

The Australian Wizard

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Editorial

Welcome to the fourth issue of Multiverse. Although it has been over six months since our last issue, we are still here and publishing. The reasons for the missed deadlines are many but we are back on schedule now. Over the last six months, we here at Adventure Simulations have been flogging ourselves to get the new Super Squadron Supplement/Adventure book, 'The Tome', ready for printing and distribution. In addition to the work on The Tome, we put together and ran Australia's premiere role-playing convention, Phantastacon, over the Easter weekend. Although a few happenings marred the overall enjoyment of the convention for us, we feel that it was still a great overall success and plans are being drawn up at this moment for next year's convention. For a more detailed overview of the convention, you can read the Phantastacon report in this issue.

Another major event for Multiverse and us is that, as of this issue we gain Australia-wide news stand distribution through Gordon & Gotch. This will enable us to reach a greater percentage of the role-playing community who are not able to go to games shops to buy Multiverse. We hope that this breakthrough will also enable us to reach allot of the general public at large who have still not discovered the joys of role-playing. So to any who are reading Multiverse for the first time, and who have picked us up from the news stand, then welcome to the worlds of role-playing. It is our obsession and hopefully soon it will be yours too. For those who would like to obtain back issues of Multiverse, they are available from us. For more details you will find an ad for them somewhere in this issue.

Now on to serious business, although we like to imagine that we are the experts in the entire field, we aren't. We love to read other peoples ideas and comments on the things we present in Multiverse. We don't want to preach from lofty heights to the throng masses below, who buy our magazine. We want to encourage debate and discussion amongst the role-playing community so that not only will we be able to benefit from your views on the hobby, everyone in the field will gain from the sharing of thoughts and ideas that are just as valid as our own warped views! So write to us. We want your comments!

Putting together a magazine as large as ours, we need articles and artwork. Lots of them, not just from our own circles, but from the entire gamut of the Australian role-playing fraternity. If you have anything that you consider to be worthy of sharing to your fellow enthusiasts around Australia and the world at large, (we are distributed widely in the US and it is about time that we showed the motherland of role-playing that we in Australia are not just cyphers living off anything that they publish), then write it up and send it in to us. If we consider it to be good enough (even if we don't neccessarily agree with it) we will publish it so that your ideas, will be able to be enjoyed (and criticised) along with all those that are being published in all the magazines around the world.

So in addition to writing your view on what we publish, put pen to paper and send us your interpretations of role-playing and anything that you have created that has increased your enjoyment of the hobby and that you feel would benefit those who enjoy the hobby as much as both we and you obviously do.

So, sit back in the safety of your own hard fought for castle, pull up the upholstered throne and delve, with us, into the Multiverse of role-playing.

Peter Hughes

News and Rumours

Over the last six months, the games industry has been stagnating. This has not just happened in Australia but has occurred all around the world. However the gaming industry is gearing up for Origins. Some of the games that have been released include the Pendragon role playing game by Chaosium, Star Fleet Battles volume 3. Victory Games have just released two adventures for James Bond and one Gamesmaster's supplement called Thrilling Cities. They have also just released two board games, one called Cold War and the other, Pax Britannica.

TSR has experienced some financial difficulties lately but they seem to have recovered, however quite a number of their games have had to be axed in order to effect this recovery. Here is a brief list of the casualties: Boot Hill, Gang Busters, Gamma World and Top Secret. All the modules and accessories that accompany these games have also been axed. Others include Dawn Patrol, Endless Quest books 1-14, Fantasy Forest Book 1-10, the Heartquest books. TSR have also deleted the following AD&D modules and items: A1-4, B1-5, C1-2, D1-3, G1-3, EX1-2, I1-5, L1-2, M1-2, N1-2, O1, Q1, S1-4, T1, U1-2, UK1, WG4, X1-4, the Dungeon Geomorphs, the Monster Treasure Assortment, the Rogues Gallery, AD&D Permanent Record Folders and last but not least the NPC Record Sheets. On the new releases side, TSR have released two more old SPI Games called Napoleon's Last Battles and Operation Cobra.

On the Australian design scene, the last six months have seen the release of Adventure Simulations' first Super Squadron Supplement/Adventure Book called the Tome. It is 56 pages and contains 10 adventures as well as 15 pages of rule variants and new powers and spells. Adventure Simulations is also planning to release its second Supplement/Adventure Book with new scenarios and a major power expansion on Special Vehicles. After their release of Carriers at War, SSG are working on their next computer game to be set in World War Two called Europe Ablaze. This is rumoured to be released at Origins and is currently being playtested. Australian Design Group are still working on their game about the Second World War in the Pacific. MUDDA is continuing to publish The Devil's Advocate, but has experienced some production delays which have now been overcome so that their latest issue (#20) has been released.

MUDDA wil also be running a 'Freeform' tournament on the weekend of the 14 July at Melbourne University, called "Nights of Camelot". It will run for the entire weekend and will incorporate a 'banquet' on the Saturday night as part of the tournament. Details can be obtained from Cathy Simpson at 11 Foxglove Court, Rosanna 3084, Ph.452-919 after hours. The next MUDDA tournament called "Watergate" will be run on June 15. For further details contact Rhys on 347 5757. The Victorian Council of ARPL is planning a large publicity campaign to promote role playing to the public at large, to be run over the Christmas holidays this year. The campaign will consist of a promotional package and demonstrations at libraries around the state, of role playing games in general. Further information can be obtained from Matthew Cohn c/- 1 Manor Street, Brighton 3186, Ph.592 5620. Games Systems has received approval to publish their two new Traveller supplement books and they will be available soon. Missing Tiger has released their new fantasy 'play by mail' game, called Demonsland. initial burst of enthusiasm from the organisers been cancelled because the pre-registrations did not live up to the organisers' expectations. The Tin Soldier convention in Sydney has , after much consideration, decided to go ahead with the convention but due to technical problems they have not been able to bring Mark Miller out for the convention as advertised. Cauldracon took place over the weekend of the 24-26 of May and attracted in the vicinity of 60 people. The organisers were pleased with the attendence and now plan to hold a convention every two years.

Kim Books, a Sydney publisher, is releasing a new magazine devoted to S.F. & Fantasy gaming and modelling, called "Pandora", and is to be distributed throughout Australia and New Zealand. A new magazine, called "Scale and Dice", was announced at the Canberra convention earlier this year. It has yet to appear on the market but it is reportedly aimed at the miniature and wargaming market.



CONVENTION LISTINGS

AUGUST 30 to SEPTEMBER 1. Arcanacon will be held at Melbourne State College. The major competition will be AD&D, and there will be two maxitournaments, Runequest and Call of Cthulhu. A variety of minor tournaments will be run and a banquet/masquerade will be held on the Saturday. Further information can be obtained from Kelly Grant, 10 Welham Rd. Mooroolbark, Ph. 725-0584.

The Convention listing is compiled from information privately obtained or provided by the organisers of the events/conventions. We would like to list all the conventions and such that are of interest to the roleplaying community so if organisers would like their convention or event listed in this column then please just supply us with information on your event in time for the issue that will appear before your event occurs so that we can spread the word to all. We love role playing here at Multiverse and want to promote it as much as possible to the public.

by Greg Ingram

The convention, Nercronomicon has, after the



A Runequest II Cult The Cult of Ragnaglar

The Cult of Ragnaglar and Elemental Demons first appeared in the Runequest tournament Kree Mountain, I would like to thank Mark Morrison and Leigh Southall for their criticisms and ideas.

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MYTHOS AND HISTORY BEFORE TIME

Ragnaglar was a son of Umath the Primal Air. At first, he was a god much akin to Umath's other sons: Orlanth, Humakt and Storm Bull. But all of the sons of Umath developed differently and Ragnaglar came to personify all that was held to be unacceptable in the Storm Gods. Like Orlanth and Storm Bull, Ragnaglar took to wife a goddess of the Earth. She was Thed, a goddess blessed with potent powers of Fertility. Together, Ragnaglar and Thed conceived the race of Broos. Ragnaglar also took a mistress; she was Mallia, a goddess of Darkness.

When his brothers began the God's War, Ragnaglar joined them seeking for himself a realm of power and influence. However, Ragnaglar abandoned all morality and honour so that he might fight and conquer without restraint. He joined with Thed and Mallia to weave the doom of the world, hoping thereby to rule over the Cosmos. Ragnaglar fought in the wars of Chaos and participated in the destruction of the Spike. With its destruction, he turned from the wars to old hatreds and mustered an army of Broos to fight Storm Bull in Prax. Storm Bull had gained the power of Death, and with it he slew Ragnaglar, his storm scouring Ragnaglar's remains and scattering them to the wind. However, the battlefield of Storm Bull's victory lost the essential balance of life and thus became the odious Dead Place.

Since Time

Ragnaglar has never accepted his defeat at the the hands of Storm Bull and continues to conspire within Time. His aim is to overthrow the Great Compromise and the power of the Lawful Gods. However, the small numbers of his worshippers prevent him from becoming a serious threat to order.

Life After Death

The cult guarantees an existence after death for the faithful worshipper, but not in the same form. Upon death, worshippers are cast into the lap of Chaos to be remade. They then join their god to await the Final Battle of Chaos, where Law will be utterly destroyed.

Funeral rites are simple. The body of the dead worshipper is rent into pieces and then buried in mud, returning it to the Chaos Ooze.

Runic Associations

Ragnaglar is associated with the Runes of Air, Chaos and Disorder.

NATURE OF THE CULT

Reason For Continued Existance

As father of the Broos, Ragnaglar is guaranteed an existance within Time. He is still worshipped by Broos, Ogres and other Chaos creatures as well as some humans who desire through hatred, greed and jealousy to dominate and destroy. As long as such motivations exist the Cult will attract adherents.

Socio-Political Position

The cult is tolerated only by its Associated cults, whose members acknowledge its leadership. It is a small cult, any strength it is able to muster is invariably wasted in attacks on other cults. In places where Chaos is deeply rooted, the cult has the important role of protecting against the depredations of Lawful cults.

Particular Likes And Dislikes

The cult hates all who would destroy Chaos, particularly other air worshippers. Storm Bull is especially hated because of his defeat of Ragnaglar. Cultists are reasonably friendly to their associated cults, but apart from this, they view all other creatures with varying degrees of hatred and contempt.

ORGANISATION

Intra-Temple Organisation

The leader of a Ragnaglar temple is called the Overlord. He is typically the worshipper who is most able to threaten and cajole the rest of the temple into following his lead. The temple itself is composed of all the worshippers of Ragnaglar sworn to a particular Priest. He may, but not necessarily, be the Overlord of the temple. There is usually only one Rune Lord in each temple.

Intra-Cult Organisation

Temples to Ragnaglar are typically independent of one another. On rare occasions however, two or more temples may unite for the execution of some common purpose. In such a case, the temple Overlord most able to bully and intimidate the other temple's Overlords and their followings, will lead all the worshippers present. In areas where the population of Chaos creatures is large enough to support more than one temple, this system will be used on an ongoing basis. It will, however, be inherently unstable as most worshippers of any status will be scheming to become Overlord of all the temples in the region.

Centre Of Power, Holy Places

The cult, due to its small size, has no known centres of power. It has two known Holy Places, the Dead Place and the Eternal Battle, both of which are in Prax.

Holy Days And High Holy Days

The cult's Holy Day is Windsday of Disorder Week. The High Holy Day for the cult is Wildday, Disorder Week in Dark Season, celebrating the destruction of the Spike.



Requirements To Join

Any creature expressing a desire to fight Law may join the cult. A fee of ten clacks, or its equivalent in kind, must be paid to the inducting Priest. A candidate must also have weapons with which to fight, and must disavow all connections with Lawful cults.

Requirements To Belong

Lay Members must perform the usual POW sacrifice on cult Holy Days, and tithe five clacks in money or in kind to the temple. Members must always be willing to fight law and must never express mercy or compassion. The laity must also attempt to spread disorder and pain when the opportunity presents itself.

Mundane Benefits

The temple will protect its Lay Members from the inroads of Law.

Skills

Lay Members may learn Head Butt, Shield Making, Shield Parry, Sword, Trap Set/Disarm, and Weapon Making at half cost.

Spells

Lay Members are prohibited from knowing the spells Befuddle, Glamour and Harmonise, as being unbecoming of their personal development. These spells will be forgotten if learnt prior to joining the cult. All other battle magics are learnt at the usual cost.

INITIATE MEMBERSHIP

Requirements For Initiation

Any Lay Member who has shown himself to be capable of fighting Law may be invited to become Initiated into the cult. The candidate must pay ten lunars in money or in kind to the Priest initiating him. He must have an attack of at least 50% in two weapons, and must pass a test conducted by the Priest. This may be abstracted by rolling (POW + CHA divided by 2) multiplied by 5 on d100. The candidate may add 1% to the chance of success for each battle in which he fought Law and did not flee. Initiates may only become members of Associate cults.

Requirements To Remain Initiated

Initiates must sacrifice two points of POW each Holy Day, and must tithe 10% of their income to the cult. They must be ready to fight Law at all times. Initiates must always take the opportunity to spread pain and suffering, and never refuse to fight Law. They must never show weakness and may only respect Rune Masters of the cult. They may not kill other cult members.

Mundane Benefits

Initiates receive free board from the cult, if available, and will have their wounds healed if possible.

Skills

Initiates receive training in skills as per the laity, but also learn to Brew Blade Venom and Brew Systemic Poison at half cost.

Spells

Initiates may learn Demoralise, Disruption, Fanaticism, Ironhand and Strength for half cost. They may also learn the special cult battle magic of Detect Law for 500 lunars. Initiates may sacrifice for oneuse Rune Magic from the cult.

Detect Law

Range: - 40 metres POW Used - 2 points Type - focused, instant

This spell gives the direction and distance from the caster of any Lawful being or spirit. It is stopped by more than three metres of solid rock or metal. It does not cause the Lawful beings or spirits to glow.

RUNE LORD MEMBERSHIP

General Statement

Rune Lords of Ragnaglar are known as Avatars of Chaos. They are the personification of their lord, revelling in violence, destruction and cruelty. Avatars also excel in hatred, greed and jealousy. They fear nothing, and desire everything.

Requirements for Acceptance

An applicant for Avatar must have been an Initiate of the cult for two years in which time he must have demonstrated a desire to conquer and destroy. He must have proven himself to be capable of destroying his god's enemies and a steadfast upholder of the cult's ideals. The candidate must have a POW of at least 15 and any three of the following skills at 90% or better: Listen, Shield Parry, Spot Hidden, Spot Trap, Tracking or Trap Set/Disarm. A candidate may substitute one of these skills with Brew Blade Venom at POT 18. An applicant must also have two weapons at 90% ability, and must pass an examination abstracted by (POW + CHA divided by 2) multiplied by 5 on d100.

Restrictions

Avatars of Chaos must always fight members of enemy cults and must never flee from a Storm Bull cultist. They must seek to eradicate all non-Chaotic cults. They may not kill a worshipper of Ragnaglar. They may only marry Thed cultists, but may take a Malliant for a concubine. They respect no-one except their god. They must never accept the result of any battle in which they were bested, Avatars must always lust for vengeance and the final conquest.

Benefits

A non-Broo, upon becoming an Avatar, will become a Broo. This process is irreversible and takes one year to complete. At the end of the year the Avatar will become a Broo, and will have a chaotic feature. Broos who become Avatars will simply acquire an additional Chaotic Feature after the passage of one year.

Avatars of Chaos also receive all the usual benefits of Rune Lord status. They may use iron, if they can obtain it, and gain an allied spirit.

RUNE PRIESTHOOD

General Statement

Rune Priests of Ragnaglar are known as Demon Masters. They do not engage in the ease of normal priestly duties since the cult demands that their priests be warriors in addition.

Requirements For Acceptance

Demon Master candidates must have a POW of at least 18 and know Fanaticism 3, plus either Stormtongue or SpiritSpeech at 80%. They must have been an Initiate for at least two years in which he has shown himself to be hateful and cruel in the extreme. A candidate must also pass an examination similar to that undergone by Avatar candidates.

Restrictions

Demon Masters must seek to spread the terror of Ragnaglar's name throughout the world. They are the instruments of their god's will, and as such the aims and motivations of Ragnaglar are more personal for them than for any other cult member. They may only marry Priests of Thed. Their Stealth and Manipulation skills are limited to DEX times 5%. They may not kill any worshipper of Ragnaglar unless the worshipper is a sacrifice to Ragnaglar. Demon Masters must sacrifice any Initiate or Avatar who has killed a member of the cult; sacrifices are frequently bound as ghosts.

Rune Spell Compatibility

Demon Masters have access to all one point Rune Spells except for Dismiss Elemental I and Matrix Creation. They may also sacrifice for Extension II.

One Point Cult Rune Spells

Berserker: Duration 15 min; Range 80m; Reusable; Non-Stackable.

This spell affects the subject in all ways as if a Fanaticism and Vigour have been cast upon him. If the attack percentage exceeds 100% as a result of this spell, the Berserker may divide attacks as a Rune Lord. When used against Initiate level or higher members of Ragnaglar's enemy cults (see below), the Berserker will have his attack chance doubled. Persons affected by this spell must roll their INT or less on d100 to stop fighting before the spell expires. If no foes are alive or visible, they will attack friends, mounts, trees and each other. Summon Small Air Demon: Duration Permanent; Range 20m; Non-Reusable; Non-Stackable

This spell summons a Small Air Demon, as described in the section on Elemental Demons.

Two Point Cult Rune Spells

Summon Medium Air Demon: Duration Permanent; Range 20m; Non-Reusable; Non-Stackable.

This spell summons a Medium Air Demon as described in the section on Elemental Demons.

SUBSERVIENT CULTS

Spirit of Reprisal: Madness

Madness will strike and possess anyone of Initiate level or above who goes against the aims and teachings of the cult. When the offender is vulnerable and defenseless (such as asleep) Madness will attack and possess him. The offender will become by degrees, driven by both paranoia and megalomania. He will wish to both slay and dominate all that he encounters, until eventually, he destroys himself.

Associated Cults

Cacodemon: Cacodemon grants his grandfather the Rune Spell Create Ghost.

Mallia: Despite Mallia's desertion from the conspiracy, Ragnaglar retains use of her Rune Spell Cause Brain Fever.

Thed: Thed was Ragnaglar's wife and remains loyal to him in Time; she grants him the use of the Rune Spell Fumble.



(For details of all the above Rune Spells, refer to Cults of Terror)

Cult Compatibility

Relations between Ragnaglar and other cults are generally of the same type. There are, however, exceptions and these are outlined below.

Ragnaglar is friendly towards Krarsht and Thanatar. He is neutral towards Bagog, Black Fang, Crimson Bat, Lanbril and Seven Mothers. He regards Argan Argar, Humakt, Kyger Litor, Orlanth, Storm Bull and Zorak Zoran as enemies. Ragnaglar is hostile towards all other cults.

Ragnaglar is treated as friendly by Bagog and Vivamort. He is treated neutrally by Aranea, Black Fang, Crimson Bat, Daka Fal, Krarsht, Lanbril, Seven Mothers and Thanatar. He is treated with hostility by Aldrya, Chalana Arroy, Flintnail, Foundchild, Frog Woman, Gorakiki, Sun Dragon, Yelorna and Zola Fel. Ragnaglar is treated as an enemy by all other cults.

ELEMENTAL DEMONS

Elemental Demons are malevolent elemental spirits which have been corrupted by Chaos. They appear on the physical plane as vaguely humanoid creatures, but their physical forms are always twisted by the demon's malevolence and association with Chaos. They are at once horrifying and nauseating. No two demons look exactly alike.

Priests of some Chaos cults may summon and command demons into service. Demon summoning requires sacrificing for the appropriate Rune Spell from a Chaos god. Elemental demons require a large quantity of the element from which the demon will take form, when they are summoned. All demon summoning spells are one use spells unavailable to any but Rune Priests. The spells are also nonstackable with an unlimited duration.

In order to command a demon into servitude, a priest must match the mean of his POW and CHA against the POW of the demon on the resistance table. If the demon was not actually summoned by the priest, he must also sacrifice to it one point of his characteristic POW. Failure to command a demon into servitude frees the demon to return to the spirit plane or rampage on the physical plane as it wills. Typically, a demon will attack the priest which attempted to command it. A demon may be summoned and not commanded into service allowing it to wreak havoc on the physical plane.

Demons in servitude of a priest must have POW sacrificed to it once per week if it is not to turn on its master. The amount required is one point of temporary POW for each week the demon has served its master. The POW may come from any stored POW the priest may have, but not from an allied or bound spirit. Only the priest which controls the demon may sacrifice POW to it. If the current POW of a demon ever reaches ten points higher than the characteristic POW of the controlling priest, the demon is freed from servitude. However while in physical form, a demon may not regenerate POW due to the exertion its spirit must make to maintain the form. A demon which is free may at any time withdraw back to the spirit plane but a demon in servitude may not. Any commands delivered to a demon must be in a language it understands. Demons typically comprehend their elemental language and SpiritSpeech at a level equal to their INT times five. Demons will register on a Detect Spirits spell but not on a Detect Life spell.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ELEMENTAL DEMONS

SIZ = STR INT = 3d6 DEX = 3d6+3 STR = see below Armour Points = current POW

All damage taken by a demon is subtracted from its current POW. Demons may make two claw attacks per round each with a base attack chance of 50%, a base strike rank of 4 and a base damage of 1d6+1. All bonuses are applicable.

DEMON SIZES

 SMALL:
 STR = 2d6 + 12 : POW = 1d6 + 6

 MEDIUM:
 STR = 2d6 + 18 : POW = 2d6 + 6

 LARGE:
 STR = 2d6 + 24 : POW = 3d6 + 6

In addition to normal damage inflicted, any creature struck by a demon suffers characteristic damage. It does this by matching its POW against the POW of its victim. Success results in the victim taking characteristic damage equal to the current POW of the demon. If unsuccessful, half damage, (fractions rounded up) is inflicted. Each point of Spirit Shield subtracts 10% from the demon's chance of success and subtracts one from the characteristic damage inflicted. Each point of Spirit Block subtracts 50% from the demon's chance of success. Any characteristic that is reduced to zero results in the death of the victim.

Elemental Demon Types			
Colouration	Attack Form	Characteristic Affected	
White/Grey	Freezing	Dexterity	
Black	Fear	Intelligence	
Brown/Green	Disintegration	Strength	
Yellow/Red	Incineration	Constitution	
Blue	Drowning	Constitution	
	Colouration White/Grey Black Brown/Green Yellow/Red	ColourationAttack FormWhite/GreyFreezingBlackFearBrown/GreenDisintegrationYellow/RedIncineration	

by Gary James

MODEL MASTER

MONSTER COMPETITION

Out there in Adventureland, there are many players who have infested their worlds with new creatures. Deadly, helpful, silly or just a damn nuisance, someone, somewhere will love your new creature. So don't be greedy, don't keep your creation to yourself! Let it out. Let your creatures go forth and multiply (or divide, as the case may be). Enter your creature in the Model Master Monster Competition. There are several prizes: the most ingenious, the most annoying creature, the silliest creature and of course a prize for The creature most likely to end up infesting the whole world. This prize is called The Creature most likely to succeed. You can design your creature for any system you choose.

To Enter, simply write out your creature's stats together with a brief description of appearance, habits, origins, abilities and if you wish a drawing of the little chap. Colour photographs or live specimens are not necessary. Be sure to include your name and address. Entries close 10pm, 31st December 1985. Prizes to be announced in January.

18 William st, Mt Waverley, 3149 Victoria By Appointment. (03) 277 2218 B.H.



Introduction

This module is for a party of six, third to fourth level characters. The party should consist of a paladin, a cleric, a magic-user, a monk, a thief and a ranger. Other characters can be substituted for these, i.e, fighters for the ranger or paladin, or a thief for the monk, but the alignment of the party should be good to neutral.

Background

Acre (pronounced Akree) is a large city in the "south" with a population of about 15,000 which was ruled by King Tyran. Acre prospered under his rule and became one of the trading capitals of the area. The city then came to the attention of an evil cleric, Dongelder, who decided to rule it. To this end she sent a large army to capture it. Her force was defeated by the army of Acre so she then decided to take control in a more subtle manner. This proved successful and she gained control of the city. A few of the nobles were quick to sense the change and packed up their treasures and headed north to Evanlore, a large city where they could raise an army and return to restore Acre to its former standing. Five of these nobles, a merchant and some of the King's guard escaped and managed to reach Maccsfield (a small town to the north which was not yet under the control of Dongelder). Here they decided to hir some extra guards for the journey through the wild to Evanlore.

Start

Characters who enter Maccsfield will see posted on most of the walls a sign requesting six people to act as personal bodyguards on a caravan heading north. Enquiries are to be made at the Merchants' Migraine Tavern.

When the characters reach the tavern the barman will tell them which room to go to. In the room Pulg, Aldon and Bwadres will be conducting the interviews. They will ask such questions as;

"What is your profession?"

"Do you have your own weapons?"

"Have you had experience as guards?"

"Can you ride a horse?" "Have you any money of which to speak?"

All three will silently agree that these six are ideal for their trip and so will hire them offering horses, food and 500 gp each upon completion of the journey.

The NPC's

ALDON STR: 14 INT: 15 WIS: 13 DEX: 12 CON: 12 CHA: 15 HP: 27 AC: 4 (Chainmail + shield) Age: 35 Class: 6th level fighter Alignment: LN

Weapons: Scimitar & Crossbow

Aldon is naturally quiet but not unlikeable, he is looked on as the leader of the party and the decision maker. It was mainly due to Aldon that they escaped Acre as he saw the change and made all the arrangements necessary to ensure safety.

Aldon is 5'11" tall, slim but confident fellow, mixing the ability of making the necessary decisions with a competent fighting ability. It takes a lot to get Aldon mad enough to fight, he usually shrugs things off philosophically. But should someone draw a weapon against him he will not hesitate to deal out death.

When the caravan moves, Aldon's wagon is the first with Aldon either riding on or next to it on his chestnut mare "Penelopy". The wagon contains: his bed, a mattress, table, 4 chairs. Near the front are two chests, one containing about 6,000gp, the other with the equivalent in silver. These are always locked and Aldon has the key on his person. Aldon is a close friend of Telvar's having known him for many years, he considers Elderon to be a likeable fool, Kreshmar to be basically a nice person, but unreliable. Pulg, he considers to be beneath him as he is only a merchant, but he does not show this. He considers Ahura to be young and frivolous, though he is always courteous to her. Bwadres is regarded as a fine soldier.

TELVAR STR: 12 INT: 14 WIS: 16 DEX: 11 CON: 14 CHA: 13 HP: 21 AC: 2 (Bracers of Defense AC 2, Chainmail) Age: 40 Class: 5th level cleric Alignment: NG Weapons: Flail 5 x 1st level, 5 x 2nd level, 1 x 3rd level - Telvar can have any spell from the normal clerical lists, though he will usually take mostly healing spells rather than offensive ones.

Telvar is extremely quiet, seldom talking and usually content to brood. He seldom contributes an opinion to any decision either saying nothing or something to the effect of "the gods will decide". He wears chainmail to disguise the fact that he wears magic bracers.

Telvar does not fear or respect anyone except for Aldon whose opinion he will listen to. He sometimes has private conversations with Aldon. What these are about no one else knows. Telvar is often the butt of some of Elderon's jokes though he takes no notice of them. He thinks Elderon is foolish but does not hate him.

Telvar is indifferent to Kreshmar, Bwadres and Ahura, accepting that he is stuck with them for the journey. He does, however, suspect Pulg of having evil motives and that he is not all he seems to be.

Telvar rides on his wagon as he does not have a horse to ride, however this is by choice and not because of lack of money. In his wagon is a chest with 5,000 gp and also a small sack containing 100 pp.

KRESHMAR

STR: 10 INT: 16 WIS: 8 DEX: 16 CON: 13 CHA: 17 HP: 13 AC: 8 Age: 30 Class: 5th level magic-user Alignment: CN Weapons: Dagger and Staff. Spells

4 x 1st level, 2 x 2nd level, 1 x 3rd level

1st level	2nd level
Affect Normal Fires	Audible Glamour
Comprehend Languages	Darkness
Detect Magic	Knock
Enlarge	Forget
Feather Fall	Levitate
Hold Portal	Mirror Image
Magic Missile	Ray of Enfeeblement
Shield	Rope Trick
Shocking Grasp	Strength
Ventriloguism	

Feign Death Fireball Hold Person Slow Fly Tongues

3rd level

Kreshmar is a bold man on the whole. He usually does things on the spur of the moment. He is HalfElven but resembles his Elven mother, thus he is only 5'4" tall, slim and extremely handsome. His sheer bold confidence and likeableness has meant that he has never encountered the half breed jokes commonly used against Half-Elves.

Kreshmar is highly intelligent but lacks wisdom. Underneath his charming exterior lies a personality which thinks itself to be superior to humans and other human kinds save elves. Here, he is resentful that he is not of full elven blood.

When Kreshmar was in Acre he gambled a lot and was in fact glad when it changed rulers as he was in debt. When he heard from Pulg that a caravan was leaving, he and Pulg hatched a plot. It was Kreshmar that arranged with the City Guards to let them out, though he did it under Aldon's directions.

Kreshmar is jealous of Aldon as he thinks he should be leading but does not let it show. He always jokes with Elderon and treats Pulg, Telvar and Bwadres with indifference. Ahura though, he tries to impress.

AHURA

STR: 12 INT: 13 WIS: 14 DEX: 15 CON: 15 CHA: 15 HP: 22 AC: 7 (Leather) Age 25 Class: 4th level thief Alignment: CN Weapons: Short Sword +1

Ahura is the only female in the caravan, she is 5'5" tall, has shoulder length red hair, and is slim and extremely pretty. She is intelligent and loves to tease the men in the caravan as she knows she is the only woman.

In Acre she was the daughter of a nobleman who was killed by the new ruler. When she was younger she was always seen in taverns where she learnt her thieving. The +1 short sword was obtained from a lieutenant in the guard just before the caravan left.

She has in her caravan one chest containing 10,000gp. When the caravan moves, she rides on her white pony called "Snow". Ahura treats all members of the caravan alike, teasing them about their manhood. Her only reason for going is to avenge her father's death. If the monk rolls under his charisma/4 on a d20, Ahura will fall in love with him. As the journey goes on the actions of the monk will affect his chances. This roll is to be made on the 8th day.

PULG

STR: 15 INT: 13 WIS: 12 DEX: 16 CON: 12 CHA: 11 HP: 12

AC: 3 (Chainmail) Age: 35

Class: 5th level thief/1st level fighter

Alignment: NE Weapons: Long Sword and Dagger

Pulg is a halfling some 3'8" in height. He is brash and whenever the opportunity arises he will insult one of the members of the caravan. Pulg is a rude and abrasive character and seems to resent everybody. He is rather overweigt and has an excessive appetite.

Under his brown robe Pulg wears an amulet which he never takes off. If Pulg is questioned about it he will simply state that it brings him luck. It is in fact an amulet which stops spells such as Know Alignment and Detect Evil. To all these types of spells, he appears neutral.

Pulg was a merchant in Acre but he is also a first level fighter and a 5th level thief. In his wagon are two chests, which only he knows are empty. (See The Plot) Pulg always rides on his wagon.



ELDERON STR: 16 INT: 14 WIS: 11 DEX: 15 CON: 14 CHA: 12 HP: 25 AC: 2 (Banded Mail + Shield)

Age: 80 Class: 4th level fighter Alignment: CN Weapons: Mace and Dagger

Elderon is a gnome some 3'6" in height. He is a typical gnome having a marvellous sense of humour. Elderon is the joker of the caravan. He often jokes with Ahura and loves baiting Pulg and Bwadres. Aldon he respects and Kreshmar he likes.

Elderon has two chests of treasure, one with 5,000gp in it, the other with 100pp and 4,000sp. He usually rides beside his wagon on a small chestnut called "Max".

BWADRES STR: 17 INT: 13 WIS: 14 DEX: 13 CON: 14 CHA: 14 HP: 17 AC: 3 (Banded Mail + Shield) Age: 45 Class: 3rd level fighter

Alignment: LN

Weapon: Long Sword

Bwadres is a burly man some 5'9" tall and he is 45 years old. His character is much like Aldon's. He is very loyal to Aldon and when he is not on guard he sleeps in Aldon's wagon.

Bwadres commanded a company in the king's guard. He noticed the change and was quick to say yes to Aldon's proposal. Bwadres brought some of the men from his company to guard the caravan. He considers the rest of the group merely as necessary people for Aldon's plan, so he will ignore them unless Aldon orders otherwise.

THE GUARDS

AC: 4 HP: 5 AL: CN Weapons and equipment: Chainmail and shield, horseman's mace, short sword, 3 days rations, tinder box, Oil (1 flask). The following guards start with the caravan: Seivan, Anra, Nonac, Stil, Wim, Gwathur, Agar, Rogair, Lankar, Gis, Zaloss and Blodor.

The guards ride wide of the caravan with three outriders, a rear guard and two within the caravan accompaning Bwadres. The outriders ride 2 miles ahead of the caravan and report back every two hours or as soon as something happens. The rear guard rides $\frac{1}{2}$ mile behind the caravan and reports in every hour. They have a loyalty rating of 80%.

The caravan also has three servants travelling with it, who cook the food, look after the horses and so on. They are Durph, Tom and Bob. They are AC 10, HP 2, 0 level fighters. They are not particularly loyal to the caravan, but in general do a good job. Tom and Bob are slow and naive farm boys, but Durph is a shady and sly looking fellow who is always trying to evade work.

The Plot

When Dongelder learned of the caravan's planned escape she ordered one of her minions to destroy the caravan. The person who she contacted was Pulg. To help him with his aims, Pulg enlisted the help of Kreshmar in carring out his plan. To destroy the caravan he hired a group of bandits. This group will attack the caravan when it is travelling north.

Caravan Night Formation





are about 30 feet apart. One player will be assigned as a bodyguard to each of the major NPC's as detailed below. Aldon rides next to the ranger and asks him some questions about himself. If the ranger answers truthfully Aldon will take a liking to him. Telvar rides on the wagon accompanied by the cleric, but does not promote conversation. He will answer questions with either a yes, no or some other curt reply. Kreshmar will sit on his wagon and talk to the magic-user. He will use this to try and gauge the magic-user's intelligence and abilities. Ahura rides next to the monk on "Snow", seeming to be interested in his schooling and early life. If the monk boasts, Ahura will not be impressed, the truth with a little modesty will impress her. Pulg will ask the thief a few questions about himself, but will soon begin to tell the character about himself and his success as a merchant and how much money he has made. Elderon will ask the paladin about his background. It won't take long before he goes into hysterics and asks if paladins are allowed to have nose bleeds. In the afternoon he goes forward with the paladin to have some fun with Pulg.

Elderon - 'Pulg, a surprise to find you by your wagon and not with Durph. You'll lose weight you know.' Then he will turn to the paladin, 'Did you know O Paladin that the medallion that Pulg is wearing repels women, never have I seen them run so."

The caravan will come to a halt with hills to the north. Having no cover the caravan makes camp as seen on diagram 2. Around the campfire that night, things are quiet but not unpleasant. Aldon says everything went well today and the formation should not change. He also describes a large river they have to cross tomorrow.

Ahura - (grinning at Pulg) 'Shall we go swimming Pulg'.

Elderon -'Oh no, Pulg will float across. I shall ride him as a raft, hey Pulg'.

Pulg reacts to this with obvious dislike for Elderon. They retire at about 10.00 pm with Blodor and Agar on the first watch. Stil and Nonac will take the second.

Day 2

The caravan sets out at 8.00am after a breakfast which not everybody attended. Aldon is up early with Bwadres (and one of the characters) instructing the guards as to what is to happen today. It is decided that the outriders will ride ahead to locate the river and will then report back.

The scene in the caravan is the same as the previous day. Moving through the hills is reasonably easy and the privat doesn't slow much. At this point the ranger will have a 5% chance of noticing that someone has passed here recently.

If he mentions this to Aldon that he found traces of others passing through recently, Aldon will call forward Kreshmar and Telvar to discuss it. Kreshmar will suggest calling back the outriders to a closer distance. Aldon will agree but the rest will not be able to think of anything.

The rest of the day is much like the day before when they have passed the hills. At 3 pm that afternoon, the river Xenobe



is reached. This is the border of Thrace and Awamir. At the river is a pull barge. This can only fit one wagon and its horses.

First of all, Kreshmar goes across via levitation to check the rope on the other side. He yells back that it is safe.

Elderon - 'Safe for Pulg?' Ahura - 'We'll send him without a wagon.' Elderon - 'Maybe my Paladin could carry him on his shoulders!' Elderon - 'Be careful you don't fall asleep Telvar.'

Aldon - 'Someone will take exception one day Elderon'

Aldon - Soliteone will take exception one day Elsoron. Ahura - 'I will protect my little companion O handsome Aldon.' Elderon - 'Thank you damsel.'

All three of them laugh and even Telvar grins.

The river is flowing at about 15 feet per second and is some 150 feet wide across. Everyone must pull to get the barge across. Aldon, the ranger and Rogair go across first. This takes about fifteen minutes. After that Telvar, the cleric, Lankar and Gis cross. Their horses are nervous but the crossing is uneventful. Kreshmar's wagon is brought across by the magic-user, Bwadres, Seivan, Anra and Nonac, who get across safely.

Next go Ahura, the monk, Stil and Wim. Almost immediately, the horses start playing up. One third of the way across two of the horses rear, one knocking Ahura on the chin. She falls uncon-scious and slides off the raft into the water. Should the monk (or someone else) dive in after her he must roll under his strength, constitution and dexterity each on 1d20 to reach her. If he fails, she will take another 5 hp's damage and the monk 3 hp's. Each round after this she takes another 5 hp's, until she is either dead or rescued.

If the monk (or someone else) reaches her, he must roll under his consitution and strength to keep both above water. Each time he fails, they both take 2 hp's damage.

On the bank Elderon will see what has happened and will immediately order the paladin to run ahead and throw a rope. When the paladin gets ahead of the two floating people both he and the monk must roll under their dexterity to get the rope secured. The paladin will not be able to drag them in by himself. Elderon and the guards will help. Even Pulg rides down though he is the last to arrive.

Telvar will fly across from the other side of the river and cast a cure light wounds on Ahura. This will bring her around and she will be most grateful to all.

The others all get safely across and the journey continues for one hour. Camp is then set up and the wagons are arranged as before. Ahura is not at the discussion around the camp fire.

Kreshmar - 'She was lucky you and Elderon were so quick minded.' Elderon - Twas my faithful paladin who rode like the wind. Ahura - 'You are all too modest, except for you Telvar," Telvar - 'Not modesty, common sense.

The following piece of dialogue will only take place if the ranger found the tracks.

Aldon - 'The guards found nothing more.'

Wim - 'No more signs.'

Pulg - 'The rear guard should be increased."

Telvar - 'Agreed'

Aldon - 'Yes, it must be increased to two.'

The conversation will then go back to the river.

Elderon - 'I hope there are no more rivers that we have to cross for a while Aldon.' Kreshmar - 'Don't you even want to have a swim?'

Pulg - 'That was our last major river for a while.' Aldon - 'He is right.'

Day 3

Day three starts out just the same as any other day with Aldon giving people their orders for the day. (Agar is sent to assist Gwathur in the rear guard. This is only done if the ranger noticed the tracks. Bwadres will join the forward guards for today's journey. Telvar who is up at the time protests about this but Bwadres cannot be dissuaded.

The day is overcast, but not threatening to rain. During the day there is plenty of conversation.

Ahura - 'My thanks to you O brave monk.'

Monk - 'Reply' Ahura - 'Ah but would you have done the same for a man.' 'Good morning Pulg. Is Ahura riding? Ah yes, I can see Elderon -

her now. Pulg - 'The lady has recovered remarkably thanks to Telvar's spell.'

Elderon - 'Greetings O vision of beauty,' Ahura - 'Good morning to you handsomest of all gnomes. My sincere

thanks to you and of course to you good paladin.' Kreshmar - 'Good morning Telvar. Where are you off to?'

Telvar - 'To see how Ahura is.'

Telvar - (to Ahura) 'Are you feeling well today.' Ahura - 'Quite, thank you Telvar. Your spell did wonders.'

Kreshmar - 'Where do you ride Ahura?'

Ahura - 'To speak with Aldon.

Kreshmar new uses his ventriloquism to imitate Elderon. "Ahura may

I speak to you?" She turns and gallops back only to find a joke has been played.

For the rest of the day the caravan continues on uneventfully and the conversation around the campfire is quite general. Most people retire early.

Day 4

The morning is like that of any other day as the caravan heads NE. At 2.00pm Rogair comes back to the caravan. This brings Telvar and Bwadres forward to Aldon as they wish to hear what transpires. Rogair reports:

'Aldon, 11 miles ahead to the north east lies a large lake, The track passes within 25 metres of its shores through some reeds. We have, that is Gis, Lankar and myself discovered some sort of animal tracks. Lankar and Gis continue to search ahead of the lake.

Aldon sends Rogair on ahead to join Gis and Lankar. They are to wait for the caravan just past the lake. Telvar suggests that the rear guard be called up, to which they all agree. Bwadres departs to call in the rear guard and the others disperse to inform the other members of the caravanwhat is happening.

As Rogair predicted in 11 hours the caravan comes to the edge of a large lake which is surrounded by thick reeds. The country is now quite swampy. The caravan track seems to be built on some natural bridge of rock through it.

For $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles the caravan moves through the reeds then from out of nowhere the caravan is attacked by a group of giant frogs.

The frogs are AC 7, HD 2, HP 12, Attacks 1, Damage 1-6. There are ten of them in the group.

Round 1

The party is suprised for the first round. A giant frog attacks Durph's wagon. It hits the horse with its tongue causing the horses to rear. A frog jumps in front of Max causing the horse to rear and Elderon falls to the ground. The paladin's horse is startled but if the paladin rolls under his strength he manages to stay on his horse. Pulg sits on his wagon and he keeps his horses under control as a frog lands to his left. Two frogs jump to either side of Ahura's wagon but Ahura manages to keep the horses under control. Two frogs jump to the right of Kreshmar. One lashes with his tongue hitting Wim and dragging him off his horse. Two frogs jump either side of Telvar's wagon causing the horses to panic and bringing the wagon to a halt.

Round 2

Durph gets the horses under control and both Gwathur and Agar attack the frog. Using their maces they hit the frog and although it fights back the guards have the upper hand and kill it. Elderon has no time to recover before the frog has him in its clutches. He cries for help and struggles grimly. The Paladin should attack this one.

The frog attacking Pulg's wagon is attacked by Stil and the thief (if he wishes). The monk faces a frog and must roll initiative. Either way when their attacks are finished Nonac back attacks this frog but misses. Ahura rides forward and slashes down deeply wounding the other frog. Kreshmar yells a warning and fireballs the two remaining frogs, killing one of them and severely wounding the other. The magic-user could kill the other one with a magic missile otherwise it will be killed by Wim. Telvar attempts to calm the horses as Seivan, Zaloss and the Cleric attack. Seivan is hit by the tongue and dragged off his horse. Zaloss hits the frog wounding it. If the cleric hits it and does at least 6 points damage he will kill it. Aldon shouts orders to the guards. The ranger may attack any frog that is near him.

Round 3

All frogs left alive fight to the best of their ability. Gwathur and Agar head to help Elderon and the paladin. Elderon takes 5hp damage from a claw and bite. Elderon hits the tongue doing damage and then the frog is also attacked by Gwathur.

Bwadres has surveyed the situation and given orders, he will then ride to aid Ahura and together they kill off the frog. Zaloss is joined by Aldon and the ranger (if he wishes). This will kill off this frog. Seivan is hit but the cleric could go to his aid. The Cleric will kill this frog if he hits.

After this round any frogs alive retreat, both Bwadres and Aldon will call out that no-one is to follow the frogs.

The wounded are patched up and the caravan quickly moves on out of the swamp to the forest just north of the track. The night is spent with the clerics curing wounds. Discussion centres on the effectiveness of the defence.

Day 5

Telvar and the cleric are up most of the night with the paladin (if they desire) curing the wounded. The caravan starts its journey late the next day at about 9.00am, on a cheerful note after the victory.

Aldon - 'We did well, Bwadres.' Bwadres - 'We did, though it was mainly due to Kreshmar's fireball, which gave them one hell of a hotfoot.'Do you consider killing defenceless frogs good, O Paladin.'



He waits for the Paladin's reply and then says, 'I was only jesting. Come let us get a drink."

At the wagon, they meet Pulg and Telvar.

Elderon - 'Greetings silent one. Pulg it is no surprise to find you here.

Pulg - 'Elderon, it seems your mouth is as big as those frogs.'

Elderon - 'And even with that advantage, I cannot eat as much or as fast as you.' Pulg - 'You are a fool, gnome.'

Pulg rides off as Elderon laughs heartily.

Telvar - 'Elderon, I feel he is not someone to have as your enemy.'

Elderon - 'I have my tall and faithful paladin.' Telvar - 'Beware Elderon, your jests do not lay well on Pulg's

shoulders.'

Elderon - 'But they do not bother you, O solemn one.' Telvar - 'It is better to let people think you are a fool, than to open your mouth and remove all doubt."

Elderon laughs heartily as Telvar rides off.

Ahura - 'O brave monk, come, I wish to speak with Aldon.'

Kreshmar - 'Where do you go Ahura?' Ahura - 'To propose marriage to Aldon, as the monk cannot marry, it's against his beliefs.

Aldon - 'Good Afternoon Ahura, of what service may I be?'

Ahura - 'Aldon, I..., kan, well i don't know what it is, but something is, well not quite right.' Aldon - 'In what way Ahura?'

Ahura - 'In the caravan, things just don't seem right.'

Aldon - 'What are you trying to say?

Ahura - 'I don't know. Just that well, what I said, things don't seem right.'

Aldon - 'Female intuition is it?'

Ahura - 'Don't patronise me, Aldon.'

She then rides off.

At camp that night, conversations deverlop between people. Elderon, Ahura and Kreshmar speak of old Acre. Aldon, Telvar and Pulg talk of Evanlore. Bwadres speaks to the guards and then joins Aldon's conversation.

Dav 6

The day starts off as usual, except that the caravan starts heading directly north. The day is overcast and threatening to rain. At 10.30am, the sound of galloping horses can be heard. Seconds later, there is a shout of 'Guard yourselves, we are under attack!'

The wagons are quickly brought to a halt. Aldon leaves his wagon, mounts his horse and draws his crossbow. Telvar utters a prayer spell which will affect, the cleric, Seivan, Zaloss and the magic-user. Kreshmar prepares a fireball and readies his staff. Ahura draws her short sword and rides her horse to the rear of the wagon. Pulg draws his longsword and prepares to defend his wagon. Elderon looses his mace and steadies 'Max'. Bwadres yells to the guards to use their maces and he draws his longsword.

The attackers are 35 Bandits hired by Pulg and Kreshmar to destroy the caravan. They are AC 5 and have 5 HP, they are wearing Acrean Chainmail and wield broadswords. They are first level fighters.

Round 1

Aldon kills a bandit with a crossbow bolt through the throat. He then drops his crossbow and draws his scimitar. Anybody else who has missile weapons may now loose them in this round at medium rance.

Round 2

Rogair and Lankar engage a bandit each and a heated combat ensues. Aldon is attacked by two bandits, who bottle him up against the wagon. Zaloss is attacked by a bandit and takes a wound in the wagon, Zaloss is attacked by a bandit and takes a wound in the shoulder but fights on. Two bandits enter Aldon's wagon. Telvar runs to help Zaloss. A bandit attacks Wim but is dealt a crushing blow by him and dies. Kreshmar casts his fireball, but both the bandits veer off and take little damage. (This is deliberate as fireball's don't miss.) Ohe' attacks the magic-user whilst another attacks Kreshmar. Ahura meets a bandit at the rear of her wagon and she engages him in a heated combat. A bandit attacks Stil, but Stil gets the upper hand and the bandit is dealt a hefty blow, severely injuring him. Pulg begins a duel with one of the bandits. Fideron is attacked by two bandits who force him back to his wagon. Elderon is attacked by two bandits who force him back to his wagon. Two other bandits then enter his wagon. Bwadres and Blodor ride to help the embattled magic-users.

Round 3

The bandits in the wagons take the chests and leave. Aldon takes a light wound but manages to kill his opponent. The bandit fighting Zaloss gains the initiative and kills him, but must now face Telvar who has just arrived to do battle with him. Wim rides to help Blodor who has just taken a deep wound. Bwadres and the magic-user are now attacked by another bandit. Ahjura continues to do battle with the bandit attacking her. Although deeply wounded, the bandit attacking Stil fights on. Elderon continues to fight, wounding on of his bandits, but the bandit hits Elderon's horse 'Max.'

Round 4

The bandits mount their horses carrying a chest between the two of them. Aldon continues to do battle with the bandit attacking him. Telvar is hit by a bandit, but it is only a light wound. Wim and Blodor are engaged in heavy fighting with two bandits. If Bwadres is free, he will go help Wim. Ahura kills the bandit she was fighting. Stil and the bandit he was attacking have fought to a standstill. Elderon kills both the bandits he is fighting but is unable to do anymore this round.

Round 5

A voice shouts 'Ride, soldiers of Acre' and all bandits break combat and ride east and northwest. Aldon manages to kill the bandit he was fighting, but his stops him from reaching the bandits carrying from his wagon. The bandit attacking Rogair successfully the chest breaks off and flees whilst Lankar kills the bandit he was attacking. Anra is killed by a bandit which breaks off and rides east. Bandits that are left alive from fighting the players ride east. In all there are the two bandits going east with Aldon's chest plus the remainder of the bandits the characters were fighting (there should be at least five). All the other bandits head north west including two with Elderon's chest.

Aldon quickly commands Bwadres to go north west with the remainder of his troops and the party to follow the group going east. He tells the party it is imperative that they retrieve the chest. The caravan will patch up the wounded and continue on. The party can meet up with it later.

The bandits have a 500 yard headstart and will reach the woods 300 yards ahead of the party. The ranger's abilities must be used to follow the bandits. The ranger has 95% chance of following the trail left by the bandits. When the characters emerge from the forest, they are about a mile behind the bandits. Across the clear terrain they will stedily gain and only be 500 yards behind the bandits when they enter the next wooded area. From here, they stay in hot pursuit until just before the Temple of the Flame.

The Temple of the Flame

The bandits should be just ahead of the party. In their mad flight, the group with the chest will be left behind and take a wrong turn. The ranger will notice that they have split up, with the main group heading to the left and a smaller, heavy laden group to the right.

The main group will continue on and run into a swamp, two of the bandits will be trapped in the swamp and the rest will escape. The two can be saved and questioned, if extreme presuure is applied, then they will give the following story:

'The caravan's departure was ratified by the City Guard, but the King ordered us to follow. We were to attack the caravan just inside the border and bring back the money for the state treasury. Anybody killed would be a bonus. We were to split up and meet back at the river crossing.

If the bandits are pressured a lot more, they will tell the real story about Pulg. They will also say that their group did not have the chest.

The second group managed to lose themselves and stumbled onto the Temple of the Flame. The Temple of the Flame is known as an old and forgotten evil religion of once immense power and riches.

When the party charges through the forest on the heels of

the bandits, they burst through a covering of bushes, to see a weird sight. In front of them at the base of a steep and muddy slope, can be seen a large and imposing building. Rectangular in shape, (about 50' wide x 30' high x 80' long), and built of some flame red marble, a feeling of heat seems to pervades the area. The front of the temple has columns of stone shaped as flames and set of steps leads up to an open double door. In front of the temple can be seen an ivy overgrown stone column. At the base of the slope can be seen, the twisted and broken bodies of three horses, which seemed to have careered down the slope. If the ground between the horses and the temple is examined traces of blood can be seen.

1) The lvy covered stone - constructed of black basalt, it has no distinguishing features, the skeleton warrior resides here as a guard for the Temple. It is buried deep beneath the earth and it will take it several hours for it to dig it's way out, so it can track down and destroy the transgressors.

2) The Temple Doors - cast in red bronze (10'wide x 15' high). they have upon them, the depiction of flames and the words (in some ancient language) "In Fire the world was created and so in Fire shall it be destroyed".

3) The Outer Temple - in this large 50' x 50' room, the ravages of time can be plainly seen, with the accumulated detritus of many years covering the floor and the cracking of the stone evident. At the far end of the temple can be seen a pit from which a sulphurous black/red flame arises 15' into the air. Behind the pit to either side are openings in the wall. Just inside the door, is one of the bandits who is seriously wounded. His body is covered in blistered scabs and third degree burns and one of his legs broken with a greenstick fracture, allowing the clean white bone to visibly protrudes from his calf. He writhes on the floor in agony, mindlessly babbling to himself, 'The heat, the damned heat'. It will be impossible to get anything coherent out of him. are openings in the wall. Just inside the door, is one of the bandits

4) The Inner Temple - through the opening can be seen a smaller room (30' x 50'). On the floor near on of the doors, lies the freshly burnt corpses of the other two bandits, the sickly sweet stench of burning flesh fills the air. Apart from these, against the opposite wall stands a large bronze brazier upon which a fire merrily plays, in the brazier can be seen Aldon's chest and a variety of other treasure. The flame is actually a Harginn, an Elemental Grue from the Elemental Plane of Fire, (see page 73, MM II) AC 3, HD 4+4, Hit Points 24, Attack: Breath for 5-8, +1 or better weapon to hit, immune to fire magic. It changes form into a horrific evil bronze statue. When the Harginn is killed, the flame in the temple goes out. If any of the treasure is taken the skeleton warrior will be activated. For the purposes of the skeleton warrior, Aldon's chest is now considered part of the Temple's treasure. The treasure consists of, in addition to Aldon's chest, 632 sp, 450 gp, 164 pp, a golden ruby necklace worth 1600 gp, a jade circlet worth 760 gp, a Chime of Opening and a Sword of Sharpness. The Hargiss will not leave the temple.

Day 7

During the night, Bwadres and his guards return, having killed some of the bandits and recovered Elderon's chest. His group interrogated one who said much the same as the others except that Interrogated one who said much the same as the others except that they found the caravan stronger than expected. The dead, Gis, Zaloss, Anra and Nonac are buried and the wounded brought back to full hit points. Sometime in the late afternoon, the party will catch up with the caravan, running into Gwathur, the rear scout. Immediately, the caravan halts and wounded party members are patched up by Telvar. Then they are asked their story.

Responses to the story:

The Entrance to the Temple: Elderon - 'What a chance for a Paladin to be good!' Ahura - 'And a Monk brave.'

If the party talks about the Chime of Opening: Kreshmar - Who now carries it? 'Character Name', you should bring it to me later and we shall discover its potential.

If the party talks about the sword: Aldon'. - 'A very powerful weapon, it must be used with great discretion.

Kreshmar - 'As with the Chime of Opening' Elderon - 'Now nothing will be able to daunt our brave bodyguards, not even the dead themselves.

The Temple of the Flame:

Telvar - 'The Flame Worshippers are only spoken of now by sages, I thought all trace of them was long gone.

Other questions are of course asked, according to what the players say and the personalities of the NPC's.

When the story has been told, the following will be said:

Aldon - 'It seems Bwadres, we chose our guards well.' Elderon - 'To my Paladin, I shall be eternally grateful.' Ahura - 'And I to my Monk.'

Telvar - 'Do you think that those you captured told the truth?' Possible response from players. Kreshmar - 'Both Bwadres and yourselves put pressure on the soldiers

or bandits and they told the same story. Aldon - 'No soldier would think of being captured.'

Pulg - 'Neither would a bandit!' Telvar - 'Still....'

They then call it a night.

Day 8

The day starts with the new order and at about mid-morning, they enter a thick patch of forest. No attacks occur on the caravan, though any member of the party straying from the caravan will have a random encounter. Mid-afternoon, they leave the forest and at night camp at the base of some hills. Some conversations that take place that night:

Elderon (to Kreshmar) - 'Your study, will it mean constant con-centration?' (about his spell work)

Kreshmar - 'Well, I hope there are no interuptions.' Ahura (to the monk) - 'Let us go see Aldon.'

Ahura - (To Aldon) 'Hail, O handsome one.'

Aldon - 'Can I be of service, Ahura.'

Ahura - 'Telvar seems quieter than usual, what is the matter?'

Aldon - 'Telvar is always quiet, he probably thinks of the death of his friends."

Ahura - 'I wish I know what went on in his head.'

Pulg - (To Telvar) 'Those soldiers, do you think they were telling the truth?"

Telvar - 'Hmm, maybe Pulg. I understand you were a merchant in the city. I suppose you and Kreshmar have long been supporters of the King.'

Pulg - 'Yes, that's right, why?' Telvar - 'Just wondering

Applies only if anything was taken from the Temple

That night at 2,00am, Wim and Agar stand guard. Suddenly a horrific scream rings out across the camp, descending into a strange gurgle. Agar calls out to awaken the camp. An investigation reveals Wim's body lying with his head nearly severed away. Close examination will show that some sort of sword was used. As well, if the ranger attempts to track before the others come up to the body and destroy any possible tracks, he or she will find no traces. Aldon, Bwadres and the Paladin will stand guard until morning, but nothing happens.

Day 9

At about 8.00am, Wim is buried with much grief. Telvar gives the service and is surprisingly loquacious and then walks away thoughtfully. The day starts with movement through hills which is slow and laborious. Elderon is moody and rides forward to talk with Ahura. They ride to the side in private.

Telvar leaves his wagon and rides to Kreshmar, they talk in their alignment tongue. Telvar appears to be serious, while Kreshmar laughs and brushes him off. If asked what it was about, Kreshmar laughs again and says 'Oh the old fool wanted to know something about that Temple you found. As if I'd know.' Telvar just says 'I'm worried

The real conversation went as follows:

Telvar - 'Interesting that those bandits weren't spotted by our rear guard.'

Kreshmar -'Lucky for us, we had our bodyguards and I must say the paladin came out of it well.'

Telvar - 'You were against us hiring extra guards, so I'd say you were doubly lucky. 'I wasn't the only one, so was Elderon. You are a

Kreshmar suspicious one." Telvar - 'We shall see my fireballing friend.'

Telvar then rides off and talks to Elderon.

Telvar - 'Elderon, who was against hiring more bodyguards?' Elderon - 'I was against it, as was Kreshmar. Though I only mentioned it to Aldon, no one else.'

Telvar - 'So you did speak against it.'

Elderon - 'Yes, but only to Aldon and only because Pulg said I should speak my mind.'

Later in the day, the caravan moves across a fast flowing stream. Kreshmar and Pulg have a quick conversation. The characters guarding these two will notice the conversation, but before they can move closer, it finishes. They will see that Pulg has a broad emile

That night guard duties are assigned as follows: a guard, a major NPC and a player character. The talk around the campfire is subdued.

That night when the Paladin, Elderon and Blodor are on guard, a cry comes from Blodor's direction. By the time the Paladin reaches the spot, Elderon is already there. He says he saw something move off in the night. Blodor lies on the ground with his head severed.

Day 10

The morning starts with another burial and Aldon makes a statement "I am sorry to see our company diminishing. Whatever it is that assails us, we shall stop it and I assure you that there will be no more loss of life. I must ask everyone to be on their guard."

Elderon is quiet but more relaxed than on Day 9. Telvar is brooding and spends nearly all the day in the wagon. After midday Kreshmar rides back to Pulg and they move to one side. They can be heard arguing by the player characters guarding them, though he/she will not be able to distinguish what is said. If he/she moves closer, they will hear Kreshmar say "Pulg, you're a fool." The two were in fact planning the murder of Telvar.

Aldon talks to the ranger about how he thinks that the bandits are attempting to whittle away their defences.

That night at the campfire, no-one is at ease. Telvar didn't road the cleric is told to go and check that he is alright. He heard Telvar talking to himself saying "Of course, if it were two. Yes that's it!" If the cleric talks to Telvar, he will tell the cleric to go away and that he is alright. Bwadres leaves the fire to post guards. Pulg whispers to Kreshmar and they go to Kreshmar's wagon. Elderon excuses himself and leaves. Aldon and Ahura get up and go to Aldon's caravan where they discuss the finances they will need to build a mercenary force. As Bwadres returns from setting the guards, the sound of arguing comes from Kreshmar's caravan. Anyone



moving closer will here:

Pulg - 'Calm down Kreshmar, I just want an explanation' Kreshmar - 'Explanation! You little weasel. I got you out of Acre. Pulg - 'It's just that you were a member of the King's House, so you may have gotten word to him' Kreshmar - 'You little idiot, I realised something had happened to the King, that's why I jumped to join the caravan. If I was in league, wouldn't I just have dobbed you in then and there.' Pulg - 'Still....' Kreshmar - 'I had nothing to do with those soldiers, it wasn't me

Kreshmar - 'I had nothing to do with those soldiers, it wasn't me who gave them word of where we were. By all the Gods, it's ridiculous, why couldn't they just follow us when Dongelder realised we left Acre, like Aldon and Bwadres think.'

Pulg - 'You may be right, I'm sorry that I accused you.' Kreshmar - 'So, you damn well should be!'

Pulg and Kreshmar return to the campfire just as a cry comes from Telvar's wagon. The voice is Elderon's and everyone heads towards it. By the time the people from the campfire get there, the following have already arrived at the caravan: Elderon, Ahura, Bwadres and two guards, Telvar lies dead on the floor in a pool of blood. A quick examination of the body reveals that the body is still warm (5 minutes) with a deep sword stab wound in the middle of the back.

Aldon yells at Bwadres, "Break out the guards damn it, I want whatever is doing this found, you lot (pointing at the players) do the same, find it and kill it."

What really happened and why.

Ever since the attack of the so-called soldiers, Telvar had thought something was wrong. Firstly, Kreshmar's Fireball seemed staged as the bandits seemed to swerve before it was cast, but if Kreshmar was a spy for the King, then why didn't he just turn them in? As well, it was Kreshmar who got them out of Acre and Kreshmar hadn't asked to join the caravan, he had been invited. had been and the state of the relation of the state of th Kreshmar had set up the raid in Acre as they were not able to stop them escaping. Thus Pulg could get the bandits to ride ahead and attack at the best spot, and it was Pulg who asked Kreshmar to join. Indeed, though Kreshmar made it easier to get out of Acre, they probably could have without him. Pulg and Kreshmar would also have tried to stop the extra guards joining as it would place their attack in jeopardy.

This all seemed to make sense to Telvar, but he was confused by the death of Wim and Blodor, as it did not seem to profit Pulg at all. Then on the night of Day 10 it occurred to him that the events might be independant. Telvar then set about trying to prove it.

Telvar had made a mistake though by letting Kreshmar know he was on to something. Kreshmar and Pulg then got together and thought of a way to kill him. They planned it as follows: as they were in the caravan arguing, Kreshmar casts a Ventriloquism spell and Pulg sneaks out and runs clockwise around the wagons to avoid the horses. He then backstabs Telvar and runs back. All the while, Kreshmar has been arguing with himself.

Response from NPC's to the murder

Aldon - 'He was a good man and a valued ally. I swear I'll get the Kreshmar - 'Whoever or whatever is doing this is both powerful and

stealthy. What worries me is how we are going to be able to fight it.

Ahura - 'He was always quiet but lately he seemed to have something on his mind. Now we'll never know what it was.'

Pulg -'The cleric was a valuable ally, without his magic we are vulnerable.'

Elderon - 'I wanted to ask him if he thought it was truly the Temple of the Flame Worshippers. I just wanted to talk to him about it. Then, he was dead. By all the Gods, I swear, I'll get who did this.

Elderon was in fact out on his own thinking. He thinks it may be the character with the Sword of Sharpness who is killing the guards, chopping off their heads, and after awhile he went to discuss it with Telvar as Elderon thought he might suspect the same. He will only tell this if hard pressed.

Bwadres - Says little but he is worried at how weak the caravan has become. If the guards are questioned, a discrepancy will appear as Bwadres didn't go straight to the guards. He was just checking the perimeter and will say so if questioned.

Day 11

The morning sees the burial of Telvar and the caravan sets out at 10.00am with Telvar's wagon being left behind. The cleric now rides in the centre with Bwadres.

The outriders return to say that a stream and some rough country is ahead. The stream is easily crossed but in the hills, Aldon's wagon breaks a wheel. A halt is called. It is about 3.00pm.

Work begins on the wagon almost immediately and it is found that the axle is also broken. A small tree is cut and work goes on into the night. Aldon orders everyone to bed except the ranger, the paladin, Elderon and Bwadres, he remains himself. They keep working and at about 9.00pm, a crack of thunder heralds an electrical storm. Lightning flashes across the sky and in one flash, the ranger will notice movement in the rocks. If he says anything, Aldon will order all the lights doused and all of them to take cover.

Elderon will let out a gasp as his infravision sees what is ahead. Out of the darkness steps a skeleton warrior. He hesitates in front of the group and Aldon charges forward calling for the others to attack. The skeleton warrior steps back to keep all of its foes in front of it and with a huge swing aims a cut at the nearest character. It will continue to fight until dead. If it is turned, it will return as soon as it is able. Once it is killed, Aldon calls a conference and suggests that this was the murderer of the guards

and Telvar. Has Map to Amulet of Susperia. Aldon - We have avenged our fallen comrades here, and now, our expedition may continue unimpeded.

Pulo - Maybe our luck will change here.

Ahura - What a relief it is, to know it is dead.

Elderon - Indeed

The wagon is fixed that night and a noticeable lightening of mood is apparent unless one of the players points out that Telvar's murder was completely different to the murder of the guards. This will also alert Kreshmar and Pulg that the players are still suspicious.

Day 12

From now on the caravan goes on as usual and it is up to the party to ask questions and get to the bottom of Telvar's death.

Late afternoon, Rogair reports a swamp to the right of the track about 1 mile away and a forest ahead of the caravan. On entering the forest, the caravan bunches up, loud animal noises are heard, but the caravan will get through with no problems. If the players have mentioned that the murders are different, then the camp will be very subdued as the three innocent members of the caravan don't know who to suspect, while Pulg and Kreshmar keep quiet to avoid suspicion.

As soon as Pulg and Kreshmar think that they have been As soon as Puig and Kreshmar think that they have been discovered, they will grab horses and attempt to escape, preferably with any treasure they can gather. Since the failure of the bandits to destroy the party, Puig and Kreshmar have been worried that they will be discovered as they are nowhere near powerful enough to defeat the whole party. They only murdered Telvar as they were sure that he had discovered them.

When escaping, the pair will fight as follows if needs be: Kreshmar will cast a slow spell on the largest group of people and run, if he gets far enough ahead he will cast a Rope Trick. In actual combat he will use Mirror Image, Magic Missile and Shocking Grasp. Pulg will attempt to hide in shadows and sneak away or if this is not possible, just run.

Day 13

The caravan continues North with morale staying low until the murderers are found (assuming that the players have mentioned that the skeleton mightn't have killed Telvar). The caravan moves through rolling hills that day. The attitude of the camp is the same as on the previous day.

Day 14

Again the caravan is very subdued and at 4.00pm, Rogair and Gis return and report the Ankor and Tazenda Rd. That night camp is made on the southern side of the road, some 50 yards away. If Kreshmar and Pulg are still free, they will make their escape tonight as the party has returned to civilised areas. They will take only the bare essentials now as they are starting to panic and don't wish to weigh themselves down. Kreshmar casts a Hold Person on Rogair who guards the horses, they then mount up and ride to Ankor; no pursuit is possible unless, they rule month of and the to have have have Kreshmar casts a Forget on Rogair, so they won't be missed until the following morning.

When the escape is discovered, Aldon will order a search of the wagons. They will discover that neither Pulg nor Kreshmar have any money. Aldon does not order a pursuit as they have a night's start and may have gone in any direction. Instead he is relieved that the murderers have left the caravan.

Day 15

The caravan sets out with a much more relaxed atmosphere and at about noon they reach the village of Ramonford. Here Aldon calls a halt ordering the guards and characters to do what they will, whilst he and the others discuss the future. The village is small and provides most of the fish for the area. Aside from the three fishmongers, there is a tavern, The Flying Fish, an armourer and a grocer.

The party will stay at the tavern until late at night. They will return and announce that they have abandoned their plans to build a mercenary force and will start anew when they reach Evanlore. The party can change the minds of the NPC's with some inspiring call to arms, but unless they do this, Aldon will dismiss the party from his service with many thanks for their sterling efforts. Depending on the interaction between the Monk and Ahura, she might go with the monk. Aldon, Bwadres and Elderon (possibly Ahura) will say farewell the following morning.

by Wim Vanderhill







Dungeons and Dragons Songbook

Singing in the Melee

(Sung in the tune of "Singing in the Rain")

I'm singing in melee Just singing in melee What a glorious feeling It's hack, slash and slay

Smash, maim and bite • I love a good fight I'm singing, just singing In melee.

Alas My Kobolds

(Sung to the tune of "Greensleaves")

Alas my Kobolds You do me wrong To slash my limbs so cruelly For I did not mean to tarry long But you crept up and you surprised me

Kobolds before my eyes Kobolds are my demise No-one to hear my cries Alas that I ever met Kobolds.



God Rest Ye Evil Succubus

(Sung to the tune of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen")

God rest ye evil Succubus May you your charms display My twelve-inch plated weapon I'll use on you today To save us all from going down Two levels in melee Oh come to my armoury and play Twelve inches heh! Oh come to my armoury and play.

Wouldn't it be Luverly

(Sung to the tune of "Wouldn't it be Luverly)

All I want is a room somewhere Lots of magic for me to wear And treasure everywhere Oh, wouldn't it be luverly?

All the monsters that I can slay Hack and slash all through the day 'Cause it's the only way Oh, wouldn't it be luverly?

All the luverly experience that we can gain Never again to get ripped in twain

All the levels that we can rise Blood and guts before our eyes See the DM as he cries Oh, wouldn't it be luverly?

Ten Mean Ogres

(Sung to the tune of "Ten Green Bottles")

Ten mean Ogres up against the wall Ten mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be nine mean Ogres up against the wall

Nine mean Ogres up against the wall Nine mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be eight mean Ogres up against the wall

Eight mean Ogres up against the wall Eight mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be seven mean Ogres up against the wall

Seven mean Ogres up against the wall Seven mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be six mean Ogres up against the wall

Six mean Ogres up against the wall Six mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be five mean Ogres up against the wall

Five mean Ogres up against the wall Five mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be four mean Ogres up against the wall

Four mean Ogres up against the wall Four mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be three mean Ogres up against the wall

Three mean Ogres up against the wall Three mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be two mean Ogres up against the wall

Two mean Ogres up against the wall Two mean Ogres up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be one mean Ogre up against the wall

One mean Ogre up against the wall One mean Ogre up against the wall And if one mean Ogre should be fireballed There'll be one less traveller standing in the hall

The Twelve Days in the Dungeon

(Sung to the tune of "The Twelve days of Christmas")

On the first day in the dungeon My DM sent to me. A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the second day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the third day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On my fourth day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and a Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the fifth day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the sixth day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Six Half-Ocre thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the seventh day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Seven Giant Rats, six Half-Orc thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the eight day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Eight Phase Spiders, seven Giant Rats, six Half-Orc thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, Two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the ninth day in the dungeon My DM sent to me Nine deadly Vampires, eight Phase Spiders, seven Giant Rats, six Half-Orc thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the tenth day in the dungeon My DM sent to me ten Golden Dragons, nine deadly Vampires, eight Phase Spiders, seven Giant Rats, Six Half-Orc thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobogoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the eleventh day in the dungeon My DM sent to me An eleventh level Wizard, Ten Golden Dragons, nine deadly Vampires, eight Phase Spiders, seven Giant Rats, six Half-Orc thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

On the twelfth day in the dungeon My DM said to me You've made second level, killing an eleventh level Wizard, Ten Golden Dragons, nine deadly Vampires, eight Phase Spiders, seven Giant Rats, six Half-Orc thieves, five Kobolds, four mean Orcs, three Hobgoblins, Two mighty Trolls and A Hobbit in a mallorn tree

Once a Jolly Balrog

(Sung to the tune of "Waltzing Matilda")

Once a jolly Balrog Wandered through a dungeon door Found thirty Goblins and chuckled with glee And he sang as he cut and hacked them Till their heads fell off "Who'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me? Chorus: Wand'ring the dungeon, wand'ring the dungeon Who'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me?" And he sang as he cut and hacked them Till their heads fell off "Who'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me?" Down to the dungeon came a youthful Paladin Spotted the Balrog and said, "Deary me" And he screamed as the Balrog tied him with His fiery whip "You'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me? Chorus: Wand'ring the dungeon, wand'ring the dungeon You'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me?" And he screamed as the Balrog tied him with His fiery whip "You'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me?" After the Paladin came a mighty Patriarch With him the Curates one, two, three. "Free that Paladin You've got with your whip" he said "Or you'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me. Chorus: Wand'ring the dungeon, wand'ring the dungeon Or you'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me." "Free that Paladin You've got with your whip" he said "Or you'll come a-wand'ring the dungeon with me." "NO!" roared the Balrog and ran towards the open door The Clerics dispelled him before he could flee And his ghost may be heard if you enter by that dungeon door "Who'll come a-haunting the dungeon with me? Chorus: Haunting the dungeon, haunting the dungeon Who'll come a-haunting the dungeon with me?" And his ghost may be heard if you enter by that

dungeon door "Who'll come a-haunting the dungeon with me?"

Day Trip Down the Dungeon

(Sung to the tune of "Day Trip to Bangor")

Didn't we have a miserable time When we went down the dungeon A horrible day, three got killed in melee We lost our hit points on wand'ring monsters Hour after hour, we sat in the tower Enslaved by an illusion And on the way back an assassin got Jack And the blood flowed on.

Ice-storms Keep Falling on My Head

(Sung to the tune of "Rain Drops Keep Falling on My Head")

Ice-storms keep falling on my head But that doesn't mean at all That I am nearly dead Just a little ill Oh, ice-storms keep falling on my head They keep falling

And the those Orcs they keep charging up the hill Just like the time before when all that blood was spilled Slash them till they're dead

Oh, the orcs they keep charging up the hill They keep charging.

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I'm a Paladin

(Sung to the tune of "The Lumberjack Song")

I'm a Paladin and I'm okay I sleep all night and I fight all day Chorus: He's a Paladin and he's okay

He sleeps all night and he fights all day I cut down the Trolls, I eat my lunch, I don't need the lavat'ry On Wednesdays I go hunting and have buttered Orcs for tea Chorus: He cuts down Trolls, he eats his lunch, he don't need the lavat'ry

On Wednesdays he goes hunting and has buttered Orcs for tea.



The Taming of the Ogre

(Sung in the tune of "Oh No John)

Oswald you're an ugly Ogre On your face big warts do grow Will you yield or will I slay you? Oswald answer yes or no.

Oh no priest, no priest, no priest, no.

Killing ogres is my duty But I find it dull This hurts me more than it hurts you Will you make me crush your skull?

Oh no priest, no priest, no priest, no.

Then I will not slay you this time But I cannot let you go Oswald I'll charm you with my staff Have you made your saving throw?

Oh no priest, no priest, no priest, no.

by Keith Wood

PHANTASTACON REPORT

Despite the radio announcement that a murder had taken place just down the road from the D&D convention, Phantastacon '85 was a success. Held for the second year at the Diplomat Motel in St Kilda, approximately 700 people attended over the four days, playing in three major tournaments and over a dozen minor tournaments.

The convention started on the Friday, with registrations in the morning and minor tournaments being run throughout the day. One of the best aspects of the convention was the variety of high quality minor tournaments available to players such as: Call of Cthulhu, Cthulhu Now!, Car Wars, DragonQuest, Minor RuneQuest, Super Squadron, Bunnies and Burrows, Minor Traveller, 'A Time to Kill' freeform, an Egyptian freeform and the AD&D Solo. These provided a vast range of roleplaying opportunities outside the major tournaments. In fact, quite a few people played only minor tournaments. One brave soul even attempted to play in all of them.

While all the minor tournaments were of high quality, a few stood out as excellent. These included Liam Routt's Call of Cthulhu module 'The Bride of Abhoth'; this involved four women of varying backgrounds being invited to visit an old friend who had played a major part in their past lives, but had since drifted away. Behind this seemingly harmless get together was an obscene plot of truly Lovecraftian subtlety. The scenario ran for two 2-hour sessions and climaxed in the women having to read out a Spell of Dismissal from an actual scroll in an darkened room by the light of five matches. Call of Cthulhu was also represented by the 'Cthulhu Now!' scenario by Kelly Grant.

The Solo AD&D was also highly successful, with over 80 people running through it. Run by Maxwell's Demons, 'Escape from Kuddesh' concerned the escape of a kobold thief and revolutionary from an evil city. Other succesful minor tournaments included the minor RuneQuest by Brad Ellis, which had an outstanding background and rivalled the Call of Cthulhu in its ability to invoke responses from its players.

In a slightly different vein were the two minor freeforms run at the convention. The first was run on Friday afternoon/night by Cathy Simpson and involved Machiavellian intrigue in the court of a 'Pharoah of Ancient Egypt'. The other was Alan Greenway's 'A Time to Kill'. Several sessions of this were run, and it was basically a murder mystery set at the country estate of Dr Thaddeus Finklebottom, an eccentric professor who had invited a group of strangers to a dinner party and reading of his latest work. Murder most foul was committed by someone, so it was up to the rest to discover him or her, before the murderer got the rest of them. Run in groups of ten or so, the resultant investigation was excellent from all reports.

The major tournaments started on the Saturday morning. The largest of the tournaments was the AD&D. The AD&D tournament was 'The Land that Time Forgot' and was designed by Andrew South and Joe Italiano. About 350 people were involved in the AD&D tournament which concerned the quest of a group of cavemen to cross their hostile world to reach the Cave of the Gods to save their tribe from the cannibal Bloodrinkers. In the first session, the cavemen had to survive many perilous encounters in their journey across their world, ranging from enraged dinosaurs, Bloodrinker war parties and natural hazards such



as ravines and waterfalls. However the wilderness contained friends as well, like the old seer and the Forest People.

The second session started with the party attempting to find their way through the Caves of the Gods, to find the home of their God. This involved tests by the gods to see whether they were worthy. These included a simple 'place the shapes in the correct holes' and it was interesting to see how modern day players could easily duplicate the problems that such a test would pose to a group of prehistoric cavemen. The third session involved the cavemen reaching the Tower of the Gods, only to find it invaded by demons and an evil goddess whom they must fight to rescue their god. In actual fact, a high level magic-user and her band of orcs had taken over the tower of the Guardian. The Guardian was a magic-user who was the master of the crater valley that the tribe lived in.

The tournament placed a heavy emphasis on role playing and the players were provided with detailed backgrounds to enable players to empathise with their character. It was pleasing to see that the roleplaying awards closely paralleled the overall tournament placings.

The RuneQuest tournament 'Somewhere in Sartar' had 60 entrants and was greatly enjoyed by all who played in it. It was designed by Mark Morrison and Penny Love and it was based on an idea from the Arcanacon II tournament 'Kree Mountain'. The players were a group of Lunar soldiers who were involved in the occupation of Sartar. The misadventures of this group ranged from the handling of insolent Sartarite farm boys to the escort of a valuable prisoner through rebel held territory. The tournament placed great store on roleplaying ability and presented the players with many difficult and thought provoking situations.

The third major tournament was the Traveller scenario 'Crystal City' organised by Steven Sharpley and the Monash University role playing group. It had about 50 entrants and was set in an independent artificial planetoid on a major jump route in the Rift. The players took the position of members of the great Houses of Crystal City, diplomats, traders and other persons of power, thus the scenario was concerned with a major power struggle between the players rather than the normal Traveller orientated adventures.

Apart from the competitions, several other activities were run over the course of the convention, these included the Fantasy Foot Rally, continuous videos in two rooms ('Bloodbath at the House of Death' proving to be the hit of the convention), a variety of computers and computer games, films each night, an auction of second hand games and the Convention Masquerade Dinner and Disco.

The great disappointment of the convention was the Dinner, with the management of the motel failing to provide enough food, nor the quality of food promised. This unfortunately took the edge off the whole night. The saving grace of the night was the excellent quality of the entrants in the masquerade. Several entries stood out in the Masquerade and as in previous years, the Keepers took out the prize with a Tolkien based group including Gandalf and two orcs which were absolutely brilliant. Other notable costumes were the Succubus, the Storm Trooper, the Cthulhu investigator in straightjacket accompanied by his doctor, and the NorthWest Adventurers who came as the crack suicide squad from 'Life of Brian' and promptly suicided all over the floor.

All in all, Phantastacon '85 was the best yet, and with imaginative tournaments, a wide range of activities and only a few administrative hiccups (we promise to speed up registration next year), it was a success from all aspects.

by Martin Dick

PHANTASTACON 85 RESULTS

Major AD&D

1st	Team 2 - Benji Beaver	12,055	pts
	Carolyn Steward	David Owen	÷.
	John Reid	Graeme Marchant	
	Kevin Dinn	David Oram	
	Keith Wood	Cathy Simpson	
2nd	Team 25 - Maxwell's Demo	ons 10,780	pts
3rd	Team 1 - Albert Beaver	10,080	pts
4th	Team 11 - Crypt Creepers	9,920	pts
	Major AD&D Roleplay	ying Awards	
let	Team 2 - Benii Beaver	2 060	nte

lst	Team 2 - Benji Beaver	2,060 pts
2nd	Team 25 - Maxwell's Demons	2,040 pts
		1,800 pts

Major Traveller

1st Team	101st PD MCCP (H	ouse Pastrami)
	Garth Nix	Paul Buckham
	Alstair Langsford	Mark Birnie
	Leo Dingly	Maj Hodge
1st Individ	dual - Alastair Langs	ford (Dr Morow)
2nd Indivi	dual - Gary Page (Sc	olomani Diplomat)
	dual - Lucky Lankow	
ord marri	dual - Ducky Dunkow	oki (i i ce i i udei)

Major Runequest II

1st	Broos Brothers	
	David Cole	Desmond Aver
	Stuart Thomson	Hugh McVicar
2nd	Byzantine Tyros	
3rd	Ogre Eaters	

Maxi Call of Cthulhu

Equal 1st	Dishonour before	Death
	Chris Berry	Les Rankin
	Debbie Jones	Dean Wright

Equal 1st Stanford Appreciation Society Robert Vermeer Andrew South Ian Padgham Kelly Grant

Minor Tournaments

AD&D Egyptian Freeform

Best Roleplayer	Greg Richards
Most Successful Roleplayer	Megan Waters
Most Eccentric Roleplayer	John Reid

AD&D The Runz

Michael Graf David Oram Chris Machintosh Steve Jensen Sean O'Braen Julic Duxburg

AD&D Solo

1st Individual 2nd Individual 3rd Individual 4th Individual Jonathan Evans Dean Wright Doug Ogilvie Chris Berry

Bunnies and Burrows

1st Team	Servitors of Pnab-D	Pnab-Djagerrnathan	
	Greg Makin	Steven Lewis	
	Stephen Merrell	Peter Olivia	

Carwars

1st Individual 2nd Individual 3rd Individual Fabian Stretten Colin Toh Andrew Hirne

Cthulhu Now

1st Team

Irish Stew

Dragonquest

1st Team Frank Tamers Homer Zeitz Geoff Thorn Lynette Hobbs

James Bond 007

1st Team Dishonour Before Death Dean Wright Les Rankins Chris Berry Dave Grevy

Runequest II

1st Team Knights in White Cotton David Laloum Michael Beck Steve Jensen

Super Squadron

1st Team	Brand X	
	Mark Schrader	Thomas Marshall
	Scott Cranfield	Benjamin James
	Scott Crainfeid	Denjamin jan

Time to Kill - Freeform

lst Individual 2nd Individual

Benjamin James Liz Cowling

Traveller

Ist Team Gstaapo (Greater Society of Thieves and Assassin Anti-Paladins Organisation) Orlando Illuffi Greg Beck Marco Boggaers Anthony Burke Mathew Beck Laurence del Papa Curis Boek

Masquerade

Best Male Costume Best Female Costume Garry Rye Melinda Rose



Joe Italiano (organiser) in one of his saner moments.

Happy Adventurers at the Awards Ceremony.



RUNEQUEST III was awaited with considerable anticipation in Australia, as despite unsubstantiated rumours to the contrary, it is definitely the most popular fantasy RPG after AD&D in Australia. If recent convention figures are anything to go by, may well be the second most popular RPG full stop! RUNEQUEST II has won many friends for Chaosium (this writer amongst them), and thus perhaps we faced the publication of RQ III with some trepidation, as it was being printed by Avalon Hill, a respected boardgaming company, but an unknown factor in the RPG area. It is to the presentation of RQ III that I shall direct my attention first.

Presentation and Value

Chaosium is to be lauded in that it has opted to avoid the temptation of becoming a full commercial, market orientated, printing house, and has rather elected to provide the imaginative and creative impetus to RQ III, leaving the marketing and publishing to Avalon Hill. I agree with the philosophy, but unfortunately, I'm afraid the presentation of RQ III detracts somewhat from its overall worth.

It comes packaged in two forms, the Deluxe Box, or in the separate Players' and Gamesmasters' Boxes. I would suggest that the Deluxe Box is the best option. Although it is slightly more expensive initially, I believe that it is the best bargain in the long run.

The cover art of the Deluxe Box leaves something to be desired, paling in comparison with the superb cover of Chaosium's earlier RQ II pack, BORDERLANDS. This niggly point aside, I come to a more grave criticism, and that is the five volumes of the rules themselves. They are printed on the normal Avalon Hill rules paper, they have paper covers (which look as if they will easily wear and fall away) and again, the artwork is down somewhat on Chaosium's normally high standard. It is a shame that Avalon Hill didn't follow the normal Chaosium process of hardcovers (well cardboard covers that is), as all role-players know just how often you thumb through your rules, and how gremlins seem to insist on spilling tea etc. all over the covers of your books. I'd strongly advise that you cover your rules in adhesive plastic.

The format of the rules falls into:

A Players Handbook - a must for all serious Runequestors, it is well set out and includes a helpful index.

A Magic Book - also a must, and again well laid out, dividing the different magic systems clearly and explaining them in entertaining detail.

A Creatures Book - useful, containing some new monsters to RQ, but omitting all the old Glorantha monsters (with the exception of the Broo), it does however require considerable supplementing by Gamesmasters who wish to use a more diverse range of beasties. It details non-human sentients very well, and is clearly orientated towards using such beings as player characters.

A Gamesmasters' Book - this is perhaps the only disappointing volume in the pack. It lacks the well planned appearance of the former three volumes, and has a rather haphazard approach to presenting data - an inexplicable amount of space is spent on ship voyages (I won't say this is wasted, but I'm sure it could have been more gainfully employed).

A Glorantha Book - this is again up to the standard of the first three volumes, and it can only be criticised due to its brevity. What there is, is great, but it leaves Glorantha fans more than a little bit hungry (I understand that reasons of cost, spacing, and the Alternate-Earth philosophy probably had its greatest impact here).

With regard to value, it is expensive in Australia (perhaps we can blame our blighted dollar), but the Deluxe Box also includes two booklets of Reference Sheets and aids (including character sheets, and more strangely ship-character sheets) and a nice (but not exceptional) map of Alternate Earth. However, I would strongly urge all devoted Runequestors to get a copy of the Deluxe Box, be it individually, or to buy a collective copy for your group. At the very least, it is a good read, even if Cormac the Pict lacks the flare and elan that Ruric had!

Alternate Earth

Some of the few grumbles that I've heard so far about RQ III, have been directed towards the idea of Alternate Earth. However, these should be scotched immediately. Clearly the Alternate Earth idea is not compulsory, and nor was Glorantha compulsory for RQ II. However, RQ II did become almost entirely Glorantha orientated (with the notable exception of QUESTWORLD). Again as a Glorantha fan I liked this, and am perhaps slightly saddened that some of the time and effort that Chaosium would have spent on Glorantha, will now be spent on the Alternate Earth. However, it was made clear in RQ III that Alternate Earth is not going to usurp Glorantha. It is simply there to expand the attraction for RQ III, as there were a few people who:

a) Simply didn't like the Gloranthan world (I don't know why, but they still did); or

b) Objected to the thought (though it never was a Chaosium dictate) that RQ could only be played in Glorantha, and that their imaginations were being fettered by this (this is so much hogwash of course, but it was still a factor considered by quite a few non Runequestors that I know).

Thus, although RQ III doesn't fall into the trap that has ensnared more of the popular gaming systems, of providing only a very limp framework for its rules to operate within, nor has RQ III become rigidly married to the one ethos. Hence, now non-Gloranthan players will have access to the excellent scenario work of Chaosium and perhaps the best answer to the critics of the Alternate Earth idea is, that they should give it a chance. After all, Glorantha has had years if not decades of work on it, and I for one am looking forward to the production of the Vikings Pack.

New Rules Systems - Character Determination

One of the problems of RQ II was that your initial characters always seemed to don a cloak of sameness, dictated by the similarity of skills and previous experience backgrounds, and this cloak was often very difficult to take off. Under RQ III characters are given a wide variety of backgrounds, ranging from the major cultures of Primitive, Nomad, Barbarian and Civilised to more specific backgrounds of Fisher, Apprentice Sorceror or Leatherworker. Virtually all backgrounds are useful, and some are very interesting indeed, though it must be noted that this, coupled with the random determination of age (2d6+15 years old) can lead to a wide disparity between characters. I would suggest that this could be circumvented in many ways, and that you always have to remember that RQ III is not a wargame. It is a role-playing game, and you shouldn't become too obsessed with your statistics and your raw killing power - I've seen some interesting characters come out of, what initially appeared to be, 'dud' backgrounds.

The character determination system is one of the new, and better features of RQ III. It has interesting and innovative ideas such as culturally based weapon skills. Perhaps the provided character sheets leave something to be desired, but then again every Runequestor has his or her own favorite type of character sheet, and I'm no exception (my friends and I have experimented with at least three types so far!). The system is lengthy and involved, but it is worthwhile, and the more often you do it, and become familiar with it, the easier and the quicker it becomes.

New Rules Systems - Combat

Superficially RQ III combat is very similar to RQ II, but there are several differences, some of major importance, some less so. The fatigue system is the most notable example of this, and I think the most successful. The fatigue system is quite simple and quick, you don't have to worry about it until it reaches negatives, you merely lose a fatigue point for every item of encumbrance that you carry (including armour and weapons), one for every round of stress (such as Combat) and two for each round spent running. The system works excellently, it stops ridiculous situations where in some game systems you can fight for a period of hours in extreme examples, in RQ III, few characters could last more than five or six minutes of consecutive melee (longer if they were unarmoured) - note this is 25-30 melee rounds.

A new 'To Hit' table is given for missile weapons, and this enhances the feel of 'realism' about the system without making it more cumbersome. A whole variety of new weapons have been provided, and its the subcategories that I like most (ie, you don't just wield a shortsword, you use either a gladius, or the dreaded Gurkha kukril). Though I must note one minor complaint about the weapons system. For some reason the pilum (the famous Roman heavy spear - not light as described in RQ III), functions the same as a javelin when thrown, except that it is heavier, but when used in melee, it still does the same damage, I would argue that it should do a d10

when thrown (rather than the d8 of the javelin), but would be virtually useless when used in melee (its long metal head being designed to bend easily so as to weigh down shields and to prevent it being thrown back at you!).

A whole variety of new armour types and rules have been provided, and at last you can now have overlapping armour in RQ III, but quite sensibly you have to pay the encumbrance cost in fatigue! My only criticism of armour is that it is perhaps a bit too heavy and definitely **too expensive**.

All in all RQ III has a very good, logical and playable combat system. It combines knock backs, knock downs, impales, criticals and unarmed combat in a well planned and integrated system. It is certainly one of the strong features of RQ III.



New Rules Systems - Magic & Cults

The most radical change from RQ II to RQ III rests in the magic system. There are now four, clearly delineated magic systems, lavished in detail, and definitely my favourite feature in the revised rules. The four systems are broken down into:

Spirit Magic - this is the old battle magic system, reworked and rendered more rational. It is obtained from Shaman and cult spirits. For all intents and purposes it is the same as old battle magic with certain exceptions:

-Spells now have a duration of five minutes.

-When gaining a spell, you don't train in it as such, instead you fight a summoned spell spirit. This won't kill you, but can mean that you waste your cash by failing to obtain the spell.

-It retains most of the old spells, but Harmonize, unfortunately has gone.

Divine Magic - This is the old Rune Magics. It has been carefully worked around the idea of cults. The more numerous the worshippers of a cult within a region, the more access to Divine Magicks that Priests obtain.

Sorcery - This is the most unique feature about RQ III, and again is one of its highlights. The system evolves in civilised cultures, and is far more time consuming than any of the other systems. In some ways it is more powerful, and in others weaker than Divine or Spirit Magic. In Sorcery, a character can actually 'tailor' their spells to their specific needs - ie you can alter the:

-Intensity of the spell, i.e the actual power of the spell itself.

-Range of the spell, provided that you can see your target, an adept sorceror can potentially cast spells up to a range of miles.

-Duration of the spell. Powerful sorcerors with a large amount of 'free intelligence' (i.e points of Intelligence not devoted to holding spells or manipulating sorcery) can get low intensity spells lasting for long periods.

-Multispell, which enables sorcerors to cast multiple spells at the same time, enhancing the variety and strength of sorcerous magic.

All the sorcery revolves around the concept of Free Intelligence, and endows the Sorcery system with a wide variety, and a potential for skillful and entertaining use by players and Gamemasters which no other RPG rivals. The system combines skill, logic and above all, playability very effectively, and this gives noncultist RQ characters a real chance to compete with their 'superstitious' colleagues!

Ritual Magic - The ritual magic system permeates the Sorcery and Divine magic systems, enabling characters through the sacrifice of permanent power, to obtain permanent magics, or to summon otherworld creatures etc. Armour can be increased, as can hit points, matrixes created, power storage devices enchanted and a variety of other effects obtained. It is another salient feature of a most strong and vital magic system.

Cults - Cults have been radically changed in RQ III, and there seems to be some dichotomy between Gloranthan and non-Gloranthan cults. Lay membership has been abolished, and most cults no longer have Rune Lords (Unfortunately Rune Lords are even more powerful now then they used to be). Cults are closely orientated with the number of worshippers - this affects the size and the strengths of the priesthood. The requirements to become ordained have been altered significantly, the basic requirement being 10 points of one use Divine Magic held by an initiate. Initiates and priests automatically gain a point of Power every year. Potentially this makes Priests very powerful, particularly when their access to Divine Magicks is considered. There are some teething problems, but hopefully these will be resolved when the promised "Magic of Glorantha" comes out.

New Rules Systems - Experience, Training & Research

A noteworthy feature of RQ III is the procedure by which a character progresses and improves. Skills no longer progress by 5% increments. Instead the roll of a six sided die dictates how much a skill improves by. This varies by the method through which the skill is to be improved:

Experience = skill improves by 1d6% Training = skill improves by 1d6-2% Research = skill improves by 1d6-2%

Experience has changed little since RQ II, except that instead of having an Intelligence based experience bonus, a player must roll above his current skill level with percentile dice, adding his specific skill bonus to the roll. Most knowledge skills and sorcery skills cannot be improved by experience.

Training has altered considerably; you no longer have to be a skill master to train others, you merely have to have a higher skill level, or in the case of attribute training, to have a particular attribute up a higher number of points than the trainee has. Training is no longer measured in weeks, instead you train for a number of hours equal to your present skill level (or in the case of an attribute, 5 x the current level of the attribute in hours).

Research is a new addition to RQ III and it enables characters too poor to afford training, or in desperate need to train up a skill or attribute, to do this without access to training. The process takes the same time as normal training, but rather than involving an automatic gain, the player must make a normal experience roll, before gaining 1d6-2% (and potentially a -1%) to the skill, or 1d3-1 to an attribute.

On the whole the system is an improvement from RQ II, though again it has some problems associated with it, particularly with the relative ease and speed of character progression.

New Rules System - Finances

The preceding paragraphs have contained little but praise for RQ III, at the worst they identified a few minor quibbles, but the system as a whole was excellent. I'm afraid however that the economics of RQ III just don't work. The scale of costs for skill training, spell training, weapons and armour in particular don't meld well at all. Armour is incredibly

expensive, a suit of average sized chainmail costs 4800 pennies, a suit of platemail costs 6750 pennies. The cost for one point of spirit magic is 500 pennies, hence for a suit of chainmail you could afford almost 10 points of spirit magic, and for the price of a suit of plate, you could buy $13\frac{1}{2}$ points of Spirit magic! To train a knowledge skill from 26% to 100% would cost 1318 pennies (these are the normal costs, but instructors can charge more). On this scale, what character would purchase the expensive and cumbersome armour of plate when he could train five skills to 100%? On the same basis what character would purchase three points of Spirit Magic when he could gain a skill of 100%? Also armour now forms the basis of most treasures , even at half resale price a normal suit of ringmail (the standard armour of most warriors and adventures in RQ III) gets a character 550 pennies.

Standards of living are set forth for various ranks and positions. Within these examples a standard Count earns 24,000 pennies per annum, if our hypothetical Count wished to raise and equip some knights, let's say they are standard knights of late 12th century (equivalent), armoured with chain, mounted on leather barded horses (assuming a war horse costs four times as much as an average horse), it would cost him, roughly speaking, at optimum prices, 16,000 pennies each, taking him eleven years to equip 16 knights, which would cost him virtually his entire income just to feed. Now I know you can fiddle around with such figures from most RPG's but this is just an example of the absurd costings system. I fully recognized this problem one night, when my character wished to hire a fishing boat; our referee looked at the costs involved, deciding that if you could live for a day on one penny in a town or city, a good load of fish would net the fisherman 150 pennies - logical, isn't it? But then, I objected on the basis that a captain of a large boat or a small ship could only afford 10 boat loads of fish per annum. Hence the somewhat massive problem with this aspect of RQ III. Hopefully Chaosium or Avalon Hill will resolve it, if not I'm sure most players will devise their own solutions. It's a shame that an otherwise superb system should be let down in such an important respect (my own idea is to halve all armour costs, and to multiply training costs for skills and attributes by five).

Conclusions

On the whole RQ III is excellent. However it does have several major worries. If it is imperfect, it still, in the opinion of this writer, surpasses its competitors in the fantasy RPG market. I advise any people familar with RQII to get a copy. It will take time to adjust to RQ III, but there are so many improvements to the system, that in the end most people will be pleased that they obtained RQ III. For people unfamiliar with RQ II, or RPGs, RQ III is still very worthwhile - it is on balance well laid out and explained, the running story of Cormac the Pict and his friends helps greatly in understanding the concepts of the game. Perhaps the final statement I can make on RQ III, is that from RQ II, it takes three steps forward and one backwards.

Quick evaluation of RQ III on a 1-10 scale:

-Value for Money	8
-Presentation	5
-Quality of Ideas	8
-Playability	9
-Scope for Development	10
-Overall analysis	8

by Mark Robins



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DATE



Character generation in Super Squadron should be a great deal more than just rolling dice. Each character's origin provides a potential for actual play, in addition to prospective character background and development. With little effort, the GM can develop a background origin scenario for the player, and actually play the character through it. The origin sequence is an ideal opportunity for the GM to enhance or introduce campaign background material, characters and concepts.

An Accidental/Scientific origin is one of the easiest types in which to utilize this concept. A characters origin in this setting could be set off by a 'new' villainous organisation disrupting an experiment. Assuming that the player began their career as a research scientist. He would have few friends and associates, as he works long, arduous hours and his only companions are his two work mates. After many years of research and a prospective budding romance with the female team member, the years of devotion are about to see fruition. The resolution of their experiment is about to enter the final stages of execution, when a group of organised thugs somehow break into the complex. The villains enter, unaware that the experiment is not in fact complete and that they are far too early. In their unthinking greed, they take the incomplete prototype and wreak havoc and destruction in their efforts to kill all witnesses and make the duplication of the experiment impossible. As they run riot through the lab, our hero is exposed to a fatal dose of "whatever", resulting in his apparent death and origin. His prospective girlfriend is assaulted before his eyes and seriously hurt, perhaps fatally injured without any hope of survival. The last member of the team is brutally slain before our hero loses consciousness, thus rendering the experiment unduplicable. The unfortunate player would initially be relatively helpless, (being a normal person), and would be forced to witness death and destruction at the hands of this group, and almost die in the process. Although the character could not possibly stop the villains, (as this would result in his origin not occuring), it provides the player with a set of immediate objectives, and the motivation to be a Superhero.

Playing the character pre-superhero, would allow them to have more realistic friends and companions, so at the critical moment, the origin situation is more dramatic. In the previous case the player begins without any abilities. All of his statistics would be reduced to those originally rolled or in some cases even given the -2 NPC penalty. (It is normally quite simple to justify minor statistic increases after becoming a superbeing). Seeing his friends die or come close to dying would provide substantial motivation, as well as a set of NPC antagonists, which the player can immediately oppose and interact with. The origin sequence can be used to rationalise the players powers, motivation and statistics.

If our hero begins with an ego of only one for example, he does not necessarily begin that low before his origin. The player may have generated a family and the GM found that his mother and only brother had died, and that his father had mysteriously disappeared. We then modify the players ego to 10, before he became a superbeing and then alter his ego accordingly as he plays through his origin sequence. Obviously during the origin sequence his mother and sister are killed, and his father vanishes for whatever applicable reason is justified. The loss of three immediate family members not only provides motivation for a superbeing career, but will also reduce his ego by 9 (3 for each family member) down to his superbeing starting ego of one.

If a character begins their superbeing career late in life (this is more common with Acc/Sci types) and yet has few skills and resources, the GM can rationalise this as part of their origin. One such option in an Acc/Sci origin is to actually have the player begin his 'career' much younger. During their origin the GM can use various reasons to render the player inactive for a number of years (until he reaches his starting age). These can include anything from being frozen to being comatose for some years. Just because a character begins at age 60, does not mean that the player is actually 60 years old.

Although some origin types lend themselves more easily to pre-superbeing origin sequences, any type of origin can be developed for this purpose with a bit of thought.

The 'obvious' problem situation that many GMs face is what to do with Mutants. After all, they are fairly plain and boring and just begin with their powers. In actual fact, they provide an abundance of potential. To begin with, Mutants have the longest origin period. It lasts for at least 16 years. During this time their powers are slowly developing and manifesting themselves. It is assumed that when a Mutant begins his career, he is familiar with his power. He is only familiar with his powers because he **has** used them before. Play the child Mutant, just as their mutations begin to manifest themselves. (Use the children section in the Romantic Involvement rules to determine when the characters powers develop). Play the various sequences that led to the players view on life. The school bully that picked on him one time too many, and the player instinctively unleashed a Lightning Bolt. The shock he experiences when he is playing doctors and nurses and finds that only he has a budding tail or wings! The GM can provide some background elements that eventually lead to the superbeings outlook on life, and whether they become a villain or hero. A character that is perpetually abused, possibly resulting in a family member being killed, would obviously have justifiable cause to extract vengeance on the rest of humanity when he is fully mature. If the early childhood experiences were more favourably received, such as the time when the player used his inherent water breathing ability to rescue a drowning companion, then the character would obviously be suitably impressed with the heroes reception and decide on a life of heroics.

You can even extend the origin concept further still and allow the player to play/experience his own parents 'life' before he was born, through the possible mishaps that resulted in the character actually being born a mutant. Perhaps his parents were forced to work under hazardous conditions, which not only resulted in his mutations, but also inflicted permanent unforseen damage to their own wellbeing. They may be slowly dying as their dangerous occupation reaches a climax just as the player's superpowers reach maturity. The character has a number of tasks open to him. These include saving his parents, preventing any further such accidents or just plain vengeance.

Self-Developed/Designed characters may also have a long origin 'incubation' period. Anyone that spends years training and developing devices to be a superbeing must have had some strong motivating experiences. The GM should assist in providing this source of inspiration. Many comic book characters, particularily the caped crusader, were 'created' due to a childhood experience. In the caped crusaders case, his parents were murdered by a thief when he was only twelve. He then devoted his life to capturing criminals to prevent this incident ever occuring again to anyone else. He spent a literal fortune on devices, gimmicks and general resources to fight crime due to this one emotional experience. Although 'death' is not the necesary catalyst, feelings of temporary inadequacy are usually responsible, eg If only I had been able to "whatever", so-and-so would not have done this, got away, died, etc,.

Supernatural characters provide the most extreme superbeing origin options. Their origin can be fairly simple, such as stumbling onto a 'Tome' (now available in your local gamestore), to being chosen and tutored or bestowed powers by god-like entities. This not only allows GMs to introduce amazing fantastic beings into the campaign, but it also provides additional dimensions or parallel earth's. If the superbeing was chosen by some entity, there should be some very interesting reason why the character was chosen. Are they destined to battle some great menace? (A great way to introduce mega-threats into the campaign and immediately warn the players, so that they have a great deal of time to prepare for the eventual threat). Must they perform some specific service? (This is not necessarily to the benefit of the people or planet on which the superbeing resides). These options can provide not only interesting origin play, but can be extended to the entire campaign and career of the player.

Aliens are quite open to a more liberal interpretation. Being an Alien is not so much an origin type, but an origin background. With the exception of multiple origin characters, aliens are literally dual origin characters. The specific secondary origin they 'have', should be based on the individual character. If an Alien has five powers, all of which are generated by devices, then the obvious origin background is Designed/Sponsored. If all his powers are natural, he could either be a Mutant/Acc Sci or even Self Developed. This second 'dual' origin should not actually be given to the Alien PCs (as most will not easily fit into another category), but should instead be utilized as a basis for the characters origin scenario. The obvious trait that all Alien characters have, is how they got to Earth and why did they come. This alone should provide a wealth of options, ranging from an inspection for potential invasion to simply "I lost control and crashed".

Defects that the characters possess, if any, should be incorporated into a players origin if possible. Although it is not necessary to reveal what a players defects and their effects are, during an origin sequence, they should be logically incorporated into the origin. We will not actually delve further into this aspect, as a section on defects appeared only last issue.

The most important thing to remember is that an origin type can provide valuable development for a character as well as additional playing time. The GM need only provide the basis for the players motivations (after discovering what type of character the player wishes to play), and thereby give the character immediate objectives and meaning. You can play those novel origins that you write up.

by Joseph Italiano



As the name implies, Multiverse covers all role-playing games. Each issue will feature a **module** for one of the major role-playing systems such as: Advanced Dungeons and Dragons, Call of Cthulhu, Runequest, Super Squadron and Traveller to name a few. More importantly, each issue will be devoted to the major gaming field - role-playing, presenting an all Australian view of variants and supplements.

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"It's mine I tell you. I bested the ogre in single combat for it."

"Ah, but my magic aided you."

"And were it not for **my** healing powers you would not have survived. 'Twas **my** faith which assured you victory."

"Be silent fools. Stand away, lest I blast the flesh from your bones. The artifact is mine."

"Too late, treacherous mage, the thief has already made off with it!"

A tiresomely familiar scene - adventurers squabbling over treasure. There is far more potential in fantasy roleplaying than that offered by a bunch of immoral and greedy red handed slaughterers. As recent tournaments have moved away from the "band of adventurers" concept, so should campaigns, to facilitate the truest aim of roleplaying - what was it really like? It is hard to get an understanding of socio-economic medieval life whilst one hundred feet underground spattered with kobold juice.

Lets face it folks, adventurers have had their day, not that they ever deserved one anyway. Disruptive, unruly, brawling and beery, they are a thoroughly unpleasant mob. Vandalistic, anarchistic, atheistic and sadistic, meeting them in the street you would be inclined to look the other way. They owe no allegiance, they pay no taxes, they maim and slaughter in an indiscriminate fashion, they cause structural damage, they tempt young men and women away from a sensible and productive life, they go where they please and do what they want. They never wash or shave, they never write home, they squander their ill-gotten gains on themselves, they stay up until all hours of the night and do nothing to promote inter-racial relations. They are unreliable, untrustworthy, alcoholic and unhealthy. Their idea of a good time is to be fondling money while coated from head to foot in gore. Overall, they are one of society's most dangerous elements.

That's a rather emotive view of how society would regard adventurers. You may well cry "But my fighter is Good" but how are the village folk to believe that when the last "good" fighter set fire to the church, ritually massacred all the donkeys and ran off with the mayor's grandmother? Adventurers should logically be treated with fear and loathing.

Historically, there is little precedent for the "band of adventurers" as we see them. The closest parallels are mercenaries, bandits and highwaymen, and we all know with how much esteem they are held. In legend, the tales usually centre around **one** good and noble (not to mention godly) character with perhaps a few hangers-on to take the photographs and sing the biography.

The main reason that adventurers should hang up their swords and thumbscrews and go home is that although they seemed a great idea when the hobby was new and immature, there are now simply much better avenues to explore.

A good campaign will be remembered by its participants in the following order: theme, plot and characterisation. You may settle for yet another "there are the orcs boys, get 'em" type campaign or you may instead opt for a stronger overall theme, which is more likely to be a memorable story. New characters can be introduced in accordance with the existing and logical framework, rather than the usual "you're all in the pub and...."

So, what themes are available? The possibilities are boundless. The first and foremost, not to mention most familiar, is The Quest. This is the one in which adventurers have a foothold, but at least will be working towards a common and worthwhile goal. Quests are fine, but lose impact when the characters have to deal with some new threat to civilisation as we know it every second week. Also, quests simply aren't that prevalent throughout "normal" medieval and ancient history. What about the other 99.5% of the population?

A better idea is to give the players a common background - this can be in terms of profession, nationality, race or purpose. These aims can be combined.

Profession is possibly the most interesting in terms of looking at history from a different angle. Make all of the players soldiers in a war, where they have the problem of not only the ever-present foe (both in physical manifestation and in evidence of his presence), but of feeding themselves, maintaining their equipment, maintaining good relationships with the populace, and in general staying alive in the mayhem and chaos of a massed battle. The players could be either invaders or defenders (even both, if your campaign goes on for long enough), both offering a different array of moral choices and agonies. If your foe is diabolical and utterly hateful, then your players will waste no time squabbling amongst themselves. Indeed their depth of feeling may well surprise. you. Alternatively they may be soldiers during peacetime, either as an occupying army or as a town watch. To maintain continuity in a martial campaign, you can develop systems of promotion and decoration. Choose a historical army to base your force on, and the campaign will soon develop a life and flavour of its own. Sieges, assassinations, patrols, special missions, guard details, delivering messages, the plots and possibilities are endless.

For those who would prefer a less violent campaign, the players could be all merchants. Buying, selling, investing and constantly building on their capital and constructing a financial empire. They would start selling mockpork from a pushcart, moving on to a wagon, then a warehouse, then a caravan and then a fleet. Their problems would be speculation, devaluation, rival merchants, wars, governments, bandits and religions.

To allow your players to exercise their imagination and wit, they could all be players in a band of travelling minstrels. If you still prefer a martial campaign, but do not want the restrictions of the army, you could encourage them to setup their own band of mercenaries. They could also be sailors, pilgrims, bandits, zealots, pirates, thieves, healers - in short, just about anything.

If the previous ideas sound too rigid for your tastes (alas! Unimaginative soul) then there are still a few ways of binding your players to give them a common identity and to keep them off each other's throats. Have them all of the same origin - this can be in the form of a city, tribe, nation or race, depending on which level you wish to operate. Race is possibly the most interesting, as it will give your players a chance to try something totally new. Make them all goblins in an underground tribe, foraging and fighting off the other underworld denizens (including marauding bands of adventurers). Make them all dragonewts on a religious trek, of varying stages. Make them all of a winged race or an underwater race, giving you new enviroments to explore. The RuneQuest and DragonQuest systems obviously require the least work to make all the players a different race, but don't be afraid of converting those D&D monsters into a playable species.

By way of examples, and true to my claim, the campaigns I remember clearest have been based around a common theme. Standard 'adventuring' campaigns tend to dissolve into a few scattered recollections.

One of my favourite campaigns was one which ultimately affected my own style of DMing. In this campaign, the players were all pirates, trying to make a buck any way they could in a thoroughly lawless archipelago. Thus, instead of being handed 'adventures' on a plate, we had to set up and execute our own money making schemes. When we were in possession of a ship (i.e could afford one after having the last stolen or wrecked) we were able to travel as we pleased and loot where we wanted, a move which ultimately resulted in our being wanted in all major ports. Another campaign was one of my own, which evolved from the player's own ideas - SOS, the Special Orc Service. Having cleaned out a Kobold tower and claimed it as their own, they set about recruiting and equipping a solely orcish brigade (with the exception of an ogre heavy). Their initial problems were logistic - how to recruit, stay low, equip, furnish and feed themselves. From this platform they plan to stage mercenary operations.

Neither of these campaigns involved more work than would penning a thousand room dungeon, but both worked well due to their strong identity. More importantly, both allowed (and relied upon) a strong input from the players, rather than having them simply look at the DM expectantly, week after week in the hope of adventures being spoon fed to them.

The trend against the 'band of adventurers' can be further witnessed in the Phantastacon 85 major tournaments, (all of which were highly popular). The AD&D tournament was based on the fortunes of a tribe of cavemen. The RuneQuest (admittedly I had a hand in this one) was based on soldiers of the Lunar Army. In the freeform Traveller, the players were members of ruling houses vying for power in a galactic city. Gone are the days of kicking in doors, kicking in heads and kicking open chests.

So, with an ounce of imagination it is not hard to send those adventurers to the soup queues and instead play realistic and coherent campaigns. Research the concept, sketch a few maps, dream up a few NPC's and then introduce the players with the magic ingredient of their collective imagination and the campaign will develop a life of its own.

by Mark Morrison





nated with poison, knockout liquid, or whatever the fop prefers.

A pale coat goes over this - it is reversible, the inside black. In its voluminous pockets are: a dagger, a garrote, six skeleton keys, a file, ship's biscuits (or E-rations), a thin flask of water, gut fishing line (or nylon), hooks, small silver bells (or electronic whistlers), a holy symbol (pocket com) and any small magical items (or technological items) the fop may possess.

The sleeves of the coat end in lace ruffles, which disguise the contents of the sleeve. A dagger in a spring scabbard (twist the arm in a certain way, and the dagger flies into the waiting hand) lies in the right sleeve. In the left sleeve, a poison sachet on elastic (to be used like a teabag, dropped hastily into drinks and then returned), and either loaded dice or four aces.

Trousers are of any fine cloth, and are unremarkable, save for an inside pocket to store another dagger or truncheon (singleshot laser). Emergency lockpicks are also sewn into the hems, along with a few gems for those unexpected payments.

Boots are knee high, of thick and highly polished leather. Built into the boots are recesses, both in the uppers and the heels. Any material may be stored there, such as a magical ring or small item. Some boots have detachable heels which act as handles for a garroting wire also stored in the boots.

A cane completes the fop's assemblage, and naturally, it's a sword cane - a thin rapier, with a springspike in the hilt.

So, the fop appears to be nothing more than a perfumed relic of high society, but in actual fact, the foppish exterior can disguise a dangerous adventurer, who has simply camouflaged him/herself for better success.

P.S "With lacey ruffles, practis'd charm, dextrous ease to keep from harm, The fop seems not quite to be, the man (or woman) you think to see." - This is another foppish trick, to endlessly quote unknown poets. They also stay long after their welcome has worn out, being totally insensitive to blatant farewells, goodbyes or anything else....

by Garth Nix

What then, if that fop is really a deadly fighter? Should he become involved in some sort of combat, that fop will have better chances for being underrated. If taken captive by surprise, the fop will rarely be guarded as well as the obviously deadly members of the party. People are careless when talking to fops, as they seem not to listen, playing with their scented handkerchiefs or the bobbles on the end of their curled up boots.

All in all, the apparent fop has many advantages, particularly amidst civilisation, where there are many real ineffectual dandies.

How To Become A Fop

When roleplaying a fop in contact situations (i.e when the referee is assuming the role of an NPC) affect a languid air, and pretend not to pay attention. Interject with comments about the low society that abounds in the area, or make observations about how high society jades the appetites. Play with a scented handkerchief.

When speaking replace all the 'r's in a word with 'w', e.g 'barbawous' for 'barbarous', 'wuffian' for 'ruffian and so on.

If someone swears loudly, or threatens, pretend to half-faint, while keeping a good eye on proceedings through hooded eyelids. Never faint so much that you go down to more than a disguised combat crouch. In general, pretend to have an elegant and languid outlook upon life, ill prepared for the hardships of adventuring, or anything outside a gilded cage.

Fops are always superbly, but not necessarily flamboyantly, dressed. Acres of lace are recommmended, and all items of leather etc.are always mirror polished to protection.

A typical fop outfitting, specially designed for the fake, or Q-fop, would include:

A massive broad-brimmed hat stitched around a conical helmet. Ostrich or similar feathers streaming from the hat disguise a small knife in the puggaree.

A starched linen shirt and fawn velvet waistcoat disguise a mail shirt (or flak jacket) underneath. A cravat around the neck doubles as a mask (or specifically treated as a gas filter). The starched collar of the shirt has a wire lockpick built into it. In the inside pockets of the waistcoat are various drugs, powders and poisons, each in colour-coded cloth packets. In each of the outside pockets, there are scented handkerchiefs - one black, one white. The black contains real scent, while the white is impreg-

The Dragon Lord

Reviewed by Robert Mun

'The Dragon Lord' is Fantasy Games Unlimited's latest module for their 'Chivarly and Sorcery' role playing system. It was written by J. Andrew Keith, one of the systems designers. It retails in Australia for \$8.25.

The basis for this module is the old and familiar story of a dragon kidnapping the kingdom's princess while she is journeying to her betrothal, and the characters have to rescue her. However, all is not as it seems, and there are several interesting twists to the plot. To avoid the pitfalls, the characters have to keep on their toes and be careful of what they do.

This module also contains a synopsis of the background of the campaign in which the module is set. This background, while very brief, is sufficently complete to provide a good solid basis for a series of adventures in the 'North Kingdom'. Another useful item provided is a table for detailing the terrain within a large scale campaign hex (ie. what is really a three mile forest hex in the way of brooks and hills). This table makes setting wilderness encounters much easier, and adds more life to them.

To get the most out of the module, requires a good deal of creative role playing by the gamemaster and an equally large amount of improvisation to keep the adventure on the correct path. Also, unfortunately, the gamemaster will have to spend a lot of time polishing up the module before play commences, something that he shouldn't have to do with a purchased module.

The module's major fault is rather glaring, and it requires a good deal of work to correct. Of all the NPC's involved in the adventure, only one is fully detailed, and that is the dragon. The rest leave quite a bit to be desired, one only requires his spells to be chosen, but most of the rest have only their name and/or number mentioned, and one or two of their abilities. I can see no reason for this obvious oversight, and page count restrictions is not an acceptable one, for the module is only twenty pages long, while most of FGU's offerings are twenty-four.

The random encounters in the wilderness are also quite poorly done. Once an encounter has been determined to have occured, the basic type of encounter (people, animals - small or large, or monsters) is determined. Once this is done the gamesmaster then selects a 'monster' from the list under the generated heading, with a few prompts depending on the locality. The problem with this system is that it gives no indication of the population density and thus frequency of occurence of each different creature. This is especially important with regard to the



more powerful creatures like the undead. There is also no information on the size of the party encountered, though this is not a major problem, for gamemaster discretion is usually required with such details. However, many of the encounters should not even be on the list, for what vampire would live in an area where there are only several hundred people, and in the same vicinity as a dragon. What sane Gnoll would venture within 10 miles of an elven community unless he's in an army? It is faults like these that mar the encounter tables. It almost looks like it is simply a list of monsters with little thought being given to its content.

Some of the encounter tables are very sparingly detailed, for example, the Wizard's lair has no traps in it, only a note "What, if any, spells or traps the wizard has prepared is left to the Gamesmaster". But, at least something was written about his abode, several other encounter areas the players are likely to visit are only noted on the map, the rest being "left to the Gamemaster".

One of the most disappointing aspect of the module's presentation are the main wilderness maps. Fantasy Games Unlimited has supplied the game with two full colour glossy maps printed on card (perhaps the reason for the low page count). Unfortunately, the maps fail to come up to such deserving treatment. The map of the north kingdom and the territories around it is a little more then a sketch map and both maps look like they were coloured by a five year old with very old texta pens. A good pair of black and white maps would have been far more preferable to the eye-sores provided.

If you ignore the obvious problems of the module is worth buying for its unusual plot line. The only advantage of the way it is written is that it is just as much work to convert it to another system as it is to prepare it for use with 'Chivalry and Sorcery', thus it is more a generic module than a module written for only the one system. It is a real shame that J. Andrew Keith's execution of the module did not live up to the ideas that created it.

The Tome A Super Squadron Adventure Book

Reviewed by Steve Hayes

First of all, let me say, that while I am very involved in superhero roleplaying, I am not a fan of Super Squadron. Although I have played Super Squadron, I am not involved in its production or playtesting. This is worth bearing in mind as you read this review.

'The Tome' is the first supplement to be released for the Super Squadron superhero roleplaying system. It is a 52 page A4 size book, stapled with a glossy cover. Contained within are ten superhero scenarios and four appendices containing expanded powers for Super Squadron characters, 22 new spells and computer generated lists of goons and normal people.

So, for \$15.00 is it worth buying? The answer for anyone involved in superhero roleplaying is a resounding YES! 'The Tome' is excellent value for money, and being Australian produced should maintain its price while imported games become more expensive. For someone who doesn't play Super Squadron, the scenarios alone make 'The Tome' a good addition to your source material. Let's look at the scenarios. The presentation of each is very well organised. First, there is a paragraph or two describing the nature of the scenario - whether it is single or multipart, whether it is combat intensive or requires thinking players and other aspects in this vein. This is followed by a section entitled 'Progressive Development' which presents a summarised version of events leading up to and ocurring in the scenario proper. This is an excellent idea which allows the prospective gamesmaster to get a good grip on the scenario and pace it out evenly. Best of all these scenarios would be an excellent addition to a campaign, the introductory developments can simply be merged into the regular campaign. This should give your campaign a feeling of continuity as well as providing your players more information to act upon when they reach the main body of the scenario.

The heart of the scenarios is also well presented. The writers have adopted the procedure, which is rapidly becoming standard throughout Australia, of placing information which is obvious to the players inside a rectangular border, while further information for the gamesmaster is listed below this. This removes the annoying problem of accidentally telling the players more than you intended. The many maps of building interiors are outstanding - at last the description of the room contained in the text precisely matches the illustration of the room, with beds, desks, chairs and even laundry depicted on the maps. No more simple boxes connected by corridors, as in many fantasy roleplaying games.



Many of the scenarios also contain new villains, all complete with costume descriptions and character backgrounds. While you may want to use your own characters in place of these, its comforting to have some new creations at your fingertips.

The actual subject matter and length of scenarios varies. One scenario is very short (less than a page in length) but should keep your players guessing for hours. There is the usual 'plot to take over the world' scenario, one involving a young mutant gaining control of his powers and yet another in which the players must face an ancient mythological evil. Two of the scenarios are linked but can be easily made to stand alone. One scenario (I wouldn't like to give away which one) is tied heavily to material presented with the original Super Squadron rules, but once again it can be made to stand alone, although its original value has much to do with the continuity it would provide to a campaign. I am less qualified to comment on the power extensions and spells. Armour has been expanded and now handles either kinetic or radiation damage separately, in a manner reminiscent of Champions' physical and energy defense. Enviroment Control is explained more fully, while Flight at light and higher speeds is determined in a new manner. A new type of force beam is added, and the effects of Gravity Control are explained in detail. Mind Powers are expanded, and Heigtened Speed, Pets/Companion and Size Change are subject to alteration. The 20 new spells (and 2 rewritten spells) will give new depth to supernatural characters. Finally, its always handy to have some pre-generated goons and normals available.

I do have some minor quibbles with 'The Tome'. Firstly, it is alwa's annoying to have power explanations changed after a first edition. You could expect the designer to get it right the first time! However, I cannot name a roleplaying game whose expansions have not modified previously printed material, and Super Squadron is no exception. Secondly, in my opinion it would be nice to be able to obtain just the rule modifications. Some people prefer not to use published scenarios, and \$15.00 is a little expensive for half a dozen pages of power and spell material. Perhaps the scenarios could have used only old powers and the rule changes (and additions) held back until there were sufficient to fill some type of publication. I realise that this is contentious and that Adventure Simulations believe that 'one comprehensive book is worth a few shekels more'.

'The Tome' is a very professional addition to Super Squadron, and contains a large amount of material applicable to any superhero roleplaying game. Well worth purchasing!

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