THE EYE OF ALL-SEEING WONDER

# **Issue Five | Summer 1995**

### **Skein of Destiny** Dave Morris presents a role-playing system with an authentically Tsolyáni premise.

(chusetl) and Spirit (baletl). Attributes

The Tsolyáni believe that a person has five selves: Body (bakte), Mind (hlakme), Passion (pedhetl), Dream

### Roll 2d10 for each attribute: Body, Mind, Passion, Dream and Spirit. It is up to you how you interpret a

high score. For instance, high Body could mean you're strong, wiry, big, dextrous, etc. Initial attribute scores are modified by social class. Nobles get +1 Spirit, townsmen get +1 Mind, and peasants

get +1 Passion. Abilities

Abilities are divided into skills (which can be trained) and talents (which can only be improved by

experience). Abilities of either type are based on a primary and a modifying attribute. The sum of these attributes determines your maximum possible score in that ability. Skills

Based On

Body + Spirit

Skill

Agility

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Brawling	Body + Body
Etiquette	Spirit + Mind
Magic	Mind + Dream
Medicine	Mind + Spirit
Missile Use	Mind + Body
Priestcraft	Spirit + Dream
Scholarship	Mind + Mind
Seamanship	Body + Mind
Singing	Spirit + Dream
Spellcasting	Passion + Mind
Thievery	Dream + Mind
Tracking	Mind + Body
Weapon Attack	Body + Passion
Weapon Parry	Body + Dream
Talents	

Based On

Passion + Mind

Passion + Spirit

Dream + Mind

Body + Passion

Dream + Spirit

Mind + Dream

### Charm

**Talent** 

Authority

Perception

Sex Appeal

Stealth

Streetwise	Mind + Dream	
Survival	Body + Mind	
	lf maximum possible value, three skills at a value. (Round fractions up in your favour	
Using Abilities		
To use an ability, roll 2d10. Su	ccess is indicated by a roll equal to or	DE ASSESSED AVIOLE
less than your score in the skil	l. The degree of success is equal to the	K / CHEST STORY / CAR
higher of the two dice in the ca	ase of skills and the lower of the dice in	A COMPANY
the case of talents. If you roll a	double then add another 1d10 to either	
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Perception score so he has succeeded. Perception is a talent, so the degree of success is the lower number rolled: a 3.

Sometimes you will need to roll against an attribute directly. This works exactly like using a talent, ie optional

Match Mind against another person's Charm to see if you have the good sense to resist them (Assuming you

Match Passion against another person's Authority roll if you want to resist giving in to them.

### Instead of making a straight skill roll, you can choose to "play safe" or "make an effort". To do this, apply a modifier ranging from -5 to +5 to

Attribute rolls

Optional modifiers

number to get the final degree of success.

cannot be applied to talents, only to skills.)

Example: Tu'unme is asked to entertain Prince Taksuru. He decides to try and impress the prince by attempting a particularly difficult song. He opts for a modifier of +5 to the dice roll. His Singing score is 13 and he rolls 6 and 2, giving an 8. With the +5 modifier he just succeeds, and he also gets to add 5 for a total degree of success of 11.

modifiers cannot be applied. Some common uses of attributes are:

want to). The higher degree of success wins out.

Passion vs Passion to intimidate a foe.

Dream vs Dream to win a game of chance.

Mind can be reduced by terrible experiences.

Spirit is reduced by disgrace or failure.

Passion is reduced by release of emotion and by casting spells. Dream is reduced by supernatural encounters or sleeplessness.

Spirit vs Spirit when vying for respect or promotion.

Example: Rasunra has a Perception score of 9. He rolls, getting a 3 and

a 5 on the dice. The total of the dice is 8, which is less than his

the total roll (announced, of course, before you throw the dice). If

successful, you must apply the same modifier to the degree of success, to a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 15. (Note that optional modifiers

Match Spirit against a dishonourable suggestion to see if you have the nobility to refuse to go along with it. (The Referee will assign an arbitrary value measuring how dishonourable the suggestion is.) Some examples of competitive use of attributes are: Body vs Body in a contest of strength. Mind vs Mind to outwit someone in a game of skill.

Attribute losses can be brought about by magic. In most cases losses will only be temporary. Body is reduced by wounds, poison and disease.

Mind insanity Passion apathy Dream undeath

Spirit annihilation

and Weapon Parry scores.

adds 1 extra point a day.

Improving ability scores

Loss of attribute points

Reduction of an attribute to o has the following effect: Body death

Ability scores are affected by the loss or gain of points in the primary attribute, but not the modifying

attribute. If you lose Body during a fight, for instance, you also lose the same number off your Weapon Attack

Body: roll Spirit or less each day to recover a point; a Medicine roll at least equal to your current lost points

Both skills and talents can be increased by experience. You are eligible for an ability increase in any month in

Example: Muresh twice got a degree of success of 10+ when using his Priestcraft skill this month. At the end

of the month he makes a Mind roll and gets a degree of success of 7. Adding 2 to this gives a result of 9. This is

Training can also be used to increase skills. Typically the Referee will first require a Spirit roll to see if the

which you got a degree of success of 10 or more with the ability. To increase the ability you must make a Dream roll. To the degree of success of this roll, add the number of uses of the ability for which you are

eligible. You need a final total higher than half your current score to increase the ability by 1.

Recovering attribute points Attributes recover at different rates:

Passion: recover all lost points in one night on a successful Dream roll. Dream: roll Dream or less each week to recover a point.

Mind: roll Spirit or less each week to recover a point.

Spirit: noble action will restore lost points at the Referee's discretion.

higher than half his current Priestcraft score, so it goes up by 1.

end of each month, the teacher makes a skill roll and you make a Mind roll. If the total degree of success exceeds half your current score in the skill, increase it by 1. You can only train in two skills at a time.

teacher is impressed enough to take you on as a pupil. (In Tsolyánu, money alone can't buy everything.) At the

parry. The attacker's degree of success minus the defender's degree of success is the amount of damage that gets through to the defender's armour. The defender can then make an armour roll, and the degree of success of this roll is how much of the damage the armour absorbs.

Value

5

7

8

9

+4

Combatants act each round in descending order of Mind score. You can take one action, either an attack or a

### Armour leather

light chlen-hide

medium chlen-hide

heavy chlen-hide

enchanted steel

Combat

shield +2 ordinary steel +1 excellent steel +3

roll cannot be optionally modified.
Spellcasting
Spells can be based on Gardásiyal or TIRIKELU. To attempt a spell you first make a Magic roll to see how
much you remember of it at that moment. Time is a factor, so if you attempt the roll after only one round you
must take an optional modifier of -5, after two rounds an optional modifier of -4 and so on. (If you have a
book or scroll containing the spell then the roll is a little easier, beginning at -3, etc.) The degree of success of
the Magic roll is the maximum level of the spell that you can then attempt to cast.
You then attempt a Spellcasting roll, subject to normal optional modifiers if you wish. The attempt costs 1
point of Passion. The degree of success of the roll is the strength of the spell. The target can attempt a Dream

roll, and must get a higher degree of success to avoid the effects of the spell.

Use the higher of the dice scores for the degree of success of an armour roll. Unlike an ability roll, the armour

making talismans, brewing love philtres, and so on. Insults

Insults can cause the loss of Spirit. The severity of the insult ranges from 2 to 20. If in doubt roll 3d6 for this. (Calling somebody clanless is always severity 20.) A 2d10 roll of equal to or less than the severity of the insults

It is possible to learn Magic and not Spellcasting. The Magic skill on its own is used for preparing horoscopes,

If you then want to cast the same spell again there is no need to repeat the Magic roll. You already have that spell in mind and can cast it in just one round. Only make a new Magic roll if you want to attempt a different

## Normally it is possible to prevent the loss of Spirit by extracting a payment of shamtla or by iSsúing a

causes the insulted party to lose 1 Spirit point.

Example: Hetle insults his friend Gedan, calling him an oaf. The Referee rules this is severity 9. Hetle gets an 11 on his Etiquette roll so Gedan cannot demand shamtla. On a roll of 9 or less on 2d10 Gedan must lose a

The clan system means that most Tsolyáni do not use cash as such. To save the usual bother of keeping a "bank balance" of Kaitars on your character sheet, which in any case is not authentic in a Tsolyáni setting,

spell.

Other magic

challenge to duel. However, if the character making the insult gets a degree of success with Etiquette at least equal to the insult's severity then you have no legal recourse. point of Spirit. Wealth

characters are simply assigned a Wealth score ranging from 1 (pauper) to 20 (very rich). Wealth is used like a skill. Example: Shokesh wants to buy a steel sword, for which a degree of success of 12 on his Wealth roll is required. His Wealth is 14 and he attempts the roll with an optional modifier of +5. (He's really wheedling his

uncles for this.) Rolling a 6 and a 3 gives success even with the modifier, but only with a degree of success of

11. The Referee announces that Shokesh was outbid by someone from a rival clan. [Return to Top]