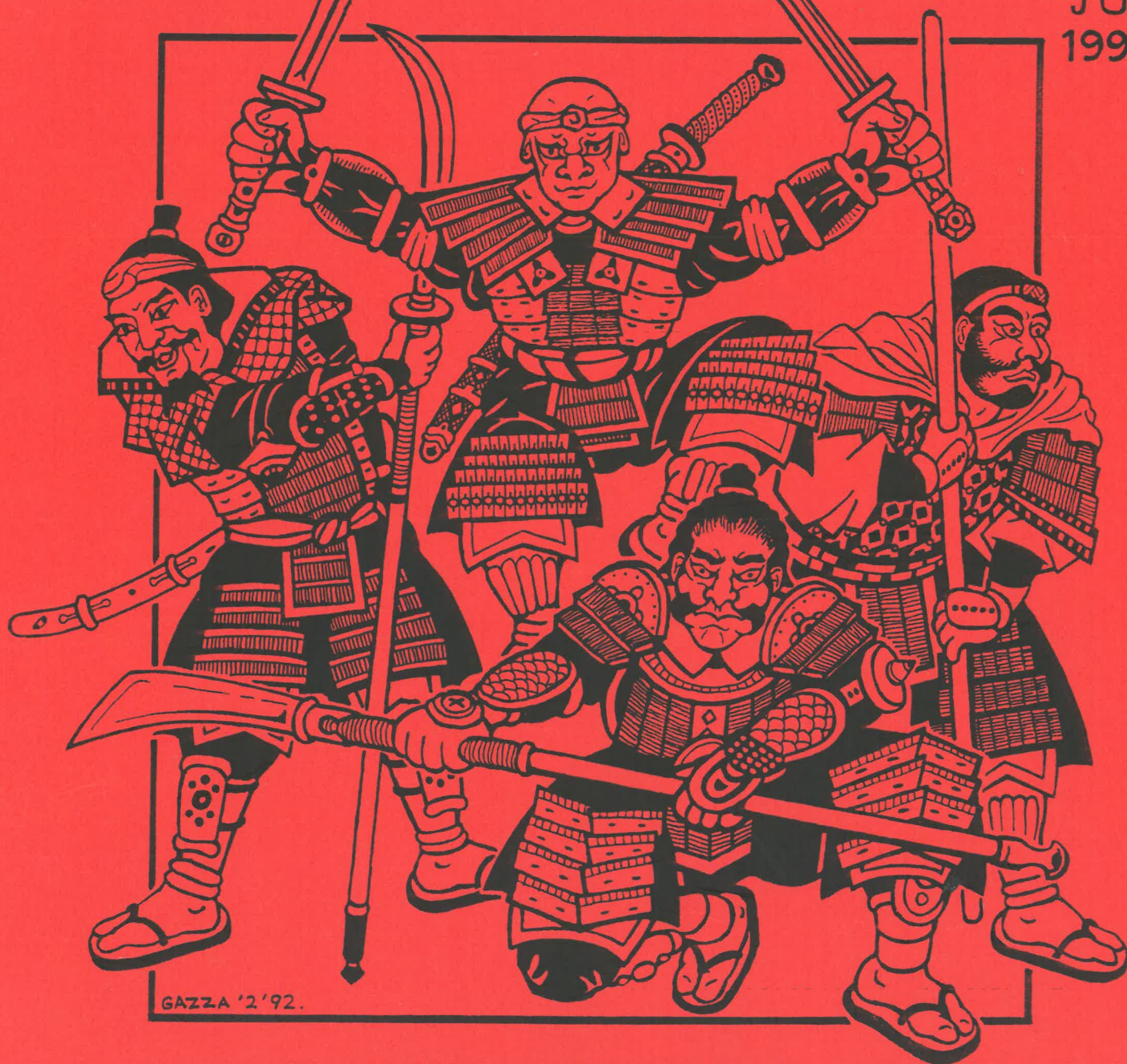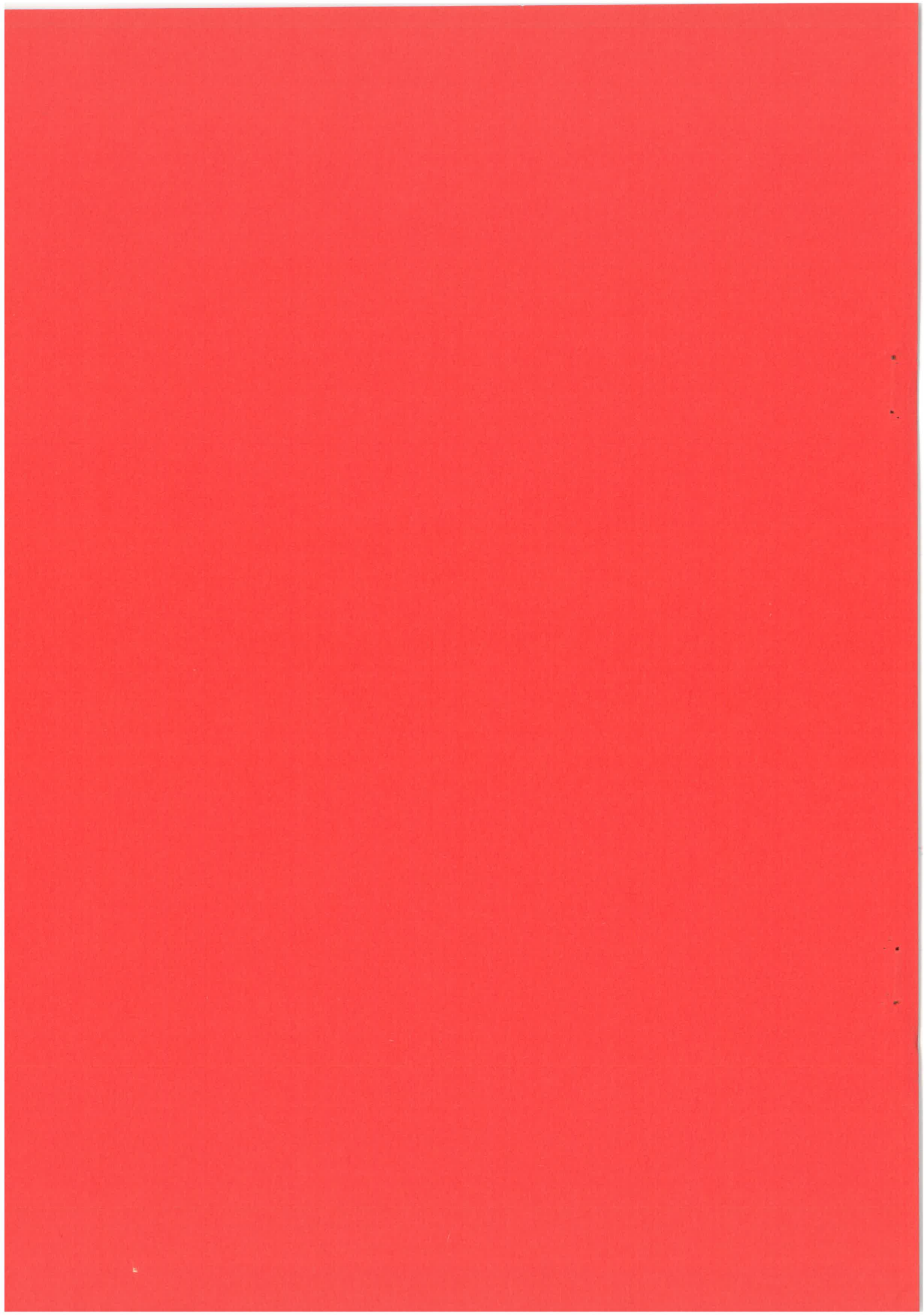# Queensland Wargamer

ISSUE # 34

JUNE 1992

GAZZA '2'92.

THIS ISSUE FEATURES: WARRIOR MONKS.

QUEENSLAND WARGAMER

A GAMING SOCIETY

PUBLICATION

EDITORIAL

Okay, can anyone guess what the front cover reminds me of? Well, it was bound to happen sometime. But Gary Knox is still doing great art as usual.

In this issue we have the history of the Warrior Monks, we have an AD&D design for a monk, and we talk about martial arts in Champions, which is kind of monkish.

Good to see some other areas of gaming being represented. We have a Rolemaster article, a Minitures article, and in next issue we hope to have a lot more of these. More would be appreciated, just write about what intrests you in gaming and send it in. Puzzles and drawings are really good too.

The Sohei. The Warrior Monks of Japan.

The religion of Buddhism in its many forms, has played a major
role in the development of Japanese society and culture. Japanese
Buddhism although introduced from the Asian mainland, in time came to
have a truly Japanese character, developing its own sects, traditions
and institutions. One aspect of Japanese Buddhism which came to have
an influential role in the political and military affairs of feudal
and medieval Japan was the sohei or "armed warrior Buddhist monks".[1]
From the tenth Century through to the sixteenth century, the militant
clergy of the major Buddhist monasteries were an unpredictable and
powerful force in the often turbulent events of the period.

Buddhism was introduced into Japan centuries long after its
conception in Ancient India in the fifth century BC. According to
tradition, Buddhism was brought across from the Korean peninsula in
538 AD.[2] The religion gradually gained acceptance in Japan,
particularly amongst the nobility. Buddhism prospered under the rule
of the Emperor Shotuku (592-628) who commissioned the building of the
first Buddhist temples and monasteries. Temples and monasteries were
originally served by twenty monks and were granted small areas of
sustenance land by the emperor.[3] This land was also largely tax
exempt. Through the Nara period Buddhism grew significantly in
influence and popularity. Monasteries and temples were built in
provinces throughout the land. Temples grew in size and influence and
tool control of large holdings of land. The increasingly wealthy
monasteries also attracted valuable gifts from generous patrons. As
the economic power of the large Buddhist centres grew, interest in
secular matters likewise increased.

By the latter half of the Heian period, Buddhist Temples such as
the Tendai sect monastery, Enryakuji had acquired enormous wealth and
controlled some of the largest estates of lands (shoens) in all of
Japan.[4] The close relationship between Buddhism and the Japanese
nobility led to continual intrigues on the part of Buddhist priests
and abbots vying for positions of power and influence. Leadership of
the monasteries and temples was conferred by appointment from the
emperor and aristocratic families in power. Because of the great
wealth and influence of the institutions these appointments were just
as much political decisions as the conferring of religious titles.
The situation was further excaberated by the nobility who placed
members of their families within the monasteries to gain influence,
strengthening the ties even further.

Despite the wealth and influence of the great Buddhist
monasteries, the institutions were threatened by a number of factors

---

[1]   The term Sohei (priest-warriors), used to describe the warrior
      monks, originated in Tokugawa times, prior to this they were
      referred to as Akuso (wicked priests). , N McMullin, Buddhism
      and the State in 16th Century Japan, Princeton: Princeton
      University Press, 1984, p 292

[2]   Ibid p 15

[3]   E Saunders, Buddhism in Japan, Philadelphia: University of
      Pennsylvania Press, 1964, pp 120-25

[4]   McMullin, op cit, p 22

during the Heian period. With the growth of power among the Buddhist centres, rivalry developed between the various religious institutions. A split in the Tendai sect in 891 between the followers of the religious leaders Enchin (814-891) and Ennin (794-864) led to the emergence of two factions. The factions divided into two separate monasteries, the monastery of Enryakuji on Mt Hiei and the nearby monastery of Miidera. The dispute degenerated into a bitter rivalry between the neighbouring monasteries. With the shift of the capital in the Heian era from Nara to Kyoto, rivalry was fostered between the temples within the regions of Nara and Kyoto. Nara Buddhist temples such as the Kofukuji and the Todaiji were in a constant state of intrigue against the monasteries of Enryakuji and Miidera which lay overlooking the capital Kyoto.

Other threats facing the large Buddhist institutions included the growing power of the warrior classes. During the course of the Heian period, the power of the Imperial court became gradually less stable and the strength of powerful warrior clans such as the Taira and the Minamato was increasingly relied upon. The warrior class of the samurai was growing in power and status and this was viewed as a potential threat by the monks. Government tax collectors were also becoming more determined in their dealings with the monasteries forcing payment on some lands held by the institutions. In the face of these developing threats the monasteries responded with a secular solution, the use of armed force for protection.

From the earliest of times the Buddhist temples of Japan had employed special guard units known as ozonokama. The ozonokama were small units of priests or laymen trained in the martial arts who watched over the temples, shrines and private property of the monasteries. With the increase of power and influence of the monasteries and the problems involved in retaining this power, larger forces were needed for security. The monasteries began the recruitment of forces into what amounted to small to average sized armies. One of the first large recruitments of warrior monks occurred under the orders of Ryogen the head of the Tendai sect. In 970 hundreds of warriors were recruited and kept on as a permanent force after a dispute with the Gion Shinto shrine.[5] The Kofukuji monastery is recorded as maintaining a large force of warrior monks as early as 968. The practice of recruitment was quickly copied and some of the larger Shinto shrines had standing armed forces, numbering many thousands of men.

The recruited armies consisted of some ordained monks and priests but the majority of Sohei were not from religious backgrounds. Typically the recruits consisted of absconded peasants, petty criminals and mercenary soldiers. While often referred to as warrior monks, the Sohei were little more than laymen within the monasteries and received little religious training. The researcher Turnbull estimates that four out of every five warrior monks had not properly entered the priesthood beyond nominally shaving their heads.[6]

Depictions of the warrior monks from artwork of the period show the monks in costumes of heavy robes with a cowl wrapped around the

---

[5] Saunders, op cit, p 146

[6] Turnbull, The Samurai A Military History, New York: McMillan Publishing Co, 1977, p 28

face. The simple outer robes were often dyed a light brown colour with oil of cloves or were left plain white. The monks wore sandles or distinctive wooden clogs called qeta. In combat the monks wore robes over their armour. While generally skilled in most forms of combat the chosen weapon of the warrior monk was the Japanese halberd or naginata. In the hands of a trained warrior monk the naginata was a devastating weapon able to inflict grievous damage with its slashing strokes. The warrior monks were so proficient in the use of the naginata that some authors even credited its invention to the warrior monks.[7] Other weapons associated with the Sohei were long studded iron war clubs and pole axes (ono).[8]

With the development of warrior monk armies, the rivalries which existed between monasteries and temples were transformed into violent military conflicts. The conflicts were not religious wars. The beliefs and doctrines of the opposing monasteries were often very similar and were generally not the matter of contention. Purely secular issues such as disputes over land ownership and political prestige were often the cause of the inter-monastery conflicts. Alliances with different monasteries were regularly formed and just as quickly broken and attacks against rivals were met in turn with vengeful retaliatory raids.

In the wars between these rival institutions a favourite tactic was to attack suddenly and set fire to the enemy's temple and buildings. Practically all Japanese buildings of the period were of wooden construction which burnt very easily. A typical example of one such attack occurred in 1081 when bickering between the Tendai sect monasteries Enryakuji and Miidera, over the appointment of the Tendai chief abbot, flared into warfare. Thousands of mountain warriors or Yambushi rushed from their monastery Enryakuji and attacked their rivals at Miidera. The Miidera monastery was set on fire destroying buildings, valuable treasures and thousands of Buddhist scriptures. What was saved was mostly plundered by the monks of Enryakuji.[9] That same year the monks from Enryakuji burnt down Miidera on two more occasions for different reasons arising from land disputes.

The first recorded conflict between monasteries was the attack in 970 of the newly formed Tendai warrior monks against the Shinto shrine of Gion. By the 11th century war between the monasteries was occurring on an almost annual basis. These conflicts continued on throughout the 12th century adding to the general instability of the country as a whole. The warrior monks further contributed to the growing instability by their use of armed demonstrations within the imperial capital. The first recorded demonstration took place in 981 when sohei from Enryakuji marched through the streets of Kyoto.[10] The

---

[7]   Ratti & Westbrook, <u>Secrets of the Samurai</u>, Rutland: Charles E Tuttle Co, 1973, p 140, Knutsen argues that the Naginata was derived from a peasant field implement and was only popularised by the warrior monks, R Knutsen, <u>Japanese Polearms</u>, London: The Holland Press, 1963, pp 31-3

[8]   Knutsen, <u>Ibid</u> pp 67-8

[9]   Turnbull (1977), <u>op cit</u>, p 32

[10] G Sansom, <u>A History of Japan to 1334</u>, London: Crescent Press, 1958, p 270

number of demonstrations grew reaching a peak of lawlessness during the reign of the Emperor Shirakawa (1072-1086) and his immediate successors.

The demonstrations of the warrior monks typically took the form of a massed rabble of armed monks descending upon the capital who threatened trouble unless their demands were met by the Imperial government. The demands of the monks were usually requests for Imperial favours which would directly benefit the monastery in some way. Demonstrations were regularly held to protest against decisions which favoured rival monasteries. In the face of an angry and potentially destructive army massed outside the palace, the emperors of the period were easily persuaded by the often unreasonable demands made by the monks.

The demonstrations of the warrior monks did not rely on threat of armed force alone to achieve their demands. The monks also preyed upon the religious and superstitious beliefs existing within the capital. At the head of their demonstrations the monk would often carry a large portable shrine called a mikoshi.[11] The deity was believed to reside within the mikoshi and any form of offence against the mikoshi was seen as a blasphemous attack upon the deity itself. On occasions the monks would deliberately leave the mikoshi in the streets, thus in effect leaving an angry deity within the confines of the city without its custodians. The monks would then not remove the mikoshi until their demands had been met. Through the combined use of potential violence and religious intimidation the warrior monks were a troublesome and unsettling influence within the capital. The relative inability of the Imperial government to deal with them, was expressed by the Emperor Shirakawa in the words,

> Though I am ruler of Japan, there are three things which I cannot control; the rapids on the Kamo river, the fall of the dice at gambling, and the monks of the mountain.[12]

The growing instability of the land fuelled by the activities of the warrior monks, forced the Imperial court to become more reliant upon the power of the samurai clans. Major clans such as the Taira and the Minamoto began to assert an increasingly powerful influence on court politics. The samurai forces of these clans were used on occasions to repel demonstrating forces of monks at the gates of the capital. The sight of armed samurai was often enough to make the monks turn away. During one such confrontation in 1146, a Taira samurai and eventual head of the clan, Taira Kiyomori fired an arrow at the mikoshi of the Gion shrine. Despite a huge outcry from the monks, such was Kiyomori's influence within the court, that he escaped with only a small fine.[13] In many respects however Taira Kiyomori was very religious. His friendship with the head of the Tendai sect Myoun, led the Taira to side with or refuse to act against the Enryakuji monastery in many disputes, much to the distress of the Imperial court.

---

[11] The first recorded use of a mikoshi at the head of a demonstration occurred in 1082 by the Shinto monks from the Kumano shrine. _Ibid_, p 270

[12] Turnball (1977), _op cit_, p 33

[13] _Ibid, p 32_

The unstable situation finally erupted in 1180 with the outbreak of the Gempei War between the Taira and Minamoto clans. Many of the larger monasteries took sides during the war. Taira Kiyomori bribed the Enryakuji to stay out of the conflict but the temples of Miidera and Kofukuji made alliances with the struggling Minamoto.

One of the first strategic battles was fought at the bridge of the River Uji. A small force of Minamoto samurai and sohei from Miidera awaiting reinforcements attempted to hold off a numerically superior Taira army. The warrior monks proved to be deadly fighters and the exploits of three in particular, Tajima the arrow cutter, Jomyo and Inchirai Hochi have become part of Japanese folklore. One story describes the individual combat of Jomyo,

> Loosing off 20 arrows like lightning flashes he slew 12 of the Taira... One arrow remained but flinging away his bow... he sprang onto the beams of the bridge and strode across. All were afraid to cross over. With his naginata he mows down five but with the six the blade snaps... flinging it away he draws his long sword wielding it and cutting down eight men. But as he brought it down on the ninth.. the blade snapped... Seizing his dagger the only weapon he had left, he plied it as one in a death fury.[14]

Despite the heroic struggle on the bridge, the Taira eventually forded the river and the opposing allied force was defeated after retreating to Byodo.

Despite his victory, Taira Kiyomori demanded revenge and later that year a Taira army attacked Miidera. The monks were prepared and the fighting lasted until the monastery was set alight. The loss was not great as the monks by this stage were used to such occurrences. A worse fate was in store for the Nara monasteries Kofukuji and Todaiji who had made alliances with the Minamoto. Kiyomori attempted to negotiate with the monasteries, to which they responded with insults. The Taira attacked in force and the warrior monks defended their temples desperately. Making no headway the Taira waited until nightfall and launched incendiaries into the temples. The destruction is wall described by the Heike Monogatari,

> Those too old to flee thinking to save themselves went into the upper storey of the Daibutsuden... but the flames reached them first and such a great crying arose that could not be surpassed even by the sinners amid the flames of the fiercest of the eight hot hells... the colossal statue of the Buddha... fused with the heat so that its fullmoon features fell to the pavement to the pavement below... its body melted to a shapeless mass... surely never before had there been such a destruction.[15]

Both temples were utterly destroyed with 3500 monks perishing in the flames.

---

[14] S Turnbull, <u>The Book of the Samurai</u>, London: Bison Books Ltd, 1982, pp 31-33

[15] Turnbull, (1977), <u>op cit</u>, p 49

The Gempei war entered a second phase with the ascendancy of Minamoto Yoritomo and his half-brother general Minamoto Yoshitsune. Yoshitsune has been remembered as one of the great heroic figures in Japanese history and folklore. His loyal companion the warrior monk Benkei enjoys a similar status and stories of their exploits abound in Japanese popular culture. According to tradition, Benkei was a wandering sohei from Enryakuji who served Yoshitsune as a faithful and devoted retainer. After his victories against the Taira, Yoshitsune was outlawed and hunted down by Yoritomo's forces. During these years according to tradition Yoshitsune aided by Benkei assumed the disguise of a warrior monk and regularly sought refuge in their temples.[16]

In the aftermath of the Gempei War, Yoritomo assumed control of the Shogunate and was generous in his dealings with the monasteries. The Nara temples were rebuilt under his supervision and Buddhism began to expand once again. The balance of power however had altered with the Imperial house losing much of its influence. Real power now lay with the Bakufu who were able to exert their authority over the monasteries. Although the Bakufu acted as a patron to the monasteries, they now had the power to confiscate and tax monastery lands. They even attempted to forbid the monks to possess weapons but this was generally ignored by the monasteries.

Throughout the Kamakura period the violent inter-temple rivalry continued. The older temples resented the rise of the newer Buddhist sects and often sent warrior monks to attack them. In 1331 the Go Daigo Emperor rebelled against the Bakufu in an attempt to restore Imperial power to its former position. The monastery of Enryakuji sided with the Emperor and fought against the Bakufu forces on many occasions.[17] Several battles were fought in mountainous terrain where the warrior monks skills with pole arms were found to be particularly effective. The war between the Emperor Go Daigo Emperor and Bakufu resulted in the destruction of any form of central authority which marked the beginning of an era of great instability.

This era known as the Muromachi period led to the decline of many Buddhist temples. Lands were snatched away by local rulers, leaving the temples with no means of supporting the previously large numbers of clergy. The larger temples such as Enryakuji, Hoganji and Kofukuji continued to maintain considerable military and political influence. The downfall of these remaining temples came in the 16th century with the rise to power of the general, Oda Nobunaga. Nobunaga's military aim was to reunify the country through the destruction of all other holders of military and economic power. The general was able to bring most of the country's Buddhist institutions under control using political measures. The last bastions of Buddhist military power required the full might of Nobunaga's forces to overcome. In 1571 the monastery of Enryakuji was attacked and destroyed in a horrific bloodbath. A less than sympathetic Jesuit priest in Japan at the time described the attack,

... his men entered the fortress and put all to fire and sword. They made a horrible slaughter of these false priests...

---

[16] I Morris, <u>The Nobility of Failure</u>, New York: New American Library, 1975, p 89

[17] Two of the Emperors sons were priests at Enryakuji. Ratti & Westbrook, <u>op cit</u> p 137

Nobunaga had concerted his business so well that not one of them escaped, in a word he put his men into every hole or cave as if he had been in chase of some wild beasts... Thus God punished these enemies of his glory on St Michael's Day of the year 1571.[18]

The last remaining Buddhist stronghold, the temples fortress of Hoganji was finally destroyed in 1578 after a long siege lasting over six years. The ruthless militarism of Oda Nobunaga thus effectively brought to an end the use of military power in the form of warrior monks by Japanese Buddhist institutions.

The warrior monks of Japan played an influential role in the military and political affairs of the land from the mid-Heian period up until the late 16th century. This influence is a reflection of the often secular nature of Japanese Buddhism during this period. The practises and activities of the Sohei were far removed from the teachings stressed the principles of non-violence (ahimsa), and abstinence from worldly desires such as material possessions, power and prestige.

In the opinion of the author George Sansom the influence the Sohei wielded was largely ill deserved. Sansom describes the Sohei as a large, corrupt, rabble, neither monks or soldiers who often acted against the wishes of their own abbots and priests. He argues that barring a few capable individual fighters and generals the military capacity of the warrior monks was not great. The power of the Sohei according to his argument lay in their abuse of ecclesiastical influence and not with their military skills.[19] Accounts of the warrior monks by many authors disagree with this view. In almost all descriptions of their conflicts in times of war, the monks are reported as skilled warriors who fought with great determination and courage. The extensive use of surprise attacks and incendiaries against the monks by their opponents suggests that they were not easily defeated by conventional tactics.

The evidence of many researchers instead suggests that the sohei made many contributions to the warrior culture of Japan. The almost constant state of war in which many monasteries existed led to a high state of expertise in the martial and warrior arts. Many schools of the traditional Japanese martial arts were pioneered by warrior monks and the influence of Buddhist philosophy is still evident in the practise of Japanese martial arts to this day.[20] Several famous warrior figures in Japanese history including Uesuegi Kenshin, Shingen Takeda and ironically Oda Nobunaga received training and instruction in the warrior arts under Buddhist priests.[21]

As previously stated the warrior monks for many centuries played an influential role in the history of Japan. Their decline can be in part ascribed to their failure to adapt to and find allies in the changing and turbulent nature of feudal Japan. The tremendous

---

[18] Turnbull (1977), op cit, p 153

[19] Sansom, op cit, pp 273-4

[20] Ratti & Westbrook, op cit, p 140

[21] Ibid, p 137

military strength of Nobunaga's forces dealt the warrior monks a final blow from which they were never to recover. While remembered in Japanese history and folklore, the Sohei made a major contribution to the warrior culture of Japan which lasts to this day within the traditional Japanese schools of martial arts.

Roger Ford

Bibliography

DeBarry W ed, Sources of Japanese Tradition, New York: Columbia University Press, 1958

Knutsen R, Japanese Polearms, London: The Holland Press, 1963

McMullin N, Buddhism and the State in 16th Century Japan, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984

Morris I, The Nobility of Failure, New York, New American Library, 1975

Newman K, Bushido, The Way of the Warrior, London: Bison Books, 1989

Ratti O & Westbrook A, Secrets of the Samurai, Rutland Vermont: Charles E Tutti Company, 1973

Reishauer E & Craig A, Japan, Tradition and Transformation, Boston: Houghton Miflin Company, 1978

Reishauer R K, Early Japanese History (40 BC-1167 AD), Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1937

Sanson G, A History of Japan to 1334, London: The Crescent Press, 1958

Saunders E, Buddhism in Japan, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1964

Turnbull S, The Samurai, A Military History, New York: McMillan Publishing Co, 1977

Turnbull S, The Book of the Samurai, London: Bison Books, 1982
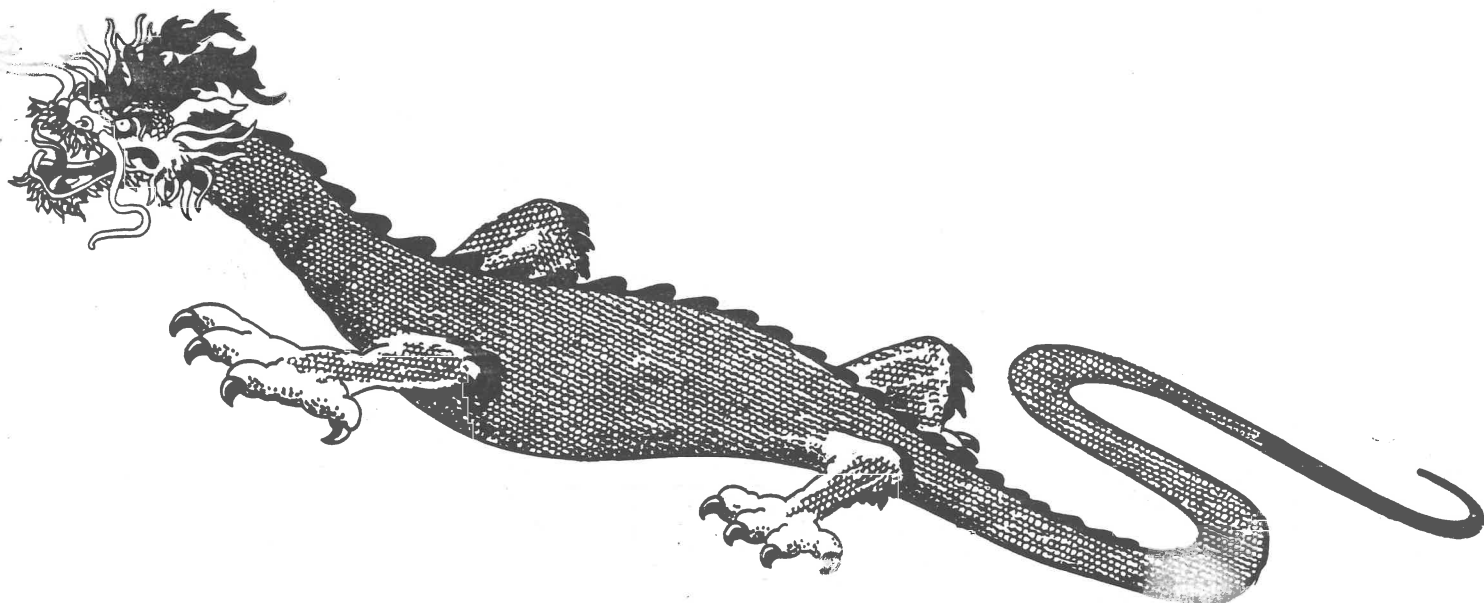
SOME THOUGHTS ON MARTIAL ARTISTS FOR CHAMPIONS

Human martial artists tend to have problems fighting super-powered beings. An ordinary person, even a well-trained one, will not be a match for someone who can fire plasma bolts from their hands or uproot trees with little effort. When one solid hit will end their participation in a battle, martial artists cannot afford to make mistakes regularly. Martial artists with superpowers can afford to be less careful than their unpowered equivalents, but they should not be overconfident.

Try to *outthink* the opposition. All heroes should use their brains as well as their powers, but for martial artists it is especially important. A martial artist (usually) isn't invulnerable, so try to avoid being a target for the enemy. Use your skills as much as you can; sneak around your opponents (or lurk in the shadows if you want to be melodramatic) and attack them when they're not looking. I know it sounds unheroic, but read a Batman comic and watch him sneak up on the criminals and beat them up. You should begin to get the picture.

Work with your teammates (it's why they're there, after all) and double-team the bad guys. Let someone else attract their attention and then attack them. A martial artist may sometimes lack the offense to do a large amount of stun to an opponent, but your 8d6 Offensive Strike may be all that's needed to put someone who's dazed (0 to -10 stun) down and out.

In fact, if your only attack power is your martial arts package, you should think seriously about supplementing your skills with some equipment. There is real world technology that a martial artist can use, if you don't want to use supergadgets like adamantium claws or an indestructible shield. For example: tear gas (although this is relatively ineffective in superheroic combat - if you want a big NND gas attack, go for nerve gas, just like Batman has), flares (to dazzle the opposition while you disappear into the shadows), oil-slick guns (if the enemy can't stand up, they can't fight you hand to hand), nightsticks, and throwing weapons (Batarangs?), as well as the ever-popular combination of guns, grenades, and body armour. Just remember the cardinal rule: if a martial artist doesn't have superpowers, they need something to even the odds.

If you want ideas for martial artists, either as a player or a gamesmaster, I would suggest turning to the various source materials for inspiration. Martial arts movies, especially Hong Kong movies, can be very useful at times (and dire rubbish at other times). Movies such as <u>Men from the Monastery</u> and <u>Shaolin Challenges Ninja</u> can be a good source of ideas, characters, and plots. If you want a more serious and realistic depiction of the martial arts, <u>Kung Fu</u>, the pilot for the famous TV series starring David Carradine, is now out on video.

A second source for martial, artists, and one often overlooked, is serious (or supposedly serious) books on the martial arts. Encyclopedias of martial art styles, weapons,

and the history of martial arts can be very informative, as well as having good pictures of various martial artists in various fighting stances. Stephen Hayes' series of books about the "secret" art of Ninjitsu can be entertaining, although most gamers know all they could ever want to know about ninjas nowadays.

There is no reason why these potentially fruitful sources should be ignored. After all, some players will appreciate the added realism and complexity that using them would bring. It would be much easier to fight the Orange Dragon if you knew that he could be defeated by grabbing his hands. Why? Because his style of kung fu is *pi kua men*, a style that uses only fist strikes to the head and neck! Think about it.

Gary Johnson

An Improved AD&D Monk
by Paul Kinsler

Why rewrite the AD&D monk? Well, Philip Meyers gives a good list of reasons in his 1981 Dragon article "He's got a lot to kick about". However, I find the rigid order in which the special abilities are granted restrictive, and I feel that the open hand damage system could be improved. This improved monk class is based both on the Player Handbook monk and the Dragon monk, but I have written this article so that you do not need to refer to back issues of Dragon. I have also included much (but not all) of what is in the Players Handbook for ease of reference.

Before getting into details, I will briefly summarise the differences from the previous monk classes. Most importantly, the special abilities are no longer doled out in a strictly defined order, but can be selected by the monk when training to go up levels. The special abilities are divided into four 'ranks'. The monk starts off with three of the lowest rank abilities, and gets one extra per level. Higher rank abilities are introduced at `Brother` and `Immaculate`. The major change to the abilities themselves is that the previous 100% resistance introduced at a particular level is now given as a bonus to the saving throw, the bonus increasing with level. For example, this enables a low level monk to gain some resistance to charm spells if desired, rather than suddenly obtaining 100% resistance at ninth level. The other abilities have been mostly left as is, with only minor modifications to allow them to fit in with the new system. The other significant change is to the open hand damage rules - the monk's "effective" level versus non humanoid, large or armoured opponents is lowered in a systematic fashion. In addition, the chances to stun or kill have been modified.

Conditions of the monk class

(1) Monks must be either lawful good, lawful neutral or lawful evil.

(2) The minimum allowed ability scores for the monk are strength 15, wisdom 15, dexterity 15, and constitution 11.

(3) Armour or shields may not be worn, and flaming oil may not be used. No strength or dexterity bonuses are granted in combat.

(4) The monk may only own a maximum of two magic weapons, and at most only three other magic items. A monk can use all the miscellaneous magic items that are useable by thieves, as well as all rings.

(5) The monk may keep few monetary possessions, only enough for living expenses, and for support of henchmen and followers. The surplus must be given to a (non player character) charity. The only exceptions are that money may be saved to meet future training costs, and for construction of a monastery headquarters.

(6) The only weapons a monk may use are the bo-stick, club, crossbow, dagger, hand-axe, javelin, jo-stick, polearms, spears and the staff. Initially, the monk is only proficient with a single weapon, and gains an extra proficiency every two levels. Non-proficient weapons are used at a -3 penalty.

(7) Monks attack on the same table as clerics, and make all saving throws as thieves.

Henchmen , Hirelings, and Followers

Monks cannot employ hirelings until they reach `Disciple` (6th level), and even then it may only be for the duration of a single adventure. At this point up to two henchmen can be acquired. Thereafter, one extra henchman can be recruited per level of advancement, up to the maximum number allowed by their charisma. Henchmen can be either normal fighters (not paladins or rangers), clerics, thieves or assassins. The monk can acquire followers as described in the Players Handbook.

Orders and Advancement

There seems to me to be no reason to restrict all monks to belong to a single order. There could be alignment based orders, national orders, religious orders, or any other type. If appropriate, the name levels from twelve up could be renamed to some other suitable titles - based, for example, on colours, the four elements, etc. There are three `Masters of Dragons` in each order, the `Red`, the `White` and the `Green`, and only a single holder of the higher titles.

Level advancement through the name levels need not always be by single combat, since the positions may be vacant in a smaller order, or have been left unoccupied by advancement, retirement, or old age. In these cases, a monk could advance by default. However, if the monk has left their order, and become a `Wandering Master` (see below), then no single combat is necessary to advance in levels.

The Wandering Master

Monks can, at `Master of Dragons` or above, leave their order and follow their own path. When the monk leaves, the order will often require the monk to under take a quest. After this quest, their experience point total drops to the minimum amount for a `Wandering Master` of the monks level. The monk is then given the title 'Wandering Master'. Once a monk abandons their order, they may *never* return.

`Wandering Masters` may advance to unlimited level, but retain only *Quivering Palms* of their rank-4 special abilities. The special abilities, movement rate, surprise chance, open hand killing chance, and weapon damage bonus usually function at the monks' level, but

only to a maximum of 21st level of experience. Their armour class, open hand damage, and number of open hand attacks are that of a `Master of Dragons`. Their 'actual level' for the purposes of attacks on large, unusual, or armoured opponents, is twelfth. However, no longer being restricted by their old order, they can accumulate as much money, and as many magic items as they want. They may not have any henchmen.

`Wandering Masters` need an additional 250,000 experience points to go up each level beyond twelfth, gaining an extra 2 hit points per level.

Standard Abilities

(1) Surprise: Monks are only surprised at a 33% minus 2% per level chance, to a minimum of a 5% chance.

(2) Missile dodging: Non-magical missiles can be dodged for zero damage if a saving throw versus petrification is made (for each missile), but this is made at −4 if the monk is attacking in combat. Magical arrows and similar missiles *are* counted as magical missiles.

(3) Saving Throws: When the monk is below ninth level, only a fraction of 1/[level+2] of the damage is sustained if the save is made, but the monk still takes full damage if the save is failed. Thus a third level monk would only take 1/5 of the damage from a fireball after saving. Above ninth level, the monk sustains half damage if the save is failed, and none if the save is successful.

(4) Falling: Monks may escape taking full damage from falling if they have the opportunity to make substantial contact with the wall (or branches, etc) while making the descent. For every four dice of damage sustained, they make a separate saving throw versus breath weapon to reduce that part of the damage (see above).

(5) Open hand damage: The damage done to an opponent varies depending on the nature of the target. The following tables are used to calculate a "damage level", which is some fraction of the monk's actual level. All fractions are rounded up. This "damage level" is then used to calculate the amount of open hand damage per attack, as for a monk whose level of experience is equal to the "damage level". The number of attacks per round is not affected. Calculate the level adjustment number (LAN) from the left hand table, and then use the right hand table to get the fraction to work out the "damage level" for the monk.

Notes:

(a) Stunning: If the target is hit by an amount that exceeds the number required to hit by the "stun number" in the right hand table, the target is stunned. They remain stunned until they make a successful saving throw versus poison, or until the end of six rounds. Stunned creatures never get initiative, and always make their saves at the

end of the round, ensuring that the monk gets at least one free attack. Do not use the armour type modifiers when calculating the stun number.

(b) Killing: A monk can only kill an opponent if they have just succeeded in stunning them with that blow. The chance of killing an opponent is a percentage equal to the targets armour class, plus the monk's level, less the stun number, and less half the targets level. The opponent is left with zero hit points, less the damage done by the monk's open hand attack.

(c) Damage reduction: The monk may voluntarily reduce the amount of open hand damage done to that of a lower level monk, but the intention to do so must be stated before the to-hit dice roll is made.

Type	LAN		LAN	Fraction	Stun number
Humanoid	0		up to 1	1	+5
Animal	1		2	3/4	+6
Other	2		3	1/2	+7
Supernatural	4		4	1/4	+9
Small, Medium	+0		5	1/8	+13
Large, to 12'	+1				
Large, 12'+	+2				
No armour	+0				
Leather armour	+1				
Metal	+2				

(5) Weapon damage: Monks gain a damage bonus when using weapons of 1/2 hit points per level, which simulates their knowledge of weapons and anatomy. Monks only get a single attack per round when using weapons.

Special Abilities

There are four grades of monk special abilities, denoted rank-1 to rank-4. Special abilities of all ranks must be specified during training, and once selected, they cannot be changed. A Novice monk starts off with three rank-1 special abilities, and can select one extra such ability for each level of ability gained. In addition, for every level from Brother up (5th+), the monk gains one rank-2 ability, and for every level from Immaculate up (9th+), the monk gains one rank-3 ability. No further special abilities of ranks 1-3 can be gained above Superior Master (11th). Rank-4 abilities are specific to the name levels Master of Dragons and above (12th+), and can only be used by monks who belong to their order.

The only exceptions to the above method are that the monk may opt to gain two rank-1 abilities in place of one rank-2 ability, and may opt to gain three rank-1 or two rank-2 abilities in place of a rank-3. Also, Wandering Masters retain the rank-4 *Quivering Palms* ability.

Some of these special abilities can be difficult to explain solely in terms of the training and discipline of the monk, particularly in the case of the rank-4 abilities. There are two ways out of this - either change them, or assume that they are not "innate" but are generated by some token (magic item) given to a monk by the order. This works particularly well with the more problematic rank-4 abilities, and it also allows freedom to change them to reflect the nature of the order. For example, the *Brothers of the Flame*, a fire based order, might grant tokens to allow limited use of some fire based spells instead of the listed abilities. However, such modifications should be tightly controlled by the DM.

Rank-1 Special Abilities

Communicate with Fish (talent). This talent allows the monk to communicate with fish, with effects similar to the second level cleric spell, *speak with animals*.

Feign death (body), for two turns per level, as the monk ability D.

Focus (discipline). This ability represents the monk's ability to concentrate given proper preparation. A number of points equal to the monk's level can be accumulated, at a rate of one point per turn of meditation. A monk cannot move or speak without breaking meditation. These points, once accumulated, can be held for up to one turn before they must be used. The points can be spent at a rate equal to of at most half the remaining points (rounded up) per round, and at least one point per round. Each point spent gives a +1 to any one dice roll (or +5% to percentile rolls) made by the monk in that round. The points must be allocated before the dice roll is made. This ability can be used the number of times per day equal to the level of the monk. These are *not* magical bonuses

Mind over Body (mental), as the minor psionic ability, for 1 day per level.

Resistance to Charm (mental), save at +1 per two levels against *beguiling, charm, enthrall, hypnosis* and *suggestion*. From the ability G.

Resistance to Compulsion (discipline), save at +1 per level against *command, geas, quest,* psionic *domination*, regardless of any "no save" restrictions. From the ability J.

Resistance to Disease (body), save at +2 per level.

Resistance to Haste and Slow (discipline), save at +2 per level. From the ability C.

Resistance to Poison (body), save at +2 per level. From the present ability I.

Self Healing (body), for [1D4+level-3] hit points, once per day. From the present ability E.

Speak with Birds (talent), as the second level cleric spell, *speak with animals*, but this talent is restricted to birds only. From ability A.

Speak with Mammals (talent), as the second level cleric spell, *speak with animals*, but this talent is restricted to mammals. From ability A.

Speak with Reptiles (talent), as the second level cleric spell, *speak with animals*, but this talent is restricted to speech with reptiles.

Thief Skills I (talent). These are the thief abilities *move silently, hide in shadows, hear noises*, and *climb walls*. They are performed as if the monk were a thief of the same level.

Thief Skills II (talent). These are the thief abilities *find/remove traps, open locks* and *pick pockets*. They are performed as if the monk were a thief of the same level. This talent is restricted to neutral and evil monks.

Rank-2 Special Abilities

Acrobat (talent). These are the Unearthed Arcana thief-acrobat skills, at a level equal to the monk's level.

Body Equilibrium (body), as the minor psionic ability, useable once per day per level.

Empathy (mental), as the minor psionic ability empathy, useable once per day.

Intelligence (mental), the monk gains an effective intelligence of (9+level), to a maximum of 18, when resisting all mind affecting attacks. From ability H.

Invisibility (talent), as the minor psionic ability, useable once per day for one round at fifth level, and for a number of turns equal to (level−5) for sixth and higher.

Resistance to ESP (mental), save at +2 with an additional +1 per two levels against ESP. From ability B.

Wisdom (mental), the monk gains an effective wisdom of (9+level), to a maximum of 18, when resisting all mind affecting attacks.

Rank-3 Special Abilities

Ageing Control (body), the monk ages as if a *phylactery of long years* were being used.

Body Control (body), as the major psionic ability, for one round at ninth, five rounds at tenth, and thereafter one turn for every level above tenth.

Detect Law and Chaos (mental), as the minor psionic ability *Detect Good and Evil*, but rather it detects Law and Chaos, once per day.

Molecular Manipulation (talent), as the major psionic ability, at a one level of mastery for every monk level above eighth, to a maximum of eight.

Rank-4 Special Abilities

Quivering Palms (talent), at `Master of Dragons` (12th), as the monk ability K in the Players Handbook.

Dimension Door (talent), at `Master of the North Wind` (13th), as the major psionic ability, from the fourth level magic user spell, once per day.

Speak with Plants (talent), at `Master of the West Wind` (14th), as the fourth level druid spell. From ability F.

Mind Bar (mental), at `Master of the South Wind` (15th), as the major psionic ability, for one hour per level, once per day.

Object Reading (talent), at `Master of the East Wind` (16th), as the minor psionic
　　ability, once per day.

Dimension Walk (talent), at `Master of Winter` (17th), as the major psionic ability, for
　　one hour per two levels above twelfth, once per day.

Astral Projection (talent), at `Master of Autumn` (18th), as the major psionic ability,
　　from the seventh level cleric *Astral spell*, once per week.

Premonition (talent), at `Master of Summer` (19th), of death or serious injury, at a 90%
　　chance, 1-4 turns beforehand.

Tower of Iron Will and/or *Intellect Fortress* (mental), at `Master of Spring`
　　(20th), for one round per level, once per day. The monk must concentrate to use
　　this power, and can do nothing but walk slowly at most. If the monk's
　　concentration is broken, the defences disappear.

Plane Shift (talent), at `Grand Master of Flowers` (21st), as the fifth level cleric spell,
　　twice per day.

Table 1　Monk Level Advancement

	Title	Experience points	HitDice (D6)	Move	AC	Open-hand Attacks	Damage
1	Novice	0-	2	15"	6	1	1D4
2	Initiate of the Rudiments	2,251-	3	15"	5	1	1D4+1
3	Initiate of the Elements	4,751-	4	16"	4	3/2	1D4+1
4	Initiate of the Principles	10,001-	5	16"	3	3/2	1D4+2
5	Brother	22,001-	6	17"	3	3/2	2D4
6	Disciple	47,501-	7	17"	2	2	2D4
7	Disciple of Secrets	98,001-	8	18"	2	2	2D4+1
8	Disciple of Mysteries	200,001-	9	18"	1	2	2D4+2
9	Immaculate	350,001-	10	19"	1	5/2	2D4+2
10	Master	500,001-	11	20"	0	5/2	3D4
11	Superior Master	725,001-	11+2	20"	0	5/2	3D4+1
12	Master of Dragons	950,001-	11+4	21"	-1	3	3D4+1
13	Master of the North Wind	1,200,001-	11+6	22"	-1	3	3D4+2
14	Master of the West Wind	1,450,001-	11+8	23"	-2	3	4D4
15	Master of the South Wind	1,700,001-	11+10	24"	-2	7/2	4D4
16	Master of the East Wind	1,950,001-	11+12	25"	-3	7/2	4D4+1
17	Master of Winter	2,300,001-	11+14	26"	-3	7/2	4D4+2
18	Master of Autumn	2,650,001-	11+16	27"	-4	4	4D4+2
19	Master of Summer	3,000,001-	11+18	28"	-4	4	5D4
20	Master of Spring	3,350,001-	11+20	29"	-5	4	5D4+1
21	Grand Master of Flowers	3,850,001-	11+22	30"	-5	5	5D4+1
12+	Wandering Master	950,001 +250,000 per level	11+4 +2 per level	–	-1	3	3D4+1

HOW TO BE A SUPERHERO

Mark Leigh and

Mike Lepine

Considering that these authors also wrote "How to be a Complete Bastard", one wonders just how qualified they are to write this book. Well, they are perfectly qualified in exposing just how twisted, incompetent, and corrupt any normal superhero would be, if they tried to be everything a comic superhero is. Add to this the fact that the authors are sexist, homophobic, typical American males, and the amount of superheroism in the book drops very low. But it is still quite funny in places.

As a source of information on how **not** to be a superhero, this book is a gold mine. Included are all the problems that besiege a superhero, from lack of money to immature sidekicks, from ethics to publicity. And then there are all the ways superpowers can stuff up if they really worked in the manner they are described.

I can see this information being used in three ways. A Games Master could use it to more create realistic Non-Player Characters, or as a source faults to look for. A Player could use it to either design a superhero that is more realistic. Or the book could be used as a source for a comedy campaign where superheroes battle down-to-earth problems like paying the rego on the Crimemobile and disguising their activities from relatives.

Then again there is always the use it was intended for. Read it for a laugh. Better yet, read while you are playing a canpaign and you can look up all the relevant sections.

Nick Lawrence

ACTION POINTS: TIME MANAGEMENT FOR GAMING

Jay Stringer

When there is a lot happening at the same time eg in a battle, many fantasy games split time up into short periods, usually about ten seconds. Each character involved gets to do something and hopefully the good guys come out on top. Unfortunately however, this does not necessarily represent each characters' unique abilities in certain areas. Is it not feasible, if not logical, that some characters due to special abilities, training, etc would be able to do more than other characters? Furthermore is it not even more reasonable to assume that some skills could be performed quicker than others (ie throwing a dart compared to attacking with that massive two handed sword) and as such there should be a strict order of who does what first? If you have been agreeing with what I have been saying then the alternative presented in Rolemaster Companion IV could be for you - no matter what system you are playing.

As an alternative for the Rolemaster system the people at I.C.E. have come up with a system of Action Points. Each character has a number of points available to them, each character has a different number of points, and each action costs different amounts. In RoleMaster games the number of AP is 100 plus that characters quickness stat bonus. A action point chart has been reproduced to show how many points are required for specific actions like weaponry attack, spell casting, movement etc. The idea in this system is for each character to plan out what you would like to do and keep track of when you can perform your next action. Using a pencil and rubber on a pad jotting down a few quick calculations makes the whole process very simple and quick for each character. Any points not used in a "turn" can be carried over to the next turn.

All the GM has to do is decide when an encounter starts and call out 5 point increments as people perform their actions (if the GM ambushed the party 0 would be when they get hit). If a character has a speciality in certain areas (mage to magic, fighter with preferred weapon) then it is very easy to work out your profile. This makes it easy for the GM to work out what his NPCs can do. The big thing is to have a rubber handy because if someone hits you first or casts a spell on you or stuns you then you will have to change your plans. There is a definate advantage to being quick. A classic example of this is in the games where people can be stunned because it can totally stuff up what you had planned to do as you have to wait for a certain time to recover and then you have to expend points again to do something. All the while providing a perfect sitting duck target for others.

Moving into the field of magic, Rôlemaster on the whole is a little hard on magic users and they are not as powerful as in some other systems (although there is a lot more flexibility in spells). Spell users may find they are not a powerful as in some other sustems and the GM may want to lower the cost a little at their discretion to fit your own sense of realism.

ACTION POINT COST CHART

Melee Attack

WEAPON	AP
Dagger	30
Falchion	37
Hand Axe	33
Main Gauche	30
Scimitar	33
Rapier	34
Broadsword	35
Shortsword	32
Bare Fist	28
Club (Norm)	35
Warhammer	34
Mace	31
Morning Star	38
Whip	38
Battle Axe	40
Flail	41
War Mattock	38
Quarterstaff	30
2-Handed Sword	38
Pole Arm	42
Spear	35
Martial Art	
- Strike	25
- Sw & Throw	25

Missile Attack

WEAPON	AP
Short Bow	10
Blow Pipe	10
Composite Bow	12
Long Bow	14
Light Crossbow	10
Heavy Crossbow	12
Sling	20

Missile Reloading

WEAPON	AP
Short Bow	24
Blow Pipe	24
Composite Bow	28
Long Bow	32
Light Crossbow	60
Heavy Crossbow	80
Sling	20

Thrown Attack

WEAPON	AP
Bola	32
Dagger	15
Hand Axe	20
Javelin	27
Spear	30
Rock	15

Spell Casting

ACTION	AP
Instantaneous Spell	1
Prepare Class I Spell	15
Prepare Class II Spell	40
Prepare Class III Spell	70
Recovery	(20+Lvl/2)

Movement

DISTANCE	AP
1/4 Movement Rate	10
1/2 Movement Rate	20
3/4 Movement Rate	30
Full Movement Rate	40

Miscellaneous

ACTION	AP
Draw Weapon	0.5 wc
Wp. other hand	5
Dismount	20
Mount Up	40
Prone to Kneeling	20
Kneeling to Standing	10
Orientation	10

As far as weaponry attack is concerned the points system gives a fair representation of how things would probably go in a battle. For example a trained Martial Artist can punch or do a sweep maneuver in 25 AP while an untrained person punching takes 28 AP because they lack the skill. It certainly would be easier to throw a rock (15) than to handle a large object like a javelin (27) and so on. Some weapons can be used as an attack weapon or as a thrown weapon (eg Hand Axe and Spear) and can have different costs for the different actions.

Concerning spells, a Class III spell is a spell the same level as your character. Therefore a level 5 archmage casting a level 5 spell has to prepare that spell for 70 points. A Class II spell is 1-3 levels lower than the characters level. So in our esample it would take our mage 40 AP to prepare a level two, three or four spell. Lastly anything less than 3 levels is a Class I spell and takes 15 AP. A naturally instant spell takes only one AP. Regardless of the characters level or the level of the spell however, a magic user has to recover from casting a spell before casting another spell. This workds out a 20 AP plus your characters level divided by two (ie 20+3 = 23 AP rounding the odd number up). Characters may move a short distance while preparing a spell but may not do anything else.

At any time a character may delay an action on which the AP have already been spent, and perform that action immeadiately on command so long as they do nothing else in between (eg soldiers could form a

line, spend broadsword APs and attack monsters as soon as they
arrive). A character can to decide to change an action at any time,
wiping the points for a certain action spent and calculate from the
new position the full AP cost for the new action.

Orientation is very important in RM when using the AP system. the
logic behind this is that if you have spent the last minute beating
the cruddlies out of a monster you probably havn't had much time to
watch what else was going on in the battle around you. As such after
you finally slay the beast you are going to have to spend time
reorientating yourself and hopefully find out that your friend needs a
bit of help or there is a spare monster or whatever. Everything is
not automatically given to the characters. Sitting around a table
with a GM speaking you hear everything that is going on but from the
characters point of view they probably would have only a very limited
knowledge of the total picture of a battle. To orientate successfully
you have to roll the percentile dice, add luck bonus and add your
characters inate stat (essence users empathy, channeling intuition,
metalism presence) and have a total over 111. All of this after 10
AP. If you roll bad then you don't notice a thing and have to wait
another 10 AP to try again. Once again you can modify this for your
own system because the logic behind it is all very clear - a person in
the middle of a battle should have to reorientate after performing a
specific action whatever that may be, before you can jump into battle
again. Now if you do not orientate and you do jump into the middle of
battle the GM can have some fun with a wandering blind ambush victim
in the waiting.

To finish I will put all this into an example in the hope to put it
all together

Carlos a level ten rogue and Vestin a level eight bard are walking
down a forest path. Carlos has 140 AP, a base walk of 75' and
uses a flaming handaxe in battle. Vestin through some special
circumstances is one tough dude - he has 155 AP and a base walk of
110' (and although a semi spell user has a wonderful repeating
crossbow). They walk into three orcs and the GM determines they
have surprise on us. Each orc has 125 AP and base walk 80'.

As the orcs get surprise we start a 5 AP. At 5 Vestin starts
preparing a level 6 spell (charm song) and Carlos decides to use
his martial arts to strike a orc instead of using a weapon. The
orcs are using clubs and will strike in 35. Carlos using martial
arts is faster and hits one in front of him at 30 AP (25 MA weapon
cost +5 because of surprise). He stuns that orc for 30 AP. At 35
Carlos and Vestin are each hit by an orc. Vestin is only lightly
wounded and continues preparing his song. Carlos is stunned and
must wait 20 AP. At 45 Vestin casts his song on the orc who is
level 3. He could have chosen a level 3 spell and waited less
time but the orc would have had a greater chance of resistance.
The orc in front of him is charmed as long as he sings. On paper
the fight would appear as:

CARLOS	VESTIN	ORC 1	ORC 2	ORC 3
0 surprised		0 start	0 start	0 start
5 start	5 start	30 stunned	35 hit	35 hit
30 Martial Strike	45 cast charm song	60 unstunned	70 hit	45 charmed
35 stunned				
55 unstunned				

Claws of Bagh Nakh: A Champions Column

Heroism and the Superhero

What is a superhero? A superhero is someone who "beats the living crap out of a supervillain".[1] This definition leaves a lot to be desired, accurate though it may be for many "superheroes" in comics and campaigns. (Especially in campaigns.) How then can we go beyond this? How do we put the hero into the superhero?

What is a hero? A hero is a person of "distinguished courage or performance, admired for having noble qualities."[2] A hero is admirable. This does not mean that the hero is respected by the public; the public is often uninformed or misled (the Spiderman Syndrome). But the reader of the comic should know. We can see that not all of the so-called superheroes in the comics are worthy of the label; examples such as Guy Gardner, a brutal feeble-witted thug providing comic relief and making the rest of the JLI look good in comparison, readily come to mind. Then there are deliberately borderline cases such as the Punisher (who was originally a villain) and Wolverine (who tries to be a hero).

We can make our character heroic by giving them what we can call heroic qualities, or noble virtues. These include: courage, generosity, a sense of fair play and justice, perseverance in the face of difficulties, and others. They do not include: greed, brutality, bullying, violent thuggishness or similar vices. This should give you the general idea.

Now we can put our hero together. What kind of person has these heroic qualities? Read your comics; they are full of such characters. Rarely are these characters perfect; their heroism does not come easily, they work at it. One of their greatest enemies is themself; their own fears and failings (but they succeed in overcoming them; this success is what counts). See what makes the heroes you admire most work. Then try to emulate this. Then your character can be a real superhero, not just a lout in gaudy tights.

How will this character work in play? Being a hero can be risky. You can't always choose to fight only when you have a 98% chance of winning (D&D style). Other people depend on you, and you risk your life to save them. This is where the GM comes into the picture. The GM can provide opportunities

---

[1]Leigh and Lepine, "How to be a Superhero." pg 7 - see review in this issue.

[2]"Macquarie Dictionary", 2nd edition. This dictionary defines a superhero as "a comic book or fantasy character, distinctively dressed, endowed with superhuman or magical powers, and involved in a struggle with the forces of evil."

This is another flawed definition, leaving little room for well-known superheroes such as Batman (who possesses no superhuman or magical powers) and other all too human crime-fighters. Do street toughs really count as The Forces of Evil?

This definition also does not address whether the superhero should display heroic qualities.

for you to be heroic. And you probably won't even die in the process; GMs often work quite hard to keep the player characters alive. In the comics, when superheroes risk all to save innocents, they usually come out on top. Can we do things the same way in role-playing? Yes, but it can take work, from both the GM and the player.

The GM should be aware that you do these things not to try to kill your character off, but to your character, these risks are acceptable in order to protect others. The GM must then perform a fine balancing act; the risks must appear real enough for the character to look heroic, and these risks must also be small enough so that the character can keep on doing it. The game system comes to our aid here; most heroes are quite difficult to kill. Most heroes must take at least 20 body before they die; few attacks will do this in one hit. The attack must also hit the character. A surprised villain may not even fire when the hero rescues his target until it is too late.

This does not mean the game will be safe for your character. Sheer stupidity will presumably get you killed just as easily as in any other campaign. All it means is that it is not regarded as stupidity to risk your life (or in most cases, simply to risk losing the fight) in the defence of others.

The next time you wish to change your character, consider the heroic death option. Remember those hero deaths in the comics? Ask your GM for a chance to die gloriously rather than just fading away quietly. Most GMs should be happy to arrange such opportunities.

How can we make the most of these opportunities provided by the GM? Keep in mind that you should protect the public. Machine guns may not be a great danger to most superheroes, but when they miss, they can do great harm to bystanders. A gun is fairly readily destroyed, so why not deal with it first? There could even be extra EXP in it for you. Read those comics. See what the heroes in them do. That's what it's all about.

Now your character should be equipped to live (or die) like a true hero. Then you will be able to boast to other players (your character, of course, will not boast) about how you braved great danger, rather than sheepishly explaining that you ran away because the villain had a bigger energy blast. Remember, heroes do it with courage, honour and decency.

UNSUCCESSFUL
SUPERHEROES NO. 22
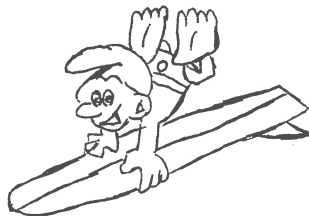
THE SILVER SMURFER

HE WHO SMURFS
THE POWER COSMIC!

CHIVALRY

Maurice Keen, *Chivalry*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.
CR4513.K44 1984 (Central and UG libraries)

Keen's aim is to establish what "chivalry" meant historically (concentrating on the period from 1100 to about 1500) as "the code and culture of a martial estate which regarded war as its hereditary profession." While he does not neglect the literary sources, he is concerned to establish how far these texts reflected the actual situation. He also considers the "historical mythology of chivalry." Keen disagrees with Huizinga's argument (in *The Waning of the Middle Ages*) that "chivalry was no more than a polite veneer, a thing of forms and words and ceremonies which provided a means whereby the well-born could relieve the bloodiness of life by decking their activities with a tinsel gloss borrowed from romance." The extensive bibliography contains both primary sources (the historical texts themselves) and secondary sources (what historians have written on the subject), although most will probably not be available in the University of Queensland libraries. This book is highly recommended.

Howell Chickering and Thomas H. Seiler (eds.). *The Study of Chivalry: Resources and Approaches*, Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, 1988.
CR4509.S78 1988 (Central)

This book provides resources for the undergraduate teaching of the topic of chivalry (late 11th to early 16th centuries in Western Europe). Its aims "are to inform readers about modern scholarship on the subject and some current teaching practices, to suggest ways" of teaching the material, and to provide lists of further reading for teachers. There are 700 pages, divided into four parts (not of equal length): the modern study of chivalry, historical and visual approaches, early chivalric literature, and late chivalric literature. Perhaps the most interesting chapter is "The technology of chivalry in reality and romance" which covers the manufacture of armour, design of armour and weapons, and other related topics. For example, the longbow is given as 6 feet in length, arrows are 36 inches and can be fired at 2 to12 arrows a minute compared to the crossbow's 1-2 bolts. Longbows had a range of 100-150 yards, while crossbows had a range of 70-460 yards. The reading list at the end of the chapter would be of use to anyone wanting to read more accurate material about weapons, armour, and other technology than is available in the usual role playing sources.

Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (eds.), *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986.
CR4513.I34 1986 (Central)

This book contains a collection of papers presented at conferences. Because of this, the topics covered are more varied than those in the books mentioned above. For instance, one of the articles is on "The game of chess: an aspect of medieval knightly culture." The articles also tend to address a specific topic, such as "The tournament and chivalry in German tournament books of the sixteenth century and in the literary works of Emperor Maximilian I." Particularly recommended for fantasy role-players are: "The ideal knight as presented in some French narrative poems" (for knightly qualities, including strength, courage, good looks, good birth, and virtue—loyalty, generosity, humility; English translations are given for quotations from French literature); and "The knight, his arms and armour in the eleventh and twelfth centuries" (for the sheer perseverence needed in training, the costs of equipping and maintaining the knight, and the actual weapons and armour that were used).

Richard Barber, *The Reign of Chivalry*, London: David & Charles, 1980.
QTO CR4513.B33 1980 (Central [Qto books shelved separately] and UG)

This is a popular work of the coffee table sort: plenty of illustrations, and easy-to-read text in relatively large print. A very short list of further reading is given at the end of the book. This

book could be a good starting point for people who know little about chivalry, and who might be confused by the detail found in the books above.

Richard Barber, *The Knight and Chivalry*, 2nd ed., Ipswich: Boydell Press, 1974.
CR4509.B37 1974 (Central)

This is Barber's earlier and larger work on chivalry. It is more substantial than *The Reign of Chivalry*, although illustrations are not lacking. The bibliography is divided into topics, but some references are in languages other than English, and others could be difficult to obtain. Topics covered are chivalric literature (including love and romance), religion and the religious orders of knights, and the tournament and warfare.

Sidney Painter, *French Chivalry: Chivalric Ideas and Practices in Mediaeval France*, Ithaca, N.Y.: Great Seal Books, 1957.
CR4529.F8P3 1957 (Central, Thatcher and Store)

If you are interested in courtly love and chivalry, then this is the book to read. It is not concerned solely with courtly love, and looks at other aspects of chivalry in France. However, its sources are mainly literary. It examines general chivalric attitudes towards women and gives examples of behaviour. A pregnant woman in a besieged castle complained that the "tumult of the siege engines annoyed her. Hence the courteous besiegers allowed her to pass through their lines to take refuge in another fortress" held by her side (pp.145-146).

Léon Gautier, *Chivalry*, edited (and abridged) by Jacques Levron, tr. by D.C. Dunning, London: Phoenix House, 1965.
CR4509.G313 1965 (Central and UG)

The original work was written by Gautier in the nineteenth century (he died in 1897). It is a good source for the literary ideals of chivalry, for Gautier limited his research to literature, neglecting other historical sources. The work contains generous quotations from the literature, and is perhaps the best out of all those mentioned here for an introduction to and survey of chivalric literature. Gautier was necessarily influenced by the culture of the last century. He writes, for example, of the code of chivalry of the eleventh and twelfth centuries: "It is the chivalry of the Crusades. It may well appear rough and barbarous. In truth, it is healthy and manly. It made of the French a great race whose glories have filled the world" (p.9).

J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought and Art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, London: Edward Arnold (Publishers), 1924.
DC33.2.H83 1924/1955/1956/1965 (Central, UG, ARCHMUS, Store)

Chivalry is examined in several chapters: the idea of chivalry, the dream of heroism and of love, orders of chivalry and vows, and the political and military value of chivalrous ideas. Huizinga's argument is that: "In spite of all the care taken on all hands to keep up the illusion of chivalry, reality perpetually gives the lie to it, and obliges it to take refuge in the domains of literature and of conversation" (p.89). Other historians disagree.

Diane Bornstein, *Mirrors of Courtesy*, Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1975.
CR4519.B67 1975 (Central)

This book covers chivalric games, chivalry as a warrior code and a social code, and the associated rituals. The author quotes from the literature on chivalry, but does not translate these into modern English, presumably because the intended audience of the book is assumed to be familiar with old English.

Lynn White, *Medieval Technology and Social Change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962.
CB353.W5 1962/1964/1966 (Central, UG, Thatcher, Store)

Again, this is a little removed from the topic of chivalry, but it is included here because the first chapter addresses the problems of the stirrup, mounted shock combat, and chivalry. The argument is well documented (that is, references are given so that the reader can verify the assertions that are made) and thus to be preferred over the articles that are generally printed in games magazines, where it is a matter of faith as to whether the "facts" cited are to be believed or not.

V.G. Kiernan, *The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
CR4595.E85K54 1988 (Central)

This book is a little removed from the topic of chivalry as such, but some people might find it interesting. There is one chapter on duelling in Europe during the time of the knights (that is, up to 1500). The index entry on chivalry has several page references. It is a good book, well written and well documented. It is worth reading for gems such as: after the English abandoned duelling, "Britons from all sorts of families formerly subject to the code of honour had to be all the more careful to strike manly attitudes. They took cold baths every morning, and sent their sons to boarding-schools to be flogged by professionals" (p.220).

Juliet R.V. Barker, *The Tournament in England 1100-1400*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1986.
DA115.B35 1986 (Central)

This book is again more specific than general books on chivalry. It examines the English tournament up to the turn of the fifteenth century, the relationship between the tournament and war, and the political repercussions of tourneying or attempting to suppress it. Pageantry, is discussed at length. The more technical side of the game is also considered: what the different forms of encounter were and what developments in armour these called for and encouraged. The chapter on tournament armour would probably be of most interest for fantasy role players and for SCA members.

Arthur B. Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*, Washington: Folger, 1986.
CR4529.G7F39 1986 (Central)

Ferguson begins with the fifteenth century revival of chivalry, and then looks at the chivalric tradition under the early Tudor state and the Elizabethans. Stylistically, this book is awkward and difficult to read. Few people would find it enjoyable, although the bibliography might be useful.
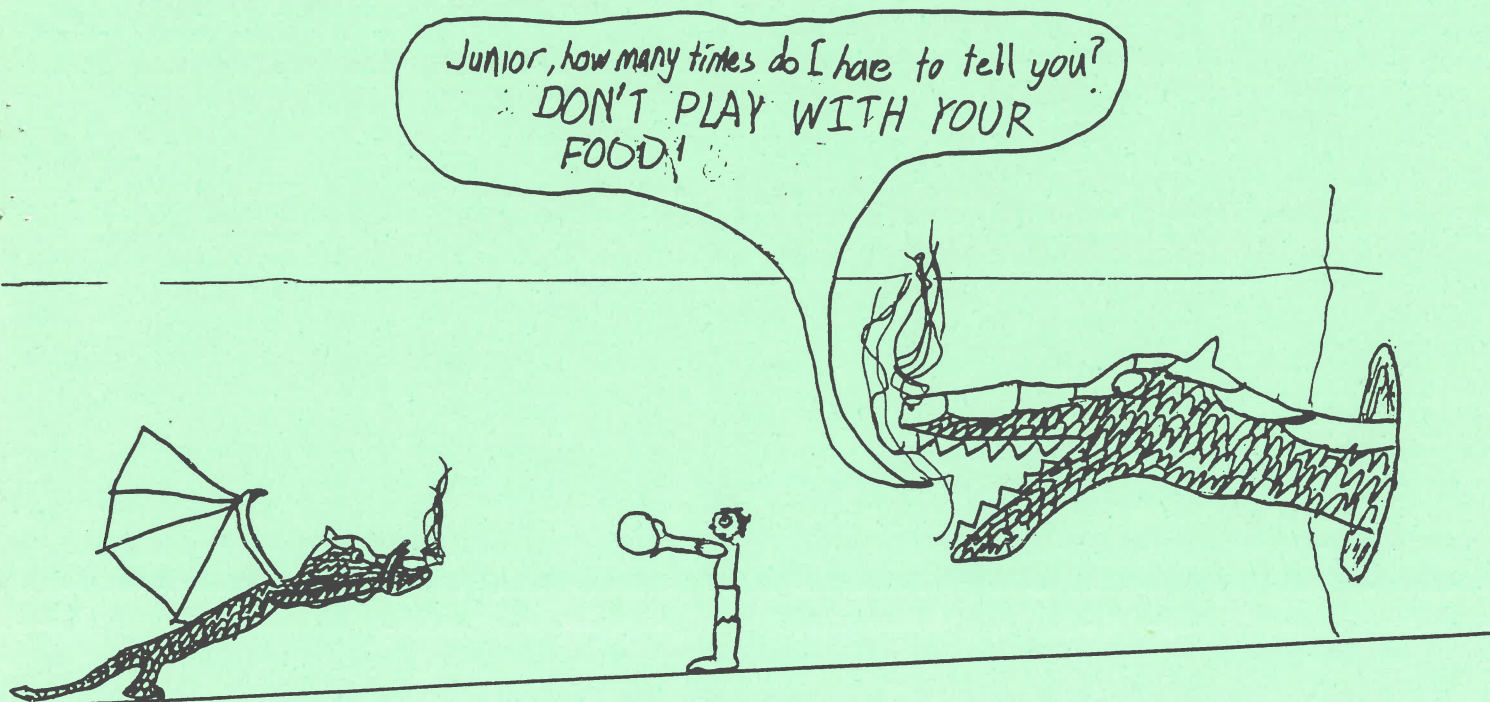
CARDBOARD HEROES.

Fantasy wargaming has recently been fueled by the release of several new sets of rules, so it was time to dust off my armies and do battle. Today the older "Warhammer" has been joined by "Fantasy Warriors" (better), "Fantasy Warlord" (not played but more complicated), and "Battlesystem 2nd Edition" plus "Skirmish Rules" (Why not just play AD&D). Although people may be interested in wargaming there is a major hurdle for beginners- the Army.

Once a general, ie. you, has decided what race and type of army to lead there is the problem of buying and painting the necessary figures. Being a poor university student myself I couldn't afford the price of a metal army so turned to their precedent- flats. With a little work one can draw up any army, colour them in, and mount them ready to do battle for only a couple of dollars. What follows is a quick guide to how to assemble the figures on the back of the magazine. Before assembling it would be a good idea to photocopy the back cover several times, to give more figures and an original to keep lest you need to photocopy more later.

Assembling your army is very easy. Photocopies should be glued to thin cardboard (eg. your Cornflakes box). Simply loosely cut out the figures (each is one side of the finished flat, with the dotted line between). Score the dotted line with one blade of your scissors and then fold up so that you have a flat figure, each side facing out. Glue this together and leave until it is quite dry. Now you simply cut out the figure more tidily and leave a flat base.

Bases were constructed from thick card like from cardboard cartons. 1" squares were cut out for infantry, while the cavalry use a 2"*1" base. There are two methods of basing;

1) Simply push a thumb tack through the centre of the base, and then push the flat firmly onto the tack. This is quick but needs alot of tacks (one per figure) and you will sooner, or later, stab yourself.
2) Useing two bases, cut one in half and then stable the two together. Paint it green and then push the flat into the resultant slit.

On the back cover are sufficent figures for the basis of both an Orc and Wood Elf army. Once your armies are based you are ready to do battle...

Richard Shepard