AUGUST 1982 NUMBER 54

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THE SPACE GAMER

NUMBER 54 — AUGUST, 1982

IN THIS ISSUE

The bad news is that the adventure game scenario originally budgeted for this issue — "Unnight," for *Space Opera* — had to be bumped back a couple of issues so that we could make cosmetic changes. Look for it in issue 56.

The good news is that the rest of this issue should hold you for a while. We have strategy for *Star Fleet Battles* gamers, a magic variant for TFT role-players, a useful article for *Wizard's Realm* players, "The Conjuring" — fantasy fiction for fumblephiles, a few pieces on the human side of the hobby — game aids, gaming widows, and gaming overseas, and our usual barrowful of capsule reviews. And columns. And departments. Lots of departments. (*Shut up!*) (Right.)

—Aaron Allston

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Where We're Going

Barring major disaster, we now know exactly what we're going to have for Origins, and even how much it'll cost. We were actually able to meet all our deadlines, so there'll be a lot of new products:

Illuminati, our first $6.00 Pocket Box game. When you see the (real!) deck of cards inside, you'll understand why the price had to go up. We had a choice between doing a rather scroungy $5.00 edition or a beautiful $6.00 one. We went for class (he said modestly).

Sunday Drivers. The ***Car Wars*** adventure from TSG 50 made the transition to separate publication very nicely, getting much more complex in the process. For $5.00 (Pocket Boxed), the components include 160 color counters, the 32" by 42" (!!) map, and 24 pages of rules. Now you, too, can shoot up Midville.

Car Wars Expansion Set 1. $3.00, in a ziplock bag. 24 assorted road sections (straight, curved, Y, and crossroads), each with debris on the back. . . plus 120 black-and-white counters (oil, smoke, spikes, and all the other extras you want).

Cardboard Heroes Fantasy Set 8: Giants. 15 *big* figures, painted by Denis Loubet: storm giant, titan, fire giants, ogres (the live kind), Ogre Magi, etc.

Cardboard Heroes Fantasy Set 9: Dungeon Dangers. Three identical sheets of assorted nasties, each with 44 counters on it – 132 in all. Rats, snakes, bugs, and several different kinds of slimes and goops – some flat, some standing. Painted by Denis.

Cardboard Heroes Fantasy Set 10: Traps and Treasures. Three identical sheets of treasure chests, jewels, spilled sacks, man-traps, pits, weapons, armor, etc. . . plus a few assorted bodies and skeletons, all drawn by J. David George.

Traveller Set 2: Imperial Marines. Three identical sheets, each with 19 Marines – an assortment of figures in both undress uniform and power armor, including officers. 15mm scale – approved for use with ***Traveller***, painted by Kevin Siembieda.

Traveller Set 3: Zhodani. Three identical sets of 19 Zhodani each. Like their Imperial counterparts, these are divided between battledress and ship uniforms. Approved for use with ***Traveller***; painted by Kevin Siembieda.

Cops, Crooks, and Civilians. 37 "Cardboard Normals" – for spy games, superhero adventures, or what have you. Police officers, assorted thugs, scientist types, businessmen (and women), teenagers, kids – even a punk rocker. Painted by Denis.

Autoduel Miniatures. We will *finally* have some of the official ***Car Wars*** miniatures out at Origins.

I'm going to quit now and turn the rest of the column over to Aaron. I didn't really intend to take that much space for a plug. . . but we seem to have an awful lot of stuff coming out. . .

–Steve Jackson

The Editor Speaks

I was actually going to write this for issue 52, but time considerations bumped it. Today, two months later, Steve has flown off to Westercon to play among the buffaloes for a while, the Cardboard Heroes boards have just been dropped off at the color separators, the ***Sunday Drivers*** mapsheets have been taken back to the printers, and a period of relative calm (broken occasionally by fits of hysterical giggling) has fallen over the office.

The Space Gamer is sliding into a slow period of transition. The editorial content is not going to change in its coverage of the gaming world – we're still focusing on reviews, strategy and tactics pieces, scenarios, and news from all over the SF&F gaming field. What we *are* going to do is work to boost the overall quality of what we publish, and publish more. We're looking for better articles, fiction, and art than ever before, and we don't want to make do with marginal items as we have occasionally in the past. For example, the adventure scenario originally budgeted for this issue was a good offering, but it still had a couple of holes in it. Rather than confront the reader with them, we pulled the scenario for more polishing. Keep your eyes open over the next few months and you'll see more polished and generally useful pieces than before.

Hopefully, we'll be giving you more pages than before, as well. Our page count is dependent on our ad base (the number of companies who advertise with us on a regular contract basis). And, even in these last months of economic recession, our ad base has grown. We managed 48 pages in June, and it's looking as though we'll be doing it again soon.

Other Changes

Another thing we're trying to do involves increasing the time and material devoted to our departments section. We just added a new column – "Metal" – and reader reaction has been uniformly favorable. "News and Plugs" was transformed into "Scanner" and has also been favorably received. The letters page was actually two pages in issue 52 and in this issue; people are writing in more and we're now able to respond on a more regular basis.

Uncle Sam Wants You

"Why don't you do an article on wombats in TFT?" "I want to see a Grand Prix scenario for ***Car Wars***!" "Publish a tactical-level space game spanning the Milky Way, would you?" You've heard this from me before, and will continue to hear it until I'm satisfied with the flow of contributions coming into this office: If you have any writing skill, don't send in article recommendations, send in articles.

Por Fin

TSG goes in to the printers tomorrow, Mickey Mouse is still comfortably in his grave, and all's well. I hope to hear from you.

–Aaron Allston

NEXT ISSUE

In September's TSG, we intend to confront you with:

NECROMANCER, a complete tactical fantasy game by Allen Varney;
Featured review and designer's notes for GRAV ARMOR;
"The Splat Gun," mercenary weapon for TRAVELLER;
"Advanced Campaigning," two articles on game-mastering RPGs – one for SF, one for fantasy;
And metamorphosing monsters.

GOODBYE MARY LOU, HELLO MICROCOMPUTER

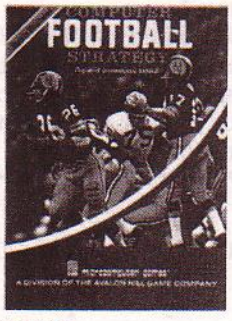
Sorry 'bout that, Mary Lou!

But your boyfriend has a new PET®. In fact, he may even have an Atari®, Apple II®, TRS-80®, or TRS-80® Color Computer, too . . . any of which plays an Avalon Hill Microcomputer Game.

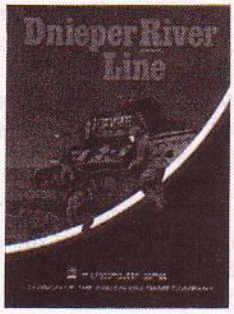
Here's what's BRAND NEW from Avalon Hill:



VOYAGER
A solitaire computer game that challenges the human player to explore the four levels of an alien spacecraft's maze-like corridors and rooms in 3-D simulated graphics, all the while avoiding robots programmed to blast any intruders. In order to win, the human must destroy all power generators and escape or hunt out and annihilate the killer robots. **VOYAGER** comes with color-animated graphics and sound capabilities for computers so equipped.

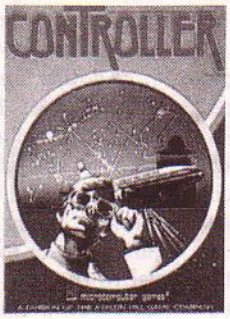


COMPUTER FOOTBALL STRATEGY
Thrilling computer version of Avalon Hill's famous board game. Based on the award-winning Sports Illustrated game of professional football; forces the player to constantly make the right decisions about his team's offensive and defensive formations. Match wits against the computer or against a live opponent.



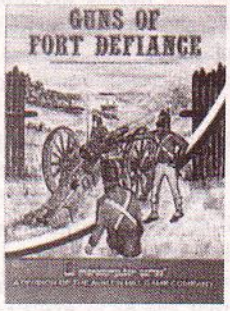
DNIEPER RIVER LINE
A fictionalized engagement between the Russian and German forces in the southern Ukraine in 1943. The game challenges you, the German commander, to repel Russian efforts to breach the Dnieper River defensive positions. Soviet units, controlled by the computer, seek to overrun the thin German line and capture sufficient objectives to attain victory. **DNIEPER RIVER LINE** has four levels of difficulty and comes complete with over 300 illustrated counters and a mounted mapboard.

CONTROLLER
A **real-time** simulation of air traffic control in which you will have to guide the approach and landing sequence of up to 8 aircraft. There are three types of aircraft: Light Planes, Airliners, and Private Jets, with each type having a different rate of climb, turning ability, stall speed, ceiling, fuel consumption and fuel capacity. **CONTROLLER** transforms your microcomputer screen into a realistic "radar scope"; also, each aircraft's heading, velocity, and altitude is continuously displayed on a separate chart next to the radar scope.

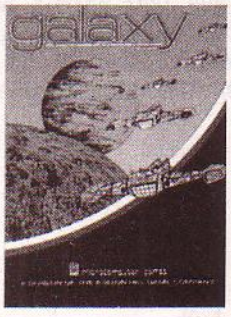


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						32K	48K		25.00
Voyager	16K	16K	32K	32K	24K				20.00
							48K	32K	25.00
Dnieper River Line		32K	32K	32K	48K				25.00
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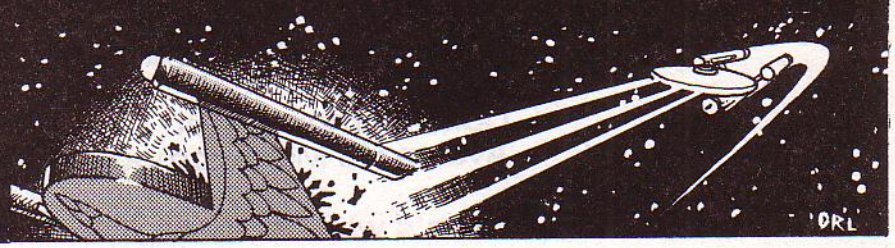
GUNS OF FORT DEFIANCE
In this exciting arcade game, you are the commander of a 19th century artillery piece in a besieged stockade. For each shot you must specify a type of ammunition—ball, cannister, shell or spherical case—and fuse length (if applicable), and set the elevation and deflection of the cannon. The computer controls the enemy forces, randomly attacking with cavalry, infantry or another artillery piece.



GALAXY
Have you ever wanted to conquer the universe? In **GALAXY,** players send their galactic fleets out to explore and conquer the universe, solar system by solar system. The planets discovered may be barren worlds or they may possess immense industrial capacity and defensive ships to resist colonization. **GALAXY** comes with sound effects (for computers with sound capability)

Winning Star Fleet Battles

by Jerry Silberman



Winning at ***Star Fleet Battles*** does not always require having the most powerful ship – though that sure can help! Actually, careful planning and tactical knowledge can greatly increase your chances of victory.

As was stated in the designer's edition of SFB, the single most important thing to learn involves concentration of fire. Don't jab at your opponent with a phaser here and a torpedo there – deliver the knockout punch: Concentrate every weapon that can be brought to bear upon a single shield before your opponent can turn another shield to face you.

Before I go any further, I'd like to convince you to always use the 32 impulse movement chart. It will give you more opportunities to fire, which can be very important in determining victory or defeat.

Suppose that Player 1 has a Federation CA which is moving at a speed of 16, and Player 2 has a Klingon D-7 moving at a speed of 8. Upon moving to a range of two hexes, the ships open fire upon each other. The Federation player fires three photons and four phasers, which do a total of 52 damage (one photon missed), 12 of which penetrate the Klingon's shields and score hits as follows:

Hit	*System*	*Roll*
1	hull	6
2	hull	7
3	hull	8
4	*R. warp*	5
5	*Torp*	11
6	hull	5
7	*L. warp*	9
8	hull	6
9	*phaser*	4
10	hull	7
11	hull	8
12	*trans*	4

The Klingon player resolves his fire on the CA, firing all disruptors and phasers, which do a total of four inside hits, which destroy (believe it or not):

Hit	*System*	*Roll*
1	*phaser*	4
2	*phaser*	10
3	*Torp*	11
4	*phaser*	13

These are marked off against the phasers and torpedo which have been fired.

During the next impulse no one moves, so the Federation player fires his remaining photon and two phasers, which do another 26 inside hits on the D-7, destroying four phasers and a distruptor. By using the 32 impulse chart, the Federation player has destroyed two disruptors and five phasers, which leaves the Klingon virtually helpless. Next impulse, only the Federation player moves, so he could move up to a range of 1 hex, launch his shuttlecraft (if using launch on any impulse rules), and get yet another volley of inside damage.

Another important thing players tend to overlook is firing angles. If you're playing against ships that have (LF), (RF), (L), and (R) firing arcs for 1/3 or ½ of their forward firing weapons, don't approach them head on head. Close on them in the rows of hexes that run parallel to the row that they are in. Just make sure you don't lose more phasers than he does when doing this! A good case in point is the Andromedan Intruder. Head on head it has three Tractor-Repulsors and four phaser IIs. Just don't forget to turn another shield toward him after he fires at you.

Knowing when to fire is an important decision requiring careful thought and deliberation. You must always take advantage of what your ship does best. Below is an optimum firing range chart for all races up to and including Expansion 1.

The major strengths and weaknesses of the different races have been outlined below.

Federation: Good long-range ships. Very destructive at ranges of 1-8. Good number of shuttlecraft.

Klingon: Good short- to mid-range ships. Disruptors and phaser IIs make them effective at ranges of 1-3. Phaser IIs limit effective range.

Romulan: Good long-range fighters, effective at ranges of 1-10. Can't afford to get too close, very vulnerable to a torpedo hit.

Gorn: Plasma torpedoes and a large number of shuttlecraft make them effective at ranges of up to 10. Good number of phaser Is.

Kzinti: Large amount of phaser IIIs and drones make them effective at ranges of 0-2. Can't do much damage at ranges of 3 or greater. Phaser Is tend to compensate for this.

Race	**Race Against**							
Firing	Fed.	Kling.	Gorn	Romul.	Kzinti	Hydran	And.	Thol.
Federation		4	3	1	3	3	4	4
Klingon	1		3	1	3	3	1	1
*Gorn	1	4		1	4	3	4	4
*Romulan	10	5	3		3	3	4	5
Kzinti	1	1	1	1		2	1	1
Hydran	0	0	0	0	0		0	0
Andromed.	3	3	3	2	3	3		3
Tholian	1	4	3	1	3	3	4	

*Indicates when plasma torpedo should hit.
All firing ranges are given in numbers of hexes.

Tholian: Phaser Is and disruptors make them effective at ranges of 1-4. Have to get reasonably close to ships in order to do substantial damage. Do not have heavy torpedo attack.

Andromedan: Tractor-repulsors and phaser IIs make them effective at ranges of 0-3. Cannot be taken in fleet actions.

Hydran: Extremely effective at ranges of 0-1. Ineffective at ranges greater than 2.

Players should take care to notice that these explanations should be taken as general guidelines. There are always exceptions to the rule. The Romulan DN, for example, is not that vulnerable to torpedo hits, and its number of phaser Is and shuttlecraft make it very good at close ranges.

Orion ships, because of their many modifications, are not listed. For the ones on the SSD sheets, you can look under the Federation column.

You'll notice that Andromedans cannot be taken in fleet actions; this is because of their power absorbers. Any energy stored in them is added to their destruction force when they are destroyed. The force of their explosion is enough to cripple any surrounding ships, friendly or unfriendly.

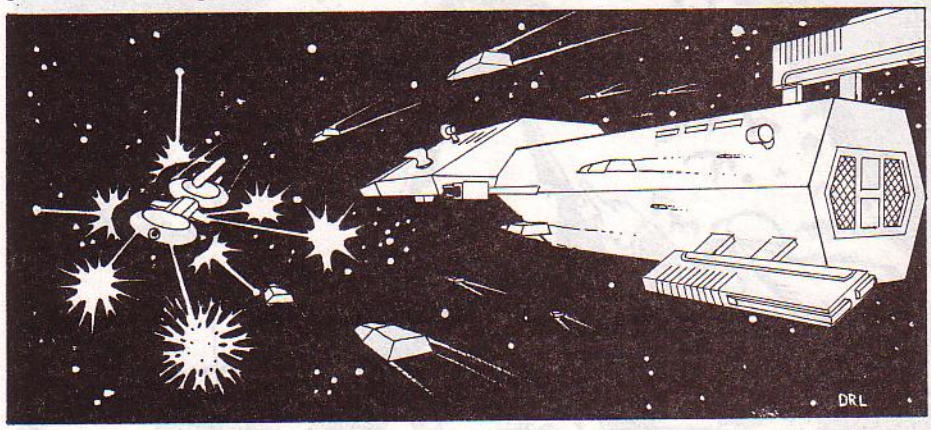
Because of the new "launch on any impulse" rule for launching drones and fighters, the weaker races, namely Kzinti and Hydran, have substantially increased their battle effectiveness. The Hydran Ranger and the Kzinti CV hold tremendous firepower at close ranges. There isn't a ship that can survive an onslaught of 22 fusion beams at a range of 0. The attack of a Kzinti CV with 12 attack shuttles shouldn't be sneezed at, either!

To finish things up, I think a few tactics should be mentioned for advanced phasers. If you're playing with ships armed with advanced phasers, always use rapid pulse phaser fire at ranges of 0-2. To illustrate this, average rolls for phaser Is and two phaser IIIs are:

	Phaser I		2 Phaser IIIs
Range	Average Damage	Range	Average Damage
0	6.5	0	7.67
1	5.33	1	7.33
2	4.83	2	6.0

A Federation CX, using its phasers this way, can do an average of approximately 117 damage at a range of 1 with just phasers. Overload them and you're talking in excess of 170 damage (and that's not including the photons!).

Now that I've shared with you some of the things I've learned through the years of sweating over CAs, CVs, FFs, and the like, you can go knock down shields – and watch out for Romulan mines!



His friends said that it would be death to live in The Big City. He laughed and said that his high-paying, executive-level job was in a megapartment with security so tight that it took even him an hour to get inside. But then his company went belly-up and now he's broke; he's living in the ghetto. That's your territory – the world of the

GANGLORD



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THE CONJURING

by Steven M. Tymon

The night was as quiet as a Farkajian's tomb. The mist and silence made for good studying weather, and Phorbal, a sorcerer nearing middle age, leaned closer to the ancient parchment unrolled upon his table. The print was small and faded, and the dancing light of his candle made the reading even more difficult. He reached for the candle and held it closer, squinting intensely at the archaic words.

"To conjure a dozen succubi," he muttered under his breath, "let thee wait until a night like a . . . like a . . . By Sarganatanas! What an abominable waste! The print is too faded!"

Angrily he swept the parchment from his table, knocking the candle to the floor in the process. The small room was plunged into darkness. Cursing, he leaned forward, feeling for his lost light.

There was a knock at the window. Startled, Phorbal jerked his head up, banging it against the underside of the table. "Gah!"

From outside came a distastefully familiar voice. "Phorbal, open up! It's me, Clar!"

He stumbled across his cluttered floor, stubbing his toe once or twice, then drew back the curtains and shoved open the shutters in one smooth motion. There was a loud thump.

Phorbal looked outside. Down below, sprawled upon the wet cobblestones, was a body. Clar? With the heavy mist in the air, it was hard to say. He conjured a small bucket of water, causing it to appear over the inert body below in hopes of reviving him. The bucket appeared. The water, however, did not pour out. Instead, the bucket crashed down upon the unconscious person's head, insuring an even longer sleep.

"Drat," cursed Phorbal. "I'll have to work on that one."

With a wave of his hand, he commanded the shutters to close. Across the street, a deserted building collapsed with a loud crash. The shutters remained open.

"Fie upon't," grumbled Phorbal. He reached out to close the shutters in the normal, menial way. From below came a groan.

The body slowly clambered to his feet, then glared up at Phorbal.

"Why don't you watch out how you open those things, you bumbling old idiot!" greeted the now quite conscious individual. It was, indeed, Clar. "You could have killed me!"

Phorbal sneered. "Indeed? Hence shall I open the shutters with even greater force! What brings you to my dwelling, you mooching migraine? Perhaps you intend to pay off some of your long-overdue debts?"

"Debts? What debts?"

"I thought as much. When you learn the meaning of the word honesty, we'll talk. Which insures that you will never bother me again. Good night." He made motions as if to close the shutters.

"Wait!" shouted Clar. He waved his hand ludicrously, then stamped his feet against the ground. Immediately he rose into the air, floating upwards until he hung suspended directly in front of Phorbal's shocked face. "Well, what do you think?"

"You? A scoundrel like you in posses-

sion of a levitation spell? Where, pray tell, did you obtain the knowledge?"

Clar smiled and reached into his jacket. He pulled out a small scrap of lambskin. On it was written the levitation spell in a hand that seemed all too familiar to Phorbal.

"Whose writing is this?" demanded Phorbal.

"Yours, naturally," replied Clar. "I tore it out of one of your books the last time I visited."

Phorbal shook with rage. "So! You're the idiot who is responsible for the missing page in my *Collected Spells*! Give me that!"

He snatched the fragment from Clar's hand, then studied it closely. A look of puzzlement came over his face.

"It's not all here," he said. "Where's the rest of it?"

"How should I know? That's all I got."

"But . . . but the spell shouldn't work. It's missing the final sentence. Listen:

'With a clap of thy hands, you rise;
With a clap of thy feet, you fall.' "

Clar shrugged. "I figured something was missing, so I tried stomping my feet. And it worked."

"That's odd. Ah, I know. The sound of feet stomping or hands clapping is enough to suffice. I would suppose any relatively loud and sharp noise would do."

"Perhaps. However, I am not here to waste time on discussing spells. Do you mind if I come in?"

"Yes, but that's never stopped you before." There was a buzzing in Phorbal's left ear. He angrily slapped at it. "Damned mosquitoes!"

There was a loud crash inside. Turning around, Phorbal noticed a distinct absence of Clar. He returned to the window and looked down. Clar had apparently returned to the cobblestones, where he was sprawled unconscious once again.

"Idiot," grumbled Phorbal. He began the arduous trek across his chamber floor in search of the door.

Within an hour, he had Clar seated across the table from him. A merry fire was going in the small fireplace. Phorbal, however, was not merry at all. If anything, he appeared somewhat displeased.

"Well," began Phorbal, "I suppose I should ask you why you bother to come here?"

Clar stopped picking his teeth with his dagger, then took a deep swallow of the warm Rine Ale from the mug before him. He burped twice.

"You call that a reply?" asked Phorbal. "Come, come. You've eaten the last of my food, drunk the last of my ale, and exhausted the last of my patience. So tell me, before I throw you out yonder window, why are you here?"

Clar smiled a drunken smile. "I know where you might obtain a copy of the *Necrophyliacon.*"

"So? I already have a copy. Is that all you had to say?"

Clar considered for a moment. "I know of an ancient fortress in distant Vallarya, filled with a thousand jewels, and at least that many ghostly warriors to guard them."

"So do I. You want to raid it for me?"

Clar frowned. "Very well. I know where you might obtain the magical jewel of D'zhordan."

Phorbal shrugged. "That's useless. I know the location, too. It's called the underworld, the place of demons."

"Yes, but I know the Demon's name."

Phorbal raised one eyebrow. "But you know, Clar old friend, that I cannot conjure a true demon alone. I would need help."

Clar nodded. "I realize that. I also happen to know that the sorcerer Mikall is this very night residing at the Carved Bear Inn."

"Mikall? I haven't seen him for ages. He spends all his time in his stupid ivory tower, grinding out volumes on magic and history, and tons of tripe on future items. Surely his spells are stale, to say the least."

"He is as powerful as ever, or so it is said. Why, this very evening he was accosted by two ruffians—"

"Relatives of yours, I suppose."

"— whom he hacked to pieces, along with most of the bar, with a sword of the purest light."

"How childishly theatrical," commented Phorbal. "Still, it seems his magic might still be good."

"He's a passably good swordsman, too."

"Yes," agreed Phorbal, "but let us hope he is sober enough that he doesn't prove it to us. Come."

Mikall was sober. Very. A long, long time in the past, a sorceress by the name of Tsche-anya had cursed him for a youthful indiscretion. Ever after, drink had no effect on him, and only her death would put an end to the accursed enchantment. He had never seen her since, though it was not as if he didn't search. For all his efforts, she was gone, gone to some place beyond the reach of his powers. At times, he thought she might be dead, for it had been so long ago, and his own life had grown long through his spells. And so, every few years, he would drift into the city to drink to her eventual death.

Without fail, he always ended up cold sober.

They found him seated at the only undamaged table. The rest of the inn's main hall was carnage. As for the innkeeper, he had hastily departed at the beginning of the combat – better to have a wrecked inn than a skewered body. No one else was about.

Mikall noticed them as they entered. He motioned for them to be seated.

"So," he began, "what brings you to town?"

"Him," said Clar, pointing at Phorbal.

Phorbal glared at the young upstart, then turned to Mikall.

"Mikall, my old friend," Phorbal said, "I come here about obtaining your help—"

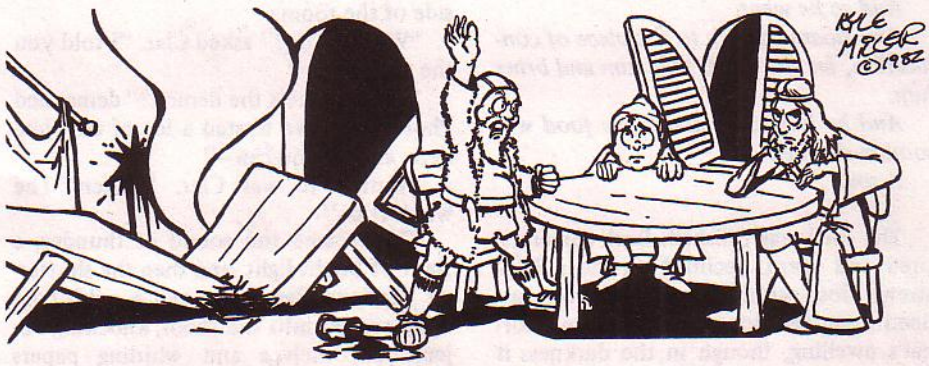
"— in conjuring a demon," the other sorcerer concluded. "I already knew all about it."

"B-but how? I didn't—"

"Your young friend was here earlier, watching me perform a bit of necessary but messy handiwork," Mikall answered. "He mentioned something about a jewel . . ."

"You!" Phorbal hissed, turning on Clar. "Already you've informed half the city! And you dared to drink my Rine Ale? And eat my food? You aborted son of a Shandarist Letmak—"

"Phorbal," said Mikall, his voice calm, "do consider that of all the sorcerers in the city, only the two of us have the power and the ability to use the jewel,



much less to conjure the jewel's guardian."

Phorbal relaxed. "You know, you're right. Perhaps no damage has been done."

"Except to my pride," Clar noted. "The very least you should do is apologize."

"I would rather eat rotted pig's meat," Phorbal retorted. "For the likes of you, those were compliments."

Clar flushed red with anger. His hand moved toward the dagger on his belt. Phorbal, noticing, immediately moved to a defensive posture, his hands raised before him in order to make the proper gesture.

"Gentlemen," said Mikall, "let us now quarrel. After all, we are in this together, are we not?"

First Clar, then Phorbal, nodded slowly. Clar's hand moved away from his dagger; Phorbal lowered his.

"Excellent," Mikall continued. "Then we have business to do. I suggest we not waste another moment."

Phorbal nodded again. "I agree."

Mikall turned to Clar. "And don't you have the name of a demon for us?"

The young man glanced back and forth between the two sorcerers, then shrugged. "His name is Aesloss," he said, "Aesloss the Ancient."

Mikall smiled. "Then we do, indeed, have much work to do. Shall we go?"

The three men departed the inn.

Aesloss was a stubborn demon, as demons go, and a tired one, for it had been so long since he had devoured a soul. He lived in darkness, a cold place of sighs borne on an unseen wind, of strangely distorted whispers that came from throats other than human. This was his home, his existence, his ever-night. Here he remained until called just so . . .

It happened, once in a very long while. Someone would conjure him, call for him, speak the old names, recite the ancient spells, whisper and shriek the words just right.

And then he would come, only then.

When he heard Mikall's and Phorbal's voices echoing in the darkness, reaching for him, calling, he knew it was time.

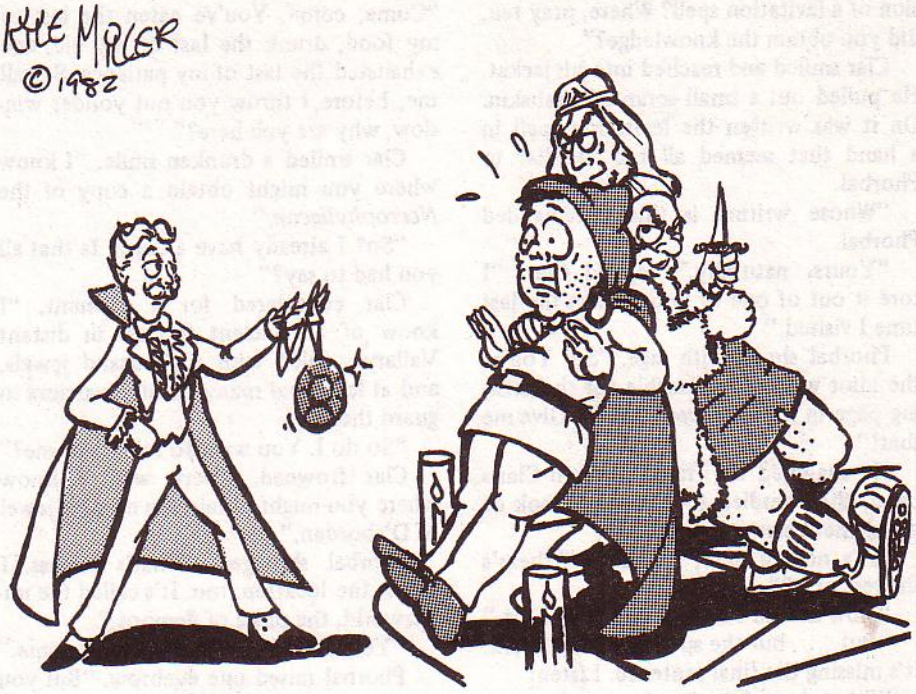
And so he went.

And floated gently to the place of conjuration, let the winds take him and bring him.

And he hungered, and knew food was soon in coming:

A soul.

The spell was finished. Both sorcerers, tired and spent, reclined on the pillow-strewn floor within the greater circle outlined upon the floor. They were in Phorbal's dwelling, though in the darkness it would have been difficult to tell. The only



light was from a number of candles placed within the two circles, within hollow glass tubes placed about them to shield their flames from any breeze. There was enough light for the two sorcerers to read the spell, nothing more. Clar, there strictly as a guest, was the only one standing. He looked perhaps too intently at the heavy book gripped in Phorbal's sweaty hands; the conjurer noticed and clutched the volume even tighter with one hand. The other moved toward his ceremonial dagger.

Mikall spoke: "Aesloss would not appear to be interested in answering our summons, eh, Phorbal?"

The other turned away from Clar. "If *he*–" he nodded toward the young rogue, "– told us the truth, it should have worked. As it is–"

He hefted the heavy volume in one hand. "Since you seem to find this book so interesting," he said to Clar, "then mayhaps you'll enjoy being knocked unconscious by it, you lousy, lying–"

Phorbal hurled the book. Clar ducked. The volume crashed into a wall on the far side of the room.

"What'd I do?" asked Clar. "I told you the truth."

"Then where's the demon?" demanded Phorbal. "We've wasted a lot of our time here, and all you can–"

"Wait!" It was Clar. "Listen. The wind. It's–"

There came the sound of thunder, a flash of bright light, and then the shuttered windows flew open and a cold, cold wind rushed into the room, knocking objects off shelves and whirling papers around and around. Only within the conjurers' circle was there calm; Phorbal, Clar, and Mikall could feel the chill, nothing more.

The wind died as suddenly as it had risen. Within the smaller circle, an old man appeared. He was dressed in robes of purest white, and the jewel of D'zhordan hung from a thong about his neck. He appeared harmless enough at first glance, though that appearance was somewhat thrown off by the flames that licked at his feet and by his towering dark shadow against the wall, reflecting some horrible alien shape, everchanging in form.

The old man smiled amiably. "You rang?" he asked.

Phorbal cleared his throat nervously. "Uh, after a fashion," he began, returning the smile. "Look, I know you're busy and I don't want to keep you long, so why don't you just toss the jewel of D'zhordan over here and I'll send you on your way."

If anything, the old man's smile grew even broader. "Ah, the jewel. You want it, yes?"

Phorbal nodded his head.

"Very well," continued the demon, "it's yours, then."

The demon pulled the jewel from around its throat and tossed it onto the floor just outside the conjurers' circle. Phorbal reached forward to grab it, but Mikall, moving faster, grabbed Phorbal, pulling him back before he reached out of the circle.

"Careful," he warned. "It's a standard trick."

"You do not trust me, no?" asked the demon, a look of innocence on the aged face. Not waiting for a reply, he shrugged

his shoulders. "Very well, then."

Calmly, the old man stepped out of the smaller circle, walked over to the jewel, and picked it up. He now stood almost face to face with Phorbal. The latter began to shriek.

"You can't do that!" He screamed. "You're supposed to stay within your circle!"

"Where is that stated?" the demon asked in soothing tones.

A guilty expression crossed Phorbal's face. He stared sadly at the book on the far side of the room.

"Oh-oh," said Clar and Mikall in unison.

Phorbal turned to the other sorcerer. "What are we going to do?"

"Might I suggest a soul, gentlemen?" the old man asked. "Give me one, and I shall leave and the jewel will remain. But I do demand a soul. After all, it's only fair."

"Bah!" cursed Clar. "Now look at what the two of you have gotten us into. Why do I bother with your kind?"

Both Mikall and Phorbal stared at him, as if noticing him for the first time. Clar noticed their stares.

"Oh no," he said. "If you think—"

"Watch out!" Phorbal shrieked. "Your shoes, they're untied!"

Clar glanced down. "What are you talking about? I don't have any—"

He did not finish the sentence. In one quick motion, Phorbal brought his ceremonial dagger up, implanting the point deep in one of Clar's buttocks.

"Yah!" screamed Clar, leaping out of the circle. He whipped back around, drawing his dagger. "Phorbal, you filth! I'll kill yo—"

There was a flash of red light, a rumble like thunder, then an even louder clap that shook the small room. The demon was gone. So was Clar. Only the jewel remained on the floor.

Behind Phorbal, Mikall stroked his thinly-bearded chin thoughtfully. "Amusing, you rid yourself of a pest and gain the jewel of D'zhordan."

"Thank you," said Phorbal.

Mikall reached into his robes and pulled out a small green stone. This he tossed outside the circle. The stone glowed faintly. Mikall smiled.

"The demon is truly gone, Phorbal," he announced. "We may claim the jewel."

The other sorcerer was already out of the circle, chortling with glee over the prize. He rolled about on the floor, holding the jewel of D'zhordan close to his face. The blood-red crystal sparkled of its own deep light, throwing a fiery glow over the ecstatic sorcerer's features.

"Mine!" he shrieked. "All mine!"

"Ours," Mikall corrected. He patiently pried the jewel from Phorbal's stubby hands. "And now what do we do with it, eh?" he asked holding the jewel up and peering deep inside.

Phorbal, still on the floor, a glum expression on his face, suddenly brightened. The parchment!

"Mikall," he said, tugging at the other sorcerer's robe, "is it not true that the jewel of D'zhordan can make clear even the most faded of written spells?"

"Have you one to experiment upon?"

"Indeed!" Phorbal ran to his cluttered table, pushing aside pieces of parchment, dishes, and melted candles as he searched. He found what he sought and waved it wildly in the air.

"Here it is," he said, his excitement evident in his voice. "This is the one."

"Well then, let us try." Mikall took the parchment from Phorbal, then spread it flat on the table. He held the jewel over it with one hand and gestured with the other. The jewel brightened, flickered. On the parchment, the words grew dark and quite distinct in less than a second. "There you go, Phorbal. Your spell, compliments of the jewel."

Phorbal howled with delight. He skimmed the ancient words, mumbling them out loud.

"Wait, Phorbal," began Mikall. "Don't you think you should wait until after we decide what to do with the jewel? After all, it is a succubus spell, and if you're going to—"

"It's done!" announced Phorbal. He spun around gleefully. "A dozen succubi, all mine."

Mikall shrugged his shoulders and politely turned away. There was little to do but wait ouside. He started for the door. There was a loud pop just as he touched the knob. From behind he heard Phorbal's mournful groan.

Mikall turned around.

There was Phorbal, surrounded by his succubi, all of them naked and giggling. And not a one appeared to be less than eighty years old.

Mikall considered for a moment, then snapped his fingers.

"Of course!" he exclaimed. "You use an ancient spell for succubi, you get ancient succubi. It makes sense, doesn't it, Phorbal? Phorbal?"

From somewhere inside the repulsive mass of bodies, there was a loud clap. Phorbal was attempting to flee. Unluckily, he was in physical contact with the group of succubi. Consequently, Phorbal, et al., rose into the air, shot out the window, and floated off into the dark night. Only one of the ancient hags was left behind, and to her, Mikall offered a curt smile, then turned to leave, tucking the jewel into one of his pockets.

"Mikall!" the woman shouted. "Don't you remember? It is I, Tsche-anya."

The sorcerer whirled about. The curse! The damnable, forever sober curse! It *was* her!

"You *do* remember," she said, coming forward, her wrinkled fat jiggling penduously. "Oh, please forgive me for that terrible, terrible spell I placed on you those many, many years ago. I was young and foolish then. No harm was meant. Here, I release you from it. You are free of my curse."

It hit him like a physical blow, a great release from within. He could tell, for the first time in years, he could tell—

— that he really, no doubt about it, for absolutely sure, *needed a drink.*

"Please, Mikall," she continued, now slavering her fat lips on his robe. "Please speak to me. Tell me you need me. I need you, you know. I need someone young, like you, someone strong, someone virile. Yes, just like you. Please, please take me, Mikall, bed me, for I am yours. Let us share our passions."

She held open her fat-drooping arms. Her spittle-covered lips parted in ecstacy.

Mikall dived through the door.

"My sorcerer!" she shrieked, chasing after him. "Don't leave me! Won't you share my love?"

Cursing his ill-fortune, Mikall ran hard down the streets toward the rising sun, all the while desperately trying to remember any of his teleportation spells, and thinking that there were worse things than sobering curses and demons from the underworld.

The fact that she was gaining on him, for instance.

Some nights, nothing goes right.



Magic Backlash in TFT

by Richard A. Edwards

It does a gamemaster's heart good to have a system which allows nasty things to happen during the course of regular events. Players can be pursuing the best possible course and yet run into difficulties beyond their control; there is risk involved in any pursuit. It is helpful if these difficulties are beyond the GM's control as well, for he is otherwise open to criticism for being the wrench-thrower.

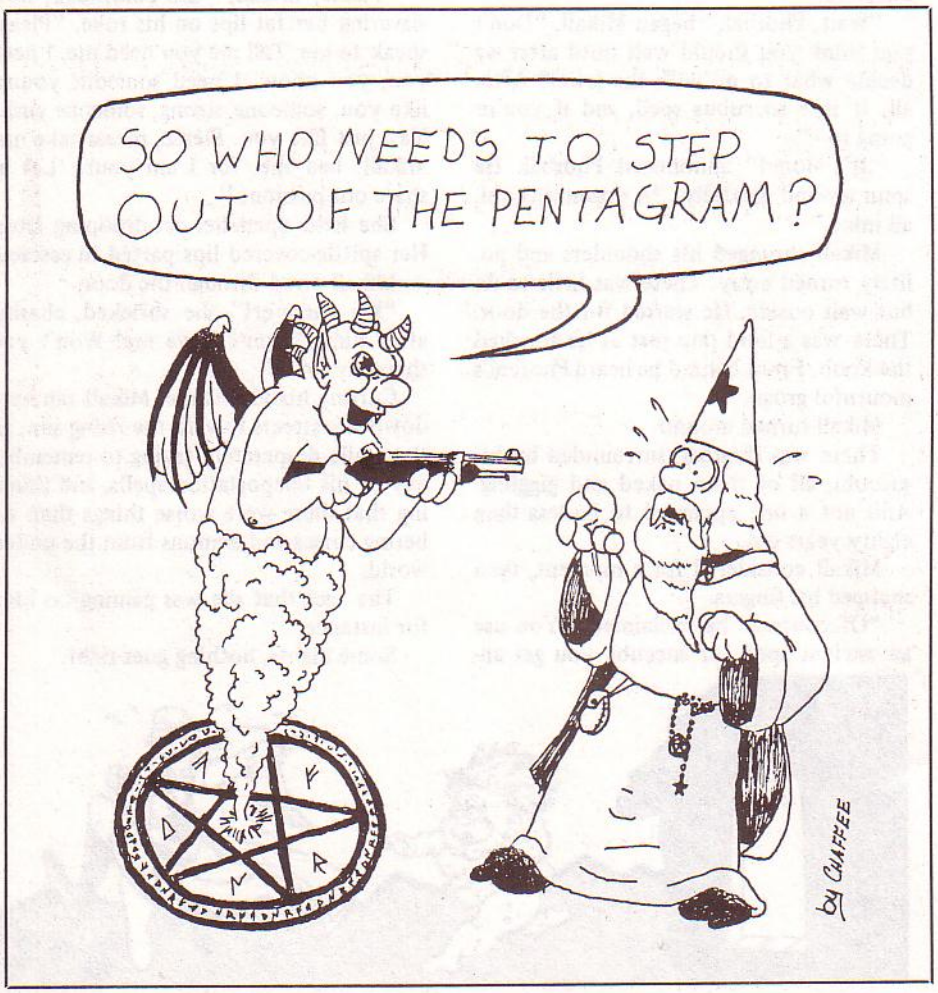
This is the basis for such mechanics as die rolls for proper use of skills. Something might happen beyond the character's control which ruins his plans. Even the highest-level characters in TFT have to deal with the approximate 5% chance of an automatic miss.

Unfortunately, ***Advanced Wizard*** does not continue the practice of fumbled spells. The only effects of rolling 16+ are located in ***The Fantasy Masters' Codex 1981*** on the "to hit generalized table." There it is stated that a 16 costs 1 ST and the spell fails, on a 17 the same is true except for missile spells (which take full ST and fail), and on a 18 the exact same results occur (except for missile spells which take full ST and the wizard falls down). From the index to the ***Codex***, the only source for this information is the microgame ***Wizard***, page 11.

This article will describe a Magic Backlash table which lets gamemasters even things up a bit. To use this unofficial variant, add the following rule additions and chart:

On a to hit roll of 17, roll 3d6 and use the result on the Backlash Chart.

On a to hit roll of 18, roll 3d6 and to the result apply the following modifier: on a 1-3 subtract 5, on a 4-6 add 5.



The Fantasy Trip **Magic Backlash Table**

-2 to 3	Caster is stricken mute and suffers physical spasms, and cannot cast any spells which need gestures or incantations. This affects all spells of the same as or up to four less than the caster's IQ. This lasts for 3d6 turns (optionally, 3d6 days if the spell was cast in other than combat conditions, or treat as a curse which must be removed).
4	Caster is cursed with physical spasms. Caster cannot cast any spells which need gestures. This affects all spells of the same as or one less than the caster's IQ. This effect lasts for 3d6 turns (optionally, 3d6 days as above). If this result occurs to a character already mute, then apply the results of 3, above.
5	Caster is stricken mute and cannot cast any spells which require incantations. This affects all spells of the same as or one less than the caster's IQ. This effect lasts for 3d6 turns (optionally, 3d6 days as above). If this result occurs to a character who is already afflicted with physical spasms, then apply the results of 3, above.
6	Caster is stricken blind and cannot see for 3d6 turns (optionally, 3d6 days as above). Apply a -8 modifier to caster's DX in doing anything except casting a spell on himself, cut MA in half, and have the *player* close his

eyes as long as blindness continues.

7 Caster pays full ST cost for the spell, but the spell affects a wrong target. If the spell were meant to hit the caster himself, it hits a randomly-determined character instead. If the spell were meant to hit another character, it misses, continuing on to perhaps hit another character or object instead. Roll to hit normally. In creation spells, control of created item goes to the gamemaster.

8 Caster pays twice the normal ST cost for the spell and falls down. If ST cost exceeds caster's available ST, unconsciousness occurs. All continuing spells cease, but may be recast.

9 Caster pays full ST cost, but spell fails.

10 Caster pays half normal ST cost, but spell fails.

11 Caster pays 1 ST, but the spell fails.

12 Caster pays full normal ST cost, but spell only takes half-effect. Thus an Iron Flesh spell would provide only 3 hits of protection, missile spells do only half damage, and so on. If the spell cannot be halved in effect, then treat this as 9, above.

13 Due to the powerful shock of the spell failing, the caster drops one magic item (or one is shaken off), randomly determined. If the caster has no magic items (remember, his staff counts), then drop some other important piece of equipment, randomly determined.

14 Due to the powerful shock of the spell failing, one magic item, randomly determined, breaks. If the caster has no magic items (remember, his staff counts), then break some other important piece of equipment, randomly determined.

15 Caster's mind is badly shaken. Caster's IQ is temporarily reduced to half its current level (rounded down). Any spells or abilities known above this new level are temporarily forgotten and may not be used. This effect lasts 3d6 turns (optionally, 3d6 days as with a result of 3).

16 Caster's mind is badly shocked. Caster permanently forgets the spell just used and his IQ is reduced by 1. All continuing spells cease and must be recast to continue. Note that this spell may be relearned just like any other spell is learned.

17 Caster really backfired this one. The caster is affected by a Curse as per ***Advanced Wizard*** rules of 1d6 level. This acts as a harmful modifier to all rolls until it is removed.

18+ Oops! Failure caused a rift which allowed a demon to appear as if summoned. See the Summon Demon spell in ***Advanced Wizard*** for the gruesome details.

Those events above which do not mention the ST expended all take full casting ST and then the event mentioned applies. The items this applies to specifically are 3-6 and 13-18.

Players should remember that there is only a small chance per spell that this chart will be utilized. Even if it is, there is a good chance that minor events (ST losses, spell failures) will occur. Don't panic when three sixes come up; there's a price to be paid for the pleasure of seeing three ones.

This chart is meant to liven up the game in unpredictable ways, not to destroy player-characters. Gaming the errors to humorous effect can be easy; several of the accidental doings from "The Conjuring" in this issue of TSG can be worked out from this chart, assuming that the GM has an active imagination and an antic sense of humor. Be reasonable in application and magic backlash will become just one of those things which can upset the best-laid plans of adventurers and mages.



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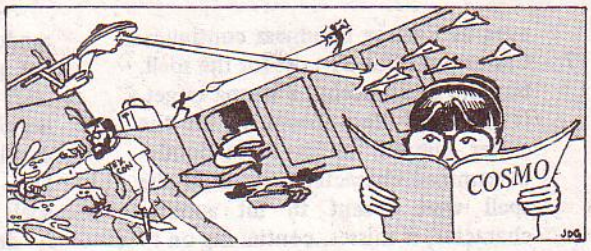
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Wargaming Widows

by Martha Ladyman



There have been times when I have envied women who married ordinary, mundane men. All they have to fear from their husbands' "night out with the boys" is him coming home with one too many beers under his belt or a suspicious blonde hair on his shoulder. I married an adventurer who sneers at danger and laughs at death every Friday night. Week after week, I lie awake until early morning, listening for the sound of the step at the door, the key in the lock, the clink of chain mail in the living room. And I worry. What if a blue dragon attacks him? He's barely recovered from the hellhound assault last week; could he manage a band of berserkers? And there were reports of jacklewere in the neighborhood . . .

A wargaming widow's shoulders must be broad, to bear the burdens of carrying on at home while he's away. She must keep a constant vigil against the Worried, the Nosy, and the Mainly Meddlesome. Daily she will be faced with the Coalition of Concerned Parents and In-Laws. Their number is few, their tenacity is legend. First, they feel out the situation. "Is David out gaming again, dear?" Next, a few feints. "Isn't he a little old for that sort of thing?" "When is he going to grow up" are favorites, as are arguments of Responsibility (the Shouldering Thereof), Duty, and Mowing the Lawn and Fixing This Place Up Before It Falls Down Around Your Ears. And, finally, the thrust, "When are *you* going to stop this nonsense and get that boy to settle down?" I stare at the phone in disbelief. You want *me* to tell a 13th level mage *no*?

Other problems beset the wargaming widow: the dried blood on the carpet; the mysterious potions in the bathroom; old scrolls tossed carelessly about the living room in an untidy heap; his blasted djinn sword (doesn't that thing *ever* shut up?). And how do you tell the preacher that your husband is out looting and maiming, but should be home around suppertime?

Worrisome as these problems may be, though, none is as pressing as the one of Keeping Our Marriage Alive. You've probably heard of KOMA – it's featured monthly in every women's magazine, and only by active participation in the principles of KOMA can one avoid Heartbreak, Divorce, and the Other Woman. Oh, the various magazines quibble over a point here and there, but they all agree on one basic premise: Keeping the marriage alive is possible only if you Share His Interests. Now, that's an easy thing to say if all you have to do is bait a few hooks or admire a stamp or even endure Howard Cosell on Monday night; but, frankly, killing orcs was never one of my strong suits. Somehow, it just doesn't seem like the sort of thing a *nice* girl should do.

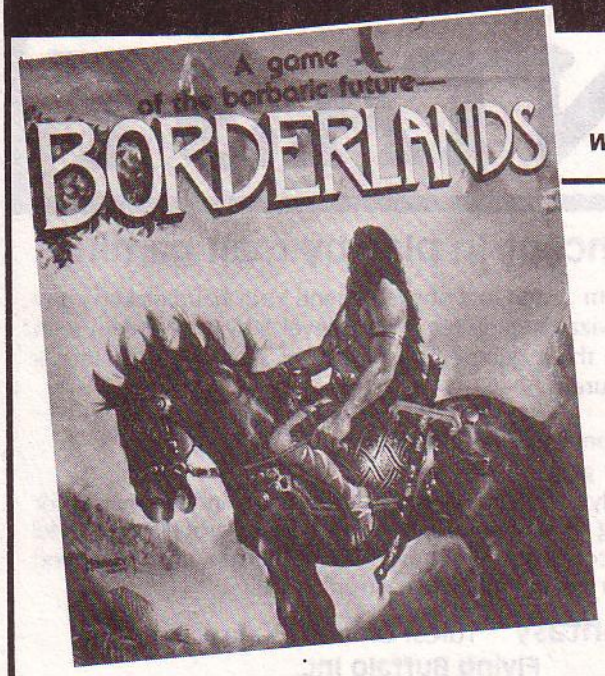
But how I've tried. I've sat in rooms filled with boys too young to grow beards, whose only desire is to Maim and Destroy. ("You open the door. Inside are 150 goblins, armed to the teeth. What do you do?" "I draw my sword, rush in, and start swinging.") I've guided space ships through hyperspace, tanks through Germany, and foot soldiers through Medieval England. I've nuked entire civilizations out of existence without batting an eye. I've sat through dozens of conventions armed with too little sleep, too many McDonalds, and an IV of Dr. Pepper attached to my arm, and I've come to a Major Conclusion.

Nuts to Good Housekeeping! Stick it in your ear, Reader's Digest! Flake off, Ladies Home Journal! The universe seems to be quite conquerable without my help, and, frankly, I'd rather go bowling.

So now I sit and watch "Dallas" and "Love Boat," and wait for my adventurer to come home. I'll help him out of his armor, clean his sword, pour a healing potion down his throat, and send him to bed, where he'll sleepily describe battles fought, causes triumphant, and the jewels and gold and pairs of dragon ears he'll bring home to me next week.

Perhaps I don't envy those normal women with their mundane husbands after all.

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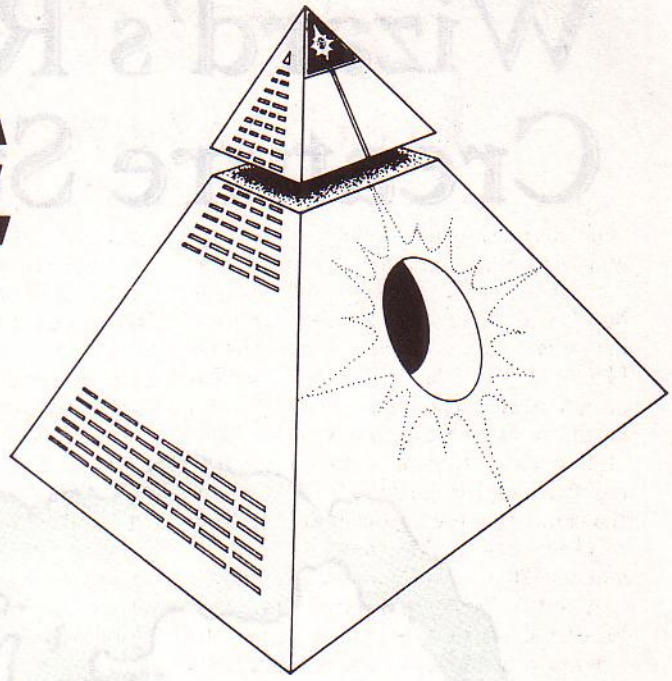
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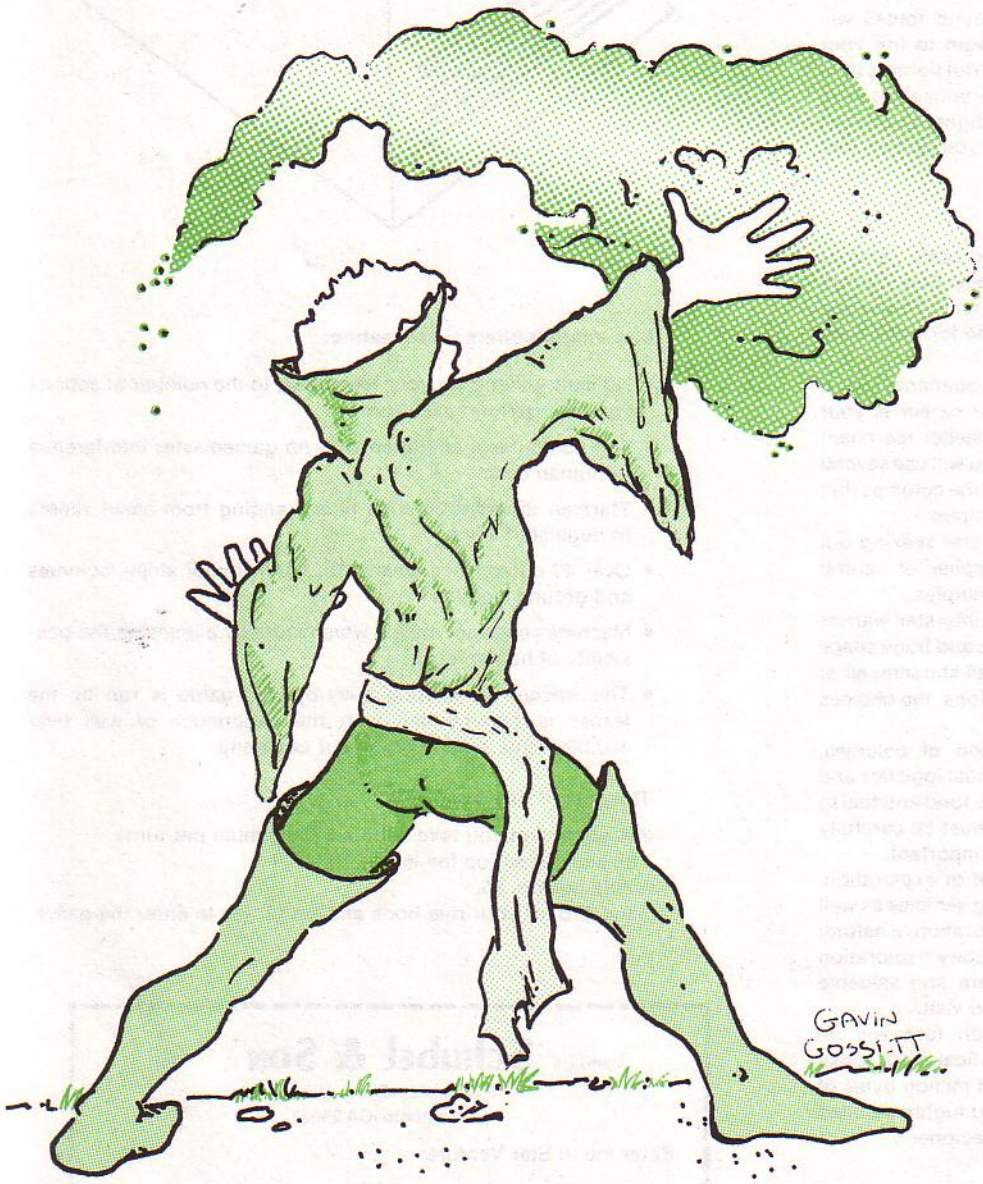
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Wizard's Realm Creature Stats

by Ronald Pehr



Wizards' Realm is a fantasy role-playing game, published by Mystic Swamp. As with similar games, it was influenced by Tolkien and contains gaming concepts pioneered in ***Dungeons & Dragons***: character classes, rolled character statistics, experience points, and levels. The drawing card for ***Wizards' Realm*** is its combat system: Various factors are added up for attack and defense, and if the former is larger, the defender takes the difference as damage. Factors include rolled character statistics and weapons employed.

Players will figure out the attack and defense numbers for their characters; presumeably, the referee will have figured out the numbers ahead of time for the non-player characters and the monsters. To aid the ref, the rulebook includes a page with a list of dice ranges for each characteristic for each monster.

However, that's where the system's lovely simplicity breaks down. For each monster, the referee must roll six characteristics, then add in the monster's natural weaponry. This is laborious, time-consuming, and – most heinous – no fun.

This article was written to make it easier for ***Wizards' Realm*** referees to either plan encounters with monsters or have a "mystery guest" without having to do a lot of die rolling. The following list of monsters is taken from page 44 of the ***Wizards' Realm*** rulebook. Given are the average attack number (AN), defense number (DN), survival points (SP), and power points (PP) for each species of monster.

AN sums the averages for strength, dexterity, and agility for each monster. If the creature has a characteristic natural weaponry listed in the rulebook's description on pages 45-48, this has been added. In accord with the rapid, one-roll attack system used in the game, creatures do not get multiple attacks for different natural weaponry (e.g., one bite and one claw swipe); these are added together into the AN unless stated otherwise.

DF sums the averages for strength, intelligence, and constitution. Natural weaponry plays little part here – the teeth, claws, and horns of most animals aid little in preventing harm to the animal – indicating that even the most violent beast is still vulnerable. On the other hand, most creatures have great physical vitality, and have some sort of armor-like covering (such as scales, fur, or thick hide).

"Unarmed" monsters employ the full values of strength, intelligence, and constitution, whereas unarmed player-characters have only constitution and artifical armor.

SP sums the averages for strength, constitution, and a six-sided die roll for each 20-sided die of either strength or constitution the monster is allowed beyond the first. For example: An Ogre has 2d20 each of strength and constitution. The average of 2d20 is 21. Leaving out the first d20 of each characteristic, the Ogre has d20 more for each one. The average of 2d6 is 7, added to 21 for strength and 21 for constitution to give an average Ogre 49 survival points.

PP sums the averages for constitution, intelligence, and 20 times the intelligence. Normal ***Wizards' Realm*** spellcasters multiply intelligence by ten; only those specifically stated as wizards, having greater natural magical potential, multiply by 20. Since the monsters' quasi-magical abilities are inherent to them, the higher figure seems appropriate.

Any monster listed as undead (Vampire, Mummy/Lich, Wight, Skeleton, Zombie) is immune from the combat results on page 35 of the rulebook. They may continue combat until reduced to 0 SP. Any monster requiring magical attacks to be hit may be hit by silver weapons; however, melee weapons of silver do only ½ damage and missile weapons of silver subtract 2 from firer's DX.

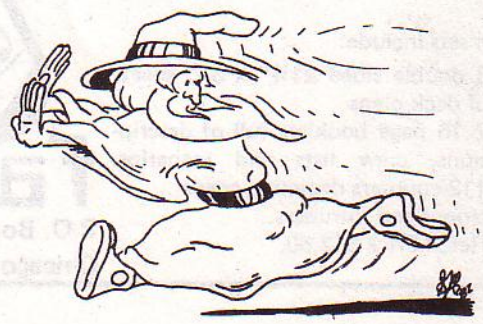
Any victim of an Enthrall has only CT plus AR, if any, as a DN, and does not roll d20. When attacking an Enthralled victim, attacker rolls an extra d20.

If a monster larger than human charges into melee, the player-character must save vs. AG or be knocked down if the monster does any damage at all in the first turn. A combatant fighting from the ground does not roll d20 for its attack; its opponent rolls an extra d20 for attack.

Flying monsters do not hover while in melee. If diving on a ground-bound foe, they may knock it down (see preceding paragraph). If they have initiation, the flier exchanges blows with the foe but has the option to fly away. If the flier does not have initiation it must continue the combat while grounded. The flier cannot take off during melee unless it allows opponent an attack which it defends agains minus its ST. Fliers may exchange blows in mid-air, separate, and exchange again, on alternate turns to allow for circling in the air.

Monsters with lethal or paralytic poison can be presumed to have injected it if their attacks exceed defense by at least 10.

Monster	AN	DN	SP	PP	Comments
Balefiend	74	116	135	714	85% chance to employ Fear Spell at 50PP per spell. Additional 50PP lowers target intelligence -1 for save.
Basilisk	42	41	37	–	Exhalation 10', but once per day 20'. Any damage given *or* taken causes opponent to save vs. CT to avoid paralysis.
Centaur	42	44	37	–	Add 3 to DN if using cudgel. May use medium bow. Roll d20 for DX.
Chimera	62	21	64	–	Three attacks per turn, on same or different foes. Does not add a d20 roll to its defense.
Cockatrice	48	39	41	–	
Florana	42	80	80	400	Sleep Spell @ 50PP, always works on character with less than 21 CH.
Gargoyle	45	42	35	145	Use spells as low degree spellcaster. Add 3 to DN if using club. Add 10 AN, 6 DN if using large sword.
Giant	46	74	75	–	Smallish giant. Add 25 AN if using weapon.
Large Giant	77	130	161	–	Add 25 AN if using weapon.
Gorgon	46	38	27	–	Does not add d20 roll to defense. Target save vs. DX, and must also subtract DX from AN when meleeing.
Griffin	78	53	51	–	
Harpy	52	32	21	242	Enthrall 99% effective at 50PP per turn.
Hellcat	65	42	27	327	Enthrall 50% effective at 50PP per turn.
Hellhound	40	30	27	–	Immune to non-magical attacks.
Hydra	86	20	16	–	Numbers are for *each* head (d10 heads).
Kraken	78	56	52	–	May attack multiple foes at AN 78, but DN and SP are aggregate amount.
Manticore	72	46	42	–	
Merfolk	38	42	36	300	Merfolk spellcasters 6th degree. Merfolk may use melee weapons, but do not employ missiles or armor.
Minotaur	64	52	49	–	
Mummy/Lich	28	60	56	330	Will use all spells as high degree wizard. May have spellstoring ring.
Nightmare	86	48	41	260	Fear Spell at 99%.
Ogre	42	54	49	220	Add 20/6 to AN/DN if using weapon.
Roc	61	41	77	–	
Skeleton	38	24	14	–	Add 15/6 to AN/DN if using weapon.
Sphinx	50	48	27	–	Immune to any mental attack/magic.
Attercope	68	32	21	232	50% chance Enthrall at 50PP per turn.
Lg. Attercope	84	66	66	338	50% chance Enthrall at 50PP per turn.
Vampire	42	48	41	261	90% chance Enthrall at 50PP per turn. 99% chance Summon at 150PP. Immune to non-magical attacks.
Wight	26	54	39	305	60% chance Summon at 150PP. 90% chance Sleep at 50PP.
Zombie	22	52	63	–	
FireDrake	82	60	65		Two fiery breaths per hour. Smallish drake.
Lg. FireDrake	160	184	168		Four fiery breaths per hour.
ColdDrakes, small or large, as for FireDrakes without the breath.					
GatorDrakes	71	49	37		Two Mystic Strikes per hour. Smallish drake.
Lg. GatorDrake	82	76	78		Four Mystic Strikes per hour.
Unicorn	56	62	36	–	Immune to any mental attack/magic.
Alligator (Sm.)	40	30	21	–	
Alligator (Lg.)	50	50	47		
Bear	60	41	41		
Cave Bear	67	64	78		
Boar	39	28	24		
Elk	42	30	27		
Horse	44	32	27		
Moose	42	36	32		
Sabre-tooth	58	30	27		
Wolf	42	24	21		
Great Wolf	48	42	33		
Ghoul	53	38	32		



Foreign Report:

Gaming in Sweden

by Anders Blixt

From Sweden, gamer Anders Blixt writes: "In **Space Gamer** *51 you asked for reports on gaming in other parts of the world. This letter contains a short article on the hobby in Sweden. I hope you like it. The Swedish market is expanding rapidly . . ."*

The traditional board games reached our country in the early seventies. They aroused interest among those attracted to military history. Small clubs were formed in the two biggest cities, Stockholm and Gothenburg. The Stockholm club soon began to publish a still-existing bimonthly fanzine.

When I entered the Gothenburg club in 1975, none of the (then) dozen members knew anything about SF or fantasy games. The two distributors in the country only sold SPI and Avalon Hill historical games. When they later began to sell ***StarForce*** and ***Sorcerer,*** those games aroused no particular interest, probably due to their lack of flavor.

At the first Swedish wargames convention, Konvent-77 in 1977, the greatest attraction was an unusual game with the odd name ***Dungeons & Dragons.*** I remember well how we WWII and Napoleonic generals gathered around the lone dungeonmaster to be introduced to the novelty. We rolled our dice and became more and more fascinated. The game was an immediate success. Several members of the club soon ordered sets of rules, and many campaigns came into existence. The old boardgames remained on the bookshelves for longer and longer periods of time.

During the years since 1977, the hobby has expanded rapidly. The language difference presents no great problem, since knowledge of English is very widespread in Sweden (six years of English is compulsory in school). Today, there are several thousand players of fantasy and SF games in Sweden. This may not seem much by American standards, but if you take into account that there are only eight million Swedes and that the games are printed in a foreign language, the number becomes more impressive.

Overwhelmingly, the most popular game is ***Dungeons & Dragons,*** generally AD&D with numerous local modifications. Following, but still far behind, is probably ***Traveller.*** The other American FRP games (***Fantasy Trip, RuneQuest,*** et al.) have their fans, but they are very few compared to the D&D players. Recently, the first FRP game in Swedish was published. It is titled ***Drakar & Demoner*** (Dragons & Demons), and is mainly a translation of ***Basic Role-Playing,*** with magics and religion added. There are two other Swedish FRP games under development, though I doubt that there will be enough room on the market for that many RPGs.

During the last year, the hobby has been noticed by the media. There have been articles in several nationwide newspapers and a short program on one of the national radio channels. The reports have been mainly neutral or positive. Some people have criticized the games for the large amount of violence in them, but my guess is that the attention in the media has done more to spread the hobby than anything else, and that the adverse articles have not done any noticeable damage.

What about the players, then? The typical Swedish RPG player is between 14 and 25 years old. The lower limit of the age range is due to the fact that you need to have a decent grasp of English to play. The typical player has an above-average education and there is a 99% chance that he is male. Otherwise, there are no standard characteristic traits. Among my fellow players there are communists as well as conservatives, pacifists as well as officers of the army reserve, and Christians as well as atheists.

Only a minority of the players belong to clubs and the only large and organized clubs are in Stockholm and Gothenburg. There have been some conflicts between the clubs, when club leaders have disagreed on various more or less important issues, but this seems to be a common trait in gaming circles all over the world.

Currently there are five fanzines in Sweden. One deals mainly with boardgames, one with ***Diplomacy,*** and the remaining three with RPG and SF/fantasy boardgames. There is not yet a market for a professional Swedish games magazine, but with the publication of ***Drakar & Demoner*** there might soon be.

Every spring since 1977, a games convention has been organized in Gothenburg; it is called Gothcon. The first convention had about 25 participants. The most recent one, Gothcon-IV, was a three-day event with about 220 participants, mainly from Sweden, but also some from Denmark and Norway. The program contained boardgame, table-top, and RPG features. Popular arrangements were the tournaments in AD&D, ***Traveller, Dune, Blue & Gray, Thirty Years War Quad*** (a matter of national heritage), ***Diplomacy, Samurai,*** the traditional RPG skirmish of the bank robbery in "Kelly's Heroes," a large tabletop battle between Vikings and Frenchmen, and a night session of ***Killer*** (Sweden vs. Norway).

There is also a game company in Sweden, publishing games in English on various historical and SF subjects. The publication of ***Drakar & Demoner*** was its entry into the Swedish-speaking market. Let us hope that they will have success there. The way the hobby has been expanding, there is a good chance that there will be more games in Swedish.

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MEGAHEXES

by Bob Hensle

How well I remember the first time I was GM for a TFT adventure. All the players had been introduced to TFT by playing solo, and now it was time for a game mastered adventure . . .

GM: You lower yourselves down the shaft into a mega-megahex size room with corridors going northwest and south.

Mapper: A mega what?

GM: A mega-megahex. (GM draws the room and corridors.)

Leader: We take the corridor going northwest.

GM: You go five megahexes and come to a trefoil . . .

Mapper: A what?

GM: A trefoil. Here, I'll show you. (GM draws the trefoil) . . .

Verbal descriptions are so inadequate when trying to map twisting, turning corridors and irregular shaped rooms. And, for the GM to draw the map for the players eliminates the chance for a botched up map and lost dungeon delvers. Thus was born the hex-shaped, masonite floor tile.

To make these very useful play aids a gamer needs some 1/8 inch masonite and access to a table saw, radial arm saw or a miter box. (A person could use cardboard, straight edge and a sharp knife, but the work involved will be greater and the finished product less durable.)

Step 1. Cut the masonite into 2" by 3" rectangles. To do this, first cut the masonite into 3" wide strips. Next set up the saw to cut the 2" dimension. Don't try to mark the masonite and then "eyeball" the saw onto the mark because even the smallest variation between the pieces will make them fit together poorly. On a table saw use the fence; on a radial arm saw or miter box nail down a guide. This will ensure that every piece will be exactly the same width. (They don't have to be exactly 2", but they all must be exactly the same size.) Once the guide is set up, *don't move it*, because you need that same width in step 4.

Step 2. This is the hardest and most important step. First cut the corner off one end of the rectangle at exactly 60 degrees (see diagram 1). You will probably waste a few pieces before you get that angle just right. After the angle is right, set up another guide so that each piece is cut the same, exactly the same.

Step 3. Cut the other corner off of the same end by turning the piece over so the other side is down (see diagram 2).

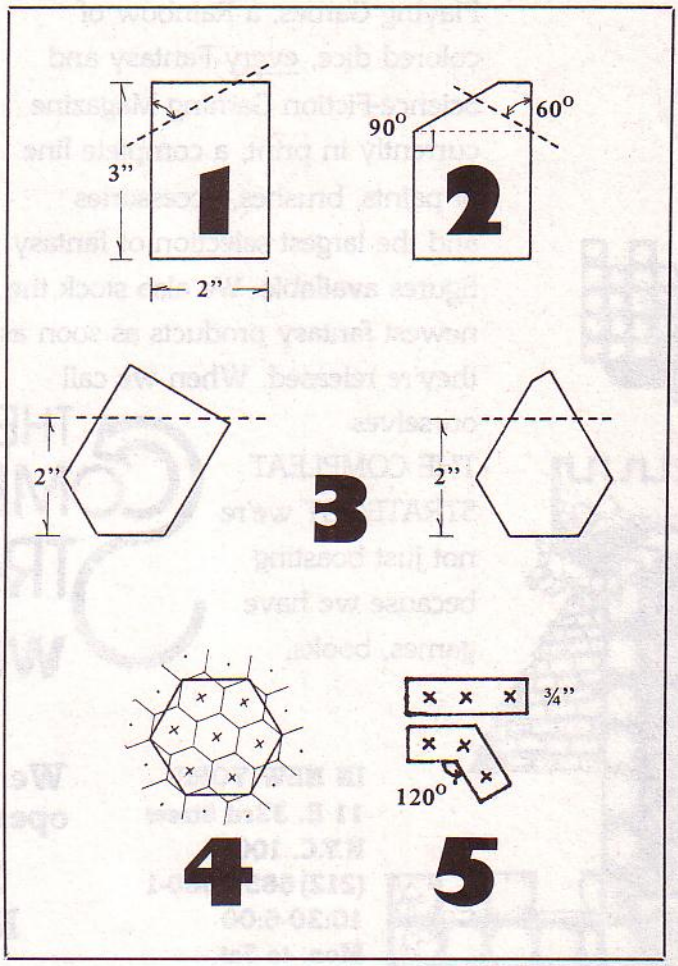
Step 4. Use the guide set up in step 1 to cut the other two corners off (see diagram 3). If you got the angle right and each piece is the same size, you will have hex-shaped pieces that fit together very well (i.e. no gaps) to form a playing surface.

Step 5. Since each of these hexes is actually a megahex, marks must be made to show the positions of the centers of the small hexes. A woodburning tool makes the best marks, but paint will do quite nicely. Resist the temptation to put a mark in each of the six corners of the hex because they actually belong off to one side (see diagram 4). If you put some of the hexes together and compare them to a piece of megahex paper, it becomes clear where the marks should be.

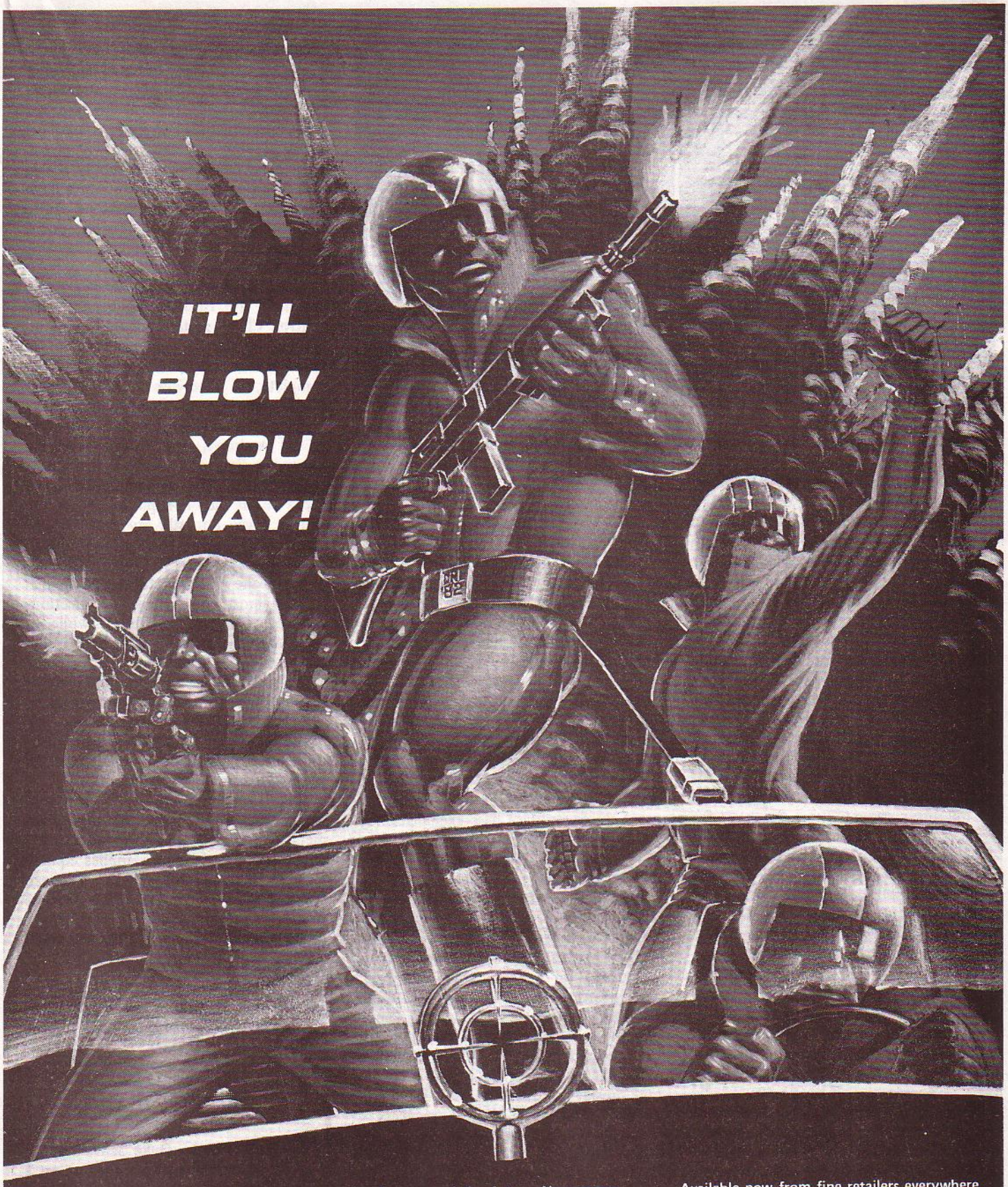
Step 6. Now all you need are the narrow tunnels. After making the hexes these should be quite simple. Diagram 5 shows how they should look. These pieces need not be as exact as the hexes because they don't have to fit together as well.

These hexes are the same size as megahexes on 19mm hex paper. While everything is set up make plenty of hexes because it is hard to reset up to make more the same size. I have over forty and it's not too many (but that's all I can fit in my gaming case).

Now all the GM has to do is lay the hexes down on the table in the same arrangement as the hexes on his dungeon map. It is faster, easier and less confusing that trying to verbally describe what the players are seeing. Mapping becomes much easier for the players (though it's amazing how some players can botch up maps when what they are drawing is right there in front of them). And those miniatures look so nice on a smooth, dark brown background . . .



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METAL

by John Rankin

Rolling Your Own

At a dollar apiece, today's 25mm figures aren't cheap. On the other hand, if you only pick up a couple on each trip to the hobby shop, they're not likely to leave you without lunch money. Suppose, though, that a scenario in your campaign calls for the adventurers to encounter a band of twenty orcs. Now we're talking sizeable investment; a single demon or balrog might accomplish the same thing at considerably less expense. It's a shame, though, because those orcs would have made for a hell of a nice melee.

An alternative is now available through the Dunken Co., the U.S. distributors of the Prince August line of figure molds for 25, 40, and 54mm soldiers. Recent releases by this company form the basis for what promises to be a large selection of fantasy types. Each mold contains three different figures. Available now are orcs, trolls and goblins, barbarians (nice Vikings), "men of the city," dwarves, and wood elves. These figures are nicely detailed and would do justice to any collection. But the real attraction here is cost. You pour the metal yourself and in one motion cut out all the middle men.

The twenty orcs for twenty bucks referred to earlier will serve as a comparison. To cast your own, you'll need a mold (at $10), a couple of clamps ($1.50), a ladle ($2.50), and a couple of bars of Prince August's special casting metal (highly recommended because of its low melting point – $2). Your kitchen stove melts the metal. At this point your total investment for 20-24 orcs is $19.50. Any further figures will cost you 15-20 cents each. You might well have a friend who would consider buying 20 orcs for $10 – and you make $6. If saving lots of money on figures, while at the same time creating them appeals to you, write for the Dunken catalogue (see their ad in this issue). They may have an idea whose time has come.

Heritage U.S.A.

While the ancient history of Heritage is far too murky to delve into, the past few years are easily summed up in the persona of one "Uncle" Duke Seifried. Duke has probably done more than any other individual to make adventure gaming a respectable hobby of national proportion. To start with, he gave us the name "adventure gaming" in response to retailer resistance to the nasty term "wargaming." Other innovations include bubble-packing miniatures, increased distribution to such non-traditional retail outlets as department stores, military base exchanges, toy stores, etc., painted miniatures, "Paint n' Play" sets combining figures with paints and brushes, and much more. Duke is a master salesman and much of his work reflects his desire to expose new potential markets to the joys of miniatures gaming.

How successful this approach will be in the long run is an unanswered question, and unfortunately Duke won't be around Heritage to read the final verdict. Duke recently accepted a prestigious and lucrative job with TSR.

In charge of Heritage's future now is new president Howard Barasch. While not as slick a salesman as his predecessor, Howie is, nevertheless, one of the pros in this business. His "insiders" knowledge of the industry is legend. In what could well be the make-or-break year for Heritage, the company is in highly capable hands.

Heritage figures are easily the most paintable ones on the market. They're somewhat caricatured in appearance and sculpted in deep relief, expressly for ease of painting. This style was developed by Duke and called "maximation" in honor of head sculptor Max Carr. (David Helber also sculpts from time to time.) To complement these figures, Duke developed (and popularized through hundreds of demonstrations) a technique known as "stain painting." Rather than try to explain how this works, I'll simply advise you to send Heritage 25 cents or a large stamped, self-addressed envelope for a brochure that details this process. You'll be amazed how fast you can turn out beautifully-painted figures.

For several years now, the "fly in the ointment" for Heritage has been quality control. Cheap metal and indifferent inspection resulted in roughly one out of four purchased figures being broken, incomplete, or otherwise unusable. In response, Heritage has finally upgraded its metal and hired a new production manager, Ed Andrews, who knows something about the figures themselves. The results are gratifying. After inspecting dozens of packs (both factory-supplied and in the stores), I can honestly say that Heritage seems to have licked this serious problem.

Regarding specific Heritage figure lines, "Lord of the Rings" is still one of the nicest and most comprehensive collections around; "Dungeon Dwellers," while of mixed quality, contains some beautifully-sculpted and animated figures; and "Knights & Magick" is a treasure trove of fighters for historical and fantasy gamers. "Conan," the latest release, is not bad, but simply doesn't measure up to some of the earlier lines. Perhaps boredom in the design department is the culprit.

The future of Heritage is, to a great degree, dependent on products other than metal figures. The financial road ahead is uncertain (this condition applies equally to many game and miniatures companies). But Heritage has come through some amazingly tough times before. Here's hoping Howie can pull it off once again.

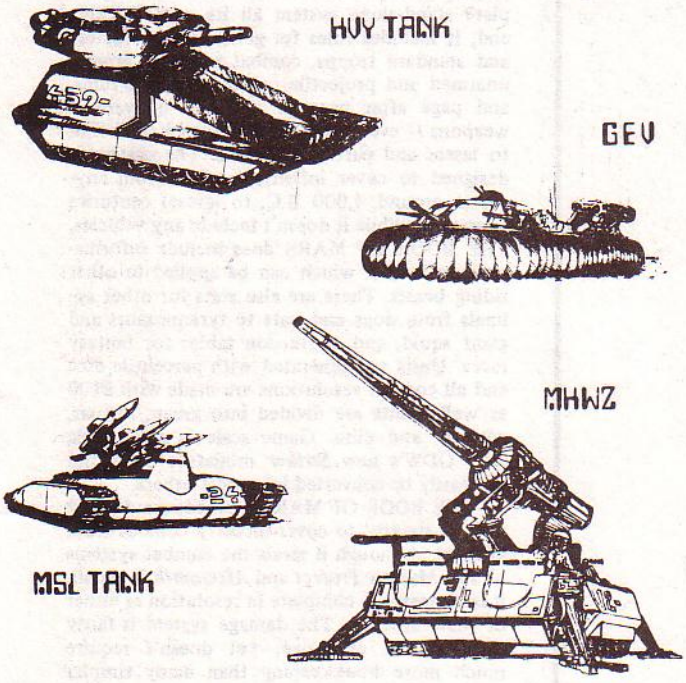
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Is the "Official AD&D®" label on a product like money in the bank? Find out as we look at Grenadier, the company with "the license."

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Dallas, TX 75234

Founded: 1976 by Duke Seifried and Jim Odin as merger of Custom Cast and Heritage (aka Hinchliffe, aka Miniature Figurines U.S.A.)
Owned by: 80% of stock owned by Dallas oil & real estate man Ray Stockman
Employees: About 25
Number of figures sold in 1981: 8-10,000,000

OGRE MINIATURES



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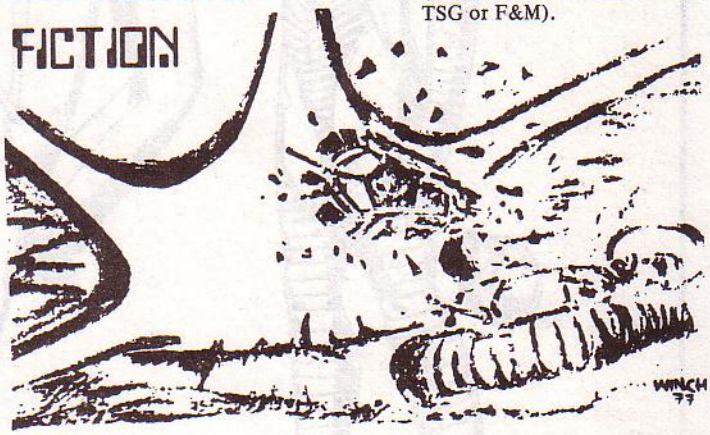
Units retail for $4.00 a pack, except for the Ogre ($9.50). Unless you're a TSG or F&M subscriber, add 50 cents postage and handling for each pack ordered ($1.00 for each Ogre).

THE OGRE BOOK

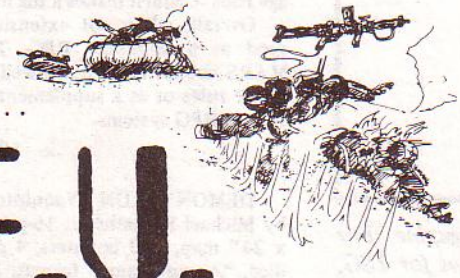
The name tells it all. This is a book about OGRE – and, of course, G.E.V. We've collected the best articles from the early issues of ***The Space Gamer*** *(many now out of print) . . . playtested them further and updated them where necessary . . . and put them all in one book. Titles include "Playing the Odds in Ogre/G.E.V.," "The Four-Howitzer Defense," "Iron Mountain," "Adding Fear and Loathing to G.E.V.," and many others . . . including the original designer's notes for both games. Whether you want to polish up your game before the next convention, or just try out the variants at home, you'll enjoy* ***The Ogre Book.***

SCENARIOS
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DESIGN NOTES
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THE OGRE BOOK is $5.00 at your local game store. To order from SJ Games, add 50 cents postage and handling (unless you're a subscriber to TSG or F&M).



The best-selling sequel to OGRE . . .



G.E.V.

In the year 2085, a tank duel lasts only seconds. An entire battle can end in a few minutes. Nuke-firing infantrymen dodge across the battleground in powered suits, trying to come to grips with the enemy armor. And those armor units, both tanks and hovercraft, are deadly. Only a direct hit will take one out . . . a miss may stun the crew, but their machine will keep trying to kill you.

G.E.V., sequel to OGRE, adds more detail to this fast-moving simulation of armored combat in the next century. G.E.V. stands by itself – but it is totally compatible with OGRE. Stacking and terrain rules, new unit types, the Mark IV Ogre, and more . . . Scenarios include Raid, Breakthrough, Ceasefire Collapse, and The Train. And within hours, you'll be inventing your own.

Since its publication, G.E.V. has ranked among the top science fiction games in SPI's ongoing survey. As of this writing, it was in fourth place among all s-f games in print!

" . . . Presumably this is 'Son of Ogre!' It is good enough to warrant 'Revenge of Son of Ogre.' *G.E.V.* is not as clean as *Ogre*, but probably has more replay value. There are some imaginative scenarios, including one involving an armored train. Probably the best single micro game." – Dave Ritchie, *Moves*



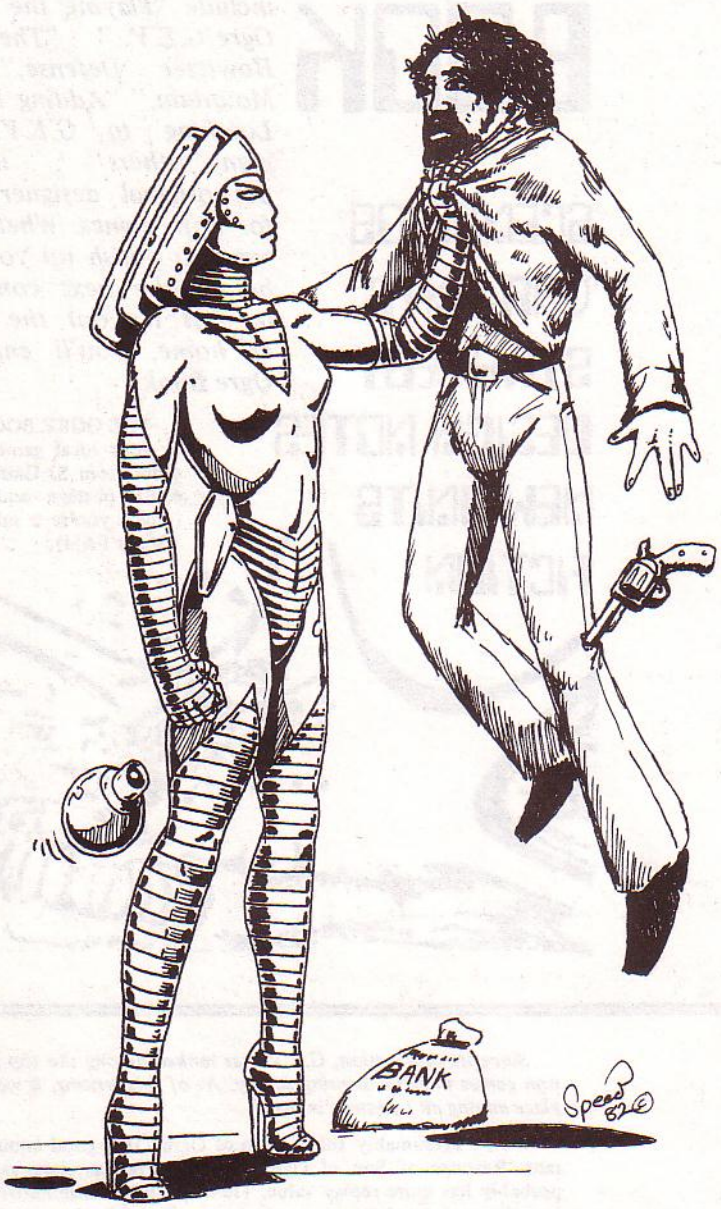
Game components include plastic Pocket Box; 112 backprinted counters; ziplock bag for counter storage; FULL-COLOR map painted by Denis Loubet; 20-page rulebook; two terrain/CRT reference sheets.

Designed by Steve Jackson. For 1 or 2 players. Complexity 5; solitaire playability 8. Playing time 60 to 90 minutes.

G.E.V. and the best-selling OGRE are both available from your local game store for $5.00 each in the new Pocket Box edition. If they're out, you can order from SJ Games. Please add 50 cents per game for postage and handling, unless you're a TSG or F&M subscriber.

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Capsule Reviews



THE SPACE GAMER reviews board games, role-playing games, computer games, video games, and game supplements. We review play-by-mail games if a reviewer is enrolled. We will review any science fiction or fantasy game if the publisher supplies a copy. We do not guarantee reviews of historical wargames. TSG may publish a review of a game we are not sent – IF a reader submits a review.

The staff will make reasonable efforts to check reviews for factual accuracy, but opinions expressed by reviewers are not necessarily those of the magazine. For information on writing reviews for TSG, see "Writing Reviews for THE SPACE GAMER" further on in this section.

Game items for which we are seeking reviews include: ***The Black Vial, Curse of Ra, Danger in Drindisti, Galactic Gladiators, Goblin, The Imperial Dragon, The Journey, Legendaria, The Official Superhero Adventure Game, RuneQuest Borderlands, Shootout at the Saloon, SoloQuest, Star Smuggler,*** and ***The Tome of Mighty Magic.***

THE BOOK OF MARS (Image Game Co., POB 1104, LaGrange Park, IL 60525); $10. Designed by David Tennes. One 8½" x 11" 100-page rulebook. Published 1981.

THE BOOK OF MARS, subtitled "a combat system," is a new set of rules designed to be used either as a supplement for existing role-playing games or miniatures rules, or as a complete stand-alone system all its own. To this end, it includes rules for generating characters and standard troops, combat rules for armed, unarmed and projectile combat, damage rules, and page after page of statistics on various weapons – everything from fist, rock, and club to lasers and particle weapons. The system is designed to cover infantry warfare from anywhere around 4,000 B.C. to several centuries from now. While it doesn't include any vehicles, THE BOOK OF MARS does include information on horses, which can be applied to other riding beasts. There are also stats for other animals from dogs and bats to tyrannosaurs and giant squid, and conversion tables for fantasy races. Units are generated with percentile dice and all combat resolutions are made with d100 as well. Units are divided into green, regular, veteran, and elite. Game scale is compatible with GDW's new ***Striker*** miniature rules and can easily be converted into most others.

THE BOOK OF MARS succeeds remarkably well in its goal to cover infantry combat from all ages. Although it rivals the combat systems of ***The Morrow Project*** and ***Aftermath*** in detail, it isn't nearly as complete in resolution as either of these systems. The damage system is fairly realistic and extensive, yet doesn't require much more bookkeeping than many simpler systems. Rules on flame and burns are especially nice. In most places, the rules are quite clear, and are amply cross-indexed for quick reference.

There are few real problems to be found in THE BOOK OF MARS if one uses it as it is intended. A couple areas of the rules, such as in the explosives section, may require repeated reading, and there are a few annoying typos and misspellings, but no serious omission. The fantasy section is a bit sparse – and it would be nice to see a supplement on vehicles – but this is not the focus of these rules. The only serious ambiguity is in damage dice. I assume that a 20-sided die is used here, but the rules don't say whether to use it as a d10 or a d20 for damage rolls – which makes a big difference.

Overall, while not extensive enough to be used as a complete RPG, THE BOOK OF MARS should serve quite well as a set of miniature rules or as a supplement for other miniature or RPG systems.

–William A. Barton

DEMON'S RUN (Yaquinto); $9. Designed by Michael S. Matheny. 16-page rulebook, 12" x 24" map, 130 counters, 4 play-aid sheets, 2 dice, "Album Game" format. 1-4 players; playing time 2+ hours. Published 1981.

DEMON'S RUN is an interstellar racing game in a section of space filled with black holes, radiation zones, and mysterious "null" areas. Each player commands a ship. A number of points are allocated to each ship to purchase ship characteristics. These characteristics range from Main Engine capabilities to offensive weapons. Players place their ships on corners of the mapboard (if there are two players, opposite corners). Other counters (buoys and mines) are placed in predesignated locations on the map. The object of the game is to move your ship across the

mapboard as quickly as possible, gathering buoys and dodging various dangers as you go, then exit off the board through the map corner hex opposite your starting hex.

This is a very well-structured game. The buoys to be "grabbed" during the race are worth victory points which depend upon how close they are to the danger areas of the board. Movement rules provide a realistic (as far as a small game can be "realistic") look at problems of momentum, maneuverability, and the effects of gravity fields on interstellar ships. The added ability to use offensive weapons against opponents, buoys (to destroy what can't be grabbed), and mines makes this game a free-for-all of genuine fun.

The shortcomings are minor, but annoying. The initiative rules for multi-player games call for the use of multi-color initiative markers, while all of the initiative markers are black. The rules for maneuvering engines and velocity are confusing. The errata is on the back of one of the play-aid cards, which is odd and inconvenient.

However, DEMON'S RUN is an excellent game. The idea is novel; the execution of the idea makes and enjoyable game, more so for three or more players than for one.

–Earl Perkins

SUPPLEMENTS

CATACOMBS OF THE BEAR CULT (FBI); $3.95. Designed by Jim "Bear" Peters. 30-page 8½" x 11" booklet, one 17" x 11" ref shield with gamemaster maps. For low-level ***Tunnels & Trolls*** characters; 2 evenings at least. Published 1981.

Those cultists are a darned nuisance – they keep sweeping down from the hills and robbing the caravans on the Great Highway. That's why the Death Empress put a price on their heads, and that's why you and your gang are out in the wilderness looking for the headquarters of the Great Bear Cult. Did I mention that the Cult members are all werebears . . .?

Magnificent! You'll want to make the Cult a permanent part of your fantasy world, and the booklet even tells you how to restock the catacombs so you can. The NPCs are fleshed out right down to politics and motivations! And this adventure tells you what to do if the characters are captured.

There are glitches. The map has some mistakes, including one vital room left unlabeled. The presence of doors isn't indicated. I could have used more help on how to do ambushes in the wilderness. As for the rationale, it's hard to believe that Bjorni doesn't know about the sinkhole when the secret door goes right to room Z! But these are minor complaints, easily dealt with.

If you play T&T, buy this. If you don't – well, this and the rulebook would be a great place to start! I look forward to the to-be-published second and third levels of the catacombs.

–W.G. Armintrout

CITY BOOK I (FBI); $14.95. Edited by Larry DiTillio. Universal supplement for fantasy role-playing systems. Paperbound book, 8½" x 11". Number of players and playing time indefinite. Published 1982.

CITY BOOK I is the first of a series of universal supplements intended to inspire GMs to more creativity. The book contains 25 different businesses, each with a floor-plan, key, and at least one character described. Scenario suggestions are included after each section, and at the end of the book. Rather than make a system to adapt characters in the book to every FRPG available, the book rates characters' fighting abilities on a scale from "poor" to "excellent." Magical proficiency is rated by a similar system.

The physical quality of this book is incredible: The artwork, diagrams and layout are superb; I have yet to find a typo or omission or unclear language. The various establishments are arranged by sections (i.e., Widow Rohls (!) Bakeshop is in the Food Services Section) with three or four pages of text and maps describing each. While a wide variety of people submitted the contents of CITY BOOK I, the businesses within are all well-done, and occasionally outstanding; reading through the book is sheer enjoyment. The scenarios suggested sound a lot more exciting than most dungeon adventures; they are a real chance to get your players to role-play and use their brains to solve problems.

The only difficulty I can see with using the book is the amount of guesswork the beginning GM will have to do when adapting the NPCs to his favorite system; a few examples – with an NPC having his attributes rendered into the various game system formats – would have been useful. More experienced GMs should have no trouble working things out.

This aid is a perfect example of how any game product *should* be done: clear descriptions, a wide variety of places and people, and possibilities for adventure easily available. If you think the only place to have adventures is in a dungeon or the deep wilderness, pick up a copy of CITY BOOK and be amazed. If you want to see how descriptive and imaginative your game settings can be, get it. An excellent product that is worth every cent of its cover price.

–Stefan Jones



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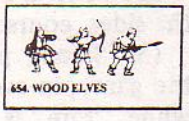
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DRAGON'S HALL (Judges Guild); $3.50. Designed by Jim Simon. Solo adventure for ***Advanced Dungeons & Dragons.*** 32 8½" x 11" pages including covers. Published 1981.

I have read solos for ***Tunnels & Trolls, High Fantasy,*** and even ***RuneQuest,*** but this is the first I've seen for D&D/AD&D. The game is not suited to solo play for two reasons. First, low-level characters are too easy to kill or incapacitate. Second, the first-level Sleep spell is too powerful, but other spells are too weak or too variable of effect to be woven into a solo dungeon.

Simon tries to get around the vulnerability problem by allowing up to four adventurers – most solos accommodate only one. He also allows spell-casters (most solos do not), with a limited choice of spells, but Sleep and Cure are included (even if the character can't normally use Sleep), so that a smart player will almost certainly take only these spells. Moreover, I noticed no case in which any magic spell other than Sleep would have approached its effectiveness, nor were any clerical spells other than Cure of much use.

Although the introduction warns that low-level characters are sometimes better off running than fighting, in cases where a flight option is given, it almost always fails. In other cases it is not even offered. Because of this, and because the adventurers are trapped in the dungeon by a cave-in, with only one way out located at an unknown and distant place, they must fight through most of the monsters in the dungeon in order to leave. I can't imagine any party of second-levels, let alone firsts, likely to survive this test.

Although paragraphs have a number-letter designation, as in most solos, the number does



not correspond to the page number. The editorial failure to re-number paragraphs is inexcusable. It certainly increases the tedium associated with the paragraph-finding method.

With nothing particularly imaginative to recommend it, and marks against it such as indifferent layout, poor word-to-cost ratio, and the unsuitability of AD&D to solo dungeons, I cannot recommend DRAGON'S HALL at this price, even to those who like solos.

–Lewis Pulsipher

GLORY HOLE DWARVEN MINE (Judges Guild); $3.98. Designed by Edward R.G. Mortimer. "Universal" FRP supplement. 48 8½" x 11" typeset pages including covers and 8 pages of maps. Published 1981.

Judges Guild has made an effort in this case to justify their "Universal Fantasy Supplement." All monsters mentioned (except goblins) are described in a section at the back, and 14 different ability numbers are given for each non-player character (NPC) so that the ones applicable to your game can be used. There's also a conversion table for 3d6 to 2d6 to d100. On the other hand, most abilities of NPCs are defined by class and hit points, so unless your game is a variant of D&D, you face a lot of work in order to prepare the module for play.

The adventure has an interesting, though familiar, premise: Several parties, including the players', are simultaneously entering a large dwarven mine soon after the dwarves encountered decimating demonic intrusions. The player-characters (50-60 levels total are recommended) must contend with several other parties as well as with the surviving dwarves and the intruding creatures of the netherworld. There are really two parts to the adventure. First there are encounters with wandering monsters and parties (30-40% chance every 10 minutes or three minutes of battle), and second, a confrontation with the demon lord. Unfortunately, wanderers are so frequent that even a strong party may have to make several trips before safely reaching the seventh level, and there, the demons will be too strong for any group which was not in its turn too strong for the rest of the mines. (The number of wanderers is limited by the total number of monsters of each type, and in some cases, the GM must look around descriptions of 129 "rooms.") Fifth-level characters could manage until encountering the demon lord; even tenth-level characters would have trouble there.

The monsters not derived from D&D are

WRITING REVIEWS FOR THE SPACE GAMER

Capsule Reviews

Most of the reviews we print will be "capsule" reviews – 400 words or less. We pay $5 for each capsule review accepted. We want to run a review for *every* new SF or fantasy game or supplement.

Each capsule review should be five paragraphs long and contain:

(1) Basic information. Present these facts, in this order: NAME OF GAME (Publisher); price. Designer. (If applicable: "Supplement to ____," "Companion to ____," or similar note.) Format: list of components, with sizes of maps and rulebooks, number of counters, etc. Number of players; playing time. Publication date.

(2) General description of the game: background, the sides, course of play, special features, etc.

(3) Strong points. Discuss what is good about the game; in every game, there *is* something worthwhile. "Fun" is a useless adjective. Be specific.

(4) Weak points. Every game has its problems, too. If the only faults you can find are minor ones, say so. If the game is fatally flawed, come right out and SAY SO. If you can phrase your criticisms as suggestions for improvement, do so.

(5) Summation. Your overall opinion of the game. Who should and should not buy it, and why. Is the game worth its price?

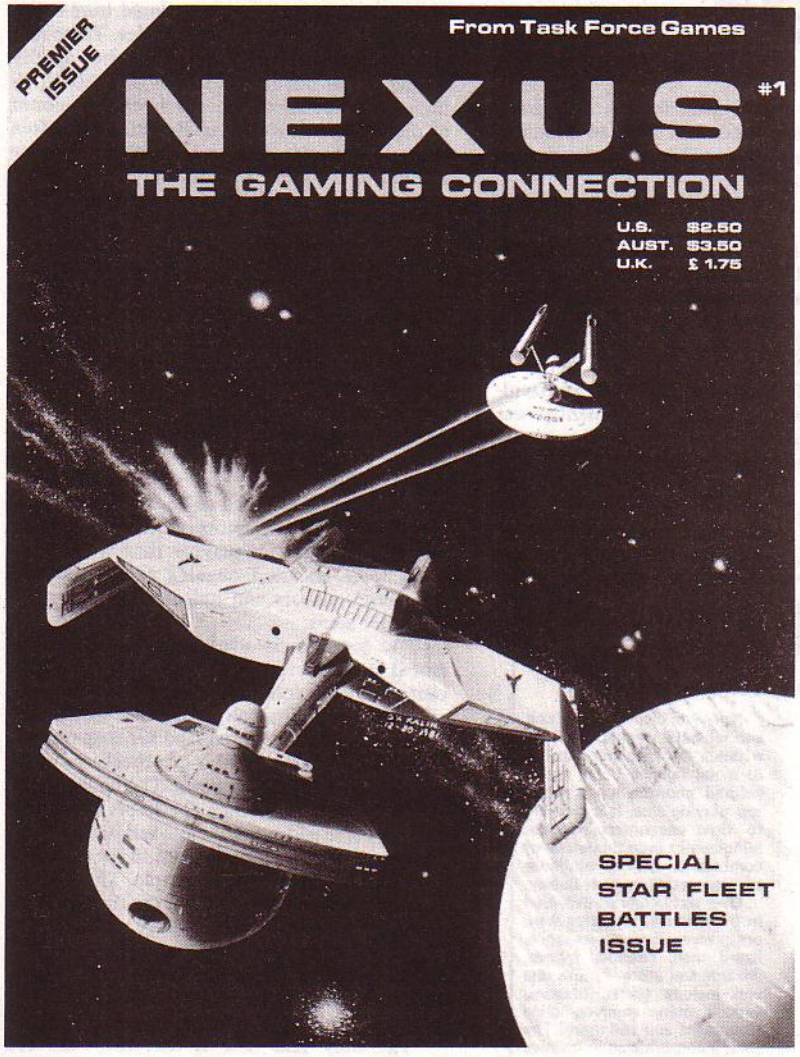
All reviews must be signed; the reviewer's name *will* be printed. No game may be reviewed by its designer, by a playtester, or by an employee of the publisher. (Designer's articles are welcome, but must be billed as such!) Final note: If you can write a complete review in less than the full 400 words, by all means do so.

This review format is designed to encourage fairness and to give the reader enough information to let him decide whether he wants to buy that game. Keep that in mind when you write. This is a short review, *not* a complete analysis. For those who want to write longer reviews, each issue will have one or two –

Featured Reviews

These will be game reviews 1,000 to 2,000 words long. They should contain *all the above information,* plus whatever else the reviewer wants to say. They may be written in any format. A featured review may cover either a new game or one that has been on the market for some time. If TSG has not already printed a capsule review, write one and submit it at the same time. We may even use both.

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fairly ordinary but decent "infantry"; but gremlins and imps, with super magic resistance and strong magical powers, are just too formidable even if they are intended to be nuisances only.

The author assumes that you are familiar with the Guild's ***City State of the Overlord***, but I managed without it. There are some unbelievable oddities of the sort which tend to crop up in Guild "dungeons"; for example: a dwarf using a halberd, huge magic weapon treasures, miners who are third- to fifth-level adventurers, and worst, "Molotov Cocktails." The maps are hard to read because numbers hardly show against the black-square grid; a much better method is to print the grid everywhere except in the rooms. The maps are otherwise no better than adequate, editing is poor, and the advertisement, not a map, should have been on the back cover.

This was a decent idea, for the most part, but inadequately produced. The $6 modules from TSR, Chaosium, or Gamelords are better, but this costs just $4.

–Lewis Pulsipher

IN THE SERVICE OF SAENA SEPHAR (Reston Publishing); $10.95. Designed by Craig Fisher. Stand-alone solo adventure using ***High Fantasy*** rules. 187-page trade paperback. One player; playing time 30 minutes to 2 hours. Published 1982.

In a far-off land, on an island of lizard-people, a delicate three-way government power structure is being threatened by a hidden bomb. As an agent for a party interested in maintaining the status quo, you must halt the assassination attempt. Since the bomb is on a timer, you have only a short time to accomplish your task – that is, if you can even get out of the predicament you're in when the game opens.

Even more than its companion, ***Murder in Irliss***, this game presents a wealth of detail and complexity rarely seen on solo games. The odds stacked against your character really give you a sense of urgency and excitement. However, there are many options your character can take and the internal structure and memory of the game insure they all hang together coherently. I also liked the idea of playing a wizardly thief for a change. When the game is over, the player is rated on a scale of 1 to 10.

Whoever coined the cliche "You can't judge a book by its cover" must've been looking at this one. Since ***High Fantasy*** is obviously trying for a mass-market audience through Reston Publishing, the book's cover should have something to do with the book's subject. Three red-eyed chameleons will only inspire apathy among casual buyers. As to the game itself, although I understand there is a certain amount of die-rolling involved in spell-casting, too often I felt the character's fate was left to the dice and not to the gamer's decisions.

If you can avoid looking at the cover, and don't mind spending the bucks, this game will provide you with many hours of exciting play.

–David J. Arlington

PHAROAH (Daystar West Media Productions, 136 W. 10th North No. 3, Logan, Utah 84321); $5. Designed by Tracy and Laura Hickman. Adventure for D&D. 67-page 8½" x 11" booklet with leatherette bound cover. Two or more players; good for a couple of nights of gaming. Published 1980.

PHAROAH is the second of the "Night-Ventures." It is designed to be played and completed with a satisfactory conclusion with a couple of sessions of playing time. It's a nice break from standard ongoing campaigns, and gives both players and judges attainable goals in shorter steps.

The scenario involves a tomb which is rumored to be theft-proof. At the start of the adventure, the players are confronted by the ghost of a long-dead Pharoah, cursed to wander the sands of his now-deserted land for time on end, in search of the ones who can break the curse and free him from this world. The players soon find themselves searching for items which will end the curse and bring them wealth and power. There are five levels to explore in the pyramid, and a fairly large exterior temple. The inhabitants of the tomb are far from the ordinary fare and provide players and the judge with fascinating role-playing. There are many clues and puzzles scattered throughout the adventure. All in all, it's a very tightly-woven adventure which should be enjoyable for all involved.

The only real flaw is that there are too many typographical errors. Most of the play supplements available today suffer from this. Couldn't designers and publishers spend just a little more time proofreading?

Given the overall quality we are presented in this product, the typos can be overlooked . . . this time, anyway. It's a great buy, considering the time, effort, and thought evident throughout.

–Harley Bates

VALLEY OF THE MISTS (FGU); $5. Designed by Bob Charrette. 8½" x 11" 32-page book. Adventure for ***Bushido***. For three or more players; playing time indefinite. Published 1982.

This is the first adventure scenario for ***Bushido***, FGU's RPG of legendary Nippon. Designed for the new 2nd edition rules, VALLEY

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centers around adventure in the Hida Province of Nippon. The scenario packet contains three separate but interlocked scenarios that can involve player-characters of various professions, from Bushi to Ninja. The three scenarios are *The Oyabun's Secret,* in which the players are hired to retrieve a valuable puzzle box from bandits by a merchant whose secret poses a threat to the local daimyo; *The Daimyo's Peril,* in which the players are hired to find the cause of a mysterious illness which has befallen the daimyo, and which may lead them to the lair of a Bakemonokunshu, an old enemy of the daimyo; and *The Valley of the Mists,* in which the players must penetrate the secrets of an enchanted valley to save the daimyo of Hida Province. Along with the various scenario rumor and encounter tables, the packet includes a set of rumors that characters may have heard before arriving on the scene. Information on Hida Province, its clans, and the temples, shrines, and schools of its capital city, Takayama, is provided, along with maps of the Oyabun's mansion, the bandit's hideout, their leader's lair, and the Valley of the Mists' most important features. Descriptions and statistics for all the important NPCs are given in a section following the scenarios, and two appendices describe three new legendary beings and a new type of magic: Tea Magic, as practiced by the province's resident sorcerer/wiseman.

Overall, VALLEY is quite a complete scenario pack. The three scenarios, plus the information on the province, can be woven by a good referee into an entire campaign centered in the area, especially if he takes the designer's advice to role-play the imparting of information to the characters when they search for rumors, etc. The situations afford the opportunity to the players both to think their way and, if necessary (as it sometimes will be), to fight their way out of trouble, with a reasonable enough balance to please players of both ilk. Enough local color, in the way of background information about the province and the NPCs, is added to make the adventure as real as can be possible with any fantasy game.

The problems in VALLEY are few – some typos and misplaced words, a place or two where fuller information might have been helpful – nothing that can't be handled by the GM. The only warning I can give is for the GM to be very familiar with both ***Bushido*** itself and with this adventure before attempting to run it.

VALLEY OF THE MISTS is a strong starter as the first ***Bushido*** adventure. If subsequent efforts are as well-done, ***Bushido*** aficionados will have much to look foward to in upcoming excursions through Nippon.

–William A. Barton

COMPUTER GAMES

SORCERER OF SIVA (Automated Simulations/Epyx); $39.95. Program for the Apple II 48K with one disk drive and Applesoft in ROM by Gene Rice, Anne Westfall, Michael Farren, and Toni Thompson. Diskette, 24-page rulebook, command summary card, boxed. Published 1981.

SORCERER OF SIVA is one of Epyx's latest adventure offerings in the tradition of ***Temple of Apshai*** and ***Hellfire Warrior,*** but with a few twists. For one thing, your goal is not to invade a dungeon but to escape from one . . . or, more accurately, to get through one as soon as possible. You start at the bottom of a five-level labyrinth (six-level, if you include the "basement"), and must find your way up to the top level and out before a certain time period has elapsed. There are lots of nasty creatures who want to stop you, not to mention the Sorcerer (who owns the mines) and well-hidden trap doors which drop you all the way down to the basement and force you to start again. And there's one more twist: Instead of being a sinewed warrior, you are a magician and must use spells and quickness to escape the dangers facing you. You can't "use up" your spells, but you can exhaust your magic powers (forcing you to rest them for a while), and the Sorcerer will do his best to make you forget your spells, one by one.

SORCERER is up to Epyx's usual high quality, and anyone who has played any of its other adventure games will feel right at home. Varying skill and speed levels (two separate factors) allow you to adjust the difficulty upwards as you become more proficient with the game. The game is fast-moving, well done, and has no real loose ends.

Despite SORCERER's high quality, my overall reaction was, "Is that all there is?" It's not that the game didn't offer a lot; it just came across as being "more of the same," just a variant on some of Epyx's other games. After playing with SORCERER for about half an hour to get the feel of it, I made it all the way through the mines on my first attempt (my score, for the record, was something over 8,200 points). Having accomplished that, I found that the game lost most of its appeal to me.

If you've never played any of Epyx's adventure games, then I can easily recommend SORCERER to you. If you've played some of the, then I can recommend this one if the theme appeals to you. If you've played most of them, you won't find anything all that new or exciting here.

–Bruce Webster

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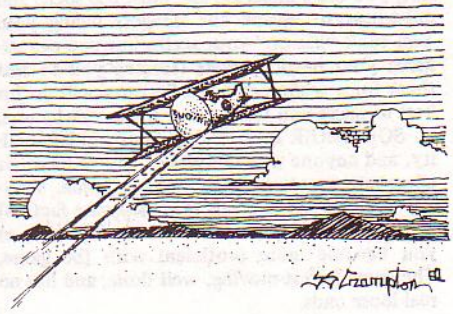
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ARCADE GAMES



BARNSTORMING (Activision); $24.95. Designed by Steve Cartwright. Cartridge for the Atari. Includes cartridge and instruction booklet. One player; playing time thirty seconds to five minutes. Published 1982.

In BARNSTORMING, a joystick-controlled biplane flies over windmills and around geese in order to dive through a set number of barns in as little time as possible. Controls are the throttle and altitude. Difficulty changes increase the number of geese and/or lower the ceiling on the barns. The four game variations just increase the number of barns needed to complete the game and stop the timer.

The game begins with one of the most beautiful graphic screens yet seen on an Atari game. The biplane sits on brown earth near a white picket fence as the sun rises yellow and red above the dark hills. As the engine starts, the prop spins and the pilot's scarf waves in the breeze. The game quickly becomes one of judgment. Can the plane miss the geese and yet clear the windmill in time to make the steep drop into the barn? BARNSTORMING is a game of quick reflexes; a skillful hand on the controls is required.

The only negative thing about the game is the fact that you can't shoot down the darn geese that are always in the way. A couple of Vickers would have been nice. But when it comes to a choice between ramming the windmill and goosing the geese, go with the birds.

This is a game no Atari VCS owner should be without. Buy it.

–Richard A. Edwards

GRAND PRIX (Activision); $24.95. Designed by David Crane. Cartridge for the Atari Video Computer System. Includes one cartridge and an instruction booklet. One player; playing time thirty seconds to five minutes. Published 1982.

The racing car is the player's seat for this fast-moving game of driving and dodging. The joystick controls the gas (the fire button), vertical movement on the screen (up and down on the stick), and braking (pulling the stick to the left). With these controls the player must race his car a set distance (variable in the four different game versions) in the lowest elapsed time. Hazards include other cars, oil slicks, and bridges.

This is a game of finesse. Speed is built up by continued use of the fire button, but the car only slowly decreases speed if you release the gas, steering becomes more touchy the faster the car is moving, and brushing the car against something produces a slight delay while a slightly more aggressive crunch results in a longer delay. It is not a matter of "go fast, brake, and crash," but of "how fast, how much brake, and glancing scrapes." GRAND PRIX rewards a light touch and quick reflexes.

It would have been nice, though, to have one variation which had random placement of the other cars. In all games they come in a set pattern which, when memorized, helps the driver know ahead of time where to be next. While it is nice to know where to be and what to expect, it would also have been good to have the option for more randomness.

All in all, the graphics and required skill make GRAND PRIX a game worth purchasing.

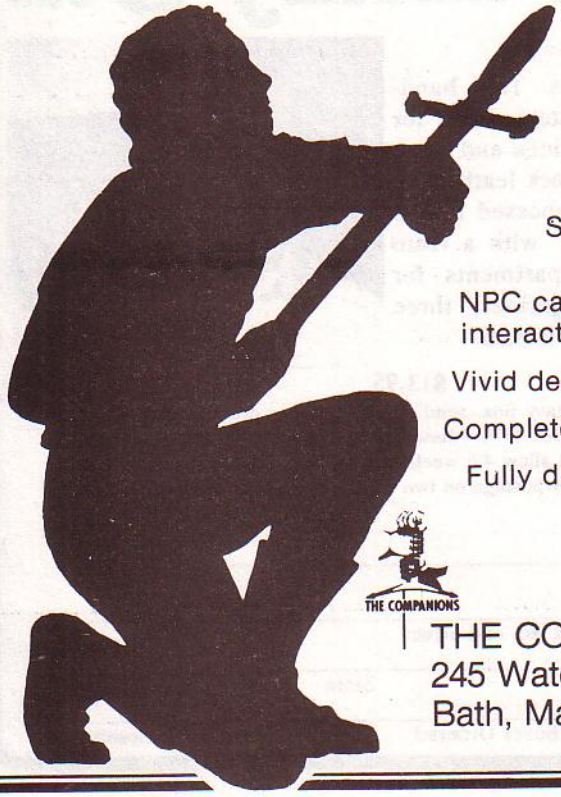
–Richard A. Edwards

HAUNTED HOUSE (Atari); $24.95. Cartridge for the Atari. Includes cartridge and 12-page instruction book. One player; playing time one to five minutes. Published 1982.

The object in entering the HAUNTED HOUSE is to find the three pieces of the broken urn and get out with it intact. In order to do this, the player must search the four floors of the house; each floor has six rooms. In order to find objects, the player must press the fire button to light a match. This creates a glowing circle surrounding the pair of eyes that represents the character. Within this area of light the player will find objects on the floor, but he can only hold one object at a time. An exception to this is the urn, which rebuilds itself as the player pickes up each piece, thus staying one object to hold. Other objects include a scepter and the master key. To block the search there are tarantulas, vampire bats, and a ghost. In advanced variations the doors between rooms lock and may only be passed by using the key. The sceptre protects against the monsters.

This game has some of the best graphics and sound Atari has yet produced. Footsteps, slamming doors, lightning, and the howling wind are

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just a few of the effects. The feeling of horror creeps up as the wind blows out your match, the bat enters the room, and you can no longer see the way out. This game requires quick reflexes to dodge nasties and thoughtful play to locate the items and get out with a few of your nine lives left.

There are no drawbacks that come immediately to mind about HAUNTED HOUSE. This is a sure winner and should be spirited away from your nearest store.

–Richard A. Edwards

ICE HOCKEY (Activision); $24.95. Designed by Alan Miller. Cartridge for the Atari. Includes cartridge and instruction booklet. One or two players; playing time three minutes. Published 1981.

Players control a team of two hockey players attempting to score the most goals in a three-minute period. The joystick is used to control the figure closest to the puck at the time. Control changes in time for the goalie to be active when the goal is in danger, and passing between two teammates is easily accomplished, all with one joystick. Features include body checking and high-sticking (with no penalty box). The variations allow two players or solitaire, at moderate or fast speeds.

The graphics are well-done and colorful. The puck moves back and forth along the stick until the player shoots, which releases the puck in one of 32 angled directions; wide angle rebounding goals are possible.

The use of two figures on a team is both good and bad. It is a novel solution to the problem of only having one figure in what are really multi-player games, and it allows for faster action, since passing speeds up puck movement. But changing over from controlling one figure to the other is sometimes confusing and sometimes frustrating. When control changes, if the figure being moved is heading down, the new figure then also starts moving down when it should be moving up. And a favorite ploy to use is to hold onto the puck just between the two opponent figures and drive the other player crazy. Then, when he's confused as to which man he's controlling, rush the goal. It's a case of the game mechanics being used to an advantage not seen in the real game.

It's a good game overall, but not a great treatment of ice hockey. Due to the frustrations which can occur and the confusion involved in using two team members, this game straddles the fence on deciding about recommendation. Due to the price, it might be better left alone.

–Richard A. Edwards





MISSILE ATTACK (Cornsoft Group, distributed by Adventure International); $14.95 (cassette), $20.95 (disk). By Phil Oliver. Cassette for TRS-80 Model 1 & 3 or disk for Model One. One player; playing time 5-10 minutes. Published 1980.

MISSILE ATTACK, as the name implies, is like the arcade game *Missile Command.* MISSILE ATTACK places the player in command of two ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) silos, which he uses to destroy waves or missiles which come from the top of the screen. Initially, the player is given three cities and thirty ABMs, and at the end of each attack wave the supply of ABMs is replenished. Following each wave, the player is given points for surviving cities and leftover ABMs.

The game's strongest point is its excellent sound. The graphics, also, are done nicely. The program also allows the player to launch several ABMs at the same time; when this occurs, the enemy missiles simply stop moving toward their targets until the ABMs have exploded. This problem eliminates the possibility of an effective "screen" of ABMs. The game also starts by itself, which becomes bothersome. The positioning of the keys is rather awkward and presents some minor problems. MISSILE ATTACK lacks the smart bombs, planes, and satellites present in *Missile Command.*

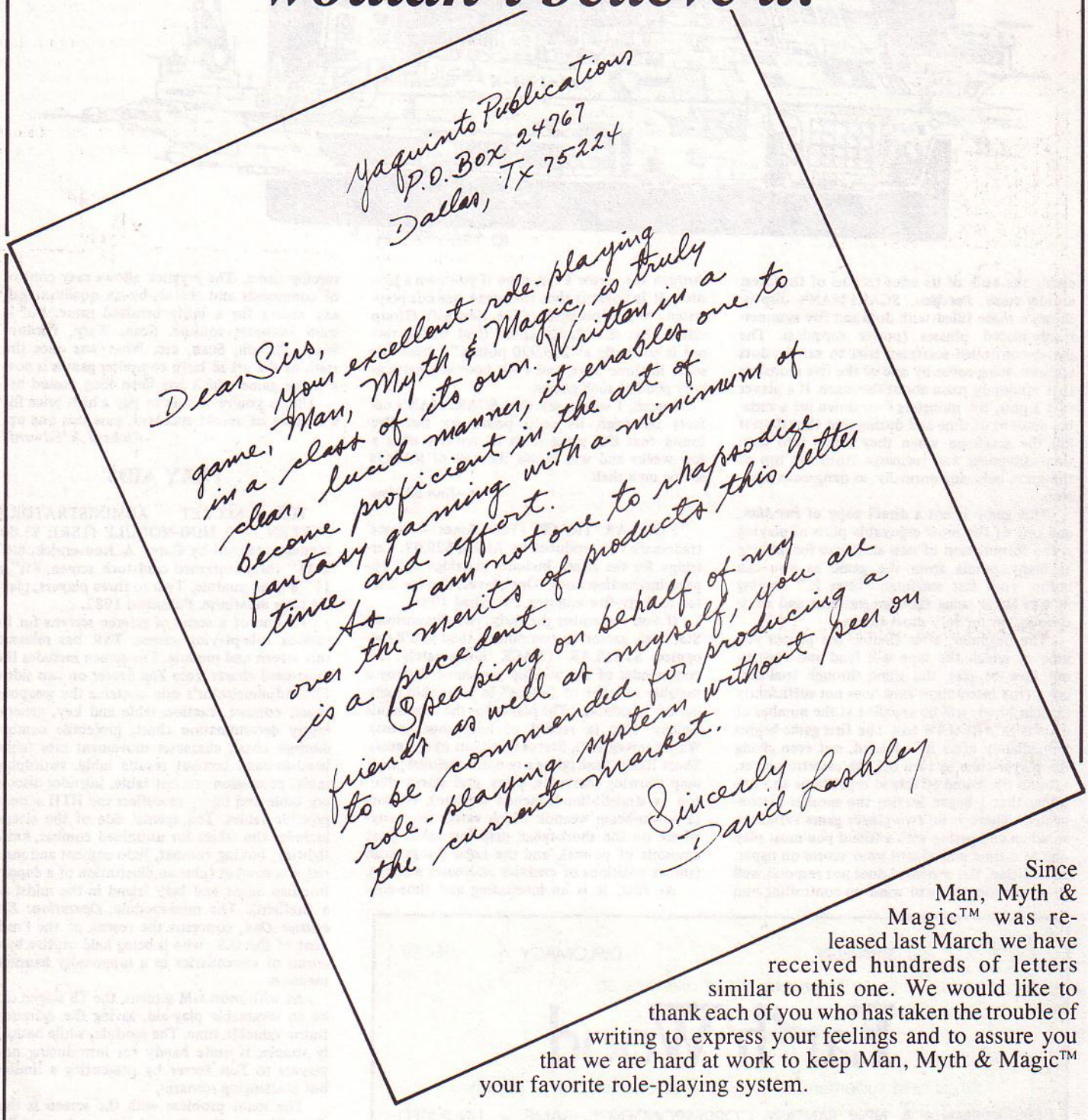
Despite its problems, MISSILE ATTACK is a very good game. Recommended for any arcade buff.

–Glenn Mai

SCARFMAN (The Cornsoft Group); $15.95. Cassette for 16K TRS-80 and instruction card, bagged. One player; playing time varies. Released 1980.

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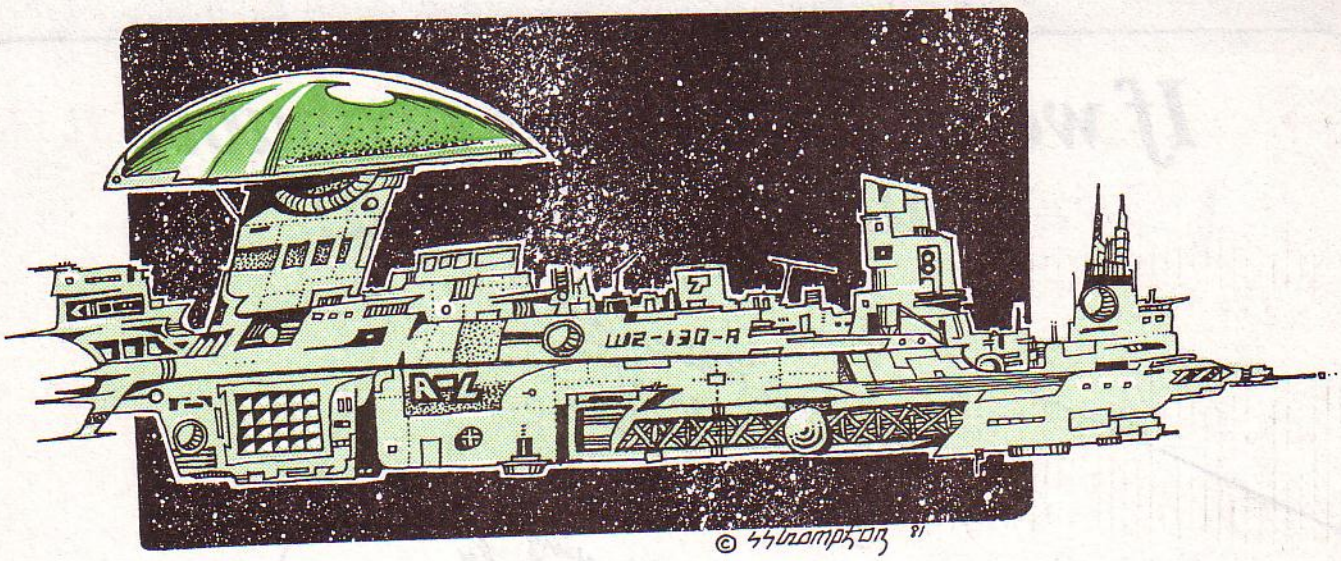
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owing the bulk of its sales to fans of the latest arcade craze, ***Pac-Man***. SCARFMAN's display shows a maze filled with dots and five symmetrically-placed plusses (power capsules). The player-controlled scarfman tries to eat the dots without being eaten by one of the five monsters that randomly roam about the maze. If a player eats a plus, the monsters slow down for a variable amount of time and during that time do not kill the scarfman when they bump into him; they disappear and reemerge from the top of the maze behaving normally, as dangerous monsters.

This game is not a direct copy of ***Pac-Man***, and one of the most enjoyable parts of playing is the formulation of new strategies for milking as many points from the game as you can before your last scarfman "bites it." Playing SCARFMAN using ***Pac-Man*** patterns and strategies makes for very short games.

The beginner, after finding the proper volume at which the tape will load and figuring out how to play the game through trial-and-error (the instruction card does not sufficiently explain how), will be appalled at the number of defects SCARFMAN has. The first game begins immediately after it is loaded, not even giving the player time to turn off the cassette player. I found the sound effects so repetitious and irritating that I began leaving the speaker disconnected. There is no two-player game variation, so when competing with a friend you must play one at a time and record your scores on paper. In addition, the scarfman does not respond well to a joystick; you will wind up controlling him through the arrow keys, even if you own a joystick. It is obvious that this game was not playtested very thoroughly. The Cornsoft Group claims that the "Indianapolis (and world) record is currently at 200,920 points." I beat this score in three days, and I am not even particularly good at such games.

Overall, I would say that SCARFMAN's defects outweigh its good points by far. I've found that this game loses its novelty after a few weeks and will spend the rest of its days sitting on a shelf.

–Dan Ekblaw

STELLAR TRACK (Tele-Games – Sears' trademark but produced by Atari); $29.99. Cartridge for the Atari. Includes cartridge and 16-page instruction book. One player; playing time ten to forty-five minutes. Published 1981.

If you remember the early, two-dimensional Star Trek games on computers, then you'll recognize STELLAR TRACK immediately. As commander of the warship you must destroy a variable number of "aliens" in a variable number of "stardates." The player has the commands Galaxy Map (a record of long-range scans), Warp (movement), Status (read-out of systems), Short Range Scan (gives a two-dimensional graph map showing starbases, ships, and stars), Photon (a straight-line-launched weapon), Phasors (a power-beam weapon which works from anywhere on the short-range map but takes great amounts of power), and the Long Range Scan (shows positions of enemies and bases nearby).

At first, it is an interesting and time-consuming game. The joystick allows easy control of commands and the six-by-six quadrant galaxy makes for a fairly involved game. But it soon becomes routine. Scan, Warp, Photon, Warp, Photon, Scan, etc. What was once the state of the art in large computer games is now a home game which has been long passed by.

Unless you're willing to pay a high price for a remake of an old standard, pass this one up.

–Richard A. Edwards

PLAY AIDS

TOP SECRET ADMINISTRATOR'S SCREEN AND MINI-MODULE (TSR); $5.00. Module designed by Corey A. Koevernick. 8½" x 11" three-sectioned cardstock screen, 8½" x 11" 8-page module. Two to three players; playing time indefinite. Published 1982.

As one of a series of referee screens for its various role-playing games, TSR has released this screen and module. The screen includes the most-used charts from ***Top Secret*** on two sides. The Administrator's side contains the weapons chart, contact reaction table and key, general injury determination chart, projectile combat damage chart, character movement rate table, hand-to-hand combat results table, swordplay table, possession combat table, intruder discovery table and injury modifiers and HTH actions possible tables. The agents' side of the screen includes the tables for untrained combat, knife fighting, boxing combat, judo combat and martial arts combat (plus an illustration of a dapper Bondian agent and lady friend in the midst of a firefight). The mini-module, ***Operation: Executive One***, concerns the rescue of the President of the U.S., who is being held captive by a group of mercenaries in a supposedly haunted mansion.

As with most GM screens, the TS screen can be an invaluable play-aid, saving the Administrator valuable time. The module, while basically simple, is quite handy for introducing new players to ***Top Secret*** by presenting a limited but challenging scenario.

The main problem with the screen is that the tables on the players' side are inaccessible to the Administrator, so he'll still have to do some page-turning. And if the Administrator wants to run the module for more than one or two players, he'll have to do some adding to beef up the opposition.

Overall, however, this should prove to be a useful play-aid for ***Top Secret*** fans.

–William A. Barton

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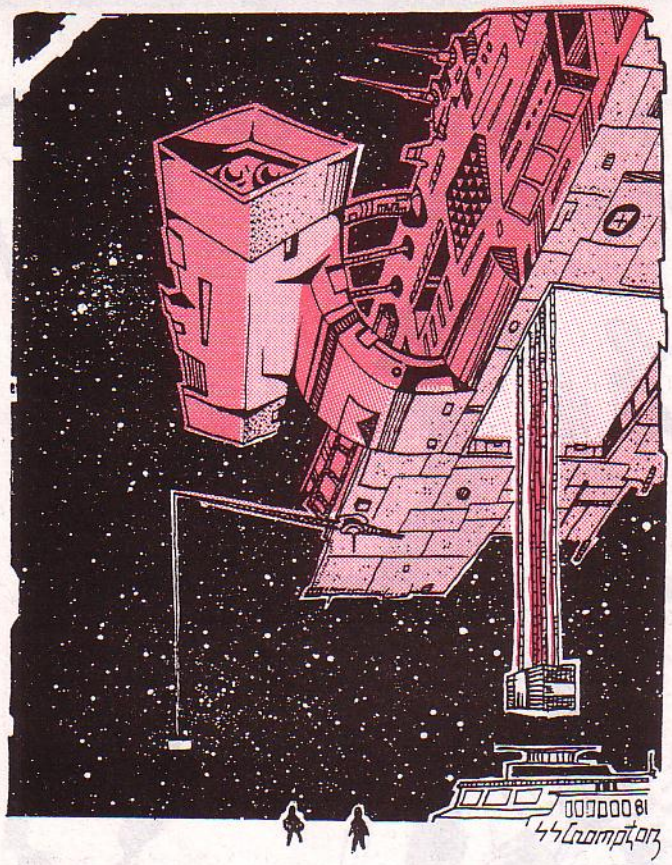
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LETTERS

In issue 52 you went to 48 pages. Just think: If you'd had that many for your April issue, you would have had room for Loubet's Naked Elf Women. . . .

David Burkhart
Glendale, AZ

There may yet be a future for Naked Elf Women. Maybe. Denis left one on a blackboard at Dalcon last June, and another on a napkin in a Dallas restaurant. Perhaps he'll go through life leaving Naked Elf Women by the wayside. Of course, it may be a ploy to attract new groupies.
–AA

In the article "Ogre Squash" in *The Space Gamer* 52, it mentions some Ogre models (Mk I, II, and IIIb); I cannot find their record sheets in any game. I would like to have some references of these record sheets or maybe even the record sheets.

I would like to say that the "Lone GEV" story was excellent. Mike Stackpole was able to incorporate an old story into a perfectly-written science fiction story.

George A. Boyett
King of Prussia, PA

Those Ogres appeared in several out-of-print issues of The Space Gamer, *and have been reprinted in* The Ogre Book, *available in retail outlets for $5 or from us by direct mail for $5.50.*
–AA

Concerning Forrest Johnson's article on "Handicapped Characters in TFT":

I feel sorry for anyone so deficient in imagination or so juvenile as to believe that homosexuality should be a handicap in an RPG.

In my campaign, there is no "gay community" – any more than there is a "straight community." There are some characters who only sleep with members of the same sex, some who only sleep with members of the opposite sex, and many who sleep with the people who attract them, of whichever sex. One of the major epic love stories in my campaign is homosexual; so is one of my best players.

It amazes me that a magazine dedicated to RPGs – surely an interest of intelligent people – would print such offensive material. Will your next issue contain an article explaining that black characters make poor spell-users because with those thick lips they can't say the spells right?

RPGs are an excellent place to learn to lose one's stereotypes, since one can create societies without some of the stupidities of our own. Use your magazine to encourage the intelligent, not the bigoted; fantasy will be the richer for it.

Anne Quinlan
Iowa City, IA

Anne, the thrust of Forrest's article was not *that it is a disadvantage to be gay, but rather that it can be a disadvantage to be overtly homosexual in a machismo-oriented medieval fantasy world. Buy passage for some Hell's Angels or Banditos to Fire Island, watch what happens, and then talk to us about losing one's stereotypes.*
–AA

I greatly enjoyed Forrest Johnson's article in TSG 51, "Handicapped Characters in TFT." His idea for awarding attribute points for starting characters with handicaps will go a long way in encouraging role-playing, subsequently making a superior set of FRP rules even better.

There is, however, one little glitch. . . .

He mentions under the "variable-point handicaps" section of his article that old characters gain one attribute point for each ten years over the starting age of 20.

If a character starts at age 20 with 32 attribute points and chooses a job from the Table of Jobs in TFT: ITL, pages 26 and 27, that has any risk at all, then that character will gain three or four attribute points per decade just by risk rolls.

I'm not saying any of this is good or bad, but if I (of all people) thought of it, rest assured that someone else has.

Keith Abbott
Muskegon, MI

However, not all campaigns in TFT use *the Table of Jobs. Obviously, if the table is being used, the GM would be foolish to also grant 1 pt. per decade bonus from the article.*
–AA

Greg Costikyan's article, "***Traveller*** as Science Fantasy" is an excellent example of what we as referees and game designers need to do more of: analyze the inevitable consequences of the technologies we postulate for the future.

In the course of his article, Mr. Costikyan concludes that energy in the ***Traveller*** universe costs so little that the average Imperial citizen has a standard of living *five million times* as great as the average modern American. He notes also that, according to the prices and salaries given in ***Traveller***, "the Imperial is no better off than I am." He posthaste throws the game into the realm of "Science Fantasy" because of this contradiction.

However, the source of the contradiction is not in the way ***Traveller*** is organized, but in Mr. Costikyan's reasoning itself.

Early in the article, he notes that "in the sun, a typical proton will last for hundreds of years before fusing with another." In the next section, he uses the fact that 20 tons, or 1.19×10^{31} protons of fuel are needed to operate an A-type jump drive, and concludes that the process releases 7.46×10^{31} MeV (at the rate of 25 Mega-electron-volts per four-proton reaction). A quick mathematical analysis shows that Mr. Costikyan ignored his earlier statement and assumed that *all* the protons would be consumed in the course of a week. If conditions in the reactor were such as to do that, the average proton lasts 3.5 days; assuming 100 years for a typical star, this means that conditions are 10,000 times as "hot" as the center of a star! No wonder his ship would melt in 0.6 seconds!

Let's not find fault with the system when we have made an outrageous assumption. Rather, let's take what we know and, in terms of Mr. Costikyan's article, work backwards.

We know from the ***Traveller*** rules that the average Imperial is about as wealthy as the average American, who can buy one kilowatt-hour for 5 cents, or 20kwh for a dollar. If CR1 = $1, then CR1 should buy 20kwh, not 100 million kwh (the conclusion Costikyan reached assuming 100% proton fusion). Some quick figuring (division by 20) shows that his figure needs to be reduced by a factor of 5 million. If this factors back through all his calculations, this means that in the course of a jump, only one proton in 5 million in the fuel will undergo

fusion. I find this more believable; the average proton lasts 2.5 million weeks, or 4,800 years, meaning conditions are probably tame enough for futuristic machines to handle.

But will this produce enough energy for jump? Modern man knows absolutely nothing of the energy requirements for hyperspace travel, and each referee will have to use his own judgment. 20 tons of fuel is 1.19×10^{31} protons, of which, by the above "one in 5 million" assumption, 2.38×10^{24} will participate in 5.95×10^{23} reactions producing 1.49×10^{25} MeV. This converts to 2.38×10^{12} Joules. In more familiar language, in the course of a week the A-type jump drive produces an average output of 5,280 horsepower.

But what gives with the other 4,999,999 hydrogen atoms of fuel? That is, besides acting as a statistical buffer. Every referee should draw his own conclusion. My own is that some of it is stored for use in attitude jets, while the rest is exhausted into space – in opposite directions, to avoid imparting a net acceleration to the craft – taking most of the waste heat with it.

Scientific analysis of *Traveller*, and in fact all SFRP games, is to be commended and encouraged. It can give players and referees new insights into how the universe works, and makes it easier to create authentic detail in a campaign. We should, however, keep in mind the difference between an assumption and a fact, being willing to change assumptions before declaring the facts inconsistent or fantastic.

Albert L. Vest
Clarksville, IN

In TSG 52, you invited debate on the question of the Mark IV versus the Mark V Ogres. Consider this a contribution.

Granted, the Mk IV can tear through defenses which can stop a Mk V dead, but the Mk IV was designed as a specialized raider unit; it *should* be able to perform a raid better than a Mk V. As for the Mk IV being able to take on a Mk V, I find this hard to believe. A Mk IV's first salvo of three missiles, one main battery, and two secondary batteries give it a total of 28 attack factors. A Mk V can fire six missiles, two main batteries, and six secondary batteries, giving it a total strength of 62 attack factors on the first volley, and 26 on any following volley.

If we assume that the Mk IV gets the first attack (which it probably would), it can attack at a range of five hexes with three missiles. If we assume its strategy is to force the Mk V to fight at range, where the Mk IV would have an advantage, the Mk V's treads would be targeted in hopes of wrecking its mobility. If we assume that every missile does full damage (a 3.7% chance), then the Mk V will lose 18 tread units. This gives it an MA of three, which will allow it to come within two hexes of the Mk IV and unleash one of those devastating 62-point volleys. So much for dancing out of the Mk V's range.

On the other hand, the Mk IV can close to two hexes, where it can use its primary and secondary batteries. It can then pull one-to-one odds on the Mk V's primaries and four of its secondaries. The chances of its succeeding with all these attacks are 0.14%. This will still allow the Mk V to hit the Mk IV with 42 combat factors in the first salvo.

Even ignoring the possibility of the Mk V ramming the Mk IV, which will blow out an average of 17.5 of the Mk IV's tread units, the Mk V's ability to launch a single withering salvo allows it to brush the Mk IV's racks and puny batteries contemptuously aside and give the Mk V absolute control over the battlefield. Oh, sure, the Mk IV can run like the devil and the Mk V will never catch it, but the Mk V is definitely the superior main-line battle unit.

By the way, using *G.E.V.* rules for overrun, the defense in "Iron Mountain" can keep a Mk IV or V from getting those trucks, provided they ignore the missiles and just attack the tread units. The only Ogre I've tried that can win, barely, is the Ninja from "The Lone GEV." I would never have believed that such a puny-seeming machine would be so devastating.

John Novak
LaGrangeville, NY

Thanks for the review of *The Wargamer's Encyclopediac Dictionary* in the last issue (52). I did appreciate W.G. Armintrout's ideas on how to make the WED better, though if I had heard them in advance I wouldn't have taken any of them. The WED is a short dictionary, not an unabridged effort – had I listed "paladin" as a rolegaming character class, I would have needed to list all of the other 1000-rule-specific character classes (e.g., Rune-Priests of Humcat, Priests of Gow [a type of MU]) and would have better titled the volume *All the World's Character Classes.*

The objective to WED was to list names and words which *aren't* specific to particular rules – words one is likely to meet out of context in general conversation. This includes important historical ideas (dead wargame clubs: the IFW invented the wargaming convention) and treatments of how, for example, ZOCs function in different games. If someone ever invents a useful, comprehensive way of naming ZOCs, it will be in the next edition. Right now, the various names used for different ZOCs, unit counters, etc., are all specific to particular games and companies, and often used inconsistently by them. Similarly, the WED is a gamer's dictionary: Rail movement in most wargames does *not* involve the use of trains; it uses lines printed on the mapboard.

I could go on, but either I or my reviewer might come to sound like a munchkin ("a young wargamer . . . Nature grants to each munchkin a voice in inverse proportion to its small size and limited wisdom . . . many grognards were once munchkins themselves . . .").

George Phillies
Ann Arbor, MI

I see that "Murphy's Rules" indicates that in ***Battle of Britain***, the player is required to keep track of every plane that fights in the battle. It is true, and I'm not sure I see the significance of listing it as an outlandish rule. If players did not keep track of how long an aircraft was in the air, it would become possible to have it exceed its real-life capabilities. So I ask you, is it smarter to engineer the game so that a record is kept, or better to pretend that all planes, regardless of capability, can fly forever?

If other authors and designers are sending you rebuttals for the "Murphy's Rules" section, you might have additional things of interest for your readers.

Lou Zocchi
Gamescience/Zocchi Distributors

Some rules appear in "Murphy's Rules" because they violate known science, or logic, or playability; the ***Battle of Britain*** *notation appeared because it's a reflection of the occasionally arduous mechanical side of game-playing. It's not wrong, it's just . . . strenuous.*

Incidentally, reaction from designers harpooned by "Murphy's" has been pretty evenly divided between "What do you mean, that's funny? It was done for a reason," and "Yep, and here are six more silly rules appearing in the same game."

–AA

This letter is in response to a particular "Murphy's Rules" segment in your number 48 issue of *The Space Gamer.*

To be exact, I wish to inform you that the complete line of Arduin products definitely *is not* a copy or imitator of the TSR line of games.

Our product line, which includes three rulebooks, a boxed game, four modules, and a half-dozen other assorted peripheral products, are all *original* works with no linkage of any kind to any other company's endeavors.

In actual fact many of our innovations and "styles" predate similar attempts by other game companies, including TSR. We, ourselves, have been widely copied by many of those now in the business.

When you specifically tell your readers that we copied a misprint in the TSR rules, you are misstating the facts. The Arduin system uses a percentage chance to find certain creatures in their lairs, and only goes into how much such creatures will lie (or be a liar) in the section dealing with the various alignments of said creatures.

I had expected a little more research from a magazine as reputable as yours is, and am saddened by this callous misrepresentation of the true fact of the matter.

Please, if in the future you have any questions about our products, feel free to ask me personally. I'll be happy to respond, and will be glad to have the chance to do so. After all, we are the second-largest seller, by volume, for a fantasy role-playing system on the market.

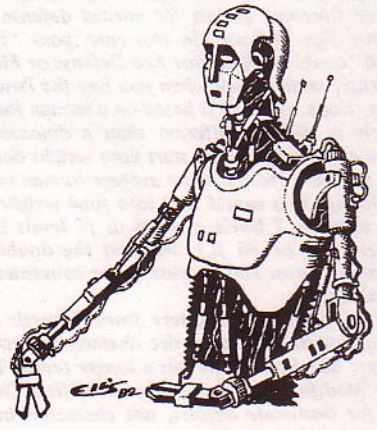
David A. Hargrave
El Cerrito, CA

Games Merchandising *magazine lists* **Arduin Grimoire** *as the seventh most popular among fantasy RPGs, and tenth in the listing among all RPGs, trailing behind D&D, AD&D, TFT, C&S, T&T, and* **RuneQuest** *in the first category plus* **Traveller**, **Top Secret**, *and* **Space Opera** *in the second; I might recommend that you send your sales figures over to Dana Lombardy at that magazine to update him.*

–AA

I have been thoroughly frustrated recently by the inability to find out exactly what I may be buying. It's almost impossible to tell what the difference between different game systems is unless you happen to know someone who has one game system already, and another person who uses a rival version. I believe it would be a great help if you were to print a descriptive evaluation of the major and recent science fiction role-playing games. This would give one the chance to pick the game system best-suited to his needs and save a lot of headaches.

Cesar Abarca
South Gate, CA



GAME MASTER

GAME MASTER exists to answer questions on your favorite games. If you have a rules question or play problem, send it in. Questions to be answered will be chosen on the basis of general interest. They will be first referred to the game publisher or designer. If no response is received, GAME MASTER will offer its own interpretation of the rule. Sorry – no individual replies are possible.

Champions

1. Do the endurance pips in an endurance battery cost power points to buy?

2. Are endurance costs for powers per turn or per phase? (If they are per phase, heroes with high speed values are penalized by having expended endurance pips affect only 1 second/phase worth of game time, while lower-speed heroes affect 6 seconds/phases worth of game time per endurance expenditure.)

3. If a hero takes the flash power and applies an advantage to it of "Based on Ego CV," would flash defense still defend against it?

4. When using growth, isn't doubling the weight for each meter added a tiny bit extreme? (That makes Tyranosaurus Rex – 30 feet tall and therefore 9 levels of growth – weigh 12,800 kg or 25,600 lbs. Every reference book I've seen says a Rex should weigh about 8 tons or 16,000 lbs.)

5. If the OCV chart on page 31 is used and extrapolated upward, is a character with 9 levels of growth going to cover 256 hexes? (!!) Or is 8 hexes the very largest?

Drake Letcher

1. The END in an END Batery is free, the result of taking END Battery as a Limitation.

2. The END cost for Powers is paid each phase the Power is used. For continuous Powers like Force Field, the effect lasts between phases, and the character only pays END on his phase. You're absolutely right: heroes with high SPDs are penalized by END cost. It's the only thing that helps balance SPD. Having a high SPD character becomes very expensive when you figure in the cost of reducing his END usage.

3. Any Power bought with the Power Advantage "Based on EGO Combat Value" is applied against the target's EGO Defense, if any. However, when you buy a Power with this Advantage, you have the option of letting the Power function against its normal defense or against Ego Defense. In this case, your "Ego Flash" could work against Ego Defense or Flash Defense, your choice when you buy the Power.

4. Nope. Growth is based on a human form, which is slightly different than a dinosaur's. Note also that you can start your weight doubling function from a more average human mass of 70 kg. This would lead to a final weight of 9.8 tons, or 7 levels of Growth (7 levels is 9 meters tall, or 38 ft.). We start the doubling functions from 100 kg mostly for convenience in calculation.

5. The OCV modifiers from Growth are given not only because the character's first is bigger, but because he has a longer reach. The Size Modifiers on the Combat Modifiers Chart are for inanimate objects, not characters built using Growth. If you want to figure out how big an area a Grown character covers, scale up from normal human proportions (I'd ignore the cube-square law of proportions, if I were you).

Steve Petersen
Hero Games

Boot Hill

In my edition of TSR's ***Boot Hill***, a single-action revolver is rated at a fast-weapon speed rating. The double-action revolver is only rated at an average-weapon speed rating. Is this an error, or is there some particular reason for a gun with a slower action to be rated as a faster weapon?

Ted Glasscock

*(No reply received from TSR.) I think the most reasonable assumption is that this is an error . . . were I refereeing, I would change the double-action revolver's rating to "fast." (Back when I played **Boot Hill**, my own characters were usually such clumsy oafs that they had to use scatter-guns.)*

SJ

Ogre/G.E.V.

1. Is ***Ogre/G.E.V.*** rule 6.101, "No infantry unit may be attacked more than once per turn by AP," still used when Ogres are used in ***G.E.V.***?

2. Do riding infantry (5.11) receive terrain defense benefits?

3. In what terrain types can non-mobile Howitzers and CPs be set up in, and what defensive benefits, if any, do they receive?

4. Would a GEV moving from town hex 1508 (demolished) to the road in forest hex 1607 have to roll for disablement (i.e., would it have to go through the forest to get on the road)?

5. In the *Train* scenario using the Ogre Mk IV (9.046), what is to prevent the Ogre from travelling under water to hex 2007 and automatically destroying town hex 2103 with a missile (6:1 odds) immediately on surfacing, blocking the train's track? This makes for an easy Ogre victory.

Randy Divinski

1. Yes. All AP fire against any one infantry unit must be rolled as a single combined attack. Exception: If an infantry unit becomes involved in an overrun attack against an Ogre, it may be attacked by AP fire once per overrun phase.

2. They receive the defense benefit applicable to the vehicle they are riding.

3. They may be set up in any terrain type except water, and receive the defense applicable to armor units.

4. If you are playing "rubble" rules, the GEV would have to roll for disablement when entering the demolished hex 1508. However, if it was all right in 1508, it could enter 1607 safely – it is moving along the road line. If it entered 1607 from (for instance) 1608, it would cross forest and would have to roll.

5. You could try it . . . but as a defending player I would be hammering your Mark IV with howitzer fire while it was underwater and unable to reply (probably doing some harm, even at half-strength). More significantly, I'd have a welcoming party of armor and infantry, stacked to the limit, at every hex the Ogre threatened to exit on. The Mark IV would have to suffer through a really nasty overrun attack before launching anything in its regular combat phase. And, by the time the combat phase came along, it might not have any missile racks left . . . or much anything else.

SJ

Car Wars

1. Can motorcycles be carried as cargo? If so, how many spaces do they occupy?

2. Can passengers or cargo on motorcycles be hit?

3. How many squares are moved during each move a rolling vehicle makes?

Joseph Zaepfel

1. This requires invention of a new rule . . . but obviously cycles can be cargo in real life, so the only question is "how many spaces?" For simplicity's sake, let us assume it takes up as many spaces as its frame has capacity. Therefore, a light-frame cycle fills 4 cargo spaces, a medium fills 5, and a heavy fills 7. Light sidecars add 2 spaces, and heavy sidecars add 3. However, if the driver or passengers of the cycle and/or sidecar sit on them while they are being transported, those people do not take up any extra spaces.

2. If a cycle has passengers or cargo, assume that there is a 50% chance that any hit on the driver is a hit on the passenger or cargo instead. If a cycle has both passengers and cargo, a "driver" hit has a 33% chance of hitting the driver, 33% chance of hitting the passenger, and 33% chance of hitting the cargo.

3. A rolling vehicle moves as many times as its speed during that turn calls for – just as though it were still on its wheels. The only differences are that (a) it moves sideways, and (b) between turns it is decelerating at 20mph per turn. Each time it moves, it moves only one inch (4 squares), or ½" on a half-move.

SJ

Undead

1. If a player begins his move in a square also occupied by an enemy character, may he retreat to an adjacent square? If so, can he move any farther?

2. If Sherlock Holmes enters play, does he modify the cooperation roll in an investigation? If he is killed in combat, how does this affect the Credibility Index? May his Baker St. apartment be used by the vampire hunters for lodging? If so, in what area is it located?

3. If a 12 is rolled on the Random Events table and the vandals are torn to pieces by Dracula, is there any chance of a newspaper article that would lead the hunters to the coffins?

Randy Divinski

1. Yes, and yes. (There are no ZOCs in Undead.)

2. He only modifies the cooperation roll insofar as in that he counts as a Doctor. If he is killed, credibility goes up as for other vampire hunters (he does not count the same as Godalming or the Inspector for this unfortunate purpose). His Baker Street lodgings could be used by the hunters, though they would have to be "found" (i.e., moved into) the same as any other lodgings. 221B Baker Street would be located in the Hyde Park area.

3. No. (Maybe he hides the pieces. Maybe he does something else with them. Nothing is ever found. Do you want to go ask him why? I don't.)

SJ

CONTEST

Actually, there are no contest *results* this issue. Issue 50 didn't have a contest. Next issue should see the results of the nefarious "Magic in ***Car Wars***" competition, which has been perhaps the most enthusiastically-received contest in TSG's publishing history.

This issue's contest is somewhat different from those of previous issues. Recently, readers have been mentioning that the last few contests have been too trivial. (Trivial spells? Trivial RPG items? Too trivial? Nah.) For those readers, we present a competition with more meat on its bones.

Long-time readers of the magazine will remember how, once upon a time, we ran a piece of art and made it into a contest. The line drawing, something that might have been entitled "Bruce Lee meets Fu Manchu," inspired the creation of the game ***Kung Fu 2100***, which appeared in issue 30.

Now we're going to do it to you again. Take a long look at this month's cover painting: "The Huntress" by George "Speed" Webber. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to work up a role-playing adventure scenario in which our cover scene could have occurred. The cover scene doesn't have to be the adventure's focal point, or its climax, or even its dominant motif – it simply has to be possible within the context of the adventure, or relate directly to the adventure.

The scenario can be for any appropriate RPG, but the following systems will receive preferential consideration, because we get very little material on them: ***Top Secret, Aftermath, The Morrow Project,*** and ***Worlds of Wonder.*** Word length should be around 4,000-6,000 words, and the adventure should be playtested and complete.

Our first-place winner will receive a $50 certificate from us, usable on any products from SJ Games; the second-place winner will receive a $20 certificate. In addition, the winning adventure is likely to be printed in the pages of TSG, and if so, the author will be remunerated for it at normal payment rates. (Yes, you're quite right. It's a trap. We're using every means at hand to get material on game systems our readers ask for but don't have the gumption to write about.)

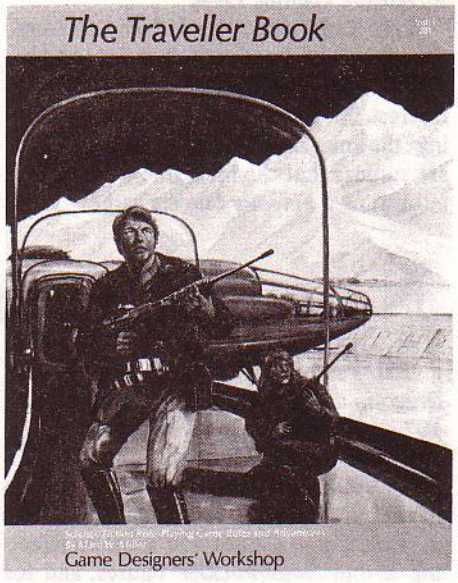
Entries must be postmarked by September 15, 1982. All entries become the property of SJ Games, but all rights to non-winning entries will be returned to the authors. As always, we reserve the right to award fewer or no prizes if no entry is of publishable quality.

–Aaron Allston

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News Briefs

Space/Space II Lawsuit Settled

Game Designers' Workshop, which had initiated legal action earlier this year against Edu-Ware Services, Inc., alleging that that company's ***Space*** and ***Space II*** software violated GDW's copyright of ***Traveller*** material, recently reported successful settlement of its claim.

The settlement required that all copies of ***Space*** and ***Space II*** in Edu-Ware's possession be turned over to GDW, that Edu-Ware make a reasonable effort to recall copies of the games from its distributors, and that the copyrights for the two titles be turned over to GDW.

Middle Earth Modules Planned

The rights to J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth tales have been landed by Iron Crown Enterprises. ICE plans to release RPG modules adaptable to any game system for Middle Earth in three different ages. The first such module will be an overview of Middle Earth, with subsequent releases concentrating on specific regions.

Security/Combat Cars Marketed

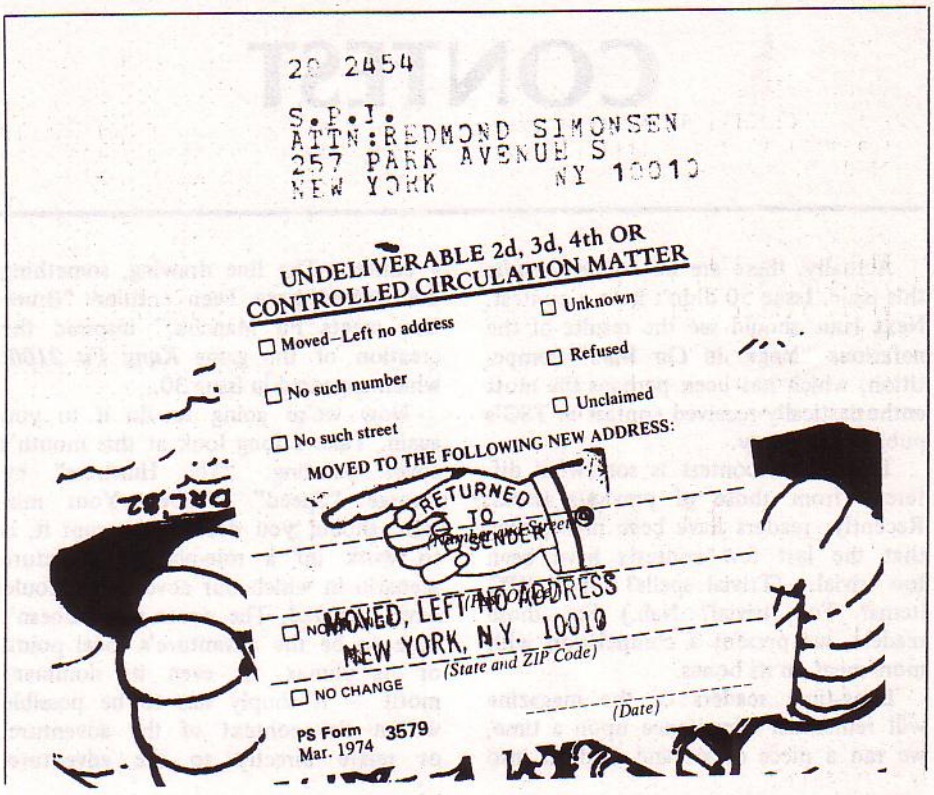
According to the June 1982 issue of *Omni*, a firm called CCS Communication Control is marketing "supersecurity automobiles" with such options as bullet-proof glass and armor, a mine-resistant underbody, metal-hooped tires, ramming bumpers, oil jets, and machine-gun ports. Car buyers can also get a foldaway motorcycle stored in the trunk (for emergency escapes) and an infrared viewing system that can penetrate darkness or smoke.

Broadsword Miniatures Purchased

Phoenix Enterprises, Ltd., a new game company in Georgia, has bought Broadsword Miniatures; Jay Adams, former owner of Broadsword, will stay on as sculptor and production manager. Phoenix will be releasing ***Gettysburg: High Tide of the Confederacy*** and ***Zulu Attack*** at Origins.

Barasch Publishes Insider's Newsletter

Howard Barasch, president of Heritage USA and a long-time S&T "Gossip" columnist, is now publishing *The Insider*, a cheerful bi-monthly yellow sheet containing "rumors, unsubstantiated ideas, gossip, and speculation concerning the adventure gaming industry." A six-issue subscription is $6.



Above is a poignant sign of SPI's fall – the mailer cover of a *Space Gamer* sent to SPI offices, returned by the Post Office stamped "Return to Sender; Moved, left No Address."

Adventure Gaming Lives

Tim Kask, editor for *Adventure Gaming*, announced recently that he and several partners have bought out Ral Partha's interest in AG and will continue publishing the magazine independently. There are rumors that the magazine will soon be publishing a ***Fineous Fingers*** game.

FYEO Revived

Steve Cole, formerly of Task Force Games and now head of the Amarillo Design Bureau, has bought from TSR the rights to publish *For Your Eyes Only*. FYEO started as a regular column in *Strategy & Tactics* and was later published separately by SPI.

New & Upcoming Releases

Ral Partha will release ***The Imperial Dragon***, a 25mm scale figure measuring 10" head to toe and 6" wingtip to wingtip. The release will be limited to 10,000 copies (6,000 in the U.S., 2,000 each in England and Canada), and retails for $50.

Task Force Games will soon be releasing 25mm ***Swashbuckler*** figures, and for Christmas will release ***Starfire*** miniatures and a ground combat module for that game.

FASA's next product will be ***Rescue on Galatea***, a ***Traveller*** scenario; it will retail for $6.00.

Automated Simulations/Epyx's next game for the Atari 400/800 is ***Alien Garden***. The arcade-style game uses joystick and costs $39.95.

GDW has several titles planned for summer release, including ***The Traveller Book***, a hardcover compendium of Books 0-3 and supplemental data, and first in the hardcover ***Traveller*** series; ***The Divine Intervention/Night of Conquest***, adventures for ***Traveller***; and historical titles ***Attack in the Ardennes*** and ***1815***.

Heritage will be releasing a licensed ***Champions*** line of superhero 25mms; these will be modular, with interchangeable components.

Convention Calendar

July 23-25: ARCHON 6. St. Louis SF&F con, with gaming. Contact Archon 6, P.O. Box 15852, Overland, MO 63114, 314-521-9690.

*July 23-25: ORIGINS '82. Adventure gaming convention. Write to Origins 82, P.O. Box 15405, Baltimore, MD 21220, or call 301-539-4634.

July 24-25: KOMMAND CON 82. Wargaming con. Contact @ Kommander's Wargaming Club, P.O. Box 2235, Mansfield, OH 44905.

July 30-August 1: PARACON V. SF&F, wargaming. Contact @ P.O. Box 1156, State College, PA 16801.

*August 6-8: TEXCON 1982. D&D, Car Wars, etc. For more information, send SASE to TexCon 1982, 8028 Gessner No. 1805, Austin, TX 78753.

August 6-8: WORLD SPACE CON '82. SF, current technology. Contact @ 1647 Camelot A-105, Waterloo, IA 50702, 319-233-8620.

August 7-8: BANGOR AREA WARGAMERS CONVENTION. Send SASE for information to Edward F. Stevens, Jr., 32 Masonic St., Rockland, ME 04841, or phone 207-596-0338.

*August 19-22: GENCON XV. Wargaming convention. Contact @ P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

*September 2-6: CHICON IV, aka WORLDCON. World SF convention. Contact @ P.O. Box A3120, Chicago, IL 60690.

September 4-6: GATEWAY 1982. Strategy game con and exposition. Contsct Gateway PR Dept., P.O. Box 2577, Anaheim, CA 92804.

September 4-6: PACIFICON. Gaming convention. Contact @ P.O. Box 5548, San Jose, CA 95150.

September 24-26: BABEL CONFERENCE '82. SF&F, comics, wargaming. Contact c/o Dave Marshall, 1160 36th St. SW, Wyoming, MI 49509.

October 1-3: ARMADILLOCON 4. SF convention. Contact c/o Robert Taylor, P.O. Box 9612 NW Station, Austin, TX 78766.

November 12-14: WESTERN RECON '82. SF &F, fantasy gaming. Contact Karl Miller, 837 N. University Village, Salt Lake City, UT, 84108, 801-582-6076.

SJ GAMES and TSG will be attending the conventions marked above with asterisks.

PBM Update

PBM Update reports on professionally-moderated play-by-mail games. Notices are monthly. Copy deadline is 60 days previous to the first of the month, for the issue in which the notice is to appear. (Deadline for the December issue is October 1.) All copy should be typed and double-spaced. Notices should not exceed 200 words in length. TSG reserves the right to edit copy as necessary.

TRIBES OF CRANE (Schubel & Son)

Crane I: Fighting continues in the north around Arcola; several Dark Union assaults on the city have been repulsed. In the Quid sea area north of Arcola, several large Cult and Dark Union fleets have clashed with Kinglord Sodoma's Grand Union allies, the Crab and Torpedo Fish peoples. Though victorious in the series of naval engagements, the strength of the Crab and Torpedo Fish has been seriously reduced. To the distant south, war has erupted between the Rainbow Empire and the CTA. Action began as several large CTA units attacked and destroyed the Rainbow Empire's 1st Marine Legion near the R.E. canal. Rainbow Empire forces immediately counterattacked in what resulted in the largest naval battle ever on Crane. It is rumored the peace negotiations are now in progress.

Crane II: After months of growing hostilities between the Celtani Federation and Halton Factor, war has finally broken out. Several Celtani Federation trade fleets have been attacked and destroyed. The C.F. leaders began mustering their strength to counterattack, but before they could strike, Halton Factor units laid siege to the city of Rawan. This will be the beginning of what is expected to be a long and costly conflict.

The Shadow Alliance, contemptuous of growing Valorous strength in the south, has attacked and looted the Valorous city of King. Several Valorous armies rapidly descended on King, trapping the Shadow Alliance forces within. Both sides are rushing in reinforcements in what is expected to be a major test of Valorous strength.

Duane Wilcoxson

STARMASTER (Schubel & Son)

The new 'Sixth Lower' galaxy has witnessed its first major naval/ground assault on a player homeworld. Three allied empires combined forces to engage the substantial orbital, naval, and ground-to-space defenses of the Ghotan Domain. After many fierce battles, Ghotan's defenses were blown away and the troop landings began. The bulk of the attacking ground force was made up of "Legionnnaire-Guard" ground units, the troopers armed with pulse lasers and photon sabres and protected by titanium battlearmor with energy screens. Tactical orbital bombardment was provided by the warships in orbit, and several major cities were destroyed by cobalt fusion bombs before the ground battles began. After months of fighting involving hundreds of thousands of troops, the Ghotan Domain fell. Over half of the world was left uninhabitable due to the explosion of dozens of AntiMatter bombs used by desperate Ghotan ground units; the surviving MegaCities will be looted by the victorious attackers.

More fighting has broken out in the NorthEast galaxy between powerful Poly-Sentient Council members and their bitter enemy, the Imperial Dragorn Empire. Several worlds have been devastated by massive naval bombardment as the fighting continues to escalate. Rumor has it that the Valkyrian Empire, notorious in the Central Galaxy for the destruction of several player homeworlds and the slaughter of billions of innocent beings, has a fleet of War Worlds in the NorthEast Galaxy and will soon help out his allies there. Wide-spread galactic warfare continues. . .

Duane Wilcoxson

EARTHWOOD (Game Systems, Inc.)

Seven games are now in full swing, and players for Game 8 are now being accepted.

Game 1: Violent hatred has broken out between the Athians and the High Elves. Already the Athians have lost a city to their enemy.

Game 3: An assassination in the City of the Mammoth has thrown the kingdom into turmoil.

Game 4: A violent earthquake struck the High Elves, causing extensive damage to the city and great loss of life. It is also rumored that a mighty wizard has learned to tame dragons for his own use.

Game 6: Recent destruction of the walls of Mahal have left the Mountain Dwarves in chaos. The sabateur remains unknown.

Game 7: Numerous cities have been assaulted and several races find them-

selves in difficult situations while alliances are being quickly formed.

Peter G. Stassun

UNIVERSE II
(Clemens & Associates)

Quadrant I: Mufrid has been captured by the Regajians. All starship commanders in the area should consider the benefits of defending Arcturus and Diadem.

Quadrant II: The long struggle between the OFS Alliance and the Unity Alliance seems to have ended in another victory for Unity. Where will they strike next?

Quadrant III: Major colonization efforts are being made in the area around Ardy. Secure bases have been established by several alliances. Little conflict between alliances has been noted as each has limited territorial expansion.

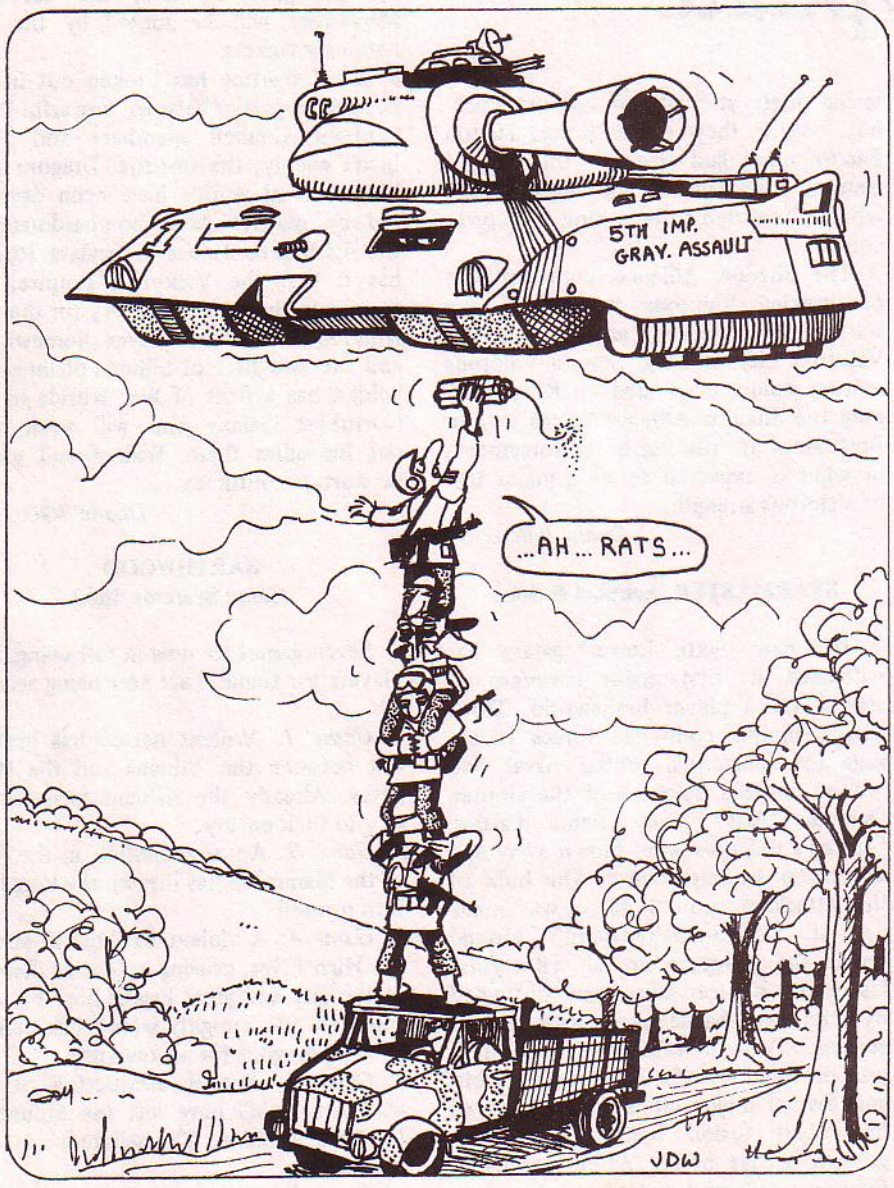
Quadrant IV: Many ships have been observed making their way to the boundary crossing portal after visiting Yed. This could indicate that a major invasion is under way.

Regajian Empire: Mufrid has been freed from the Etuel. Thousands of Regajians were released from the Etuel slave labor camps when our victorious forces arrived at the planet. Cmdr. Wil of the Cetus, leader of the assault force, has been rewarded with a cloaking device for his starship.

Ixtli Empire: IXV Zartraz has been reassigned to Quadrant II to strengthen the border near Alula. Command of the Quadrant I forces has been assumed by IXV White Hart.

Muar Empire: New raids by the UTSC/Unity pirates have cost them dearly as they encountered the bases reinforced by the Muar Raiders and the MSS Dieu de Guerre.

Jon Clemens



SILVERDAWN
(Entertainment Concepts, Inc.)

I would like to welcome PBM Update readers to the first ECI news to appear in TSG. Our first game, ***Silverdawn,*** has been running since November 1, 1981, and is doing very successfully. In eight months it has grown to 1100 players. We have been able to process a high volume of moves on a personal basis – in other words, by typing a one-page narrative response to readers rather than using computer programs. Therefore, players have had the opportunity to write full narrative move instructions, which are read and adjucated by gamemasters using a word processor. ***Silverdawn*** is a fantasy game, and many players who got in on the ground floor have accomplished quite a few adventures. Our most successful character so far has been Rick Harwell's Kaldarius, a mage who travelled (under geas) to the most dangerous spot in the world and was cunning (and lucky) enough to return alive (after being briefly dead) to tell of the experience!

Due to a high volume of player requests, in the fall we will be releasing a science fiction game using a similar move-adjucation system. We have just added two gamemasters, and at Origins will release a line of FRP game aids. Also at Origins, I will be running a seminar on Correspondence Gaming. Hope to see you all there!

Jim Dutton

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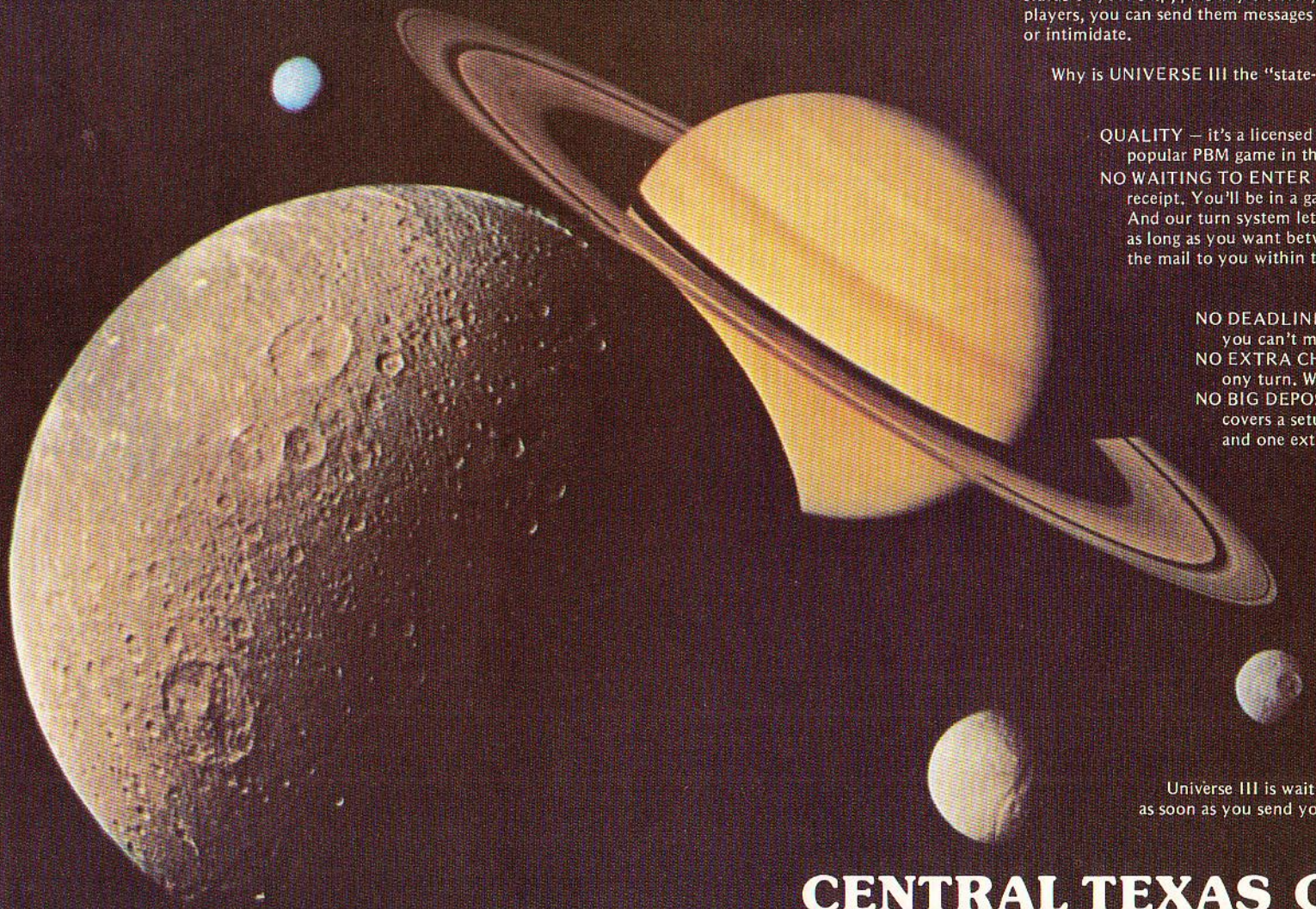
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