 2.0: . . . to cold statistics.



Baal: The Time Warriors vs. the God of Evil.



move in the mountain's direction, though there's nothing to indicate you can't move onwards. You'll find this same sort of invisible barrier in almost every game locale – not that it's a bad programming decision, mind you. However, with most adventure-game offerings, there is usually a given reason why something logical doesn't take place. In *Zak McKracken*, this is not the case. You have to accept that you can't finish your move simply because the game designers didn't loop your activity through that area.

Zak McKracken is, in spite of minor problems, an enjoyable game. It doesn't reach the heights of Lucasfilm Game's' *Maniac Mansion*, a five-star-rated offering. Still, *Zak McKracken* is certainly worth purchasing if you enjoy a good adventure.

Battlehawks, on the other hand, is a phenomenal game! If you own an IBM micro or compatible, you absolutely must purchase this air-combat simulator. The unparalleled animation beats that found in most other IBM products (although the new *Microsoft Flight Simulator* does come close in quality, but with a much lower excitement level). The flight controls are exacting; they are also smoothly interfaced into the game. This simulation is as close as you can come to participation in World War II air combat without endangering your own life. The aerial combat is reminiscent of the battle films depicted in old newsreels. LucasFilm hired several World War II combat pilots as technical advisors to complete this massive project.

Each plane and ship can scale accurately through 1,500 different magnifications. The tracer fire, both incoming and outgoing from your plane, is very realistic. Direct hits on enemy aircraft can lead to shattering explosions directly in front of your plane. The fiery remnants of the enemy craft tumble into the ocean far below. You can even hear ditching planes splash down. Hit a ship with your bomb or torpedo, and you see smoke and fire billow up from the vessels decks.

You have the option of flying either an American or Japanese plane in 1942. There are four basic missions: fighter escort, fighter intercept, torpedo run, and dive-bomb attack. You train for these missions beforehand; this step is an absolute must! There is nothing as fear-inspiring as a 20,000'-dive straight down toward an aircraft carrier. You wait until you reach 1,500' or less to drop your single bomb and immediately level off to evade flak. Try flying 100' above the waves as you angle in on an enemy ship for a torpedo attack! Attempt these maneuvers without practice, and you and the enemy ship will easily become one!

There are a dozen training missions, each of which requires several attempts before you master the technique. With the Instant Replay option, you can also record your attack and view it after safely evading enemy defensive fire to see if your bomb or torpedo struck home. If you find

your craft under attack from the rear, your tail gunner can spring into action.

This combat simulation comes with a comprehensive user manual. Expertly written, the text and graphics not only explain how you should fly but give in-depth historical backgrounds on American and Japanese aircraft used in the Pacific theater. As you succeed in battle, you even get medals and promotions.

The game supports full EGA and 256-color VGA boards. You can fly with either the joystick, keyboard, or the mouse. We found the mouse to be the most accurate input device. This is a challenging and exciting offering. LucasFilm has set a new standard for computer-based, air-combat simulations. As far as MS-DOS software is concerned, it appears that LucasFilm Games is light years ahead of the competition. Don't dawdle with this one; rush out and buy Battlehawks right away.

Microsoft Corporation

16011 NE 36th Way
Box 97017
Redmond WA 98073-9717
(206) 882-8080

Microsoft Flight Simulator, Version 2.0

MS-DOS version Price n/a

If you own a PC/MS-DOS machine, you should also own this updated version of

the *Microsoft Flight Simulator* This program is almost as spectacular as the previously reviewed *Battlehawks*. Designed by Bruce Artwick of SubLOGIC Corporation for Microsoft, *MFSV2* leaves little to be desired in the realm of flight simulation. Pull-down menus control everything from the type of plane you pilot to the weather conditions. You can also use the keyboard, joystick, or mouse to operate your airplane. The world you fly over consists of 10,000 square miles. Night flight comes complete with city lights. Any graphic adapter is fully supported, and the game has fast solid-modeling imaging if run on a 286- or 386-based computer. VFR and IFR flight instruments are included. You can fly a Cessna 182 or Gates Learjet 25G aircraft, or try your hand jockeying a crop duster or Sopwith Camel in the game's entertainment mode. There is also a flight recorder for flight playbacks.

Novice pilots should attend ground school and graduate up to altitude flying. You learn as though you are participating in a real flight-training environment. You'll learn how to taxi and how to become proficient at attitude flying. Other maneuvers include crosswind takeoffs, final approaches, accelerated maneuver stalls, steep turns, and working into basic airport traffic patterns. There's even an aerobatics course that'll test the limits of your seat belt. Microsoft has included formation

flying and crop dusting for seat-of-your-pants flying. You can even fly with a partner by connecting two IBM micros together through their serial ports or via a modem. The user's manual includes airport runway maps for 23 airports and four national flight charts.

Microsoft Flight Simulator Version 2 is one of the finest software flight simulators ever programmed for an IBM microcomputer or compatible. This flight simulator leaves nothing out. The crispness of full-color, flicker-free animation and the true-to-life feel of piloting any of the selected aircraft are amazing.

Spectrum HoloByte

2061 Challenger Drive
Alameda CA 94501
(415) 522-3584

PT-109

MS-DOS version \$39.95

Falcon AT

MS-DOS version \$59.95

Gordon Walton and the staff at Digital Illusions have completed an extremely worthwhile conversion of the PT-109 *Torpedo Boat Simulation* to MS-DOS computers. After playing this World War II strategy-and-action game on the Apple Macintosh (see DRAGON® issue #140), we realize how the MS-DOS offering takes full advantage of EGA graphics boards with



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bright colors and smooth animation. Even the shell bursts are captured with realism. The-only area with which we could find fault is basically a problem with MS-DOS-based computers: the program's sound. The call to general quarters sounded as unlike a klaxon as a cat sounds like a canary. Otherwise, the user interface for keyboard commands is logical and easy to learn, and the included "PT-Boat Tactics" booklet reveals how PT-boat skippers fought in the Pacific theatre.

Fortunately, the game is not copy protected. You can copy all of the necessary files to a subdirectory on your hard disk, which speeds up disk access when called for by the game. However, those with 3 1/2" disk drives must send Spectrum HoloByte \$12.50 (along with the registration card) within 60 days of the purchase date to receive the micro disks in return. The same is true for those who need 5 1/4" disks if they buy the 3 1/2" package. When combined with the lack of quality sound effects, this results in a four-star-plus rating and not a five-star rating for PT-109.

Falcon AT is yet another flight simulator for IBM AT micros or compatibles; your computer must be running an Intel 80286 or 80386 central processing unit. If your system has an advanced EGA video board, this three-dimensional flight simulator is an awesome offering. With a superior heads-up display, 12 missions, and five

skills levels, you'll swear no element has been left out of this F-16 fighter simulation. *Falcon AT* is far more exciting than the *Microsoft Flight Simulator*, but not as action-packed as *Battlehawks* from Lucas-Film. However, *Falcon AT* possesses more advanced flight controls and weaponry than any other MS-DOS-based simulator we've seen on the market, which means that this simulator takes a while to learn how to use. In the same breath, we must state that if you only buy three flight simulators during the next six months, make certain *Falcon AT* is one of them. This simulator offers flight complexity and high action, and even has the ability to engage in head-to-head dogfights via a modem!

Epyx, Inc.

600 Galveston Drive
P.O. Box 8020
Redwood City CA 94063
(415) 366-0606

Final Assault

MS-DOS version **** \$39.95

This mountain-climbing simulation is innovative, exciting, and intriguing. With versions for all dominant micros, the MS-DOS release supports all of the popular graphics modes. The game is copy protected. You select a trail to conquer the mountain, then pack a rucksack for the climb and set your departure time. During the trip, you learn how to hike, jump quickly, and use your supplies effectively. Climbing on ice is no fun, but you can master this after some practice. You can also stop and save your in-progress game.

Masterplay Publishing Corp.

8417 Fun State Street
Tampa FL 33634
(813) 888-7773

Star Saga One: Beyond the Boundary

MS-DOS version *** 1/2 \$79.95

Star Saga is a multi-faceted, role-playing space adventure that provides a combination of book-based and computer-managed adventures. The game introduces several different characters who interact not only with the human players but also with themselves. This offering requires the player to read passages from various scenarios found in 13 scenario pamphlets and six character booklets. Also included in the game box is a host guide, playing board, and player tokens. Patience, the ability to read text and instructions, and a willingness to use the computer only as a record keeper are the keys to this game's enjoyment. After the first few turns, even the most addicted computerphile will enjoy this text- and book-based adventure.

Publishing International

333 West El Camino Real Avenue
Suite 222
Sunnyvale CA 94087
(408) 738-4311

Pharaoh's Revenge

MS-DOS version *** 1/2 \$29.95

If you enjoyed Broderbund's *Lode Runner*, you'll find this arcade game enjoyable. Unfortunately, the game presents a graphics and animation technology that is no longer considered state-of-the-art. This arcade offering has a median-repeatability factor, meaning that you'll probably come back for additional play a few times before realizing there are other, more advanced arcade games for your IBM micro or compatible.

Sir-Tech Software, Inc.

P.O. Box 245
Charlestown Ogdensburg Mall
Ogdensburg NY 13669
(315) 393-6633

Wizardry IV: The Return of Werdna

MS-DOS version * * * 1/2 \$59.95

If you haven't completed or at least extensively played any of the *Wizardry* scenarios (specifically *Wizardry I*), then don't even think of attempting this fourth scenario in the *Wizardry* series. This is an expert-level-only scenario. Two problems spoil an otherwise exciting adventure for a targeted audience group: copy protection and CGA-only graphics. What we do like are the complex plots, combat (as experienced from the other side of the fence), and one of the most unique plots ever programmed onto a floppy disk. This time you are Werdna, and you must escape your tomb. If you think other fantasy role-playing games are hard, and if frustration is an emotion you can't handle, *The Return Of Werdna* is definitely not for you - but if you are an experienced fantasy role-playing or *Wizardry* player, no other scenario can offer more bang for your buck. This adventure possesses over 400 adversaries to delay and offer Werdna continuous demise at every corner. Buy this offering, and your evenings will certainly be cut out for you for quite some time to come! [More information on this game appeared in *DRAGON*® issue #130.]

MS-DOS in review

Recalling the drought of quality entertainment software for MS-DOS machines just a few months ago, and the CGA-only or monochrome games that proliferated the market, the system has come a long way in a short time. Developers are finally committing the money, time, and effort necessary to produce quality entertainments for MS-DOS systems. It should be obvious to any computer gamer that the MS-DOS environment is rich with entertainment offerings and is no longer a stodgy, business-only computer system. You can have as much fun with a Tandy or IBM micro as with any other system on the market today. The one real difference seems to rest in the graphics and sound presentation of IBM or clone machines - they just aren't up to par yet with other



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computer systems. But watch what's coming around the corner: IBM's *Presentation Manager* and Microsoft's OS/2 operating environments provide a much richer graphic interface. If only IBM would let the consumer decide which operating environment suits his needs. Thank heavens companies like Tandy/Radio Shack exist, for they seem to understand the system quandary many MS-DOS or OS/2 users face and offer a variety of standard machines with numerous options.

Broderbund Software

17 Paul Drive
San Rafael CA 94903-2101
(415) 492-3200

Shufflepuck Cafe

* * * * 1/2

Apple Macintosh version \$39.95

Our lone, non-IBM review is of a new Macintosh arcade game that found space in this column because of its high quality. *Shufflepuck Cafe* contains eight of the galaxy's weirdest creatures, who have but a single obsession: to be the best shufflepuck player. Similar to air hockey, the object of shufflepuck is to beat your opponent by shooting a puck past his defenses and scoring against the opposite edge of the playing table. You must also defend your side of the table from your opponent's maneuvers, slams, and rebounds.

Shufflepuck Cafe runs on any Macintosh and offers outstanding three-dimensional animation. If you wish to practice before suffering humiliating defeats by an odd assortment of alien creatures, challenge droid DC3-ALSO. If you find that DC3 cannot provide you with enough sport, you can alter his settings to make him the most powerful adversary you'll ever face.

After selecting one of the eight adversaries, the Macintosh screen shows you seated at the game table. Your opponent eyes you from the other end of the table and tries to psych you out with some of the weirdest sounds and glares ever found in a computer game. In the upper-left corner of the screen is a scoreboard maintained by a barroom droid. Each of the eight opposing life forms has a unique personality that becomes quite clear when it scores against you or you score against it. Coupled with outstanding digitized sound effects, the reactions of these beings are quite lifelike, considering the alien character of some of these opponents.

Your mouse controls the on-screen paddles, which can be altered to suit your offensive and defensive needs. Power and Bounce are other paddle attributes that can also be adjusted. If you find playing the eight opponents easy (which we doubt until you complete several hours of gameplay), you can adjust the paddle to handicap your gameplay.

When you feel confident enough to take on the Champion, you can move on to a tournament game. This mode pits you against each of the opponents, from the weakest player to the Champion, in order

of their gaming capabilities. If you lose just one game, you have to start over again. If you succeed in beating all opponents, you earn the title of Champion.

Shufflepuck Cafe is a great relief from the many mundane shoot-'em-up arcade games that still flood the market. A fast-paced game, *Shufflepuck Cafe* allows you to study your opponent's strategies and devise your own maneuvers to counter their strengths. With fluid animation and digitized sound, this game is suited for solo play or for activation during a party. The individualized personalities add a new dimension to arcade gaming. The only drawback to this game is that once you have defeated all opponents, the game doesn't offer any more challenges and could become boring. We certainly hope Broderbund decides to release a new opponent data disk containing some more shooters.

Strategic Simulations, Inc.

1046 North Rengstorff Avenue
Mountain View CA 94043-1716
(415) 964-1353

Pool Of Radiance Clue Book

This publication is an invaluable aid that discloses the gaming secrets of the *Pool Of Radiance* AD&D® game adventure, a computer role-playing game licensed to Strategic Simulations by TSR, Inc. This is the

definitive guide to success for *Pool Of Radiance*. The clue book covers every aspect of the adventure, from the various missions and adventures to the available spells and their power parameters. All of Phlan and its surrounding area, specifically those locales where you must complete the various quests, are fully mapped. There are even discussions of how to create characters and preferred method of combat. As a guide, it's up to the user how much he or she reads when trouble rears its head. The information is all contained in 63 pages. We recommend you don't read all of the clues; if you do, it could decrease the enjoyment of figuring out how to avoid or negate the numerous, well-devised predicaments. If you face certain death and have nowhere else to turn, a few page flips might not hurt. The clue book is \$12.95 and worth it.

News and new products

Accolade

550 South Winchester Boulevard
Suite 220
San Jose CA 95128
(408) 985-1700

A multi-level, arcade-action game called *Rubble Ghost* has been released for a variety of computer systems. Your task is to have the bubble ghost blow a bubble th-

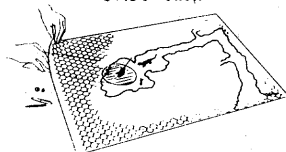
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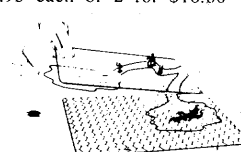
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rough a castle's 35 hazard-filled rooms. There are also secret passageways that can save time and help you avoid some of the more difficult levels. The program is available for IBM micros and compatibles, Atari ST, Apple IIGS, and Commodore Amiga at a price of \$34.95. The C64/128 version sells for \$29.95.

Accolade's first military-simulation game, *Steel Thunder*, has also made its debut. This is the first American tank simulation that places the player in the midst of modern tank warfare in today's global hot spots: Cuba, Syria, or West Germany. The player receives his orders at the start of the game and selects one of four American battle tanks. The tanks are then equipped with appropriate weaponry, missiles, and ammunition. An overhead map, gunner and commander screens with powerful scopes, and a keyboard overlay are used. The game is for the C64/128, for \$29.95.

Electronic Arts

1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo CA 94404
(415) 571-7171

Released for IBM micros and compatibles is *Sentinel Worlds I: Future Magic*. This science-fiction role-playing mystery has players attempting to stop the destruction of valuable cargo transports by mysterious raider-ships in the Caldorre System. In this adventure designed by Karl Buitter,

you are in command of a high-performance warship equipped with sophisticated combat systems and a skilled crew. With these elements at your command, you must execute classified orders in an attempt to secure the safety of the Federation transports and insure the future development of civilized space settlements. There are more than 150 separate illustrations and a top-down, animated view of characters and boundaries. A unique Battle Helmet gives players a camera-eye view of the action and a first-person feeling of movement. Top performance depends on tactical planning. In addition to the strategic selection of weapons and armor, entrepreneurial skills are necessary when there is a need to purchase additional equipment, weapons, or advanced training. The 5¼" disk version is \$49.95. A combination 3½" and 5¼" package retails for \$54.95. Graphics modes supported include CGA, EGA, or Tandy 16 color.

The Bard's Tale II: The Destiny Knight is now available for the Apple IIGS. Designed by Interplay Productions, this sequel to *The Bard's Tale* is 50% larger in code size and features an expanded dominion for exploration and adventure; it also incorporates advanced combat and magic systems. *The Bard's Tale II* revolves around your attempts to halt an evil force by reassembling parts of a magic wand. The price of

this game is \$49.95. Versions are available for the Apple II, C64/128, and Commodore Amiga. Also available is a clue book for assisting players through a variety of the game's dungeons.

Epyx, Inc.

Epyx has introduced *Space Station Oblivion* for IBM micros and compatibles, with versions for the C64/128, Amiga, and ST available next year. Far in the future, immigrants from Earth have found a new home on the planet Evath. The moon, Mitral, is mined by prisoners who are unleashing poisonous vapors that threaten to annihilate all. Your job is to drill in each of Mitral's 18 sectors to release the vapors that threaten to demolish the solar system.

Another goody from Epyx is *Battleship*, released for the C64/128, Atari ST, Commodore Amiga, and IBM micros and compatibles. This is the Epyx version of the classic strategic board game from Milton Bradley. You secretly hide your carriers, subs, destroyers, torpedo boats, and battleships on a grid map. From there on, it's hide-and-seek as each player tries to blow the opponent's fleet out of the water. The price is \$29.95.

Interplay Productions


1575 Corporate Drive
Costa Mesa CA 92626
(714) 545-9001

The company responsible for *The Bard's Tale* and *Wasteland* now introduces *Battle Chess*, an animated chess game where medieval figures combat each other upon contact for positioning on the playing field. *Battle Chess* combines a magnificent chess-logic system with colorful and dramatic graphics, animation, and sound, all of which enhance the game of chess. A move such as knight takes pawn (NxP) comes to life as the bold knight, resplendent in his armor of silver or ebony, sallies forth to slay the opposing foot soldier. *Battle Chess* provides an opening library of 30,000 moves. A variety of settings lets you play against the computer, your friends, or lets the computer play against itself. Ten different levels of play are available to challenge your skills, and modem capability allows you to link players in different locations. The game is currently available for the Commodore Amiga computer for \$49.95.

Psygnosis

Liverpool, U.K.

This English-based company has released *Baal*, a game with a mix of strategy and arcade action. Baal, the supreme God of Evil, has dispatched an undead army to steal a dreadful weapon of destruction, a War Machine. You must guide the Time Warriors through three different domains, each full of monstrous beasts. The War Machine has been hidden in 18 different pieces which you must find: There are over 250 highly detailed screens, more than 100 monsters, and





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over 400 traps. This game has been released for the Atari ST and the Commodore Amiga.

Clue corner

Warning: Read no further if you don't wish game hints!

Several readers have written letters asking for the required format for submitting game hints. Simply write or type the information you wish to share in a letter and mail it to us. We can also be found on-line in three database services; if you have access to an on-line service, send messages to the following electronic mail addresses:

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The Bard's Tale II (Interplay)

The person that appears to be your best friend will turn out to be your worst enemy! Of particular importance when fighting powerful opponents is the Sword of Zar. After fighting the statues in the second level of Dargoth's Tower, this weapon can be found in the second level of the Maze of Dread after you solve a colorful riddle. This sword is deadly when thrown as a missile while the Archer's Tune (#1) is being played. Also, in the snare of the Destiny Stone, try using the arrow clue found in the manual. The clue starts when you enter the door past the magic mouths.

Luke Clossey
Carlsbad, Calif.

The Bard's Tale III (Interplay)

For anyone having trouble making it to level four of Unterbrae, your best friend is a sword. In Arboria, do not pay for Gilles' Gills at the Wizards Guild, as you can learn it from a fisherman for 500 gold. Nuts can also help you win the Nightspear, but you must get them and then give them a drink of Water. Blue rhymes nicely. Be certain to tell the prices: CHAOS. The Rainbow Dragon can help your quest in more ways than one.

Cody Sims
Address not given

In the sixth dimension, when you kill Werra, you will only find Werra's Shield. Don't worry! When you venture into the seventh dimension, you will find Hawkslayer dead and you can get the Strifespear from him. And speaking of the seventh dimension, it would be a good idea to use seven party members at this level, as time can get pretty tough. For example, Tarjan's Warriors have 9,999 hit points!

Mike Anderson
Sherwood Park, Alberta

There is a trick to obtaining Harmonic Gems. First go to the storehouse in Skara Brae, but before you enter the building, insert the original character disk in your disk drive. Now enter the storehouse. After you are in the storehouse, remove the original character disk and insert your copy disk. Take all that you wish from the storeroom, Harmonic Gems included, and then leave. The empty storehouse will be saved on the copy disk, but not the original character disk. If you need more Harmonic Gems, simply insert the original disk in the drive and repeat this process.

Sean Keough
Peterborough, Ontario

Might and Magic (New World Comp.)

Search Algary's shops for more travel to exotic places!

Erick Flint
Bloomer, Wis.

Ultima IV (Origin Systems)

Mystic Armor is located in the middle of the Oak Grove, but you must be eight parts Avator in order to retrieve it. Mystic Weapons are in the training room at Serpents Castle. For the Resurrection Spell, try A, B, C, D, E and Mandrake Root! Lastly, the words of passage are "Amo," "Ver," and "Cor."

Jon Cylka and Mark Calverie
Hamburg, N.Y.

The Green Stone is found in Dungeon Wrong. The White Stone is found beside an ankh in a mountain. You can only get there by blinking or by balloon; it is totally sealed off! The Black Stone is found at midnight in the Moonglow gate. (Type s to search for it.) The Rune of Humility is in the village of Paws. The Rune of Honesty is under Mariah on her gold in the town of Moonglow. (Just leave the gold alone!) Talfourd (the ruler of Yew) knows about the Rune of Justice. The Shrine of Justice is East then North of Yew. Finally, the Shire of Compassion is east across two bridges from Castle Britannia.

John R. Morris
Address not given

Ultima V (Origin Systems)

Hint #1: The crown is on the top level of Blackthorne's castle. Hint #2: Look for the scepter in the mountain tower east of Lock Lake. Hint #3: These islands have towers; the one south of the Codex, the one to the south of Skara Brae, and the one east of Jhelom. Hint #4: SEARCH for the skull keys in the northwest part of Minoc. Hint #5: Use these keys to get into the top of Lord British's castle and GET the magic carpet.

Justin Phillips
Bellvue, Wash.

The Mantras for the shrines are the same as they were in Ultima IV. Also, you can only reach the Shrine of Spirituality if you enter a moongate at midnight. For those who aren't afraid of heights, ask the Lord of Empath Abbey about the Grapple. When in Minoc, follow Shenstone the armorer around, and he may lead you to a solution for the odd door.

Christopher Ozols
Eden Prairie, Minn.

I had a little trouble starting this fantastic game. . . . I kept starving to death and succumbing to poisonings. These hints should help in these regards. To prevent yourself from starving to death, drop off Shamino and Iolo at the inn in Britain until you have garnered enough money to buy food for all three of you. I recommend you purchase your food in Moonglow where it costs the least. Don't get your food from the fields or tables because such actions will move you away from the path of the Avatar. Lastly, if you don't have the H.M.S. *Cape Plan* when you cross the ocean, make certain you have plenty of An Nox (cure poison) spells, because those nasty squids delight in poisoning you!

Albert Howe
Rossmoor, Calif.

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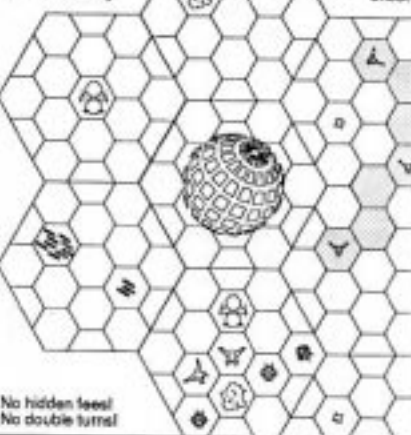
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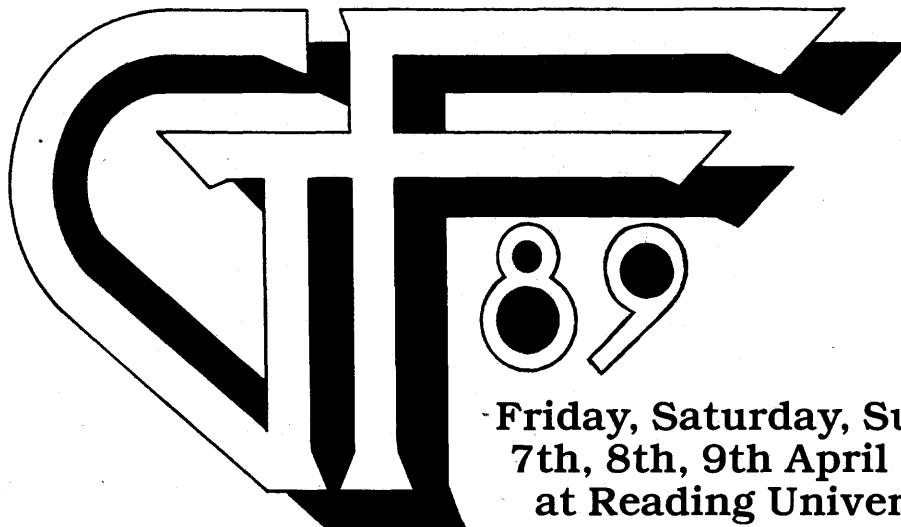
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Made-to-Order Clerical Orders

Helpful hints for clerical assemblies

Temples are an important focal point of many AD&D® game campaigns, because of the key role they play in both society as a whole and the lives of player characters. A well-developed temple organization can be the DM's most effective means of guiding and constraining a cleric PC. It can also provide occasional information and assistance to the players, while its political interests can be a powerful source of intrigues and adventure goals. At times a major threat can even test its full military, healing, or financial resources.

In order to meet such challenges, a DM needs to know a great deal about a temple and its members. This can be a problem if this information has not been developed in detail. The following system is designed to solve this problem by quickly enabling the DM to determine how many clerics belong to a temple and what their levels are. Some additional information is included that might prove helpful as a reference when a temple is being developed in greater detail.

Temple organization and hierarchy

To begin with, we need to define what constitutes a typical religious organization for game purposes. This article assumes that the average temple contains quite a few *nonadventuring* clerics and *lay brethren*. These are NPCs whose activities have little to do with exciting gaming but everything to do with the "real" functions of a temple. (What adventurer worth his salt would willingly spend a lifetime copying manuscripts or sweeping floors?) Together, the adventurers, nonadventuring clerics, and lay brethren of a temple make up the religious order. In the manner of bureaucracies everywhere, adventurers are generally subordinate to their administrative colleagues of equal rank.

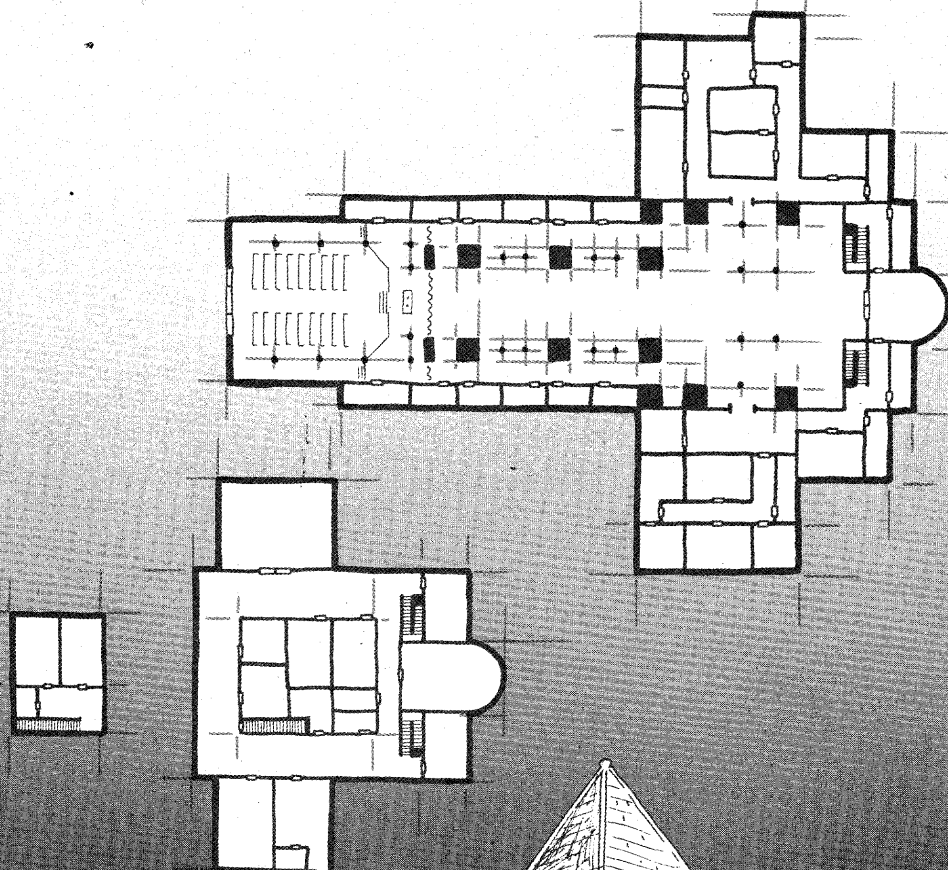
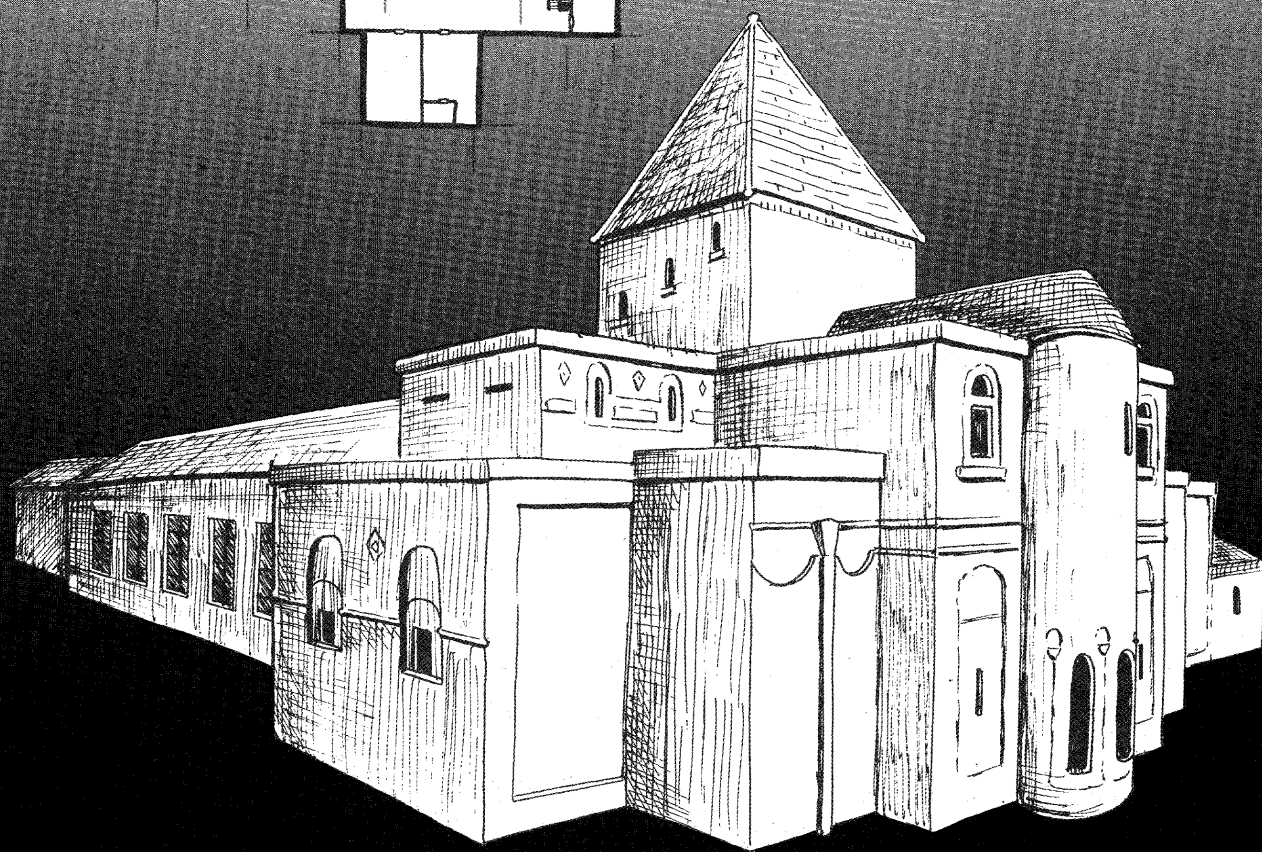
Nonadventuring clerics form the backbone of the temple hierarchy. They oversee the day-to-day functions of the temple, perform the majority of its rites and routine services to the people, and undertake various scholarly pursuits. Having little use for combat skill, they rarely venture into the wilderness, and often view their adventuring colleagues as violent and undisciplined (though necessary because of the gold, glory, and power they bring to the temple). They advance in level more slowly than adventuring clerics, but with less hazard.

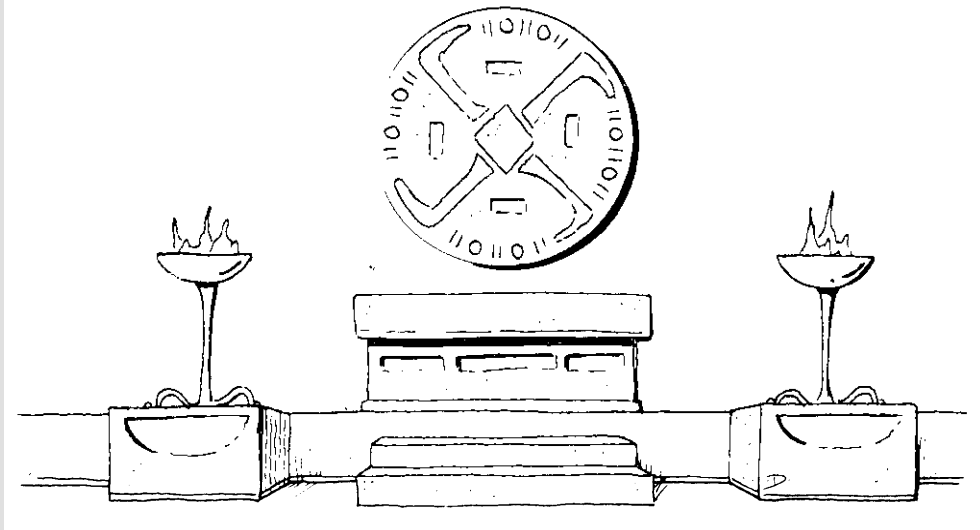
A type of NPC which fills this role admirably is described by Len Lakofka in his article "The Cloistered Cleric," which appeared in DRAGON® Magazine #68. Mr. Lakofka locates his cloistered clerics in separate abbeys which have little contact

with the outside world, although they might just as easily be placed in regular temples. Normal clerics who are retired or have substandard physical abilities could also be suited to this purpose.

Most temples also include a sizable number of lay brethren drawn from the general populace. These unusually pious laymen fill out the ranks of the order and perform a multitude of minor tasks for the temple. They work at unrelated occupations in their daily lives and live in ordinary homes away from the temple grounds. Their clerical powers are minimal; they have undergone the *ceremony of dedication*, but not *investiture*. However, their numbers may include *invested* deacons and archdeacons with very limited spell-casting abilities.

If clerics are allowed to use *orisons*





(clerical cantrips, presented in *DRAGON* issue #108), they should be granted to nonadventuring clerics and perhaps to lay brethren as well.

The official rules regarding followers for PC clerics deserve a special note. The *Players Handbook* (page 20) states that an 8th-level cleric who establishes a place of worship receives 20-200 fanatically loyal followers of unspecified type who serve without pay, in addition to a number of men-at-arms whose exact types are detailed in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* (page 16). These provisions are clearly geared toward the typical PC who establishes a new religious stronghold, generally in the wilderness. In such a case, the 20-200 followers represent zero-level laymen who contribute a variety of skills and occupations to the new community and also serve as lay brethren in its temple, while the men-at-arms constitute the temple's guard force. However, these figures may not be appropriate for an *established* temple, especially in a settled area. The system presented here is intended for use in developing an established temple. A newly constructed one will evolve into a similar organization if it survives its early years.

Temple size

In fleshing out a temple hierarchy, the DM needs to begin by determining the number of clergy in the temple. Start with the total population of the town (or other worship area), then decide what percentage of the population actively serves as clergy of one sort or another. While substantial variation occurs from one place to another, this figure is generally between 2% and 10% of a town's inhabitants. (If these figures seem high, remember that, since the gods are visibly real and active in their world, a high proportion of the populace is actively involved in their worship.) Then, based on the number of temples in the town and the popularity of each, decide what fraction of the town's total clergy serve in the temple in question. This allows an estimate of the actual number of clergy in the temple. (The number of nonclerical worshippers is 10-20 times as

great, but remember that many of these attend only on major holy days, just as in our world.) At least 10 clergy are normally required for a temple to be viable.

For example, the frontier town of Almeida has a population of 10,000. As its people are not noted for their piety, only 2% of them are active clergy – about 200. Since the town has five temples, they average 40 clergy each. The temple of Chauntea, goddess of agriculture, is the most popular, and has 80 clerical types. The temple of Mystra, goddess of magic and the moon, is the smallest, being frequented by magic-users, alchemists, and a few lycanthropes. It has 15 clergy.

In contrast, the city of Nap has a population of over 50,000 and, being the capital of a warlike theocracy, is a center of religious and military activity. Its 5,000 actively involved clergy (10% of the population) are divided among 25 temples, and average 200 per temple. The largest temple is that of Tempus, god of war, with over 400 clerics. The smallest is that of Ilmater, god of the poor, which has only 27 clergy.

Next, decide what proportion each of the three types of clergy accounts for within the total just determined. The actual ratio differs between temples, and depends on the popularity and goals of each deity. In most temples the bulk of the clergy are lay brethren, especially if the deity is a popular one. A popular deity's temple might have a ratio of 10% adventurers to 20% nonadventuring clerics to 70% lay brethren. The equivalent figures for an unpopular deity might be 20%, 30%, and 50%. Secret or banned temples are, of course, another matter and may consist entirely of adventurers.

In making these calculations, precision is not essential. A town of any size always has room for one cleric more or less! The percentages given above should be regarded as no more than loose guidelines, so estimates are fine – but avoid having too many round numbers in the final totals.

For example, the temple of Chauntea of Almeida fits the 10 : 20 : 70 ratio typical of popular deities' clergy, having 8 adventuring clerics, 16 nonadventuring clerics, and 56 lay brethren. The small temple of Mystra has a higher proportion of adventurers

maintaining its fortunes. Its 15 clerical types are in a ratio of roughly 25 : 25 : 50 – 4 adventurers, 3 nonadventurers, and 8 lay brethren (including 2 semiretired magic-users). The temple is notorious locally for its shape-changing acolytes.

In Naf, the huge temple of Tempus also has a high proportion of adventurers, again with a ratio of about 25 : 25 : 50. In this case, the reason is the warlike nature of its deity. Its clergy includes 97 adventuring clerics, 102 nonadventuring clerics, and 228 lay brethren. The temple of Ilmater has relatively little use for adventurers, since its clergy concentrates on ministering to the poor. Its clerics include only 2 adventurers, 11 nonadventurers, and 14 lay brethren.

If a temple contains shrines to friendly deities who have no local temples of their own, 1-3 clerics of each deity may be present, adventurer or otherwise.

Leaders

Now the levels of the temple's clerics must be determined. The first step in this process is to decide the leader's level. A temple can be led by any type of cleric (adventuring or nonadventuring) of sufficient level. (Of course, the larger the temple, the higher this is likely to be.) If random determination is desired, use the following procedure which relates the leader's level to the size of the temple. The numbers in this procedure can be tailored to fit the general spread of levels in a particular campaign.

Add the total number of adventuring and nonadventuring clerics in the temple. Divide this number by five (rounding up) to get the base level for this calculation. Then add the roll of 2d4. The end result is the level of the temple leader. The leader of a temple must normally be at least 8th or 9th level, so any result lower than this should be rerolled except in special circumstances.

For example, the temple of Chauntea in Almeida has 8 adventuring and 16 nonadventuring clerics for a total of 24. Dividing by five and rounding up yields a base level of 5th. The roll of 2d4 produces a 6, indicating that the leader is 11th level. The temple of Mystra, has only 7 clerics, giving a base level of 2nd. The roll of 2d4 produces a 5, for a result of 7th level. Since a 7th-level cleric cannot lead a temple, the dice are rerolled until a suitable result (9th level in this case) is obtained.

Past a certain point, though, the leader's level cannot continue to increase in proportion to temple size without becoming impossibly large. An upper limit must be set. Therefore, if the temple has more than 60 clerics, the base level described above (the total number of clerics divided by five) does not increase above 12. Instead, if the number of clerics is between 61 and 90, add the roll of 2d6 rather than 2d4 to the base level of 12; if it is between 91 and 120, add 2d8; and if it is above 120, add the roll of 3d6.

For example, the temple of Tempus in Nap has 199 clerics, making it the largest temple in the Western Reaches. Because of the upper limit, this number is treated as if it were a 60, giving a base level of 12th. Since 199 is more than 120, the additional roll is made with 3d6 rather than 2d4. This results in a 13, indicating that the temple is headed by a 25th-level cleric (this leader could have been anywhere from 15th to 30th level).

The temple leader can be either a desk-bound adventurer (25%) or a nonadventuring (or cloistered) cleric (75%). Note, however, that Lakofka's cloistered cleric cannot exceed 11th level. If you are using this type, any result of 12th level or higher has to indicate an adventurer.

Clerical levels

There are two ways to determine the levels of a temple's remaining clerics; these methods are as follows.

If a fairly even distribution of levels is desired, roll the largest type of die whose number of sides is *equal to or less than* the leader's level, once for each cleric. If the temple is large, roll for groups of clerics rather than individuals.

If low-level clerics are desired as most common, divide the temple's clerics into groups of approximately equal size. Roll 1d4 for each cleric in the first group, 1d6 for each member of the second group, and so on up to the largest appropriate die (the type used for the first method above).

As a special note, the first method is best for adventurers. An even distribution seems reasonable in this case, since low-level adventurers tend either to die or to advance to other levels fairly quickly. Either way, the short time they are likely to remain at any particular (low) level keeps their numbers down. The second method seems better for nonadventurers, since they progress more slowly than adventurers, live in much safer conditions, and spend a much larger percentage of their careers at low levels.

The DM may wish to assign positions of responsibility to some of the organization's higher-ranking clerics. These areas of responsibility might include the following duties, which can be combined or divided up in whatever way seems appropriate.

- Treasury and financial affairs
- Upkeep of temple records
- Manuscript procurement and copying
- Level training
- Management of temple adventurers
- Management of temple lay work force (including lay brethren)
- Management of temple guard and other defenses
- Organization and planning of services, rites, and holy days
- Direction of music and chorus
- Upkeep of buildings and grounds
- Acquisition and storage of supplies

If the temple is not too large, it may be

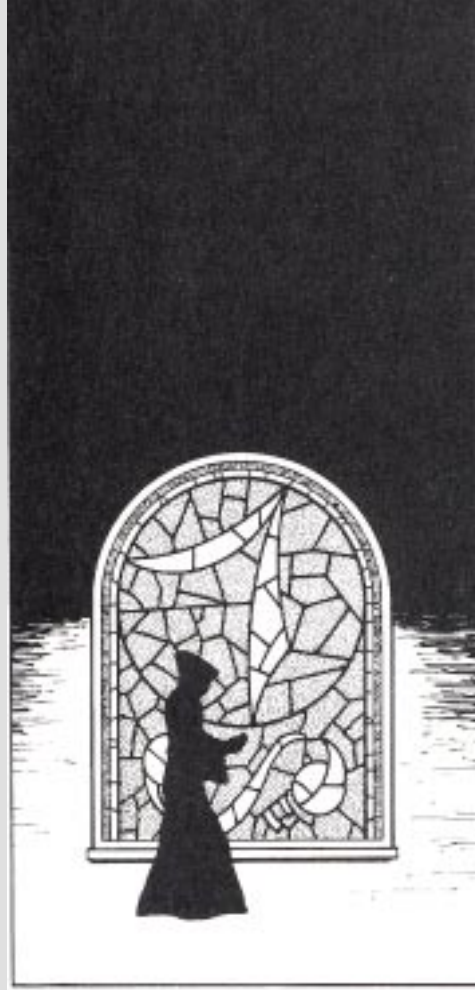
possible to develop each of its adventuring clerics (and possibly nonadventuring clerics as well) as detailed NPCs. Even if that isn't possible, a few NPCs could be developed. Every PC cleric should be personally familiar with at least one temple superior who provides instruction, information, and discipline.

For example, the temple of Mystra in Almeida has seven clerics and a 9th-level leader. Therefore, 1d8 is rolled to find the level of each of the four adventuring clerics, while 1d4, 1d6, and 1d8 are rolled for the three nonadventuring clerics. The levels of the former turn out to be 1st, 3rd, 6th, and 8th, while the latter are 1st, 4th, and 7th. The high priest oversees level training. The 8th-level adventurer is given responsibility for defense and supervising the other adventurers, while the 6th-level cleric acts as quartermaster in charge of upkeep, supplies, and lay brethren. The 7th-level nonadventurer supervises the treasury, the temple records, scribes, and holy services. The temple is too small to have a choir.

Physical design

The official rules contain many scattered clues concerning the internal design of temples. One of these is the Players Handbook's requirement (page 20) that an 8th-level cleric's shrine must have a floor area of at least 2,000 square feet, and a 9th-level cleric's temple have at least 2,500 square feet. Since these areas correspond to linear dimensions of 40' X 50' and 50' X 50' respectively, this rule is not likely to present much of an obstacle. Another important comment is the *Dungeon Masters Guide's* paragraph on "Evil Areas" (page 66), which applies to both evil and good temples. A scale area of up to 10" X 10" for a shrine, or up to 20" X 20" for a temple, can be specially consecrated to good or evil. Within this area, all turning attempts by clerics of opposed alignments are at a penalty — a substantial one in the case of a temple. (Interestingly, no extant spell is known to cause such an effect. An addition to the ceremony spell is proposed at the end of this article in order to fill this gap.) This rule has an important bearing on temple shape and layout, since the most vital rooms will be contained within the bounds of the evil or good areas.

The temple's location and purpose help answer some basic questions about its physical design. Is it a shrine or a true temple? An urban edifice, a country estate, or a cliff-top retreat? One building or a cluster? How strongly is it fortified? (Remember that a cleric can construct a fortified temple for only half the usual cost, thanks to religious help.) Are the grounds walled or unwalled? Do they contain any important terrain features (streams, ponds, woods, etc.)? Is the temple a self-sufficient entity, or does it depend on nearby townspeople for its needs? Its architectural style should be



considered too. Keep in mind that many of the most striking and distinctive types of architecture in the real world are associated with religious edifices. Almost infinite diversity is possible in a fantasy world.

DMs should be as creative as possible in matching the form of a temple to the needs of its organization. Nevertheless, it may be helpful to define some terms commonly used in traditional church architecture. In the familiar cross-shaped church, the long central area is the *nave* and the side halls are *transepts*. The area containing the altar and seats for the clergy and other functionaries is called the *chancel*. This area is often raised above the others. A pulpit or lectern may be present near the altar. An *apse* is a vaulted, semicircular area projecting directly behind the chancel; this area most likely contains a large, highly visible holy symbol. Adjoining the chancel to or near the side is a private changing room called the *sacristy*. Sacred items and vestments are kept here. A vestibule or *narthex* serves as the public entrance to the nave. Overhead are galleries or *clerestories* whose windows look down on the roofs of lower structures.

The public worship area should be large enough to hold the full congregation on a major holy day. This area can be any shape, as long as the altar is clearly visible from all points. The entire area is usually adorned with as many fine paintings, statues and sculptures, murals, wall hangings, etc., as the temple can afford. The

colors of the deity are prominently featured. A separate area for a choir may be located to the side or rear, or in a loft.

The centerpiece of any temple is its altar, which is placed to dominate the main public worship area. The altar's specific form depends on its function in the organization's rites, but it is certainly made of, the finest materials, draped in the deity's colors, and surmounted by an enormous holy symbol. It is likely to be heavily protected by defensive magic and possibly traps. *Any* item which is to be placed on the altar must be purified by means of a ceremony: consecrate item spell. If this is not done, the offenders sustain damage: 2d6 if their alignments match that of the altar's deity, 3d6 if either ethics or morality differ, and 4d6 if both differ.

Many temples also have a smaller, private worship area and altar. This is especially true of sects that practice secret rites, which are usually carried out in an inner sanctum seen only by the temple's priests and perhaps a favored few others. Since an altar must be used in the creation of a cleric's magical items, a private inner sanctum is also useful for this purpose, perhaps with a workroom and other necessary equipment nearby.

The inner sanctum may also include or adjoin the high priest's sanctuary, which is one of the most guarded rooms in the entire temple. The sanctuary is the destination of *word of recall* and succor spells. It is also used for meditation and prayer, for the seclusion required in the creation of magical items, and as a resting place for the high priest's body when he is traveling astrally or recovering from a *resurrection* spell. It or a nearby room may feature a magic circle, a thaumaturgic circle or triangle, or a pentagram for use in summoning an *aerial servant* (or for other, darker rites of summoning). All of these are excellent reasons why the sanctuary is kept an inviolable refuge!

Somewhere in the vicinity of the altar or inner sanctum can be found the fabulously expensive font where holy or unholy water is created (*Dungeon Masters Guide*, pages 114-115). It is likely to be placed in a manner that allows for comfortable viewing when it is used for scrying by means of the *holy font* spell. (The concept of holy water seems a particularly Christian one; DMs may wish to exercise their imaginations to come up with other substances that might serve the same function for various deities.)

Some of the other features that might be found in a temple complex (but not a shrine) are listed below. Only a large temple would include all of these:

- A library and scriptorium
- Living quarters for clergy and servants
- Guest quarters
- A dining area
- A large kitchen and larder
- Meeting rooms
- Cloakrooms, storerooms, and closets

- A protected storeroom for magical items
- A treasure vault
- A bell tower
- A music room
- A wine cellar
- A healing area
- Shrines to closely affiliated deities
- Guardrooms
- Barracks
- Practice areas for weapons training
- An armory
- A smithy
- Cells or a dungeon
- Crypts containing the remains of former high priests
- A graveyard
- Stables including stalls for magical mounts
- A garden for herbs and vegetables
- An orchard
- A vineyard
- A greenhouse (mundane or magical)

For the contents of indoor areas, see Appendix I to the *Dungeon Masters Guide* ("Dungeon Dressing," particularly the list of "Religious Articles and Furnishings") and Appendix 2 to *Legends & Lore* ("Temple Trappings"). Magical items that are most likely to be used in a temple include *candles of invocation*, a *dicerion of light and darkness*, *incense of meditation*, a *necklace of prayer beads*, clerical rods and staves, various healing potions and ointments, and a library of clerical and protection scrolls.

Wealth

It may occasionally be important to know how much money a temple's leaders have access to in an emergency (or when a particularly brazen thief manages to break into the treasure vault). A wilderness stronghold's standard income of 9 sp per inhabitant per month (*Players Handbook*, page 20) seems an insufficient guide to this subject. The size of the treasury can vary enormously from one temple to the next, typically ranging anywhere from 100-10,000 gp per cleric. A suggested method of calculating a temple's wealth is described as follows.

Multiply the roll of 1d100 × 100 gp to find the average gp per cleric. (If desired, this roll could be modified to reflect the political fortunes of the temple, the amount of greed inherent in its philosophy, the wealth or poverty of its surrounding area, etc.) Multiply this figure by the total number of adventuring and nonadventuring clerics in the temple (excluding lay brethren) to determine the actual size of the treasury. Of course, in a real emergency, a temple might call in favors, appeal to other temples of the same deity, or even sell assets to supplement its resources.

For example, the temple of Tempus in Naf is the flagship temple of the state religion, and so has a + 50 bonus to its 1d100 roll. A 62 is rolled on the dice, for an adjusted figure of 112. A figure of 11,200 gp per cleric multiplied by 199

clerics give its treasury the staggering sum of 2,228,000 gp. Since the temple of Ilmater follows a creed of poverty, 1d30 is rolled instead of the usual 1d100. A roll of 9 on this die gives a result of 900 gp per cleric, for a net treasury 11,700 gp – poverty indeed for an urban temple!

Defenses

Almost every temple has many areas where secrecy and protection are of paramount importance, and the defensive arrangements of each temple should reflect this. A contingent of fighters is often present to serve as guards, and some temples even have castle-type fortifications for them to defend. Paladins or cavaliers may be on hand to lend assistance. Thieves might be employed to install complex locks and deadly (or immobilizing) traps to guard vital areas (a magical *forget* spell cast at the conclusion of the work can help safeguard the temple's most important secrets from such hirelings if the job was a quick one). The services of a magic-user or illusionist might be engaged, either to set magical traps or to serve as permanent members of the guard force. Additionally, evil clerics are likely to use undead to augment their guard forces, and major temples of any alignment may be defended by appropriate creatures of the Outer planes at times of special need.

But the temple's clerics most frequently employ their own spells. These include *glyphs of warding* (see "The Glyphs of Cerilong" in DRAGON issue #50 and "More Pages from the Mages" in DRAGON issue #69 for some excellent examples), *symbols*, and short-term *wyvern watch* spells for area defense. *Forbiddance* spells are used almost universally to protect temples, although many a high priest might find it necessary to exclude certain public areas from its effect so as not to embarrass visitors of differing alignments who miss their saving throws. Guards could be *imbued with spell ability*, and might be assisted by a golem or an aerial servant if danger is suspected. Strategically placed items can be brought to life via *animate objects* spells, while *magical vestment* can help a cleric caught without armor.

It goes without saying that a *ceremony: consecrate ground* spell will have been cast on the grounds of any temple before construction, since the edifice would otherwise be certain to collapse eventually (see also the effect of this spell on graveyards). Presumably, *consecrated* ground is not vulnerable to *dispel magic* spells, otherwise temples would be much too vulnerable to their enemies. This can be justified by assuming that the deity takes an interest in maintaining the magical power of the *consecrated* ground. Thus, the only way to desecrate such an area is to ritually defile its associated altar, as described in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* (page 66).

If you think that desecrating or destroying an altar is too easy for someone who

gains access to it, consider giving every altar an inherent magic resistance — perhaps 75% for a greater god's altar, 60% for a lesser god's, and 45% for a demigod's. If the temple is abandoned, these figures are lowered by 1% for every decade the altar has gone unused, to a minimum of 10%, 5%, and 1% respectively. Furthermore, if any character other than a high priest attempts to desecrate an altar, there is a chance equal to the altar's current magic resistance than an aleax (FIELD FOLIO® tome, page 11) emerges from the altar and attacks. If several characters are participating in the defilement, roll separately for each. And remember the penalty suggested above for touching an altar with an unconsecrated item.

As mentioned previously, the creation of areas specially dedicated to good or evil requires a special spell. The following addition to the ceremony spell is proposed for this purpose. Its effect on opponents' saving throws and clerical spells is in addition to the undead-turning penalty specified in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*.

Ceremony: Consecrate Temple (Invocation)

Level: See below Components: V,S,M
Range: Touch CT: 1 hour
Duration: Perm. ST: Special
AE: One area

Explanation/Description: Consecrate temple requests a cleric's deity to confer a blessing upon a newly completed shrine or temple, providing it with holy or unholy power through a permanent link to the Positive or Negative Material plane. Although ceremony is a first-level spell, the ability to consecrate temple is not available to the cleric until he is at a higher level. It can only be cast by a cleric of at least 8th level (for a shrine) or 9th level (for a temple). The blessing affects a scale area of up to 10" X 10" for a shrine or 20" X 20" for a temple. Within this area, clerics of opposed alignment suffer a penalty on all saving throws and attempts to turn or control undead.

The exact area to be consecrated and protected must first be outlined with an appropriate holy substance. The deity's attention is then attracted by means of a sacrifice of great value. In the case of a shrine, the sacrifice must be worth either one-half or one gold piece per square foot, and confers a penalty of either -1 or -2 respectively. In the case of a temple, the sacrifice must be worth either one-and-a-half or two gold pieces per square foot and must also include a valuable magical item. It confers a penalty of -3 or -4 and renders it impossible for an opponent to invoke the direct aid of his deity (e.g., bless, chant, prayer or gate spell). An evil cleric can substitute living sacrifices whose total experience-point value is equal to the required monetary value of the sacrifice.

Forum

Continued from page 9

resurrected, he would surely become a ranking member on a pirate ship and maybe go on to become a leader at the base camp of the privateering operation. He might even make a complete alignment change and rule a small part of a kingdom, but he would still be a fighter, and nothing else.

I would like to add some house rules that are used in the campaigns I play in and the one I run. First of all, European barbarians are not allowed simply because they are overpowered. Paladins have remained a subclass of fighters, and cavaliers have been limited in their starting assets; they also cannot increase their ability scores. Rangers, simply out of the desire to play them as they were meant to be played, may not specialize and cannot wear armor heavier than chain mail. This helps bring the fighter back to a decent strength among his peers, even though there are more "frilly" and attractive characters. To me, the fighter is great just the way he is.

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I was quite interested to see Jon Slobin's "Just How Big Is This Bomb?" in your July 1988 issue. I have long been interested in this kind of application of basic physical reasoning to gaming problems, and I commend Mr. Slobin's pursuing it. [However,] some of his statements don't match up with what I've read in my own research on explosives.

To begin with, Mr. Slobin says that 100 lbs. of TNT would release about 20 joules of energy. According to the texts I have read, one gram of TNT releases one kilocalorie of energy, equal to 4,187 joules. Based on this, 100 lbs. would release 190 million joules. One joule is a remarkably small amount of energy; a fist blow is 25-100 joules, and an ordinary light bulb consumes 50-100 joules each second — and neither one's effects much resemble those of 100 lbs. of TNT!

Mr. Slobin's scaling also seems a little less than perfect. It's most convenient to work in the metric system; in that system, 1,000 grams equal 1 kilogram, 1,000 kilogram equal 1 tonne, and since a tonne is only 10% larger than an English ton, we can have the next two steps of 1,000 give us kilotons and megatons with little error. But multiplying by 1,000 in Mayfair's DCTM HEROES game is the same as adding 10 APs. So when Mr. Slobin puts a gram of TNT at 1 AP and a kilogram at 9 APs, he has them too close together — though his AP values for tons, kilotons, and megatons are properly spaced at 10-AP intervals.

A useful rule of thumb with explosives is that the range of serious injuries increases as per the cube root of the explosive charge. In other words, if you want to double the lethal radius, you have to subtract 3 APs of blast effect for each 1 AP of range (not 2.5 APs). One gram of TNT can cause serious injury at a one-meter range; one kilogram (1,000 times larger) at 10 meters; one ton at 100 meters; one kiloton at 1,000 meters; and one megaton at 10,000 meters. A typical hand grenade, with 125 grams of charge (not the roughly 2,000 grams Mr. Slobin's table suggests), will cause potentially lethal injury at 5 meters (roughly 16').

I suggest modifying Mr. Slobin's table as follows. Let zero APs of explosive force equal one gram of TNT (4,200 joules). Then 32 grams of TNT — roughly one ounce — would have 5 APs of explosive force. Since the cube root of 32 is 3.2, lethal effects would go out to 3.2 meters

(10½ feet) — close enough to zero APs of distance. This, then, would allow use of zero APs as the base range at which explosive effects were figured, as Mr. Slobin proposes. I point out that a 5-AP attack, with the average roll of 11, will cause 3 RAPs, which is just enough to take a normal human being to negative BODY and thus cause a risk of death. In other words, with this adjustment, all the scales are properly adjusted to each other and the effects will be of the right magnitude.

Mr. Slobin proposes the example of a 100-megaton explosion at one-mile range. One megaton would be 40 APs of explosive force, and multiplying by 100 would give an added 6 APs, totalling to 46. One mile is just barely over 9 APs of distance, but by DC HEROES game rules, it is treated as 10 APs. So the net effect of the explosion would be 46 - (3 X 10) = 16 APs. This will still kill any normal human being; the adjustment isn't substantial, but it produces slightly more accurate results and also is slightly neater as a computation.

I emphasize the word *slightly*; Mr. Slobin's approach is fundamentally sound, and I'm only tinkering with details. I do think, though, that such tinkering is not only gratifying for its own sake but also produces a more satisfactory game. [My suggestions are] an attempt to make a good thing better.

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Arcane Lore

Spells of the wild cult

As any player worth his weight in DMs' notebooks knows, the druid's entire purpose in life is to protect and serve nature as it is represented in the AD&D® game world. In return for these services, the druid is allowed a magical ability that draws its force from the very fabric of nature itself; nature provides his inspiration, purpose, and power. Through the use of nature, its natural elements and lifeforms, the druid is most certainly a force with which to be reckoned. This month's "Arcane Lore" adds considerably to that force. Note that mistletoe or a related holy plant must be used with each of these spells in addition to any named material components.

Animal/Bird Call (Conjuration/Summoning)

Created by: Craig Dudek

Level: 1 Components: V,S,M

Range: 0 CT: 1 round

Duration: *Special* ST: *None*

AE: 12" radius (+ 1"/level, bird call)

Explanation/Description: These two related spells are simplified versions of *animal summoning* (they are also known collectively as *animal magnetism* spells). Before casting, the druid must decide if the spell is an *animal call* or a *bird call*, as the verbal components are different. After casting, all animals (or birds) within the area of effect that are susceptible to the *animal friendship* spell will come to the druid. Once most of the animals or birds arrive, the spell duration begins for one round per level. During this time, all called animals/birds are *charmed*; they will stay and not harm the calling druid or other animals or birds called. To others, they act normally, fighting if attacked as if they were cornered; no other control is evident to onlookers without the use of further spells (e.g., *detect charm*). After the spell duration has expired, the called animals or birds leave the area and return to their normal territories, the *charm* lifted. The material components are two handfuls of animal or bird food appropriate to the type of spell being cast; the food is eaten by the animals called.

Coalstone (Alteration)

Created by: Christopher Krough

Level: 1 Components: V,S,M

Range: *Touch* CT: *One turn*

Duration: *Special* ST: *None*

AE: *One stone*

Explanation/Description: This spell creates a magical stone — diamond-hard but black — that burns as a glowing coal at the bearer's command. The material component of this spell consists of a burning piece of coal and a diamond of any size (the latter being consumed in the spell's casting). Even when cold, the stone has a dull, crimson glow, deep within it, and has a natural value equal to the original value of the diamond used, plus 20% (in addition to any magical value). The *coalstone* gives a dim radiance within a 5'-radius circle, and burns anyone (including the bearer) for 1 hp damage per round held if no protection against fire is used.

Whether used or not, the *coalstone* burns out in time, crumbling into a fine black dust. The length of time the *coalstone* burns depends on the size of the diamond component. In any case, the *coalstone* burns at a rate of 1 day/gp value of the original stone, with a maximum of 1 year/level of the caster.

When the magic-user casts this spell, he must grip both the burning coal and the diamond in his fist as if crushing them. He must be bare handed and will take 1 hp damage per round of casting time, unless protected against fire. *Coalstone* can be used to ignite any commonly flammable

material in one round (e.g., oil, tinder, candles, and torches). Such stones can also be dropped into a pot or cup for cooking purposes (the stone is not extinguished by immersion in liquid), or be carried in a fireproof container for warmth.

Druid'sight (Evocation)

Created by: David Ulrich

Level: 2 Components: V,S,M

Range: 15' CT: 3 rounds

Duration: 12 turns ST: *Special*

+ 1 turn/lvl.

AE: *One animal*

Explanation/Description: By means of this spell, the druid is able to see through the eyes of another animal and perceive things as that animal would. Animals who are on friendly terms with the druid, such as pets or summoned animals, require no saving throw. Normal animals receive a normal saving throw. Familiars and *polymorphed* or *shape changed* creatures are not subject to this spell. The subject animal can be commanded telepathically to scout, spy, or stand guard at distances up to 100 yards plus 10 yards per level of the caster. The material components for this spell are a bit of food desirable to the animal.

Hailstone (Evocation)

Created by: Andrew Kasarskis

Level: 2 Components: V,S

Range: 5" + 1"/lvl. CT: 4 segments
over 2nd level

Duration: *Instant* ST: *None*

AE: *See below*

Explanation/Description: When a druid casts this spell, one or more magical *hailstones* are formed to attack a particular target or targets. A caster may opt to produce five hailstones which each do 1 hp damage if they hit, or a single *hailstone* which hits automatically and causes 1d4 + 1 hp damage. The druid gains one additional automatic-hit *hailstone* for every two levels beyond 2nd level, each such stone doing 1 hp damage per level of the caster. These small ice chunks travel in a direct line from the caster's finger, firing at any number of objects in a round provided the caster has enough *hailstones*. The missiles fracture on impact with hard objects (shields, helmets, metallic armor, walls), causing half the initial damage of the *hailstone* (1 hp minimum damage) to all creatures within 3' of the point of impact. As the automatic-hit *hailstones* of high-level druids travel much faster than those of lesser druids, the range of the ice splinters produced by such *hailstones* is increased by 1' for every 1 hp additional damage caused. It should be remembered that *hailstones* will not fracture on soft surfaces (though they do damage to the target if the target is living) or tolerate extreme heat.

Sense Direction (Divination)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 1 Components: V,S,M

Range: 0 CT: 4 segments

Duration: *Instant* ST: *None*

AE: *The caster*

Explanation/Description: This spell instantly tells the druid which cardinal direction he faces. The spell will also tell the caster his depth underground or altitude aboveground. The material component is a small lodestone held in the hand.

Sharpleaf (Alteration)

Created by: David Ulrich

Level: 2 Components: V,S,M

Range: 5' CT: 5 segments

Duration: 1 turn/lvl. ST: *None*

AE: *Special*

Explanation/Description: When cast, this spell causes leaves of any type to become rigid and razor sharp, effectively becoming knives. These sharp leaves can be wielded or thrown, causing 1-3 hp damage if a successful "to hit" roll is made. The leaves can also be crushed and crumpled prior to the casting, then serving as caltrops doing 1-2 hp damage. Three leaves per level of the caster can be affected. If mistletoe is used as the object of the spell, 1 hp additional damage is added. The material components for this spell are the leaves used in the casting and sap from a hardwood tree sprinkled on them.

Shatter Stone and Metal (Alteration)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 5 Components: V,S,M

Range: 6" CT: 3 segments

Duration: *Perm.* ST: *Neg.*

AE: *Special*

Explanation/Description: This spell causes metal or stone objects, totaling no more than 5 lbs. weight per level of the druid, to explode into shards of sharp projectiles. Items to be affected get a saving throw vs. crushing blow at - 1 on the die roll for every two levels of the druid (see the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, page 80; magical items gain bonuses as noted therein). Creatures standing within 5' plus 1' per 5 lbs. weight of the shattered object are hit by the shards of the item. Shards do 1 hp damage per 5 lbs. weight of the object. Damage taken is reduced by an amount equal to the target's armor class subtracted from 10; thus, AC 5 reduces the damage taken by 5 hp. The material component is a miniature stone hammer.

Sink into Earth (Alteration)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 5 Components: V,S,M

Range: 0 CT: 1 segment

Duration: *Special* ST: *None*

AE: *Special*

Explanation/Description: The druid casting this spell may choose to sink himself or-one nonliving object into the earth for a distance of up to 5'-per level, measured from the point at which the object rests on the earth. The object or druid so sunk may come back to the surface at will or automatically so when one day per level of the druid has past. While sunk, the

druid or object is completely safe from burrowing creatures or movements in the earth. In addition, the druid enters a state of hibernation, requiring no food or water for the duration of the spell. If a cave or other opening lies beneath the object when this spell is cast, the object drops through the roof of the cave and lands on the floor, taking no damage, whereupon the spell continues where it left off. The material components are a miniature shovel and a bit of earth.

Splinter Wood (Alteration)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 3 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: 6" CT: 2 segments
Duration: *Perm.* ST: *Neg.*
AE: *Special*

Explanation/Description: A step beyond *warp wood*, this spell causes one wooden object to explode violently into thousands of splinters. The druid can affect up to one spear shaft worth of wood per level (one axe handle, seven arrow shafts, or 7 lbs. of wood are equivalent to one spear shaft). Targets to be affected gain a saving throw vs. crushing blow at - 1 for every two levels of the druid (see the *DMG*, page 80; magical items gain bonuses as noted therein). Any creature within 2' plus 1' per 20 lbs. of the splintered object will be struck by the splinters. The splinters cause 1 hp damage per 7 lbs. of the object, so a spear shaft would cause 1 hp damage to any creature holding it or within 2'. Damage caused by the splinters is reduced by a value equal to the armor class of the target subtracted from 10. Thus, a victim with AC - 1 would be protected from (10 - (-1) =) 11 hp damage. A victim's dexterity is reduced by 1 point for every 5 hp damage done by this spell until such time as all splinters are removed, which takes one round per 1 hp damage done. Splinters doing less than 5 hp damage need not be removed. Additionally, victims who are wearing no great helms or eye protection have a 5% chance per 1 hp damage done by the spell (calculated before armor-class reductions are made) of being blinded for 2-8 rounds.

Stonewood (Alteration)

Created by: Nathaniel Downes

Level: 5 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: *Touch* CT: 8 segments
Duration: *Perm.* ST: *None*
AE: *Special*

Explanation/Description: This spell bestows the strength of stone on a given volume of wood without otherwise altering its appearance or weight. A wooden door or wall, for example, would have the sturdiness (and saving throws) of stone. *Stonewood* affects a maximum of 100 square feet of wood per level of the caster, to a thickness of 1" (or any equivalent numerical combination). Only one object may be so treated per spell. The material

components of this incantation are a gemstone of at least 500 gp value and a small piece of hardwood.

Thunderclap (Evocation)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 3 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: 0 CT: 1 segment
Duration: *Instant.* ST: *Special*
AE: 3" radius around druid

Explanation/Description: To cast this spell, the druid takes an oak leaf in hand and slaps that hand against any hard object (including the other hand). The result is a sound very much like a thunderclap that can be heard for miles. Any creatures within 3" of the druid are stunned and deafened unless a successful saving throw vs. spells is made; in this case, the victim is only temporarily deafened for 1d10 rounds. If a target is stunned, it cannot initiate or continue any action for the remainder of the current round or the next round. Attacks made while deaf are at -2 to hit. Deaf creatures have a +2 on all 1d6 rolls to be surprised. The druid casting the spell is immune to the spells effects.

Tracking (Divination)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 2 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: 0 CT: 1 round
Duration: 1 turn ST: *None*
+ 1 turn/lvl.

AE: *The caster*

Explanation/Description: All living creatures or spirits leave psychic impressions wherever they go. This spell detects these impressions for the caster. The druid first takes an object closely related to the creature being tracked, like a favorite article of clothing, a lock of hair, some blood, etc., and receives the quarry's psychic pattern by casting the spell on the object. After this, any psychic trace of the same pattern glows in the vision of the caster. The fresher the "tracks," the brighter they glow. These impressions are visible up to two days old per level of the druid. This spell can detect the passage of creatures under the influence of a *pass without trace* spell; it can also detect the passage of another druid.

Warp Stone or Metal (Alteration)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 4 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: 1"/lvl. CT 4 segments
Duration: *Perm.* ST: *None*

AE: *Special*

Explanation/Description: Stone or metal objects up to 5 lbs. weight per level of the druid may be warped and made useless by this spell. Any number of objects may be warped as long as the total weight does not exceed 5 lbs. per level of the druid; these items must also fail a saving throw (see the *DMG*, page 80; magical items gain bonuses as noted therein). Creatures in

warped metallic armor take damage equal to the armor-class value subtracted from 10; thus, AC 2 does 8 hp damage if warped. Warped armor is useless. Locks may be warped open or permanently closed with this spell; this is also true of doors with metal hinges or bands. The material component is a small piece of iron ore that can be crumbled by hand.

Weather Dome (Abjuration)

Created by: Tom Hazel

Level: 4 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: 4 CT: 1 round
Duration: 1 turn/lvl. ST: *None*
AE: 30'-radius dome

Explanation/Description: This spell brings into being an invisible barrier against the elements over one person or object upon which it is cast. The dome moves with that person or object. Inside the dome, the temperature is comfortable and the ground is dry. The dome repels most effects of nature, such as rain, snow, hail, sleet, frost, high winds, desert heat, and extreme cold. These effects must be natural and not magical (i.e., a *cone of cold* still affects those inside). This spell does not keep out natural catastrophes such as rock slides or sea waves, but does protect against tornados, hurricanes, and typhoons. The material components are a tent-shaped leaf and a 1,000-gp or greater-value diamond, which are destroyed in the casting of the spell.

Wind and Rain Protection (Evocation)

Created by: Mike Rodgers

Level: 3 Components: *V,S,M*
Range: *Touch* CT: 6 segments
Duration: 1 rnd./lvl. ST: *None*
AE: *One creature*

Explanation/Description: By use of this spell, a druid can make one creature immune to wind or any form of precipitation. In essence, a shell is created around the creature that no form of precipitation (including rain, sleet, snow, fog, hail, meteors, or any other natural objects falling from the sky) can pass through. The shell also reduces the speed of any wind touching the protected creature by 10 MPH per level of the druid. Any form of magical wind or precipitation is unaffected by this spell, but spells that summon up a natural wind or storm are affected. Any air elementals attacking a protected creature receive a - 7 on all "to hit" rolls, and the protected creature gets + 5 on all saving throws vs. magical precipitation that does damage, as well as against air elementals. This spell in no way protects against lightning or temperature extremes. The material component is a fan-shaped leaf, which is crushed in the casting, and a 500-gp or greater-value diamond, which is destroyed in the casting. Ω



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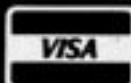
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CONVENTION CALENDAR

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 May issue is the last Monday of March. 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 canceled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to either Robin Jenkins 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.).

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DALCON '89, February 3-5

Dalhousie Simulations presents its third-annual gaming convention, featuring AD&D®, BATTLETECH®, KILLER®, and MONOPOLY® tournaments, as well as CALL OF CTHULHU®, WARHAMMER FANTASY BATTLE®, SQUAD LEADER®, ROBOTECH®, and historical miniatures game events. Also featured will be a casino-style raffle, a scavenger hunt, and a miniatures-painting competition. Convention hours are 7 P.M. to midnight on February 3; 10 A.M. to midnight on February 4; and 11:30 A.M. to 11:30 P.M. on February 5. The convention will be held in the McInnes Room, on the second floor of the Dalhousie Student Union Building. The entrance fee will be \$3 Canadian per day, or \$5 Canadian for the weekend. Write to: Dalsim, c/o Enquiry Desk, Dalhousie Student Union Building, University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, CANADA, B3H 4J2.

JACKSONVILLE SKIRMISHES 89 February 3-5

SKIRMISHES challenges you to conquer the river city at our second-annual JACKSONVILLE SKIRMISHES, which will be held at the Jacksonville Hotel, 565 South Main Street, Jacksonville, Fla. Events will include AD&D®, TRAVELLER®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, CAR WARS®, BATTLETECH®, INTERCEPTER®, and SEEKRIE® games, board gaming, a KILLER® tournament, dealers, an art show and auction, a miniatures-painting contest, demonstrations by the SCA, and other role-playing and gaming events. Reservations may be made through the hotel by calling: (904) 398-8800. Room rates are \$49 for single to quad occupancy. Registration for the weekend is \$18 at the door. Write to: SKIRMISHES, P.O. Box 2097, Winter Haven FL 33883; or call: (813) 293-7983 or (904) 246-1325.

REDCON 89, February 3-5

The Royal Military College of Canada will hold its annual International War Gaming Convention in Yeo Hall on the campus grounds in Kingston, Ontario. Special guest for this event is Larry Bond of the war-games club of USMA, West Point. Scheduled events include HARPOON®, BATTLETECH®, microarmor miniatures, Napoleonic, CENTURION®, and AD&D™ tournaments, plus plenty of open gaming. Retail vendors and game-company representatives will demonstrate and sell their wares. Registration is \$7 Canadian at the door for the entire conference. Send an SASE to: RMC Combat Simulations Group, c/o OCdt Derek Buxton 4 Sqn., Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario, CANADA, K7K 5L0; or call: (613) 541-6277, between 7 and 10 PM week nights.

WARCON '89, February 3-5

Texas's oldest gaming convention will be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Tex.

Featured events include an RPGA™ Network AD&D® and a CHAMPIONS® Open Team tournament, with a variety of board games, miniatures events, role-playing tournaments, a dealers' room, and 24-hour open gaming. Special guest is Larry Bond, U.S. Naval analyst, designer of GDW's HARPOON®, and coauthor of *Red Storm Rising*. Preregistration is \$8, or \$11 at the door. Write to: MSC NOVA, P.O. Box J-1, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77844; or call: (409) 845-1515.

YAM CON VII GAME MARATHON February 3-5

Held at the YAM Community Center in Oneonta, N.Y., this gaming convention will feature role-playing, story telling, miniatures judging, board gaming, and more. (Some games are variants.) Preregistration is desired but not required. Prices are \$5 for preregistration, \$7 at the door, or \$1 for each event. Write to: Joe O'Sullivan, Mail Officer, 5 Kearney Street, Oneonta NY 13820; or call: (607) 432-7333

THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN '89 February 4-5

The Southern Illinois University Strategic Games Society will host the second-annual Egyptian Campaign at the SIU Student Center on the campus of Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Ill. Featured events include RPGA™ Network tournaments, with AD&D®, BOOT HILL®, DIPLOMACY®, CIRCUS MAXIMUS®, RUNEQUEST®, CAR WARS®, GURPS®, BATTLETECH®, CHAMPIONS®, ROBOTECH®, ACE OF ACES®, WINGS®, and SUPREMACY® games. A science-fiction and fantasy miniatures-painting competition, Clay-O-Rama, an exhibitors' area, and more are also offered. Preregistration is \$8 for the weekend, or \$5 per day at the door. Send a business-sized SASE to: SIU Strategic Games Society, Office of Student Development, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale IL 62901-4425; or call: David T. Blustein at (618) 457-6416 or (618) 453-5302.

ORCCON 12, February 10-13

STRATEGICON will sponsor this convention, which is to be held at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. All types of family, strategic, and adventure board, role-playing, miniatures, and computer gaming will be offered at this convention, as well as flea markets, an exhibitors' room, auctions, seminars, demonstrations, and special guests. Write to: STRATEGICON, 5374 Village Road, Long Beach CA 90808; or call Diverse Talents at: (213) 420-3675

DUNDRACON XIII, February 17-20

DUNDRACON is back at the Oakland Airport Hyatt, 455 Hegenberger Road, Oakland, Calif. (Mention the convention name to get the special \$65 room rate for single through quad occupancy.) This year's convention offers numerous role-playing games, with over 120 events in a variety of fantasy, modern, and science-fiction systems. Also included are seminars, board

♦ indicates an Australian convention.

* indicates a Canadian convention.

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games, miniatures events, a huge dealers' room and a flea market, a figure-painting contest, SCA demonstrations and armor displays, and lots of open gaming space. Preregistration for the weekend is \$20 to February 1, or \$25 at the door. One-day registrations may be purchased at the door for \$10. Write to: DUNDRACON, 386 Alcatraz Avenue, Oakland CA 96418; or call Dorothy Heydt at: (415) 524-8321. *

FAL*CON '89, February 17-19

This fantasy and science-fiction convention will be held at the Howard Johnson's Convention Center in Meridian, Miss. Big-name guests and many panels are featured, as well as AD&D®, TALISMAN*, KINGS & THINGS*, COSMIC ENCOUNTER*, CAR WARS*, KING-MAKER*, and STAR FLEET BATTLES* tournaments. An art show, art auction, indoor pool party, masquerade and dance, SCA demonstrations, Civil War reenactment, hospitality suite, and dealers' room are also offered. Admission fees for the weekend are \$20; daily admission is \$10. Send an SASE to: FAL*CON '89, P.O. Box 492, Meridian MS 39302; or call: (601) 693-0384.

GENGHIS CON X, February 17-20

Attend a special birthday party with GENGHIS CON X as it celebrates its 10th anniversary at the Ramada Inn, Westminster, Colo. This event is sponsored by the Denver Gamers Association. Gaming of all kinds will be offered, along with an official RPGA™ Network AD&D® tournament and a games auction. Miniatures events will be staged by the Colorado Military Historians. Registration is \$14 for the weekend until January 31, or \$17 thereafter. Write to: Denver Gamers Association, P.O. Box 11369, Denver CO 80211; or call: (303) 433-3849.

OMACON 8.5 - GAME FEST, February 18

This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Central, 72nd and Grover in Omaha, Nebr., from 8 A.M. to midnight. Gaming events will be offered in fantasy, historical, and science-fiction genres (with prizes in several categories), with a dealers' room and OMACON 9 preregistration discounts. Admission is \$5. Write to: OMACON 8.5 - GAME FEST, c/o Star Realm, 7305 South 85th Street, Omaha NE 68128.

BASHCON '89, March 3-5

BASHCON '89 is the seventh gaming convention held by the University of Toledo's Benevolent Adventures Strategic Headquarters (UT-BASH). This event features an auction, a miniatures contest, movies, game exhibitors/dealers, an RPGA™ Network AD&D® tournament, and more than 130 role-playing, miniatures, and board-gaming events. The convention will be located in the Student Union, third floor, at the University of Toledo's Main Campus. The special guest of honor will be Poul Anderson. Send an SASE to: Student Activities Office, UT-BASH (BASHCON '89), 2801 West Bancroft Street, Toledo OH 43606-3390; or call: (419) 537-4654.

SIMCON XI: The New Beginning March 3-5

The convention will be held on the University of Rochester's River Campus in the Wilson Commons. Events will include role-playing tournaments, war gaming, miniatures, movies, demos, and a dealers' room for war-gaming, role-playing, miniatures, comics, and science-fiction fans. Registration fees are \$5 before February 1, and \$10 thereafter. Write to: SIMCON XI, P.O. Box 29142 River Station, Rochester NY 14627; or by calling: (716) 275-6186.

TOTAL CONFUSION, March 3-5

TOTAL CONFUSION will be held at the Sheraton Worcester Hotel and Convention Center. It will feature RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournaments, an RPGA Network GURPS* event, and other role-playing and board-gaming events. A costume competition and several seminars have been added to this year's schedule. Guests of honor include Verne Wetherholt, John Astell, and Brent Nosworthy. A dealers' room, a miniatures-painting contest, and benefit events are also planned. Preregistration is \$18 for all three days, or \$7 per day if payment is received by February 1; otherwise, costs are \$8 per day thereafter. Hotel convention rates are available. Write to: TOTAL CONFUSION, P.O. Box 306, Northbridge MA 01534-1302.

CALCON IV, March 10-12

This gaming convention will be held at the Sandman Inn in Calgary, Alberta. Events will feature a large variety of games, including an AD&D® tournament, miniatures contests, guest speakers, and more. Send an SASE to: CALCON IV P.O. Box 204, Station M, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA, T2P 2H6.

BATTLEDAY, March 11

Cosponsored by the Cincinnati Adventure Gamers and Wanna Play? The Game Store, this one-day affair will be held at Saints Peters and Paul Hall in Norwood (Cincinnati), Ohio. Events will include all-day gaming, a BATTLETECH* event, AD&D® games, miniatures events, and much more. Write to: Wanna Play? The Game Store, 1555 Cedar Avenue, Cincinnati OH 45224; or call: (513) 542-3449.

COAST CON XII, March 17-19

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the Gulf Coast Coliseum Convention Center in Biloxi, Miss., with accommodations at the Howard Johnson's (call (601) 388-6310 or (800) 654-2000 for reservations). Guest of honor is Joel Rosenberg, author of the Guardians of the Flame series. Other guests include: Steven Sechi, designer of Talislanta and *Atlantis*; P. D. Breeding-Black, artist for *Talislanta*; and John Levene, who plays Sgt. Benton on *Dr. Who*. Events include an RPGA™ Network tournament, video rooms, a meet-the-guests party, a costume contest, filk singing, a charity auction, an art exhibit and auction, and a large dealers' room. Registration is \$20. Write to: COAST CON, Inc., P.O. Box 1423, Biloxi MS 39533.

NEO-VENTION VIII, March 17-19

NEO-VENTION VIII will be held at the Gardner Student Center of the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. Featured events include RPGA™ Network and miniatures events, a games auction, and more. Write to: UGS, University of Akron Gardner Student Center, Office #6, Akron OH 44325. For a quick reply, send a 25-cent stamp or SASE.

OWLCON X, March 17-19

Rice University's WARP and RSFAFA will hold this gaming convention at Rice University. Registration will take place in Sewall Hall. Events include RUNEQUEST*, PARANOIA*, CAR WARS*, TRAVELLER*, DIPLOMACY*, ILLUMINATI*, CIVILIZATION*, BATTLETECH*, STAR FLEET BATTLES*, ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER*, and AD&D® tournaments, with open gaming and with prizes awarded in some events. Admission fees are \$10 for all three days before March 3, or \$12 at the door. One-day

passes are \$4 for Friday or Sunday, and \$5 for Saturday. To preregister, send a check for admission made payable to RSFAFA. Write to: OWLCON Preregistration, P.O. Box 1892, Houston TX 77251.

ABBYTHON 7, March 18-19

The Abbyville Community Center in Abbyville, Kans., becomes a Guild Hall once again as the Abbython Adventure Guild hosts its seventh-annual 24-hour role-playing games marathon. New members are welcome. Best players will be awarded prizes for their efforts. Admission is \$5 if paid before February 18, \$6 thereafter, and \$7 at the door. Send an SASE to: ABBYTHON, P.O. Box 96, Abbyville KS 67510.

GAMES 89, March 24-27

This major Australian games convention will offer role-playing, war, computer, and other game events on a massive scale. Nongaming events include: a formal dinner Saturday night (followed by other social events, such as cocktail parties, Easter egg hunts, etc.), show bags, films, lectures, and more. Convention fees are \$16 Australian for the weekend, or \$5 Australian per day. Write to: GAMES 89, P.O. Box 242, Lilydale, Victoria, 3140, AUSTRALIA; or call: (03) 726-7525.

I-CON VIII, March 31-April 2

Held at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Long Island, I-CON (Island Convention, not Iowa Convention) will have guests of honor including Frederik Pohl and E. Gary Gygax. Other guests include Joe Haldeman, Barry Longyear, Julius Schwartz, and the current *Dr. Who*, Sylvester McCoy. Gaming guests include Martin Wixted and Greg Costikyan. More guests are confirmed daily, and a *Star Trek* actor-guest is in the works. Featured events include speakers, movies, autograph sessions, and AD&D®, CHAMPIONS*, STAR WARS*, and DIPLOMACY* games. Game masters are welcome. Advance tickets are \$16 until March 17, or \$18 at the door. One-day passes are also available. Send an SASE to: I-CON VIII, P.O. Box 550, Stony Brook NY 11790.

MARCH FANTASY REVEL March 31-April 2

Come to the fourth-annual MARCH FANTASY REVEL at the Harborside Holiday Inn in Kenosha, Wis. Activities will include a war-gaming area, a silent used-game auction, a dealers' area, and role-playing events. Featured RPGA™ Network events include an AD&D® Grand Masters, AD&D® Masters, AD&D® Feature, TOP SECRET/S.I.™ Feature, and MARVEL SUPER HEROES® Feature tournaments. Other activities include workshops, a gamers' banquet (please make reservations early), and an RPGA™ Network members' meeting. Special guests include Harold Johnson, Jean Rabe, and Skip Williams. Fees are \$8 a day or \$16 for the weekend, if paid before February 1. Thereafter, fees increase to \$10 a day, or \$20 for the weekend. RPGA™ Network members receive a \$2 discount on registration. Write to: Keith Polster, 2432 Park Avenue, Apt. 6, West Bend WI 53095; or call: (414) 338-8498. Gamers may also contact: Janice Ours, P.O. Box 840, Silver Lake WI 53170; or call her at: (414) 889-8346.

STELLARCON XIV, March 31-April 2

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the Elliott University Center on the University of North Carolina at Greensboro campus. This year's convention features authors Jean Lorrah and Allen Wold,

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and game designer Steve Jackson. Guests will conduct panels, lectures, and readings from new or soon-to-be-released works. In addition, there will be an RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournament, a CAR WARS* event, other game tournaments, a trivia contest, a costume contest, and an art contest with entries from convention patrons (no charge), and a dealers' room; films will also be shown. Preregistration runs until March 1. Admission prices until then are \$12 for the weekend, \$8 for two days, or \$5 for one day. After March 1, admission prices at the door are \$15 for the weekend, \$10 for two days, and \$8 for one day. Write to: SF³, Box 4, EUC, UNC Greensboro, Greensboro NC 27412.

TECHNICON 6, March 31-April 2

Sponsored by the Virginia Tech Science-Fiction and Fantasy Club (VTSFFC), this sixth-annual science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held in the Donaldson Brown Center on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg, Va. Guest of honor is John M. Ford, author of two *Star Trek* books and the PARANOIA* game module *Yellow Clearance Black Box Blues* (winner of the 1984 World Fantasy Award and the Charles Roberts award for best role-playing module). Fan guest of honor is Chip Livingston. Convention activities include three 24-hour video rooms, three tracks of continuous gaming, a dealers' room, panels, the TECHNICON play, computer gaming, a masquerade, science-fiction *Jeopardy*, a dance, parties, and more. Preregistration is \$12 for students and \$15 for others, if paid in advance. Otherwise, fees are \$15 for students and \$18 for others paying at the door. Write to: TECHNICON, P.O. Box 256, Blacksburg VA 24063-0256.

CONNCON, April 1-2

Held at the Quality Inn in Danbury, Conn., this convention features role-playing, board-gaming, and miniatures events. Two RPGA™ Network tournaments will be held, one open to all players and one for members only. A benefit event will be held; proceeds will go to the American Heart Association. Preregistration is \$10 for the weekend, if paid in advance. Registration paid at the door is \$15. Write to: Hobby Center, 366 Main Street, Danbury CT 06810.

GAME FAIRE '89, April 7-9

The tenth-annual GAME FAIRE convention will be held at the Spokane Falls Community College in Spokane, Wash. Events will run from Friday night through Sunday afternoon, and include game tournaments, microarmor and historical miniatures, a video room, dealers' tables, role-playing games, board games, family games, a games auction, and a demonstration by the local SCA. Registration for GAME FAIR '89 is \$10 prepaid or \$12 at the door. One-day memberships are available at \$5 for Friday or Sunday, or \$6 for Saturday. All profits go to the Wishing Star Foundation, a charity dedicated to helping children. Write to: Merlyn's, W 201 Riverside, Spokane WA 99201; or call: (509) 624-0957.

ROUNDCON IV, April 7-9

The Round. Table Gaming Society will hold this gaming convention at the Russell House Student Union on the University of South Carolina campus. Events will include multiple-round AD&D® and CHAMPIONS* tournaments, single-event role-playing games of all types, miniatures events, a video room, a miniatures-painting contest, board games, and rooms for open gaming, with awards and door prizes. Preregistration is \$3 if postmarked before March 15; for confirmation of preregistration, please send an

SASE. Write to: ROUNDCON IV, USC Box 80018, Columbia SC 29225; or call (803) 254-2601 or (803) 772-4784.

SCRYCON '89, April 8

Able adventurers are needed to regain lost shards of the Famous Crystal Monolith at SCRYCON '89, the seventh-annual one-day tournament sponsored by the seekers of the Crystal Monolith Gaming Club. This year's convention will be held at the Red Hook Methodist Church in Red Hook, N.Y. (approximately 60 miles south of Albany on Route 9). The tournament will consist of AD&D® tournaments, alternate games, miniatures-painting contests, and our popular used-game flea market. Admission is \$5 for the whole day. Send an SASE to: SCRYCON '89, P.O. Box 896, Pleasant Valley NY 12569.

VALLEYCON II, April 8-9

Sponsored by the Northeast Wisconsin Game Players Association (GPA), this gaming convention will be held at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. All forms of gaming will be presented, including a 40' x 39' miniatures battle of the Assault on Hoth, strategic miniatures and board-game battles, and role-playing events ranging from the D&D® and AD&D® games to science-fiction games. Other events include a miniatures-painting contest, door prizes, and much more. All game masters must be preregistered by no later than January 31. Ticket prices for game masters are \$3 plus \$2 per event entered in the convention for one day, or \$4.50 plus \$2 per event entered in the convention for two days. To preregister, send your name, address, telephone number, game system you wish to run, and the admission and entry fee (check or money order only) to: VALLEYCON Headquarters, 1211 Morris Avenue, Green Bay WI 54304. Game-master packets and schedules may be picked up at the convention. Send an SASE to the address above, or call: Brian Severa at (414)494-7313.

BAMACON III, April 14-16

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the Econo-Lodge (formerly the Stagecoach Inn), located at 4810 Skyland Boulevard East in Tuscaloosa, Ala. Special guests include Hal Clement, Nancy Springer, Brad Strickland, Phil Foglio, Mary Hanson-Roberts, Allen Hammack, Dr. Maureen Kendrick, and many others. Featured events include author and artist panels, an art show and auction, a Friday night ice cream reception, an AD&D® game team tournament with \$210 in cash prizes, many other tournaments with prizes, filksinging, author readings, a Saturday night costume contest (with cash prizes), a masquerade ball (right after the contest), and an all-you-can-eat banquet (\$6, scheduled for Sunday at 10 A.M.). Membership is \$15 if paid before February 14, \$20 thereafter, and \$25 at the door. Dealers' tables are \$40 (includes one free membership). Hotel rates are \$29.38 for one to four people (mention BAMACON III). Write to: BAMACON III, University of Alabama, P.O. Box 6542, Tuscaloosa AL 35486; or call: (205) 758-4577 or (205) 758-2186.

DEF-CON I, April 15-16

Sponsored by THE CLUB, this gaming convention will be held at the Howard Johnson's in Portage, Ind. (intersection of Route 20 and U.S. 249). Special events include group vs. group role-playing, and RPGA™ Network and computer tournaments. Other events include AD&D®, MARVEL SUPER HEROES®, CHILL*, TWILIGHT : 2000*, and BOOT HILL® games. Fees are \$3

preregistered, or \$5 at the door. Prices are from free to \$3 per game. Write to: David Machin, 719 Jumper Road, Valparaiso IN 46383; or call: (219) 759-2530.

AMIGOCON 4, April 21-23

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Sunland Park in El Paso, Tex. Melinda Snodgrass is author guest of honor, and Frank Kelly Freas is artist guest of honor. Other guests include Walter Jon Williams, Rick and Pati Cook, Jennifer Robertson, Mel White, and George Alec Effinger. Advance membership fees are \$12. Registrations purchased at the door are \$15 for all three days, or \$7.50 for one day. Write to: AMIGOCON 4, P.O. Box 3177, El Paso TX 79923.

CHATTANOOGA COMICS, CARDS, & COLLECTIBLES SHOW, April 21-23

This semiannual collector's show will be held at the Eastgate Mall on Brainerd Road, just off I-75, in Chattanooga, Tenn. Show hours are 9 A.M. to 9 P.M. Friday and Saturday, and 11 A.M. to 6 P.M. Sunday. Guests will include representatives from Marvel Comics. Events will include an AD&D® game tournament (which begins Friday, with winners announced Sunday); an ongoing DRAGONLANCE® board game; video showings of *Star Trek Bloopers*, *The X-Men*, and more; an auction hosted by our own Freddy Krueger; and a costume contest Saturday night. Admission to this show is free! The entire mall is the show-room area; it will include comic books, baseball cards, *Star Trek* and Dr. Who memorabilia, Japanese animation, gaming, and other events. Dealer tables are \$100 each, or \$150 for two. Tables are 8' long. 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.

SALUTE '89, April 21-23

This gaming convention will be held at the Best Western King's Inn, 5411 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C., Canada. Featured events will include table-top miniatures, board gaming, and fantasy role-playing. In addition, 7th-edition 15mm Ancients, SQUAD LEADER*, and D&D® game tournaments will be held. A miniatures-painting contest will also be held, along with trade stands and a swap meet. Write to: Barry Kemp, Convention Director, SALUTE '89, 5850 Rumble Street, Burnaby, B.C., CANADA V5J 2C4; or call: (604) 526-4463 or (604) 437-3038.

COSCON 89, April 22

Sponsored again this year by the Circle of Swords, this one-day gaming convention will be held at the Butler County Community College in Butler, Penn. Scheduled events will include RPGA™ Network tournaments, board games, miniatures events, and other role-playing games. Also included is a dealers' room and a miniatures-painting contest. Registration is \$6 until March 31, and \$8 thereafter. Send an SASE to: COSCON, c/o Dave Schnur, 127 Crosslands Road, Butler PA 16001; or call: (412) 287-6797 or (412) 283-1159.

Sage Advice

Continued from page 10

portable medium before experience is awarded. What constitutes a transportable medium? Do magical items have to be retained and used before experience is awarded for them?

Gems and jewels don't have to be sold, but the experience value of these items is equal to their sale value in gold pieces. The *DMG* says treasure must be removed from the dungeon and converted into a transportable medium (i.e., carried on the character's person) or stored in a character's stronghold (residence). That is, treasure must be taken to a safe place, appraised, and assigned to PCs before any experience is awarded for it. A transportable medium can be anything the PC finds convenient. Likewise, experience is awarded for items that are added to a character's hoard, use notwithstanding. No experience is awarded for an item sold for cash or traded for goods or services.

How many gold pieces can the various containers listed in the AD&D game rules hold?

The following unofficial capacities have been extrapolated from the *DMG* encumbrance list. They will give you something to work with for the time being:

Backpack: 400 gp
Belt pouch, large: 200 gp
Belt pouch, small: 100 gp
Boat: See the *Wilderness Survival Guide*, page 44
Box, large: 200 gp
Box, small: 50 gp
Chest, wooden: 15 gp per gp of encumbrance (see the *DMG*, page 225)
Chest, iron: 3 gp per gp of encumbrance (see the *DMG*, page 225)
Land vehicles: See the *WSG*, page 33
Sack, large: 400 gp
Sack, small: 100 gp
Saddlebag, large: 1,000 gp
Saddlebag, small: 250 gp
Ship: 900 gp/hull point (see the *DMG*, page 54)

What happens when a character is reduced to 1 hp?

Nothing. Characters in the D&D and AD&D games don't have to worry until they are reduced to zero hit points (or less in the AD&D game; see the *DMG*, page 82).

What does a one-way door look like when viewed from the wrong side?

This is up the DM. In many campaigns, the "wrong" side of a one-way door looks like a normal door. In other campaigns, they can't be detected at all. In still others, they can't be seen, but they can be located by touch or tapping.

I'M THE NO-SASE OGRE.



It's quite possible that your manuscripts and I have already met. If the editors receive a gaming article, but the author has not sent a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the manuscript to allow for a reply, the editors give the manuscript to me, and . . . well, let's not dwell on that.

Give the editors (and your manuscripts) a fair break. With each article you send us, enclose a SASE large enough to permit the easy return of the manuscript, should it require rewriting or be unsuitable for use. Canadians and residents of other countries should enclose international postal coupons, available at local post offices.

Don't let your article come my way. Be sure to use a SASE with all your submissions.

What exactly is a composite bow? Why should a character buy one? In the AD&D game, a long bow costs less and shoots farther than even a long composite bow.

A composite bow is made up of layers or wood, bone, and sinew (this is the "composite"). They are more difficult to make than a one-piece bow (often called a self bow), hence the greater cost. Composite bows offer two advantages over self bows: They are more powerful for their size; a long self bow is longer than a man is tall; a long composite bow has about the same range but is only about 4' long. Composite bows can be specially built to allow for strength bonuses. One local campaign figures the cost of such special bows as equal to the base cost for the bow plus an equal amount per bonus point of damage, so that a bow allowing +1 hp damage for a 16 or 17 strength is twice normal cost, a bow allowing +2 hp damage (18 strength) is triple the cost, etc.

What is the creature pictured on the cover of the *Manual of the Planes*?

The creature is an astral dreadnaught, as as-yet undescribed monster that inhabits the Astral plane. Its game statistics may appear in a future *DRAGON* Magazine.

What evil lurks in the ruins of Dragonspear Castle?



Find out in
Spawn of Dragonspear
by Steve Perrin



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DRAGONMIRTH

by Dwain Meyer

"I don't mind the hunting,
it's these darn decoys."



by Joseph T. Pillsbury

"...OKAY... WHICH ONE OF US TICKED
OFF THE D.M. THIS TIME?..."



by Walt Hackensmith



"Brother Dwain, I'd like you to meet the new fryer."

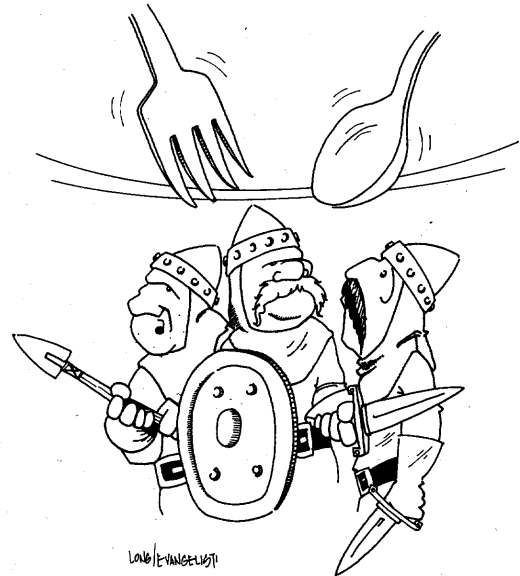
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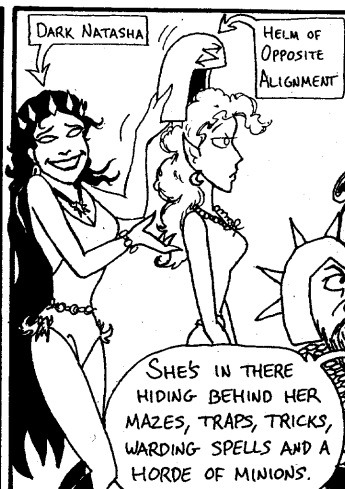


by Raymond Long and Jim Evangelisti



"We seem to be in some sort of arena."

YAMARA



by John Adams and Barbera Ward



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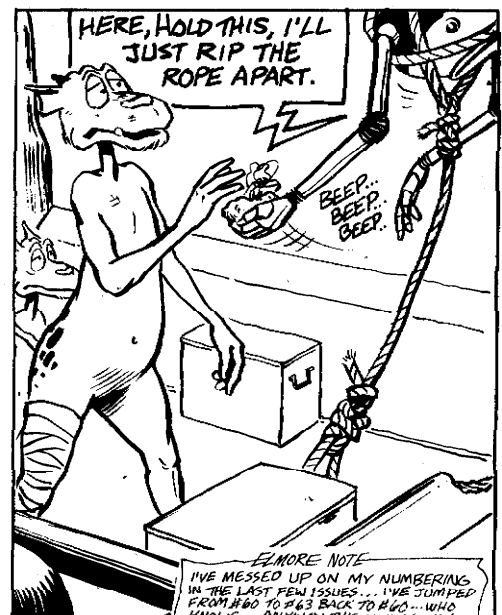
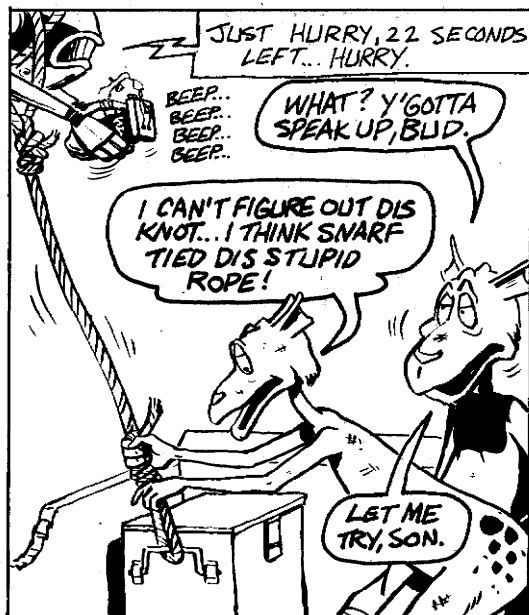
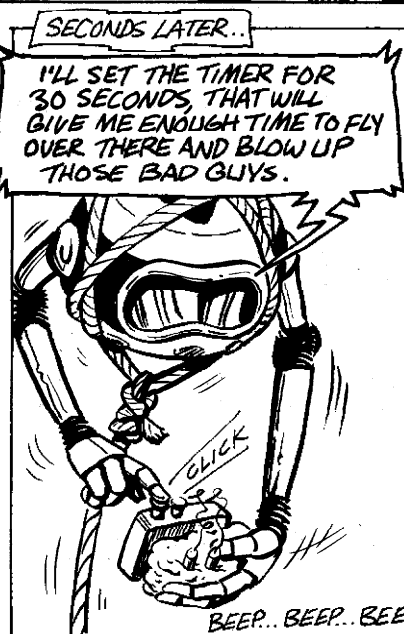
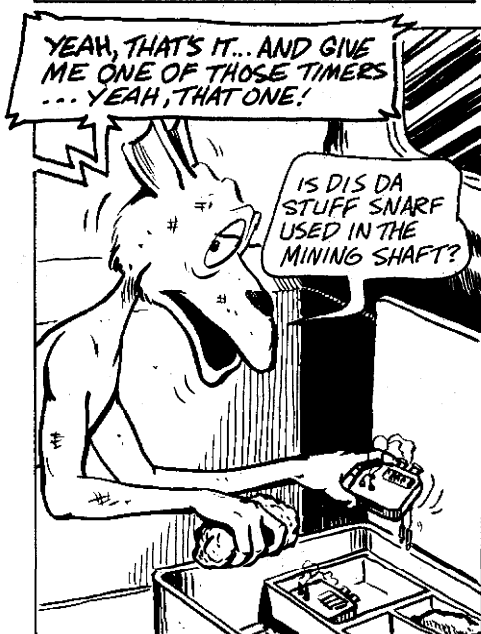
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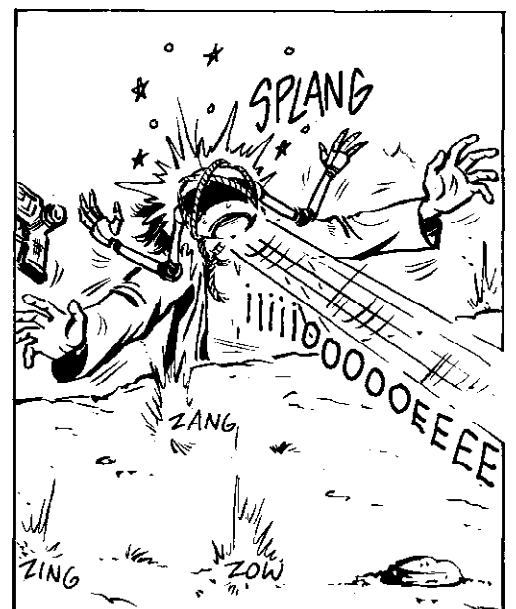
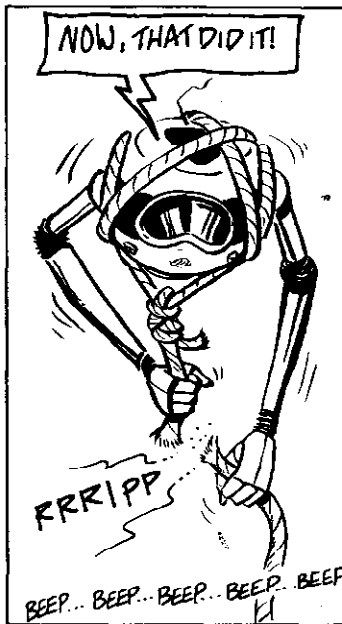
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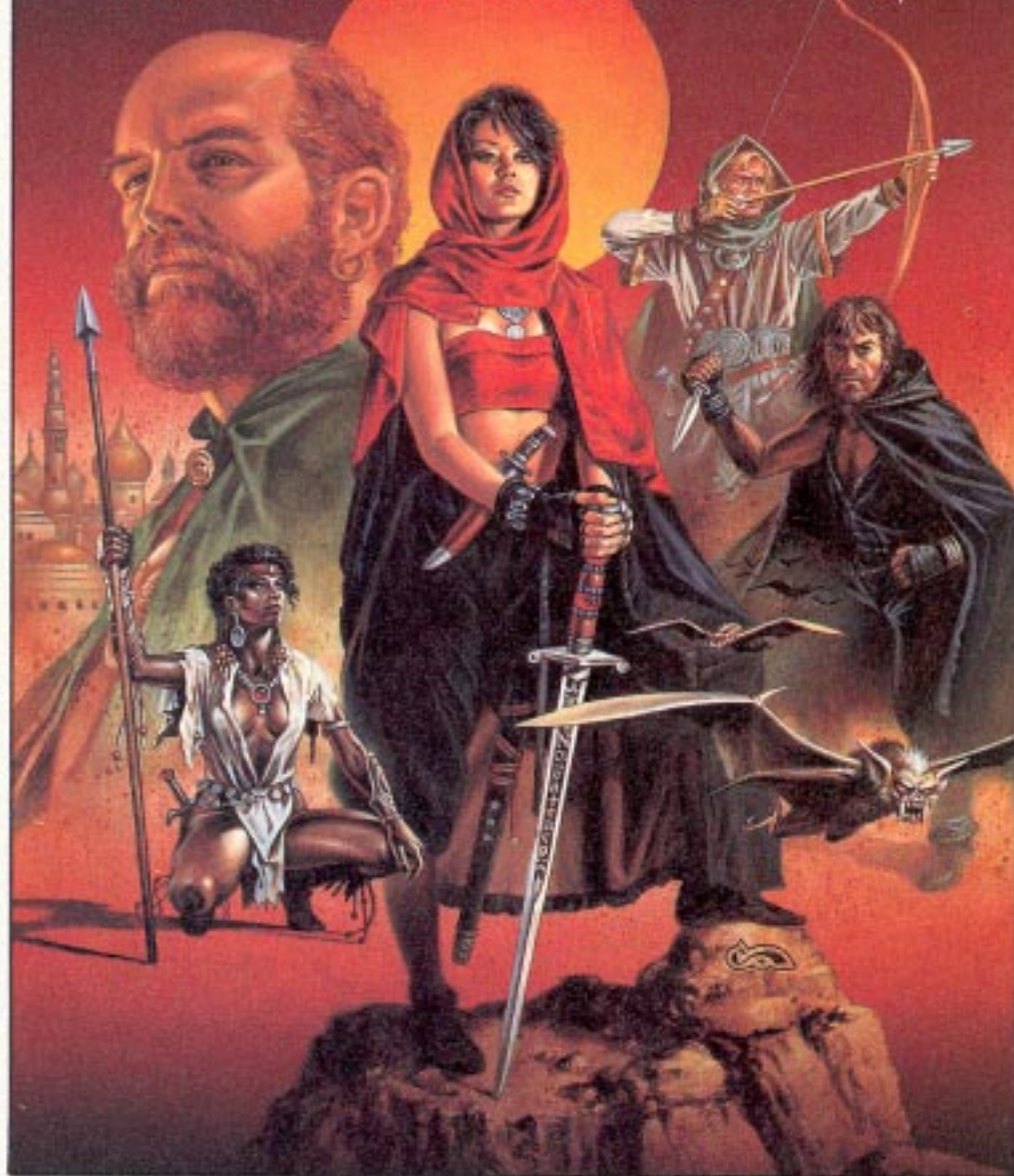
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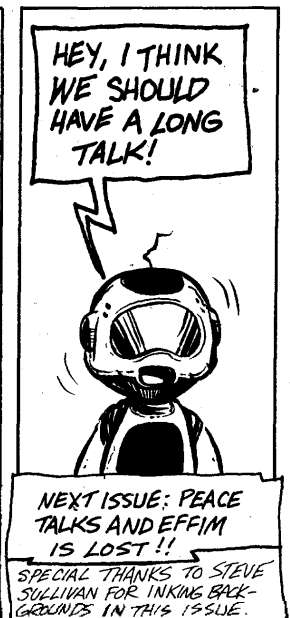
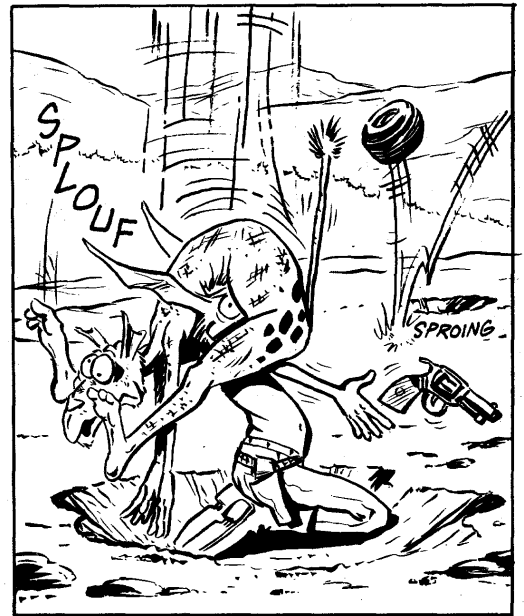
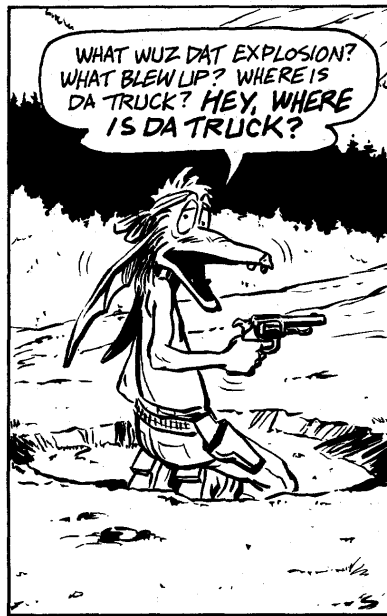
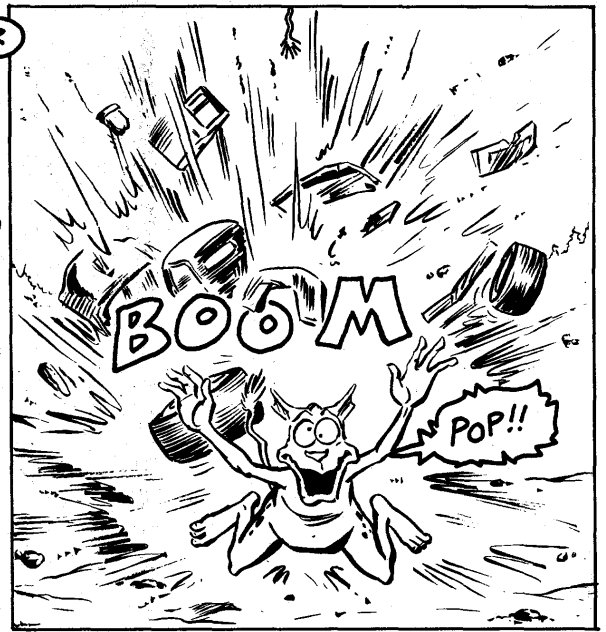
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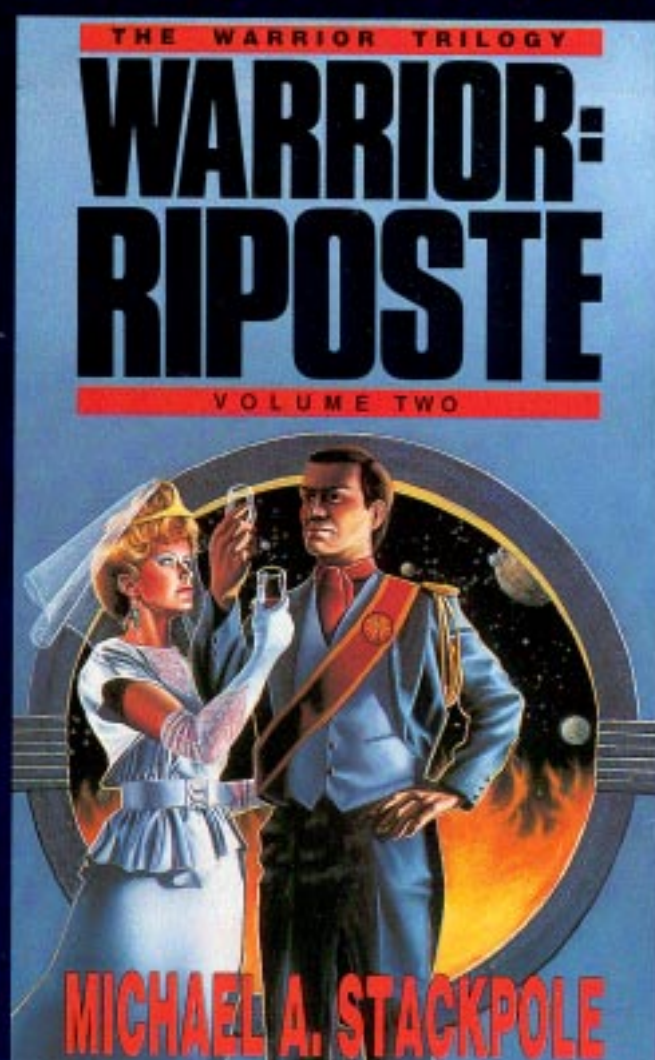
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