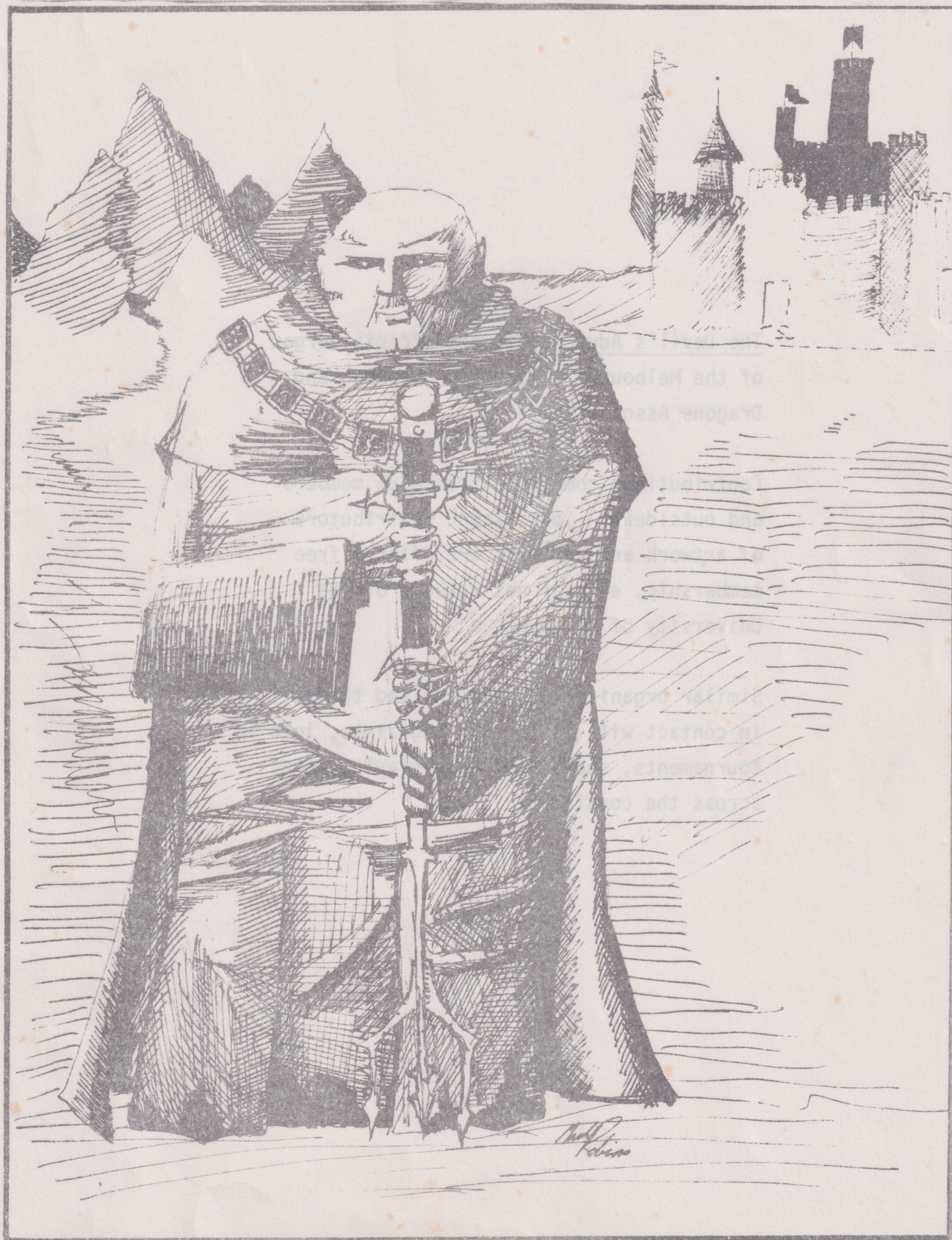
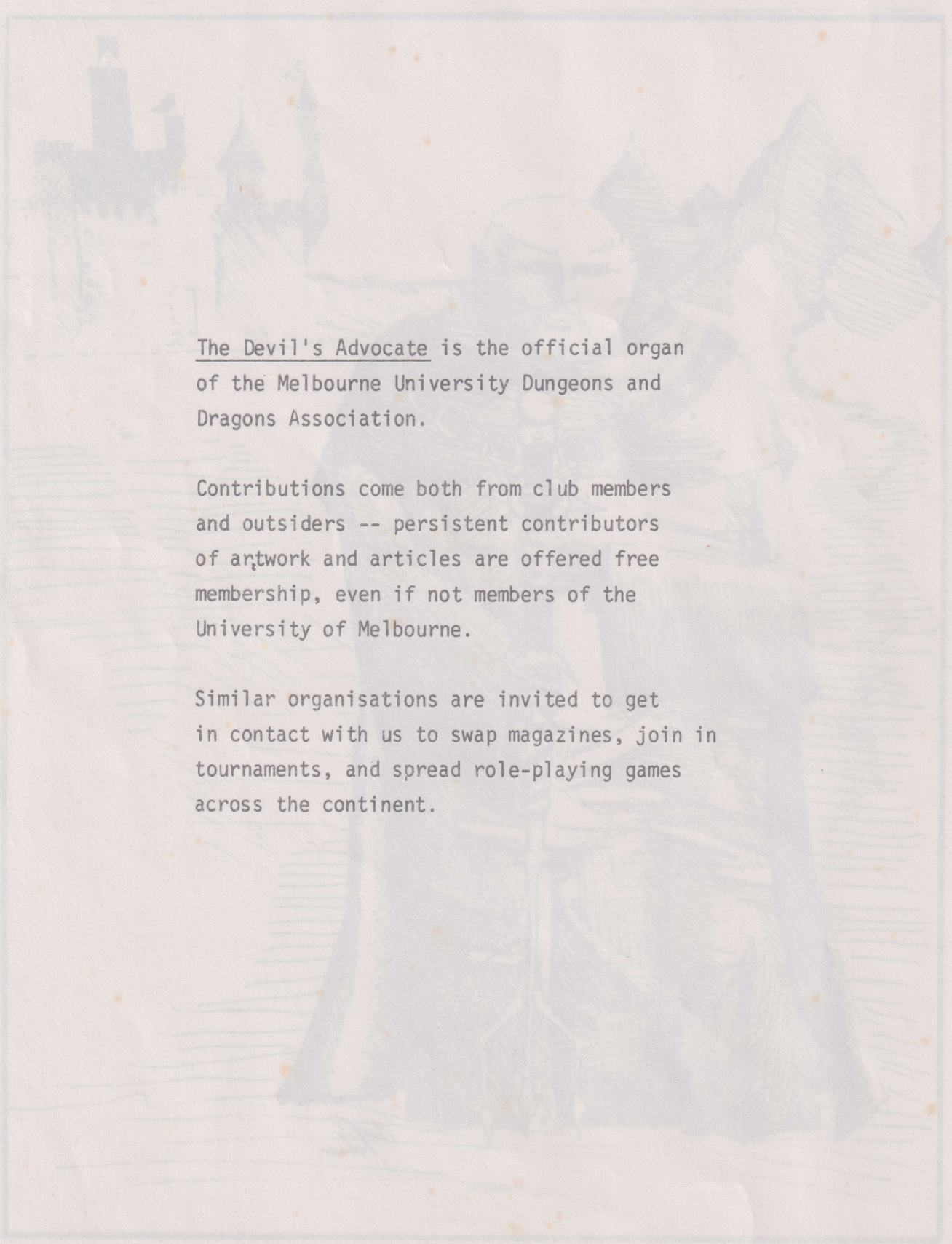


THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE



ED. 3
1982.



The Devil's Advocate is the official organ
of the Melbourne University Dungeons and
Dragons Association.

Contributions come both from club members
and outsiders -- persistent contributors
of artwork and articles are offered free
membership, even if not members of the
University of Melbourne.

Similar organisations are invited to get
in contact with us to swap magazines, join in
tournaments, and spread role-playing games
across the continent.

Thieves

by Nicholas J. Cowell.

"The thief will go around and backstab the giant toadstool"

How often does that happen to the thief in your party? Forced by those clumsy scum in their tin can armour to act as a kind of surrogate fighter without the dice, strength, armour or weapon to be one. Too often the thief is simply a back-stabbing and chest opening tool for the fighters, clerics and magicusers, forced to wander about dungeons where he is way out of his element (along with druids and rangers). Resistance to this kind of pressure is difficult; and convincing a party to do some "adventuring" in a city is heart-breakingly hard. This article is an attempt to show some techniques I have devised and used to prolong the life and increase the fortunes of my thieves.

An important first point is to remember that a thief's foremost joy and aim in life is the acquisition of inordinate amounts of moulah. Why should you have to hand over the contents of every chest you open? Arrange with the DM to pilfer a small percentage of the total money to pass through your hands, and to pocket any rings, gems or suchlike found amongst the gold and weapons in the chest.

If someone protests about watching over your shoulder while you pick the lock, complain about not being able to concentrate with him growling over your shoulder. If he persists, let off the next trap you find straight in his face (you'll have to talk to the DM beforehand) -- a poisoned needle in the eye should make him keep his distance.

A very big no-no is pinching items from individuals in the party -- not only does the brute whose ring you stole have 18(00) strength, but his search through your pack or purse will reveal all that other loot you've been carefully acquiring. Having hiding places for your money (like boot heels, spaces in armour padding, or waterskins) can prevent embarrassment of this kind.

Many of these pilferings require you to be alone -- so sometimes it is worth volunteering to guard poor unconscious Drongo, or to be lowered into the dark pit. (Your standing with the rest of the party will go up, too.) If the situation is safe, tell the party to wait while you disable some dangerous traps -- and hurriedly unlock, ransack, and relock the three chests you found. Should the situation be dangerous, scream like hell for the fighters and run away!

Unfortunately, there will come times when you have to fight; so take lots of time and carefully set up the backstab -- you do lots of damage, and can look smug when you kill the minotaur that just croaked half the fighters!

In the terrible instance of having to attack frontally, you have one advantage -- your dexterity. High dexterity enables use of two weapons, so you can have two rolls to get that elusive "to hit". The longsword and dagger or two daggers can be quite devastating, allowing you more smug looks at those injured fighters when you step in and finish off the wounded owlbears.

A Thief must establish claim to several magical items if they appear -- a ring of invisibility, a ring of protection, elven boots (or an elven cloak). The best way to do this is to loudly forego the privilege of getting any useless magical items, and strongly support another player's claim. That way, he'll hopefully support you when you demand that invisibility ring. The best people to do this with are clerics and druids; there are so few overlaps between their desires and yours.

Give yourself a chance when trying to hide in shadows or move silently; wear dark clothing with a padded cloak over the lot, and wear soft boots. A former character of mine even had fur galoshes to quieten his movement.

While (Drats!) one cannot wear gloves whilst picking locks, etc. -- no one ever mentioned not having special climbing gloves with steel hooks for grip and rings for securing rope. The Japanese had such an implement (netsuke) and they also used them in hand-to-hand combat!

A thief, if played imaginatively, (and with his true functions in mind), is an immensely interesting and vitally important character -- if given the opportunity by players and DMs.

Good Thieving!

Mordenkainen's Magical Miscellany.

RINGS OF CHANGE

MARTIN DICK

These rings give the wearer the ability to polymorph himself into a particular animal for up to 1 day three times a week. There are several different types of these rings:

Chance	Type	GP Value	XP Value
01-20	Ring of the Wolf	12000 GP	2000 XP
21-40	Ring of the Eagle	20000	3000
41-65	Ring of the Rat	15000	2500
66-80	Ring of the Elephant (Asiatic)	25000GP	3500 XP
81-00	Ring of the Horse(Light War Horse)	15000 GP	2500 XP

There is a 5% chance per use that the wearer will not be able to change back into human form and will forget all human memories in 2-12 months. Even if this is somehow removed any time the ring is put on again the same thing will happen. There is also a 20% chance per month that the wearer of the Ring of the Wolf will contract lycanthropy as if a werewolf had bitten him, unless he is a paladin.

GLOBES OF MONSTER SUMMONING

MARK ROBINS

These are 6" (real size) diameter globes, transparent but for the fact that they are filled with a white mist in which shadowy figures may be seen. If smashed the Globe will have the same effect as a monster summoning spell of the 12th level. The actual level of the spell is variable, but the beings summoned will attack as commanded by he who smashed the Globe until the spell dissipates.

Chance	Globe Type	XP value	Sale value
01-15	Monster Summons 1	400	1000GP
16-30	Monster Summons 2	500	1300
31-50	Monster Summons 3	600	1600
51-70	Monster summons 4	700	1900
71-85	Monster Summons 5	800	2200
86-95	Monster Summons 6	900	2500
96-00	Monster Summons 7	1000	2800



BRAIN OF THAUMATURGY

C. MATHESON, A. BRISBANE

These items are created by the ritual implantation of magicians' brains in a clear quartz bottle. They have the power to cast an Identify spell once per day as a 7th level magician. The item to be Identified must be placed on the wide flange lid of the bottle, and the brain will telepath the result to the last person to use the command word. There is a 20% chance per use that a save vs. spells must be made or a minor curse (e.g. -1 on charisma, double damage from fire) will be given to the owner for a period of seven months. Dropping or breaking the bottle causes a major curse (fail all saves, charisma of 3, etc.) for seven years. Remove Curse has no effect on these curses, but wishes usually prove effective in removing them.

EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of "The Devil's Advocate" we ran a tournament, "The Dungeon in Arvidge", which attracted a good deal of interest. Initially we feared a chronic shortage of DMs and thus didn't publicise it too furiously. In the event, we could probably have managed eight parties (maybe even ten) instead of the six groups that did run -- but most people were well satisfied with the day.

It was interesting to see the variety of DMs that the club owns -- they ranged from the gentle niceguys to the occasional Attila, but the quality of them was good to excellent and as each party had three DMs over the tourney there was opportunity for variety. Not everybody was happy of course, but most complaints were about the strict DMs whose rulings were, to me, often commonsense, and in many ways I felt that these people refereed the most properly of all; I did not overrule any DM as a result of player queries -- most of the more fascist interpretations can be traced back to me (I designed it and gave rule recommendations with the aid of Martin Dick) so if anyone intends to hire assassins my address is given in issue 2!

I thought that the groups who were held up for ages in the hobgoblin ambush played very poorly -- the answer was to send the thief (invisible per potion) up the wall, and use the Levitate potion to send an invisible fighter up too. Why do you think we gave you the potions? The portcullis is mainly a psychological trap: the dwarf muscleman had 25% chance to lift gates, the other fighter 13%, with the party total being 60% -- so even a party which didn't scout ahead sensibly is pretty likely to lift and/or break the thing. This is without the Hold Portal, Spider Climb, Rope Trick and Hold Person spells.

What was most fascinating was the way in which the competition was fought out -- in the end it came down to a contest between the extreme disciplines: the Slash/hacks and the Thinkers. Both groups played their method rather well, and in the end it was but a little luck that separated them. The other group all stayed in the doldrums, with little clear direction appearing, and (at times) too much arguing amongst players. When I checked a little before the tournament ended, four groups were still on the first level, one was on the second (the Slash/hacks, the eventual winners) and the Thinkers were down on the 4th and bottom level.

Just a word about the two most successful parties: the eventual winners actually started an hour late, although they gained half an hour by playing through the breaks. There was a good mix of beginners and experienced players, and they formed a reasonably cohesive whole.

Their rivals, our intellectual group, were remarkable in that two of their group were absolute beginners, two had played a reasonable amount before, and two had played not a great deal but had spent most of that time playing in my campaign last year. The last pair particularly interested me: I wonder whether I had instilled good habits into them, or whether they were able to anticipate my defenses and/or my traps: both were new in this dungeon, but sometimes if you know the DM's preferences it helps you get paranoid at the right moments. For instance, in my dungeons you will hardly ever get a common (or garden variety) pit, but most intelligent creatures will have some sort of defensive construction, often some sort of ambush. They told me they recognised it as my handiwork, but I'm not sure whether this assisted them.

You might be wondering how they got down to the fourth level -- from what I can gather they hacked their way through (a few) hobgoblins in a series of guerilla raids. The gargoyles they ignored altogether (obeying the first rule of tournament dungeoneering: Head straight for the bottom). They were placed there as a punishment for those who would be distracted, but at least one DM forgot their 1d6 fireball breath weapon, which made them easier to kill than they might have been. They met the Motagroks (see the MUDDA Menagerie

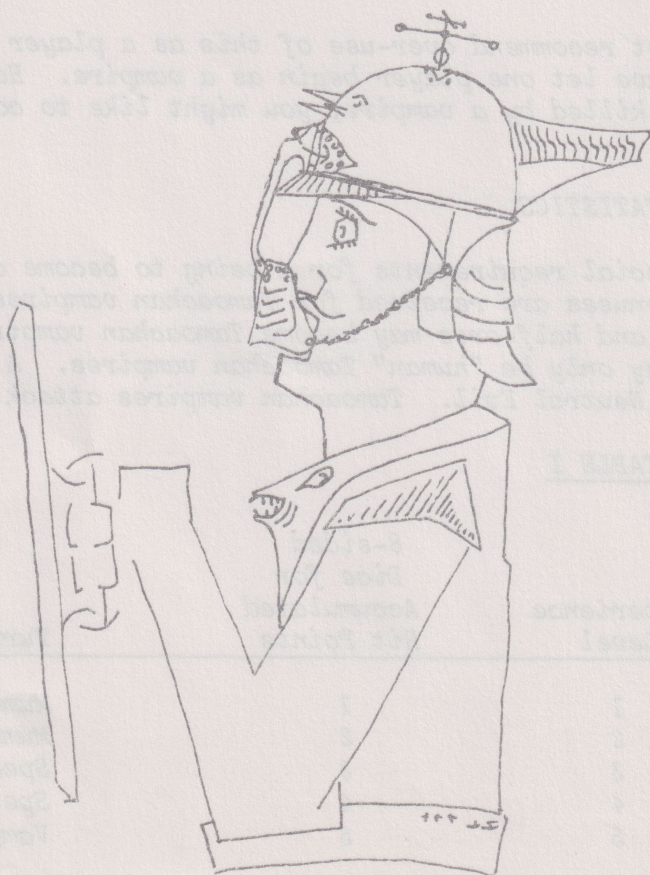
this edition for details) and, after a brief altercation, handed over one of their party to be used for reproductive purposes (???! Alignment?) and kept going. Thus they found themselves at the bottom of the dungeon having avoided most of the monsters (and their treasure)

Here they were deceived by an obsidian statue of an elf (Rule two: Never believe dungeon statues, especially black ones) who kept them from going through the right door to the room where the object of the quest, the Venom Blade, was held. Instead they meleed with a mad druid who cast Heat Metal on their fighters then got into combat with Puff the Magic Dragon (the sick joke of the dungeon) and would probably have killed him. If they had trashed the dragon and found the sword in the other room, they would have won by a long way -- but in tournaments you have to play to a time limit.

The winners used an entirely different technique -- they systematically slaughtered everything they got near. They ended up deep in the second level, the whole party alive and well but with enemy corpses strewn everywhere. They wasted time by doing side rooms, but they certainly killed everything most efficiently, which gave them a large number of tournament points in monsters and treasure, and being sidetracked became profitable.

I believe that the Thinkers played the best, and I'll admit that I would have liked to see them win; the mistake was in the design of the dungeon. It was biased a little to the Slash/hack school, because I felt that this would assist beginners -- I had not anticipated the scenario where the beginners were the more thoughtful players. Another plus would have been to give points for getting to lower levels, which would also assist a clever party.

We'll have some more tournaments this year, at least one of which will be mine: probably the "Necropolis of Pard" which I hope will be a little more mind-numbing. To our winners, I congratulate you, and look forward to seeing how you perform in the next tourney; to the Thinkers, I want to join your group for Phantasticon 1982.



TAMOACHAN VAMPIRES

by Andrew South.

INTRODUCTION

The Tamoachan vampire was a class I developed of necessity when a player was bitten by a vampire he encountered in the wilderness. He had worked the character up to a fairly high level and was reluctant to part with it. I was unwilling to allow him to play a vampire with full or even half abilities, and yet did not like to see his effort go to waste. Thus the Tamoachan vampire was born.

The name "Tamoachan vampire" is something of a misnomer. The expression originates from the excellent TSR module, "Shrine of the Tamoachan". There is a vampire in this module whose characteristics differ from the norm to a significant degree. Somehow the new, lesser vampires became identified with this character, though he had nothing to do with it. The players continually used the expression and it eventually stuck.

Tamoachan vampires were eventually explained as servants of Camazotz, God of Bats and the Night in my world. He was once a servant of Orcus but has since broken with his master and become a God in his own right, changing to Neutral Evil in the process. Many of Camazotz' clerics are themselves vampires. Once bitten the victim of a Tamoachan vampire retains all his/her levels in previous classes and begins again at first level as a vampire. Thereafter, the DM can have the time of his life devising strange rituals and sacrifices to go up levels, with a cost roughly equivalent to the training required by other classes. The vampire in my world had considerable trouble persuading seven female virgins to participate in his ceremonies, especially considering he had not developed his charming gaze at the time.

Before going on, I should warn that my campaign is basically low-level (1st-6th). I have a feeling that the Tamoachan vampire would be too deadly to let players use in a situation where levels are gained quickly. A full-powered vampire is amongst the deadliest creatures one can encounter.

Finally, I do not recommend over-use of this as a player character class, although I myself have let one player begin as a vampire. However, I do feel that if a player is killed by a vampire, you might like to consider this idea.

TAMOACHAN VAMPIRE STATISTICS

There are no special requirements for a being to become a Tamoachan vampire and no experience bonuses are received for Tamoachan vampires with high abilities. Although half-elves and half-orcs may become Tamoachan vampires as well as humans, player characters may only be "human" Tamoachan vampires. A Tamoachan vampire's alignment is always Neutral Evil. Tamoachan vampires attack and save as fighters.

TAMOACHAN VAMPIRES TABLE I

Experience Points	Experience Level	8-sided Dice for Accumulated Hit Points	Turns As
0-2500	1	1	Mummy
2501-5000	2	2	Mummy
5001-10000	3	3	Spectre
10001-22500	4	4	Spectre
22501-40000	5	5	Vampire



40001-60000	6	6	Vampire
60001-90000	7	7	Vampire
90001-135000	8	8	Vampire
135001 up	9	8+3	Vampire

TAMOACHAN VAMPIRES TABLE II

Level	Strength	Damage	Armour Class	Regener- ation	Level Drain	Charm Save	Special Abilities
1	13	1-3	9	-	-	-	A
2	14	1-4	8	-	-	-	B
3	15	1-6	7	-	-	-	C
4	16	2-7	6	1	-	-	D
5	17	3-8	5	1	-	Normal	E
6	18	4-9	4	1	1	Normal	F
7	18/01	5-10	3	2	1	-1	G
8	18/51	5-10	2	2	1	-1	H
9	18/76	5-10	1	3	2	-2	I

Strength becomes the minimum level if it is below that level. If it is above that level, no change occurs.

Damage is the damage done by a bite. In order to satisfy the vampire's blood-lust, kills must be made with a bite.

Armour class is similar to the monkish armour class ability, but in the case of vampires is conferred by the increasingly powerful bond with the Negative Material Plane.

Regeneration is the number of hitpoints which may be regenerated in one round. This ability is not gained until 4th level.

Level drain is the life levels a vampire can drain from its victim using a bite. A save vs. death magic is applicable. At 9th level, one level is drained even if the save is successful. This ability is not gained until the 6th level.

Charm save indicates the modifier on the save vs. the vampire's charming gaze. The save is vs. magic and success indicates no effect. Failure should be treated as a Charm Person spell. The vampire may use this ability once per round. This ability is not gained until 5th level.

EXPLANATION OF SPECIAL ABILITIES

- A. Immunity to sleep, charm and hold spells.
- B. The ability to polymorph to the form of a bat, as often as desired.
- C. Immunity to poison and paralysis.
- D. Half-damage from cold and electricity-based attacks.
- E. The ability to assume gaseous form, as often as desired. When the vampire reaches 0 hit points, he or she will now be forced into gaseous form rather than dying. To restore his or her corporeal form the vampire must return to his or her grave and rest for eight hours.
- F. Immunity to normal weapons.
- G. The ability to summon and control 10-100 rats. The rats will arrive within 2-12 rounds. In places where rats are not present, bats may be summoned instead. In places where neither are present, nothing may be summoned.
- H. The ability to summon and control 3-18 wolves. The wolves will arrive in 2-12 rounds. In places where wolves are not present, nothing may be summoned.

TAMOACHAN VAMPIRES TABLE III

Armour	Shield	Weapons*	Oil	Poison
none	none	any	yes	yes

* includes any magical weapons of the named type.

Tamoachan vampires are subject to all the weaknesses of normal vampires. That is, they will die if exposed to direct sunlight (but not a Continual Light spell). They will lose one third of their hit points each round they are within running water. A strongly presented cross or garlic will keep them at bay, and they may be turned as described earlier. Finally, a Tamoachan can be killed (even after reaching 5th level) by any of the various methods to destroy vampires mentioned in the Monster Manual.

Periodically, a Tamoachan vampire must fulfill his or her blood-lust. As the bond with the Negative Material Plane becomes stronger, this blood-lust naturally increases. Thus, a vampire must kill and drain the blood of one creature per level per week. Of course, animals are not as useful to quell this lust as are humans. Animals will vary from being worth $\frac{1}{4}$ of a creature to $\frac{1}{2}$ of a creature. In order to satisfy the vampire's blood-lust, kills must be made with a bite.

Though all Tamoachan vampires can create lesser vampires as soon as they gain their level draining ability (6th level), this is to be strongly discouraged in player characters (a plague of vampirism being very unhealthy for a campaign).



For clerics, the choice is between flails and maces. Maces are more traditional but only do 2-7/1-6, whereas a flail does a slightly more satisfactory 2-7/2-8. Lucerne hammers (which sound great in the book) are not (by AD&D rules) useable by clerics as they are not, as some people propose, large hammers, but are in fact polearms with sharp and very pointed spikes, which of course is generally forbidden.

Thieves have a wider choice, but it comes back once again to a Broadsword or Longsword. Most thieves will have sufficient dexterity to let them use a dagger as a second weapon.

Magicians are supposed to be able to choose between a dagger and a staff. Daggers have the advantage that they can be used as missile weapons too, but a staff has certain advantages. If a magician staff counts as a quarterstaff, they can do 1-6/1-6 which I think is a little too much. I rule that magician staves do 1-4/1-6 which makes them superior to daggers in normal combat, but not too good. This, of course, is up to the individual DM.

Subclasses are the same as their base class except that assassins have the same choice as fighters (but only Shortswords, Longswords, Broadwords and daggers can be used to backstab) and druids may take scimitars which do a healthy 1-8/1-8.

Missile weapons are too complex to discuss here -- the merits of composite versus self long or short bows is not a matter for The Devil's Advocate to tackle at this stage. And if anyone wants to dispute my suggestions, please do send your queries/insults/constructive arguments in and we may print them. Is there nobody prepared to defend Short Swords?

ARCANA ADVOCATUS

SPECTACLES OF REALITY

by Rhys Howitt.

This artifact was created for Thosrongadin the Blind King by the Witch-queen Veldirra, almost three thousand years ago in the Age of Hewing ending the Ascendency of Forests. It allowed him to restore the withered Aargarronian Empire and to cast its borders further: with the powers of the Spectacles he was able to conquer Gorvan to the west, and the Confederation of Sciankor to the east, and was only prevented from taking Darn's Weald and Gakirron by the Fate of The Doom.

There has been much speculation about the part of the sorceress Veldirra in the expansion of Aargarron. One thing that is almost certain is that the Spectacles were conceived as an assistance to Thosrongadin, but as little more; certainly they were not planned to be artefactual: Veldirra, despite her considerable power, was not capable of creating such an eldritch item by herself. It seems that some mighty and anonymous agent interceded to make her creation infinitely more powerful.

What is argued by sages is the origin of The Doom. Some say that the creature which magicked the Spectacles placed it on them so as to stop them being used to control the world, but others note that Veldirra was eager for power herself, and probably made the Spectacles in the first place to lure the King into marriage. Some suggest that, further than this, she coveted the Empire, and that she placed a curse on them so as to procure the Sapphire Throne on his demise. What is important is that when she gave Thosrongadin the Spectacles, he was (by the power within them) able to see her in her true form -- and he banished her from the Empire in a singular lack of gratitude. Apparently she was shortly assassinated.

The Spectacles of Reality appear much as do Eyes of Charming, although the crystal is of a slightly darker hue, and that a band of gold connects the two lenses and fits over the nose. Once affixed to the eyes, they cannot be removed until the wearer dies, when they teleport away to a seemingly random location.

What, then, are the capabilities of the Spectacles? At all times the wearer has very superior vision (as Eyes of the Eagle and Eyes of Minute Seeing) as well as ultravision over the same distance and 200' infravision. Also the wearer may detect Good/Evil and Invisible simply by glancing, and has immunity to all illusions (except those caused by the wearer's own insanity -- see below). And, of course, they give this sight even if the wearer is intrinsically blind.

Once a turn the possessor has Clairvoyance as the spell. Once an hour several powers are available: Detect Charm, Detect Magic, and Charming (as Eyes of Charming). Further powers, available once per day, are True Seeing, Vision, and a superior ESP (allows the possessor to search a subject's mind for all facts and motives. A saving throw must be made for each broad collection of facts/motives, and if this is made those things are not revealed to the wearer of the Spectacles.)

For clerics, the choice is between flails and maces. Maces are more traditional but only do 2-7/1-6, whereas a flail does a slightly more satisfactory 2-7/2-8. Lucerne hammers (which sound great in the book) are not (by AD&D rules) useable by clerics as they are not, as some people propose, large hammers, but are in fact polearms with sharp and very pointed spikes, which of course is generally forbidden.

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Possession of the Spectacles gives immediate colour-blindness. The only other negative effect is the Doom of Veldirra, a consequence of the all-seeing nature they allow. The wearer will have increasing difficulty in trusting people (for we all have our schemes and plots) and will find himself more and more alone. This is quite likely (20% minus wisdom as chance per month) to cause some form of insanity. The chance for insanity is not cumulative but insanities may be. They are not normally curable although wishes have a 20% chance. The types of insanity are: (D4)

1. Paranoia
2. Melancholia
3. Hallucinatory Insanity
4. Suicidal Mania.

The Spectacles have shown up in many places in the time they have been on Zaenis, but have ever been the company of great kings and masters of war and statecraft, spawning many empires which then crash inevitably. They were last recorded across the eyes of Zohmarhis, 37th Caliph of Bannath, who died about twenty years before the Thralls of Banndak rebelled and his dynasty was overthrown by the Lords of Flame.

MUDDA'S Menagerie.

TRUE GOBLINS

by Mark Robins.

No. Appearing: 4-40
 Frequency: Uncommon
 Hit Dice: 4 + 5
 Armour Class: 5
 No. of Attacks: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: As per weapon.
 Special Attacks: Hypnotism
 Special Defenses: Fire resistant
 % in Lair: 85%
 Treasure Type: F
 Alignment: Neutral Evil
 Size: S (4½ feet tall)
 Psionic Ability: Nil
 Attack/Defense Modes: Nil



Goblins dwell underground and work at great forges amidst the very flames; fire and heat affect them as cool water does humans. A goblin will suffer 1-3 pts damage per pint of water that touches him, and he is also susceptible to holy water. Goblins are unaffected by heat or flame, take half damage from lightning, and double damage from cold. A Control Weather spell which causes rain will do one point of damage to any Goblin within, per round. Goblins appear as ugly, green-skinned dwarves, with exaggerated noses and flaming red eyes. They generally wear black clothing and hoods over chainmail.

For the first round a being sees a Goblin's face, he must save vs. magic (per hypnotism spell) or be hypnotised. Goblins may also try to persuade passers-by to enter their lair (and thus be ensnared)-- if a party talks with a Goblin, there is a save vs. magic or they are Suggested to enter the Lair of the Goblins.

Here they will serve as slaves for a year and a day. They will then be released, only with their immediate clothing, and will not remember the location of the Goblin lair. Any being who has worked in the Goblins' mines for more than six months must make a save (5%/constitution point) or be blinded; at any rate any being will lose 1-3 points of constitution permanently, and Hit Dice bonuses are lost permanently if constitution is lowered past 15.

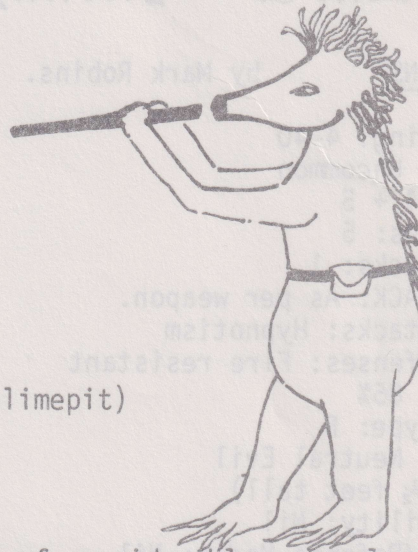
In battle Goblins will wield poisoned flails (25%), poisoned scimitars (50%) and poisoned battle axes (25%); and half of any Goblin force will be armed with short composite bows (poisoned arrows).

Goblins may surround themselves with 5' r. of darkness. For every 10 Goblins, there will be one Hobgoblin. Hobgoblins are similar to Goblins, but have 9 HD and generally wear plate mail, and usually command the lesser Goblins. They may Hypnotise and Suggest as normal goblins, but they have other powers: Darkness 10' radius, Invisibility (at will), Move Silently (Surprise 50%), Read Magic, Sleep (3/day), Hold Portal (1/day), Knock (1/day), Write (1/day), Spider Climb (2/day) and Feather Fall (1/day). If 40 goblins are encountered, there is a 50% chance of their being Goblins of a King (there will be 5-50 extra goblins, 20-200 kobold servants, 2-5 troll guards and a Goblin King). A King Goblin has 12 hit dice and all the powers of a Hobgoblin, and in addition the spells of a Necromancer. Goblins are sometimes (25%) encountered mounted on Giant Lizards; if so encountered, Hobgoblins will be mounted on Minotaur Lizards. For every Goblin encountered there will be 0-3 (d4 -1) human captives of either sex. For every Hobgoblin there will be 2-4 (d3 +1). Sometimes, evil lords have pacts with goblin princes, and employ the Goblins as warriors.

MOTAGROKS

by Rhys Howitt.

Frequency: Rare
Hit Dice: 3
Armour Class: 7
No. of Attacks: 2
Damage/Attack: 1-3/1-3
Special Attacks: Poison darts.
Special Defenses: Nil
% in Lair: 80%
Treasure Type: D non-magical usually (each slimepit)
Alignment: Neutral
Size: S (5½' tall)
No Psionics.



Motagroks are a race which live in areas of considerable natural seepage, mainly subterranean scapes with numerous rockpools. In addition to the normal dungeon algae, the Motagroks culture their own varieties of slime to fill these pools, and most are malodourous and of a sloppy, soupy consistency. The Motagroks spend much of their time slime-sitting in these pools, much as we sunbake.

Motagroks are an amphibian race related to troglodytes. They are covered with a moist grey-green skin, and have long snouts and their heads are covered with tentacle-like extensions of the dermis.

They speak Common and their own language in a hissing voice and will negotiate with parties -- up to a point. They won't eat humans, preferring certain types of slime. Their companion race, Hoorts (see below) do like a nice succulent adventurer occasionally, but Motagroks would rather have the party go on and kill any annoying monsters nearby than see their friends with full tummies. What the Motagroks do need is humans and demihumans for their reproduction -- how they do it is uncertain, except that they seem able to implant zygotes in the areas of the bowel richly supplied with blood, from where they are cut out at term (about three months).

Motagroks, when found, are 60% likely to be all in a slimepit unless they have warning or are suspicious; this is no major problem for them, as they can leap out of the pits and into melee in one round (just as penguins can leap up onto ice floes). Their Hoort cohorts can jump out in one round also. The Motagroks do this by pushing hard against the walls with their hand-paws, and kicking very hard with their feet. The handpaws have three fingers and an opposable thumb, as well as a tough abrasive pad which lets them grip the walls through the slime.

It is these pads that can be used to advantage in combat--they do 1-3/1-3 damage. Most Motagroks will use a weapon though: the principal one is a blowpipe with poison darts. The poison is scraped from the back of the Hoorts, and has two effects: a save must be made at +2 (it is not very powerful) or else catatonic paralysis sets in -- it is actually more like a Feign Death spell as the senses are not affected. Even if this save is made, another must be made too (no bonus this time) or else the victim loses 1-3 points of dexterity for half an hour. Hoort poison lasts for two days, but both Hoorts and Motagroks are immune to it. The dart itself is 1-3 damage.

Most Motagrok groups are ruled by a chief of double hit dice and damage attack. He runs the show and also organises the temple life; Motagroks worship Laogzed the Toad God, and bring their best slime to adorn the walls and rocks of the temple. Any humans who die in Motagrok territory will be dumped into the slimepit in full armour and with all treasure (Motagroks not understanding treasure unless it is greasy and/or slimy), so the bottom of old temple pits can have many interesting things. Large slugs (4 HD, bite for 1-6, spit acid for 1-6 unless save is made, size M, AC 8, animal intelligence) are 70% likely to guard the temple, and there will be 2-12 of them.

Often the Motagroks will cover up semi-disused slime pits to stop them drying out. For game purposes, these work just as pits, dumping people who do not roll under their dexterity into the slime (roll d20). It is not possible to get out of slimepits without some special means, as the walls are too slippery to climb. Often a deep slimpit which has only a few inches of slime at the bottom will be used as a gaol to keep captured humans in.

HOORTS: a race of Giant Toad, with LOW intelligence, AC 6, 6" + 6" hop, 2-8 damage, size M. They are used as servants and guards by the Motagroks. As previously noted, they are poisonous. They are Neutral Evil.

IMPROBABILITY DRAGONS

BY C. MATHESON.

Are your characters intensely lucky, or outrageously unfortunate? Do they get into amazingly stupid scrapes, or by a horrid twist of fate wipe out your carefully-chosen monsters and dungeons? To give DMs a little more control over the "arse factor", Improbability Dragons were created.

When an improbable event (e.g. rolling three natural 20s in a round) has occurred, there is a 10% chance that one or more Improbability Dragons will appear. Exceptionally stupid or brilliant acts count as improbable events too.

They appear as normal dragons (as per Monster Manual) of the various colours, except that they are only 3' long. They only do 1-2 bite, 1-3 by tail lash (their claws are too small to hurt). They do one point of breath damage per hit die (just as Very Young dragons in MM). They fight so as to reduce the improbability of the situation, to bring the situation back to normality: if the party is being too effective, the dragons will fight them, but a group doing unusually poorly may get the Improbability Dragons on their side.

There is only one way to get entirely rid of Improbability Dragons -- that is by arranging something even more improbable than the event that brought them in; for instance, rolling four natural 20s in a round. Providing no more dragons come too (normal 10% chance), the Improbability Dragons will disappear.

Once the melee or situation is over or normalised, the dragons will try to leave -- staying around characters is dangerous for them as improbable things will probably occur. If after a week they have still not been banished, they turn into real (Very Young) dragons. Colour will depend on the general alignment of the group they intervened for/against, and the alignment will depend on that also. Some sages suggest that dragons' eggs, like roosters' eggs, are a myth and that all dragons are created in this manner.

BOMB MONSTERS

By ANDREW SOUTH.

The torso of these peculiar creatures is roughly spherical except that they have two long arms and a pair of short legs. They are red in colour and make grumbling noises as they rush towards characters, grab them in a close cuddle, and explode for 4-24 points damage. This apparent suicide takes them down to -20 hit points, but they have regenerative ability at 1 HP per round. After the twenty rounds are up, they will wake up and head off in search of the party again. They have 1 HD, 9" movement, AC 6, and are of low intelligence. They originated on a hot jungle planet, so their regeneration is not stopped by fire -- cold and acid are effective however.

The D&D combat system leaves a lot to be desired in the way of "realism" or even "skill". In a fantasy game it would be rather silly to concentrate too much on realism; however, when you begin to remove all skill from combat, leaving everything to chance, it is perhaps not as much fun as when you have a reasonable number of options.

PARRYING

A parry is when tries to ward off one's opponent by providing a glancing blow to his weapon or by deflecting his weapon with yours. This will involve the parrying character's entire attack (though if other attacks are available, they may be made, however one may never parry more than a single attack in any one round of melee). A parry will subtract 2 (10%) from your opponent's chance of hitting. Should the attacker roll a natural 20 he will have a chance of 2%/strength point of disarming you; if he rolls a natural 01 there is a 2% chance per strength point of the parrier disarming the attacker (note: only a weaponed attacker/parrier may be disarmed. Should a monk be using his hands to parry and he is disarmed, add a d6 to the damage he would normally suffer from the attack). If a weapon in a person's left hand (assuming he is using his right hand) is being used to parry, the hitting modification on the attacker is -1, and on a roll of a natural 19 or 20 the attacker will automatically disarm the parrier's left hand weapon. A disarmed weapon will land 1-6' away from the combatants. A parry may only be made against a frontal or right side attack by an unsurprised defender. A natural parrying weapon like a staff subtracts -3 from the attacker's chance rather than -2.

DODGING

A character may attempt to dodge a blow/missile weapon: this will occupy his entire round of combat -- any additional attacks are lost because of the extreme nature of the dodge. In addition to normal dexterity bonuses a Dodging character will subtract 3 or 15% from his armour class (if the Dodger has a 15+ dexterity the minus is -4). However should the Dodger be struck regardless of his dodge, he must make a dexterity saving throw (roll less than his dexterity on a d20) with a minus equal to the attacker's strength bonus or he will be knocked to the ground and will lose the next round in getting up: attacks made on him whilst on the ground are at +2. This reflects the chance of being caught off balance after an unsuccessful dodge. On slippery or uncertain footing a normal dexterity saving throw must be made after a dodge even if missed by the attack. A dodge will affect all frontal attacks made on the dodger.

DISARMING

A character may make a deliberate attempt to disarm his opponent by striking at his weapon. So instead of attacking the opponent's armour class, he attacks that of his opponent's weapon. A wooden hafted weapon has an armour class of 6 whilst a sword or metal braced weapon will have an armour class of 4. To the armour class of his weapon the defender adds his dexterity bonus, the magical bonus of the weapon being disarmed, and a bonus for every point of strength that the defender has over 14. If the target of a disarming attack is holding his weapon in two hands he adds a further point to the armour class of his weapon, whereas if the attacker is wielding a flail, morning star or trident, then he has a +1 chance of disarming an opponent. Should the attacker successfully strike the opponent's weapon then there is a 4% chance per strength point of the disarmer of disarming the defender. For example, a character with 16 strength, a 15 dexterity, wielding a +1

Two-handed sword has a weapon armour class of 4 -2 (due to a 16 strength) -1 (due to a dexterity of 15) -1 (because his weapon is a +1 sword) and -1 (because it is a two-handed weapon, thus his weapon's armour class is a total of -1. Assume a 3rd level fighter with a 17 strength wishes to disarm our character. To hit AC -1, the fighter would normally need a 19, but because he has a +1 hitting bonus (due to his strength) and because tridents make disarming attacks at +1, he needs a 17 to hit his opponent's weapon, and if he hits there is a 68% chance that he will disarm his target (17 x 4%). Should a defender be using two weapons only one weapon may be struck at per attack. An unarmed Monk cannot normally be disarmed (exception: Parrying). A disarmed weapon will land 1-6' away from the combatants.

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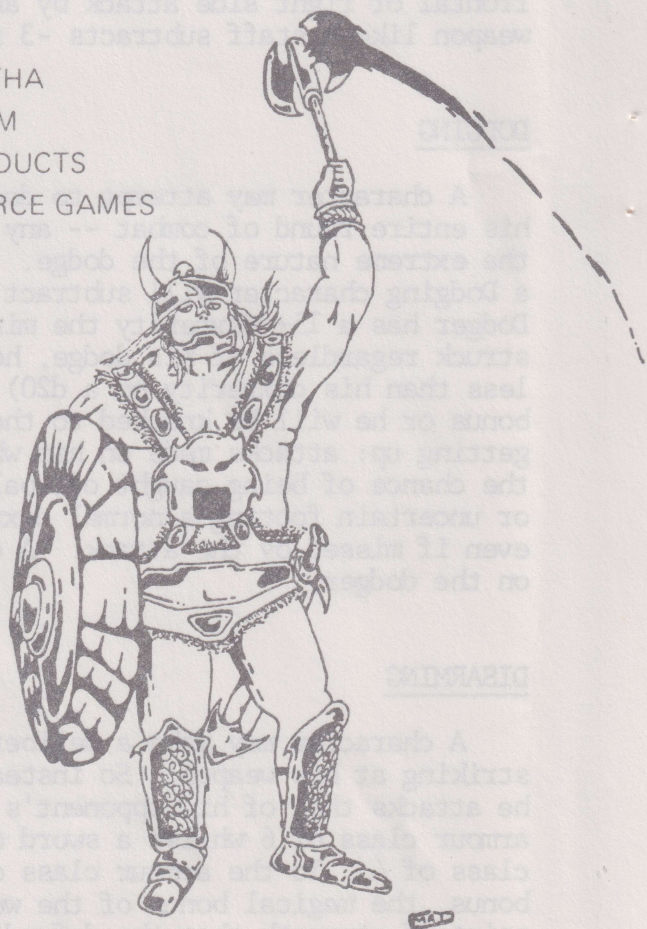
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I crossed the stupidity threshold (that period when one thinks D&D childish) about five years ago and have since been playing and DMing enthusiastically. The changes to the game since then have been massive. Our original worlds had Vorpall Blades and Staves of Wizardry aplenty, and we went from random room to random room to kill a random monster then hunt through the chest (or, if the DM was being particularly imaginative, the obligatory pile of offal) to find the treasure. The DM took along a character too until the cries of "deliberate favouritism" became too loud. These were the days of 39th level thieves and "theme levels" of eight umber hulks in 20' by 20' rooms. We thought "Blackmoor" was pretty hot stuff.

We suffered for a while under those malignant Original rules, then many of us turned to Barker's Empire of the Petal Throne in frustration. Eventually the Monster Manual came out, and D&D won back a few people, but it was not until the (very) long-awaited Players' Handbook came out that it really took off. Our shoddy dungeons looked a bit weak alongside such creations as the corny but still-magnificent Citystate of the Overlord from Judges' Guild.

By now we had regular access to The Dragon (and the cheaper but nastier White Dwarf) and this caused a rapid upgrading of our dungeons. The Judges' Guild material suddenly went into a rapid decline, from which it has never recovered -- this gave us a little confidence, but it was obvious that something had to happen soon. To be fair, White Dwarf has been improving all the time and is now an excellent publication.

In early 1978 (was it that long ago?) we received the Oct 1977 issue of The Dragon, in which was an article by Richard Gilbert entitled "Let there be a Method to your Madness" and this revolutionised dungeon-eering. This radical idea -- logic -- damned random monster tables forever. The concept can be broken down into the following questions:

1. Who built the dungeon? Why?
2. Who has lived in it over the years? How did they leave their mark? Why did they abandon the dungeon?
3. What lives there today? Why don't they eat each other? If they need to, can they get in and out, and do they have access to food and mates? If not, why not?

The recommended method was to first decide how many levels would be required, work out (roughly) what they would be required for, then draw them with this in mind. No frenzied activity with the mathomat, but rather a pensive examination of the requirements of the builder. In Method in your Madness dungeons you hardly ever get triangular rooms, and only get secret and one-way doors when there is a use for them.

The same philosophy, slightly altered, can be applied to the distribution of monsters and more particularly, what they will do to the party. Often kobolds react just the same way as bugbears except that they do less damage. Orcs sit patiently in 20' by 30' rooms waiting for adventurers to come in and contest for the 200 GP in the chest.

.Eek! The monsters are just as paranoid as you are. They know that the dungeon is dangerous and will certainly plan for their own safety. You spike doors or at least wedge them shut, so why shouldn't they? If they are staying anywhere on a permanent basis they will probably bar and barricade doors also. That way your 18/97 fighters will take

a couple of rounds to batter the door to splinters, which lets them run onto the set spears of the hobgoblins -- not a good idea even in plate mail. All sorts of humanoid races will carry little horns to call for assistance, and even better (because Silence spells don't help) is a long rope leading down the passage to a loud bell.

Gravel along the bottom of the tunnel is very effective against invisible creatures -- crunch, crunch, crunch, and the goblins know exactly where to find their opponents. Not great for the characters, but this has to work both ways.

Type (a) insinuating poison is cheap and could perhaps be prepared from dungeon fungi. Most races will use poison against invaders, and type (a) from kobolds makes them tough. As a matter of course, kobold lairs will have some creatures assisting them as guards -- giant boars or weasels allow blitzkrieg techniques and this teaches the players to respect kobolds a little more.

Whenever a humanoid finds it has enemies or gets pestered by adventurers, there are various options open to it. It can block up the entrances with stone, which is really quite effective in dissuading intruders, or (if they need to use the passage themselves) they can set up a fortified barrier. Even kobolds can use crossbows to guard this point, and further effective tactics can be worked out. One really amusing one is for the kobolds to hurl caltrops (a miniature catapult is very good at this and easy to make) across the floor, around a charging party. This is going to cut their movement rate dramatically and kill the charge, giving the kobolds a great chance to use their (perhaps poisoned) javelins.

The portcullis is a useful defensive point, but has the disadvantage that spells can be cast through it. Even so, there are few things as nasty as having one crash down and cut you off from the real world. Murder holes scattering acid and/or rocks are useful too, and even at 1 HP per splash, the acid will polish off weakened characters in low-level dungeons.

Special tactics will be in existence, particularly in much-frequented areas. Even kobold elders live for over a century, and that is a long time to observe different strategies in operation. Obviously, mindflayer plans will be more detailed and complete than the deliberations of a tribe of orcs, but all groups should have something different to use against the players. Nets, various tricks and traps....I don't really want to list more because I'm using them in my own dungeons. One great and simple idea is to have a pit which tips only after a certain weight, and to set this at a corridor cross-roads. One party that I was in (years ago) pursued a kobold down a passage only to discover that we had fallen into a pit with spikes, courtesy of the tribe. Owing to map troubles we fell down it twice more over the ensuing weeks, so the kobolds really did well out of it. Collapsing stairways (leading into a pit of venomous snakes) are great fun too -- perhaps not for the players. (Author: I wrote this months before the "Dungeon at Arvidge Tournament" -- some of these ideas were used in that, and I know that some of you have, from that, experience in them. I wonder what you think!)

One other note is HAVE DIFFERENT MONSTERS, to save you and your players from stagnation. Many of these tribes will have been isolated for thousands of years, and they will all have developed special characteristics. One local dungeonmaster has kobolds with a single (large and very sharp) horn on their heads. These run into the characters and attempt to impale for 2-12. They are said to be very effective indeed. One day I experimented with regenerating kobolds. A party bashed a few, then carted them upstairs to the tavern to collect a bounty, before heading

down again. When they resurfaced, a very angry publican indicated his wrecked establishment and promptly sacked the group. Other monsters might be things like piranhas which float in air in dungeon corridors -- a shoal is great fun. Some monsters, like the Ogre Mage, lend themselves to all sorts of interesting tactics. Please no quasi-neo-otyughs.

Humanoid shamans can be good but this will depend on how imaginative you are. Cure Light Wounds is best used on high-HD creatures like Giant Weasels than low-point humanoids because they will hit more often and do more damage. Speak with Animals converts rats into an instant and useful guard-service. Prayer is a useful spell for humanoid hordes.

A goblin witchdoctor with Invisibility can be an amazing advantage, allowing superior ambushes and scouting. Note that a Giant Weasel can smell invisible creatures from quite a distance.

So don't just draw up the dungeon; plan strategies and tactics for your nasties, and make the players work hard for their experience points. The day must come when a kobold dungeon will intimidate illusionists and panic paladins.

DALEKS REVISITED, or OOPS! THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY!! by Mark Robins.

Upon receiving my copy of "The Devil's Advocate", I greedily flipped through the pages prepared to enjoy the egocentric thrill of seeing my name in print. But rather unfortunately, last year (after a period of prolonged mental fatigue) I gave my beloved Dalek monster to those collating the magazine. I made a gross error in not rereading my creation which was truly Frankensteinian in its nature. People, after reading the Dalek, would come up to me and poke me with their grubby fingers, and I would slink away, my ears filled with the derisive shouts of "There goes the D&D Davros" ringing in my ears. Well sorry squire, and just to show that I'm not a Looney (though that of course will remain a matter for conjecture), here are those desperately needed corrections for the Dalek:

NUMBER APPEARING: 1-6 (1 75%, 1-6 25%)

HIT DICE: 50 hit points.

ARMOUR CLASS: -4

Other statistics as noted.

The first thing I must state is that a Dalek encounter should be by no means random or unprepared, and only very strong parties in special circumstances should ever be faced by one let alone a group of them. So here are the revised spell vulnerabilities:

FUMBLE SPELL: This will immobilise a Dalek for 1 round/level of caster (i.e. no movement), and decrease its chance of hitting by half (rounding down fractions). However the Dalek will only be affected by this spell 40% of the time.

HEAT METAL SPELL: This spell will inflict 2 points of damage/level of caster on the target Dalek, and there is a percentage chance equal to the caster's level of destroying the Dalek completely.

WEB SPELL: This spell functions normally against a Dalek, though they

will cut their way out in 2-8 rounds and of course will not suffocate.

BURNING HANDS SPELL: This spell will inflict $\frac{1}{2}$ point of damage/level of the caster.

MAGIC MISSILE: This will inflict 1-2 points of damage per missile.

SHOCKING GRASP: This spell will inflict 1 point of damage per level of caster.

FIREBALL/FLAME STRIKE SPELLS: These spells will do 1-3 points of damage per level of the caster on all Daleks in the area of the spell.

LIGHTNING BOLT/SUMMONED LIGHTNING: These bolts will inflict 1-4 points damage/level of the caster with a percentage chance equal to the caster's level of destroying the Dalek.

WALL OF FOG, COLOUR SPRAY: These will affect a Dalek's vision though remember their scanning powers.

EARTHQUAKE SPELL: This will upend any Daleks in the area (75% chance/Dalek), and it will take them 3-18 rounds to right themselves (halved if assisted).

GLOBES OF INVULNERABILITY, ANTI-MAGIC SHELLS: If a magicuser touches a Dalek there is a chance depending on the type of spell cast of neutralising that Dalek for a number of rounds (no movement or attacks):

	% Chance	Duration
Minor Globe of Invulnerability	50%	2-9 rounds
Globe of Invulnerability	65%	2-13 rounds
Anti-magic shell	80%	3-24 rounds

During this time all physical attacks on a Dalek are at +2 hit.

CHANTS AND PRAYER SPELLS: These operate as normal (reducing Dalek efficiency by 5%).

DISPEL EVIL: As the Dalek is not of "this world", a Dispel Magic may actually transport a Dalek back to its plane of origin (35% chance). Or because of Divine Aid Dalek efficiency will be at -25%.

TRIP SPELLS: There is a 20% chance of upending a Dalek (see Earthquake).

FEEBLEMIND SPELL: These will halve Dalek efficiency (round down).

FIRE STORM: Daleks take 1-6 points of damage from this spell.

WALL SPELLS: These will hinder a Dalek, though it may smash through Ice, and only take 1-3 points of damage from a Wall of Fire.

BIGBY'S HAND SPELLS: These operate against Daleks, but only inflict $\frac{1}{2}$ damage.

PRISMATIC SPHERES, SPRAYS AND WALLS: All operate against Daleks, although damage suffered is halved.

Weapon attacks are effective against Daleks, but swords other than Sharpness, Vorpal, Flaming or those that get bonuses against enchanted beings inflict half damage. Any swords that drain energy (or other such energy drains) remove 10% efficiency and 5 points from a Dalek. As for Dalek attacks, the Death Ray is made at +1 savingthrow, and if made only 2-16 points of damage are suffered (a save against Wands will halve this). For Daleks armed with Machine Guns, they may shoot 1-8 bullets/round. Dalek efficiency extends to movement rate as well as chances of hitting. A character who begins and ends a round next to a Dalek may upend it by rolling "Bend Bars" chance.

THE ISLE OF MENTOR.

by Nicholas J. Cowell.

This campaign was set in the far south and east of Tolkein's Middle Earth, early in the Fourth Age, following the Downfall of Sauron. In doing so, I simply extrapolated the maps in "Lord of The Rings" using the few mentions of the Southern and Eastern regions of Middle Earth listed in LoTR as starting points. Thus, the lake of Rhun, Far Harad, Dorwinion, the Wainriders, and various others found their way onto the map alongside total inventions such as Hyar-menyanta, Harad Formen, Lomeanor, Valkon, Vila-en-Quendi and the immortal Isle of Mentor. My reasons for using LoTR in this way was in order to avoid the onerous task of detailing 4000 years of history over a whole continent (a task I recently undertook in my Kos campaign). No D&D player will be wholly unfamiliar with Tolkein's history/geography; thus the players have some of the background knowledge of their characters which allows better role-playing.

The action in the campaign took place largely in the southerly Isle of Mentor; a medium-sized temperate island ruled over by a mad wizard called Veladon the Red, (If a name of this type rings bells (e.g. Gandalf the Grey), it should -- I postulated Veladon as one of the five Istari sent into Middle Earth (Tolkein names only Gandalf, Radagast and Saruman) who, as with Saruman, was weakened by his dominion over men. Because of his paranoia and mysophobia (fear of infection) he rarely left his palace on the White Cliffs, having eight simulacra spread about the island to administer government and justice (unbeknownst to the inhabitants).

As Veladon's interest extended only to magical research and taxation, law and order was largely absent from the land outside the cities. This allowed the huge tribe of primitive nomadic Balchoth (Veladon's allies in his conquest of the island) to wander the island unhindered. They were led by such worthies as Pithon Bullwrestler (whose favourite attack was to crush the unlucky object of his aggression in a bearhug) and Makor the Inassailable, Axe of the Balchoth (who was successfully assailed by the players). In opposition were the deposed aristocrats of ancient Mentor, led by Lord Anach of the Westery Hundreds and Ledach Anonar the Protector.

The characters of the party were no less colourful. There was the mighty Janus the Two-faced, who robbed a whole town singlehandedly, and wandered off for a year to learn to play the lute, only to return as an almost completely different character called Kirgurth. There was Erran the magic-user (STR 3, INT 18 (rolled)) who rode on the back of his crony Tholia (STR 18/44, INT 3 (again, rolled)), who collected glassware and fine porcelain. There was Grim the half-orc fighter/thief who delighted in garotte and staff, and who murdered the mad Scots magician Logarithm Nacalalgorithm in his sleep six months (real time!) after the aforesaid Logarithm had made some disparaging remarks about his ancestry. There was Gonzo the Pegled who lost half of his foot to the knife (very sharp) of an annoyed master thief he disturbed opening a chest.

There was Poly the 6'9" assassin, who delighted in quoting poetry and popping pills, and whose favourite pastime was collecting devious and unusual locks. There was Loki Hellson, the magicuser/thief, whose avarice was matched only by the shortness of his lifespan. Lastly, there was Athos the 6' 7" assassin, whose greatest distinction was having a housemaid throw a pan of hot oil in his face when he sneaked into her kitchen intent upon burgling the house. At 6' 7", with a face like peeling pink weatherboard, his ability to melt into a crowd was just a little curtailed.



īγρῶ-ίρῶ-λῆγῶρῶ
 arda-en-hyarmen
 (Southlands)

This motley collection of low-lives had a terrible habit of causing catastrophe wherever they ventured; having at one stage no less than four separate enemies pursuing them intent on revenge. A further bad habit was their ability to get out of tight spots: like the time that one of their pursuers, an 18th level ranger whose forest they had burnt down, recognised one of the party at the top of a staircase and started to attack -- only to be pushed down the stairs by the party's assassin whom he did not recognise.

Their stumbling across the ruins of an old mithral mine contributed to the downfall of good government on the isle when they gave its location to just about every organisation in the country, causing civil war. This came about when one of the party members was bitten by a vampire, necessitating a Restoration spell for which they could not pay. They instead offered a service to the clerics, who accepted; asking the party to retrieve the eye of an idol from their enemies, the Druids. When the Druids were not amused by this, the party was forced to offer them something in return for their lives -- the location of the mine. The players then returned to the clerics, who were annoyed about not getting the eye -- so they were appeased by being given the location of the mithral mine. When one of the players then pawned a small mithral nugget in order to rebuy their possessions, the Thieves' Guild became inordinately interested in the origin of the nugget, and were promptly told. The players then walked away unscathed and let nature take its course (i.e. the triumph of the thieves over the other factions) causing the greatest mithral rush since that of '74, and the rebuilding of the Thieves' Guild headquarters into a slightly larger building.

Of course, not all occurrences in the campaign were as small-scale or as uncomplicated as that detailed above -- I will have to leave it to your imagination as to how they assailed the Inassailable or had a large company of spirits following them or destabilised the regime in Hyarmenarda. The downfall of several members of the party, however, was the devious Kalog Urban (Master Thief) and his mute 7' assistant Fred the Flesh (Golem) who took delight in believing that he really was a golem (and who fought like one). When it came to Kalog's notice that these boys were trying to move in on his territory, he and his assistant sent the party greetings in their own inimitable way and carried away those who didn't jump out the windows in large rolls of carpet to be sold into slavery.

It was about that time that the campaign was suspended after about a year and a half's on and off play, in order for us to suffer the rigours of Martin Kaseliland. Whilst not a particularly brilliant conception, the quality role-playing of the characters made this campaign a lasting success, still vividly remembered two years later.....

Nicholas J. Cowell Esq.

"Unsavoury", "boorish", "obnoxious" -- the AD&D system is scattered with references. Obviously Gary Gygax has found a quirk in his family tree and is over-compensating his rejection of his ancestry. Less apparent is that even with the rules slanted against them it is well worth considering them for your next character.

Any amateur sage with a knowledge of biology knows of the phenomenon of "hybrid vigour" -- the reason why mules are stronger than horses and donkeys. A half-orc has not only human and orcish genes but perhaps some pig (which is why some orcs have pig-faces), bear, goblin, hobgoblin, and ogre blood. This gives them a genetic strength unparalleled by any non-magical creature, and it shows in their +1 strength, +1 constitution -- probably the best two abilities to get bonuses in -- bonuses to the roll-up ability scores. True, they look a little odd, but in these rearrange-how-you-like days only paladins take high charisma anyway -- and if you keep half-orc henchman you won't really lose a point.

They share with halfelves the ability to choose clerical talents as part of a multiclass package. A cleric/assassin worshipping a nasty god is in a great position to set up secret triads and death squads. If you play that under certain circumstances non-humans can advance to one level more than the normally-permitted maximum, they have access to the wonderful *Animate Dead* spell and can smear evil thickly across the land.

If you go for the macho types, remember that half-orcs can reach the 10th level of fighting ability, which is one better than the dwarves.

To further rubbish their bad press, I refer you to page 16 of the DMs Guide, a section obviously scribed by a frustrated paladin. The race is referred to as being "cowardly". The distinction between cowardly and sensible depends largely on which side of the character alignment graph you lie (which might be a pun for half-orc assassins). The Red Dragon leaps out, sorties briefly, and the paladin calls out in his dying shriek, "Where's Crudmuzzle?", who is nowhere to be seen. He who fights and runs away lives to come back with a larger party when the dragon is asleep.

They are supposed to be bullies too -- this is in fact another advantage. It is always handy to have a few orcs as servants, and bullying them is the only way to get through to them. I suggest that DMs allow half-orcs to be immune to food poisoning as orcs surely must be, for they will be eating much the same food, being "rude, crude, crass", and "horrid."

Instead of sitting back looking stupid and passively absorbing the crap we serve up to you, why not write a reply to the rubbish, so we get feedback and another point of view. We ask that such contributions be funny or else cover new and interesting material. On the other hand, if you think it's good crap, tell us so that we can arrange more of the same. (Ed.)

This book is probably the best presented of the U.S. produced AD&D books, the illustrations being frequent and of a generally high standard. Unfortunately many of the items actually dealt with by the book are not so satisfying. The Gods, despite assertions to the contrary, appear as monsters with more hit dice, more magic and more power. The way that the gods are given with defined abilities, defined hitpoints etcetera is too much an american attempt to catalogue Gods within defined limits and fit them within the game framework. By presenting the Gods in this fashion there will be a temptation to abuse this book and actually encounter Gods. "Deities and Demigods" has come a long way from the old "Gods, Demigods and Heroes", but as far as the Gods go, its progression has been up a deadend. The heroes are however generally very good, if not excellent, though much of the scholastic groundwork must have been frightfully sketchy; e.g we have an Achilles with a strength lower than Odysseus (Ulysses), and an Odysseus with a 10 Wisdom. The Arthurian Knights are also presented, often inaccurately, but aside from the odd glaring error are adequate.

Aside from the unspeakable waste of including the American Indian Gods (who on earth would use them?), the Celtic Gods are the most misleading. Again we have that dreadfully schizoid Dagda (where on earth they gained the impression that he could split into a dozen identities is a mystery to me) and Nuada reappears, even though he was the original King of the Tuatha De Danaan (the Celtic Gods) who died before Dagda came to replace him. Arawn, true to the american idea of death is evil, when at worst he was Lawful Neutral, the ruler of the Land of the Dead, far from being a devil or demon as he is portrayed. Aside from some new monsters and the magnificent Central American Mythos, the book is at best adequate, but generally disappointing.

One area in which I had expected great help from "Deities and Demigods" was that of the cleric, however aside from the most useful part of the book (an index stating the God's sphere of influence, and the various characteristics of the clerics such as race, sex, attire, and alignment as well as a brief account of ceremonial practises and holy plants and animals) clerics were generally ignored apart from a paragraph or two dealing with their spell acquisition.

The problem that has hounded D&D from its conception has always been that Clerics are exclusively based on Christian models possibly the worst single model that could be chosen when dealing with the clerics of different religions. Many of the spells of Christian clerics are unique to the philosophy of the religion whilst the weapons available and fighting techniques are exclusively Christian. The idea of being unable to shed blood hence the use of bludgeon type weapons never applied to any religion other than that of Christianity, indeed in most ancient religions the priests were as good a warriors as their fighting men, the Roman Legionary who bore the eagle of his Legion was not only the best fighter in the legion but also a priest of the Legion's patron god (generally Mars). As for Ancient Greek priests, they wielded spears and swords in the thick of many a fray. Thus if religions are to be used other than that of Christianity, the Referee will have to decide which religions these are to be and to limit the fighting and spell casting of the priests accordingly.

Ideally speaking, the clerics for each God should have separate statistics, though it is easier and less time consuming to assign a general type of cleric to each religion, with brief

notes appended, denoting differences between the different deities. Before I give an example of Norse Clerics, I have one more important thing to say about D&D clerics. From the twisted corridors of E. Gary Gygax's mind sprang the idea of clerical resurrection of the dead! From my experience almost every religion is concerned to a certain extent with life after death, and no priest whatever the cause would risk so dreadful a blasphemy as raising the dead from their appointed place and risk the censure of some angry God. If a cleric insists on raising or resurrecting the dead, the solution is simple, if permitted the Cleric will replace the spirit of the resurrectee with his own(i.e he will die).

NORSE CLERICS IN D&D: by Mark Robins

The Norse Gods were a violent bickering pantheon if there was ever one, and this reflects on their worshippers, particularly the clerics who served to calm storms, encourage warriors, heal wounds, navigate their vessels and above all fight and slay whenever possible. Beyond the normal Wisdom requirement, a Norse Cleric should have a minimum score of 12 in both Strength and Constitution. If the cleric has a 16 in Wisdom and 14 in both Strength and Constitution he gains the 10% experience bonus.

Norse Clerics use the same Attack and Saving throw tables as other Clerics, however their weapon and armour restrictions are quite different. Norse Clerics disdain the use of any armour better than chainmail, thinking it cowardly, though they may also use shields, armour such as splint, banded or plate mail are prohibited. They gain the same number of weapon skills but their choice of weaponry is quite different once again: Broadsword, Bastard Sword, Two Handed Sword, Spear, Javelin, Battle Axe, Hand Axe, Hammer.

Norse Clerical symbols tend to be in the form of runes carved on shields, helms and jewellery. Funnily enough Norse women made better Clerics than the men, though were limited to being homebodies more than roving warrior priests.

Norse Clerics gain spells in the same numbers as normal Clerics, however their range of spell choice differs greatly. In brackets the spell is followed by its normal level and type in the Players Handbook; MU=Magic-User, Cl=Cleric, Dr=Druid

1st level Spells

- 1 Animal Friendship(1 Dr)
- 2 Bless(1 Cl)
- 3 Command(1 Cl)
- 4 Detect Magic(1 Cl)
- 5 Detect Evil/Good(1 Cl)
- 6 Enlarge(1 MU)
- 7 Protection From Evil(1 Cl)
- 8 Remove Fear(1 Cl)
- 9 Remove Cold(1 Cl)
- 10 Push(1 MU)
- 11 Light(1 Cl)
- 12 Predict Weather(1 Dr)

2nd level Spells

- 1 Augury(2 Cl)
- 2 Chant(2 Cl)
- 3 Cure Light Wounds(2 Dr)
- 4 Detect Charm(2 Cl)
- 5 Detect Invisible(2 MU)
- 6 Know Alignment(2 Cl)
- 7 Find Traps(2 Cl)
- 8 Hold Person(2 Cl)
- 9 Resist Fire(2 Cl)
- 10 Pyrotechnics(2 MU)
- 11 Speak with Animals(2 Cl)
- 12 Strength(2 MU)

3rd level Spells

- 1 Continual Light(3 Cl)

3rd level Spells

- 1 Continual Light(3 Cl)
- 2 Create Food and Water(3 Cl)
- 3 Cure Disease(3 Dr)
- 4 Dispel Magic(3 Cl)
- 5 Explosive Runes(3 MU)
- 6 Glyph of Warding(3 Cl)
- 7 Prayer(3 Cl)
- 8 Protection/Normal Missiles(3 MU)
- 9 Remove Curse(3 Cl)
- 10 Silence 15'radius(2 Cl)

4th level Spells

- 1 Cure Serious Wounds(4 Cl)
- 2 Detect Lie(4 Cl)
- 3 Cure Blindness(3 Cl)
- 4 Divination(4 Cl)
- 5 Fear(4 MU)
- 6 Exorcise(4 Cl)
- 7 Neutralise Poison(4 Cl)
- 8 Protection/Evil 10"radius(4 Cl)
- 9 Tongues(4 Cl)
- 10 Water Breathing(3 Dr)

5th level Spells

- 1 Atonement(5 Cl)
- 2 Commune(5 Cl)
- 3 Control Winds(5 Dr)
- 4 Animal Summoning 1(4 Dr)
- 5 Dispel Evil(5 Cl)
- 6 Insect Plague(5 Cl)
- 7 Quest(5 Cl)
- 8 Call Lightning(3 Dr)

6th level Spells

- 1 Animal Summoning 2(5 Dr)
- 2 Animal Growth(5 Dr)
- 3 Cure Critical Wounds(5 Cl)
- 4 Find the Path(6 Cl)
- 5 Wall of Thorns(6 Dr)
- 6 True Seeing(5 Cl)
- 7 Tenser's Transformation(6 MU)*
- 8 Plane Shift(5 Cl)

7th level Spells

- 1 Control Weather(7 Cl)
- 2 Confusion(7 Dr)
- 3 Earthquake(7 Cl)
- 4 Finger of Death(7 Dr)
- 5 Gate(7 Cl)
- 6 Heal(6 Cl)
- 7 Holy Word(7 Cl)
- 8 Symbol(7 Cl)

* As Magic-User's spell, however weapon limit is hand axe.

As you can see this is merely one new type of Cleric which could be used, and with a little thought and effort your campaign will improve as the Cleric becomes a more enjoyable and imaginative character class to play, remembering that a successful Cleric is a fanatically devoted Cleric. Keep a constant eye on how a Cleric acts and even thinks, adjusting experience accordingly. In future editions of the Devil's Advocate I hope to deal with Graeco-Roman and Egyptian Clerics.

SURPRISE

by martin dick.

SURPRISE -- a word that will strike fear into the most hardened adventurer, a phenomenon that will turn a handful of innocuous kobolds into a group of murderous chainsaws which will proceed to rip your cherished characters into little shreds, or (even worse) turn your troll into a tornado that will leave that invincible paladin a pile of limbs and offal before he can even draw a breath!

As it explains in the DM's Guide the term is basically self-explanatory; unfortunately the section which explains the mechanics of surprise is anything but. Our group and several others I know finally settled on the following: that if the party threw a 1 or a 2 this was subtracted from the monster's roll, to determine how many segments and vice versa.

This meant however that a party would be surprised for 5 segments and the above-mentioned buzzsaw kobolds would appear. It is ridiculous for a trained fighter to stand still for half a minute to be torn apart by a monster. One party I was in had successfully destroyed a kobold stronghold, killing about 80 in the process; we entered the last room, there to be torn apart by the last six surviving kobolds: we only lost four of the six members so we thought we got off lightly.

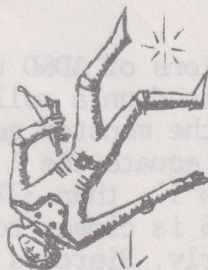
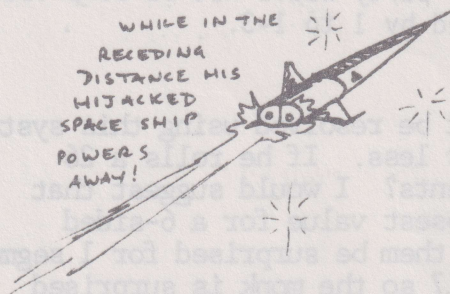
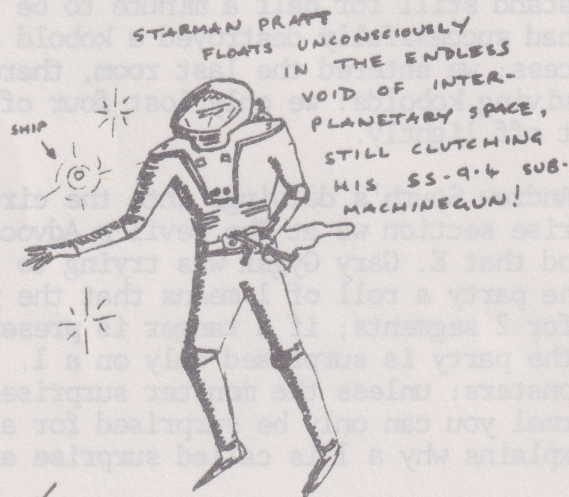
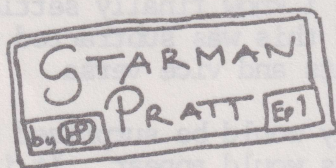
Now, thanks to Andrew South's delvings into the circuitous and labrynthine wording of the surprise section we at The Devil's Advocate can reveal to you the actual method that E. Gary Gygax was trying to tell us. When the dice is rolled by the party a roll of 1 means that the party is surprised for 1 segment, a 2 for 2 segments; if a ranger is present then a roll of 2 matters not, for the party is surprised only on a 1. Similar is the DM's roll for the monsters: unless the monster surprises on a different probability than normal you can only be surprised for a maximum of 2 segments. This reading also explains why a 1 is called surprise and a 2 complete surprise.

For creatures that surprise on other than a 2 in 6 the same procedure is followed. For instance, if a Lurker Above is encountered which surprises on a 1-4 a roll of 4 indicates that the party is surprised by 4 segments though a ranger in the party would mean that the party would not be surprised on a 4 because the chance of surprise is reduced by 1 to 1-3.

There are still sections of AD&D that cannot be resolved using this system: e.g. a monk who is surprised on a roll of 30% or less. If he rolls a 26 and gets surprised does the monster get 26 segments? I would suggest that if the monk is surprised equate the % to the closest value for a 6-sided die -- if it is closer to 17 than 33% then let them be surprised for 1 segment. In the above example a 26 is closer to 33 than 17 so the monk is surprised for two segments. Similarly, Piercers (who surprise on a 19 in 20) have nearly enough time to climb back up and drop on you again.

The dexterity adjustments subtract from the segments that the character is surprised for; this means that someone with 17 or 18 dexterity cannot be surprised by a normal monster but this adjustment applies only to that character and the person standing next to him will still be attacked for the indicated number of rounds if he/she has no adjustment for dexterity. This is because the high-dexterity character can put up some sort of defense against attack while the low-dexterity person just stands with an open mouth as the monster proceeds to eat him.

If this has explained what surprise means, I hope that it provides relief for those poor characters who faint when they roll a one. If anyone disagrees we would be glad to receive their suggestions on what E.G.G. meant. Meanwhile may you never roll a 5 when you meet a Giant Owl.



Air-rafts by Henk Plaggemars.

The air-raft is a most useful piece of equipment in Traveller, as being able to negate gravity does have its advantages.

Air-rafts are one of the "byproducts" of developing anti-grav military vehicles. Over the years the air-raft has been transformed from a primarily military vehicle to a popular public transport vehicle, replacing such items as ground cars and trucks.

Air-rafts are standard equipment for police forces and play a major role in freight transport, scouting, and of course in the military format.

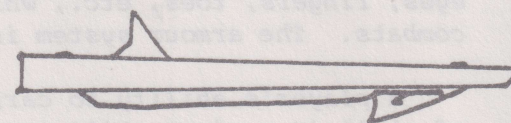
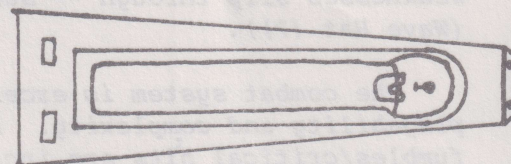
This selection of air-rafts is based on the line of air-rafts put out by Dragonflight Aerospace Co.

Code Letters: Personal (P)
Para-military (PM)
Military (M)

P-6 Standard Unpressurised

RA: infinite WT: 4t
SP: 100 kph AGN: 4
CA: 4t CR: 6
PA: 4/12 ARM: -
MxAlt: 3

Basic home-planet air-raft; many types incl. private, freighter, etc.

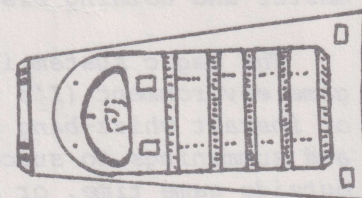
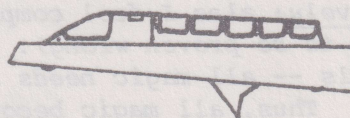


"The P-6 Hearse"

P-7 Standard Pressurised

RA: infinite WT: 5t
SP: 100 kph AGN: 4
CA: 3t CR: 7
PA: 2/6 ARM: -
MxAlt: 3

Common high-altitude private vehicle, mostly cargo carriers & govt. rafts

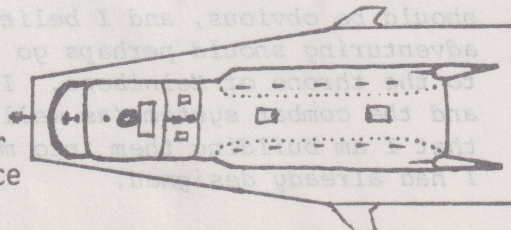
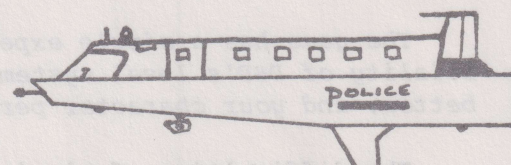


"Government Limousine"

PM-9 Pressurised Paramilitary Raft

RA: infinite WT: 6t
SP: 120 kph AGN: 5
CA: 3t CR: 9
PA: 6 (10) ARM: 1 x PL, 1 x SL
MxAlt: 12

Carries a complement of up to 10 police/troops and is often used as a troop carrier besides being more commonly used as a police vehicle.



"Police PM-9"

Stormbringer

.....yet another review.

It may seem to regular readers of my reviews that it is about time that I canned a game. For them I must apologise -- I have unearthed another gem in my search for the perfect RPG. 'Stormbringer' is not perfect, but it is one of the finest, most self-consistent game systems I have yet encountered.

This game is built around the world of the Young Kingdoms outlined in Moorcock's Elric series, and has the imprimatur of Moorcock himself. After a long but interesting character generation, a player ends up with a character whose abilities, background and even class are randomly determined -- a better system than it sounds, although perhaps lumping a player with a character he doesn't like. The variety of characters I have lately generated range from a thief of 2'3" to a hunter/assassin of the Weeping Wastes to a Melnibonean noble warrior/sorcerer.

The game system is an embellished version of RuneQuest with most of the bad bits removed, and the good supplemented by new material. Still, some weaknesses slip through -- such as the "Tie a Knot" and "Credit" skills (Wave Hat (?)).

The combat system is excellent, achieving the fine balance between playability and complexity. Parrying, dodging, weapon specialisation and fumbles/critical hits are included, as are permanent injuries such as lost eyes, fingers, toes, etc., which all make for interesting and memorable combats. The armour system is great.

A player's ability to carry out certain actions is codified by his level of skill in a given skill type (perhaps a little over-codified) which can improve with successful use. This is eminently logical (how did that thief achieve 93% pick pockets without ever having picked one?) and allows for greater character individuality -- if you so desire you may become a sword master and nothing else.

The magic system is lovely; alas I feel completely unworkable in a game environment (I'd like to be proven wrong). There is a complete lack of instant whizz-bang spells -- all magic needs sacrifices, sanctuaries and summonings to succeed. Thus, all magic becomes an activity pursued outside game time, or a matter for NPCs. This is in keeping with the Elric saga; thus showing a difficulty in basing a game on a book. This magic system has similarities with the magnificent and totally unplayable magic of Chivalry & Sorcery.

The game has a simple experience system which does away with the artificiality of D&D's level system -- as you go on your most-used skills get better, and your character performs better.

The difficulties of playing in Moorcock's failing and chaos-ridden world should be obvious, and I believe they would inhibit play somewhat -- so adventuring should perhaps go on off-map or in times before Elric's accession to the throne of Melnibone. I feel that the character generation system and the combat system (as well, to a lesser extent, the magic) are so good that I am building them into my own game system -- supplanting much that I had already designed.

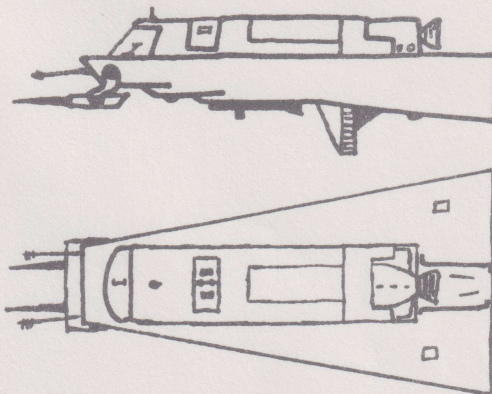
This game system is just short of magnificent, and is worthy of a good read by any DM or player -- unfortunately the price is rather magnificent too, although one does receive a lot of extras with the game -- a set of high-impact dice, a pad of character sheets, an excellent map of the Young Kingdoms, and some cut-out (?) for use as miniatures (?). Thanks to AHL for lending me the game.

NJC.

M-15a Military Strike Craft (Pressurised)

RA: See below	WT: 15t
SP: 120/300 kph	AGN: 6
CA: 1t	CR: 20
PA:-	ARM: 2 x BL, 2 x MS,
MxAlt: infinite	2 x SL, 1 MCOMP.
(effectively)	

The M15 is often launched from orbiting spaceships in a synthetic bubble which burns away as the M15 enters the atmosphere. Due to the presence of 6 AGN it is able to escape almost any (9,000 m + diameter excepted) planet's gravitational field -- but only in the vertical (i.e. it cannot travel in a horizontal direction above about 20 km altitude). Also, while most rafts rely on gravity field manipulation for propulsion (gives 120 kph max. speed) the M15 also has a jet pack which increases its speed to in excess of 300 kmh. The jet engine is small and has a 20 pt fuel tank -- the engine uses 1 pt/hour.

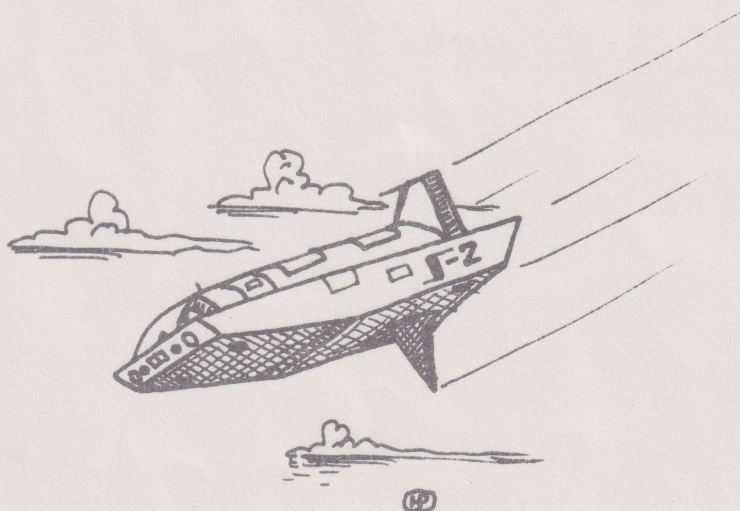


ABBREVIATIONS: :

RA - Range; SP - Speed in kph; CA - Cargo capacity in tonnes; PA - # passengers carried LOADED/UNLOADED; WT - Unloaded weight in tonnes; AGN - # of Anti Grav nodes; CR - Cost in millions of credits; ARM - armaments; MxAlt - Maximum altitude in kilometres; BL - Beam Laser; MS - missiles; SL - Search Light; MCOMP - Microcomputer; PL - Pulse Laser.

NOTES:

1. The fact that an air-raft is pressurised means that it has vents which pressurise the air when the craft is in motion. In tainted atmospheres a life support unit is required, taking 1t of cargo space per five passengers or fraction thereof.



TOURNAMENT 2 : The Necropolis of Pard.

On April 24th the club will hold another tournament. Whereas the last one was designed largely for beginners, this one is designed to sort out the sheep from the goats. The characters will be unusual and very interesting, and the dungeon will require real talent to get through.

Because it is a higher level of competition the prizes have been doubled to \$60.00 for the winning group. If the club is able to make a profit, this will go to the establishment and improvement of the D&D library being set up in the Rowden White Library.

A fortnight after Easter, the tournament will go from 12.00 (start playing at 12.30) until 5.00, and will be in the Mixed Lounge (1st floor of Union off Coffee Shop) subject to negotiations with the powers that be.

Cost is \$1.00 for members, \$2.00 for non-members. Entry is by party (individual entries are allowed, but we have a limited number of DMs and groups will get priority). There are six members in a party.

Late groups are accepted, but they may not play through breaks.

Organiser: A. Worsley.

Dungeon: R. Howitt.

ENTRY FORM.

Address we can contact: _____
_____Telephone_____

Team members:

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____
6 _____

** Return this
form to A. Worsley
or Box 104,
Union Basement.*

Preference will be given on the following basis:

1. Party entry, pay by cheque (made out to MUDDA) beforehand.
2. Party entry, paid beforehand to committee member (get receipt)
3. Individual entry, paid beforehand.
4. Party entry, pay on day.
5. Individual entry, pay on day.

We reserve the right to pay or not pay refunds depending on situations.

