

# Dragon®

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# MACHINERIES OF DESTRUCTION

CHARIOTEER

LONGHORN

REAPER



MORBIUS

HELL BLADE

SCREAMER

SKULLCHUCKER &amp; CREW

# Skeleton WAR MACHINES



The name Morbius is reviled throughout the world as a synonym for evil. Now mortals can see the greatest of his creations, revealed through the craft of Bob Naismith and Aly Morrison in this Citadel boxed set. The set comprises a catapult with a crew of three and a pile of skulls, a chariot with two undead horses and a charioteer, five personality figures and four slottabases, giving you one chariot passenger and four foot personality figures.

#### Undead Chariot

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD	Int	Cl	WP
6	3	*	4	4	5	3	*				As Crew

Points Value: The Chariot costs 80 points including the charioteer. Passenger models add their own PV to this figure.

**Special Rules:** causes *fear* in living creatures. Subject to *instability*; make one check for both chariot and crew. It may move over all terrain and through all obstacles except buildings with no penalty; movement through solid walls and into/out of buildings costs half the chariot's movement for that turn. Opponents receive no bonuses for cover other than solid walls and buildings.

#### Longhorn, Reaper, Hellblade, Screamer - Skeleton Champions

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD	Int	Cl	WP
4	3	3	4	3	1	3	1	5	5	5	5

Points Values: Longhorn 9% Reaper 5% Hellblade 6% Screamer 8%

**Special Rules:** Longhorn gained the Chaos mutation *Beastial Fists* in life, and now has a horned bovine skull, giving him an additional *gore* attack in hand-to-hand combat. He is unarmoured, and fights with a two-handed scythe.

Reaper wears chain mail and fights with a one-handed scythe.

Hellblade wears chain mail under his surcoat, and carries sword and shield.

Screamer is equipped with chain mail, spear and shield. He emits an incessant wail in battle, causing all living creatures within 6" to make all *fear* and *terror* tests at a -2 penalty.

#### Skullchucker - Skeleton Catapult

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD	Int	Cl	WP
*	0	3	6	6	8	0	0	0	0	0	0

Points Value: 115 (including crew).

**Special Rules:** Skullchucker follows the normal rules for stone throwers. It and its crew are subject to *instability*; make one check for machine and crew. It costs another 25 points to equip Skullchucker with enough skulls for an entire battle. Any unit hit by a skull tests for *fear* as if charged by a feared creature.

#### Morbius - Liche

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	LD	Int	Cl	WP
4	4	3	4	4	4	6	4	10	10	10	10

Points Value: 900

**Special Rules:** Morbius has developed two new Necromantic Magic spells. *Summon Undead Chariot* is a level 3 spell, summoning a stone or bolt thrower with a crew of 3 armoured skeletons, and is otherwise identical to *Summon Skeleton Horde*. *Summon Undead Chariot* summons a two-horse chariot with a Skeleton charioteer, but is otherwise identical to *Summon Skeleton Major Hero*.

## WARHAMMER

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**Star Cruiser—The Game:** Once you've constructed your starship, *Star Cruiser* gives you the opportunity to test it in action. The map and counters reg-

ulate your position and movement as you run silent to fool your opponent (human or alien), waiting for the right second to activate your sensors or fire your missiles.

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## ***Ships of the French Arm***

The run from Core to Beta Canum and the German colonies used to be easy money. But now it's

a test of nerves. The further we get from

Earth, the more likely we are to run into trouble—every system beyond Kimanjano is known to have had Kaifers in it at least once! From now on there's no casual approach to the frontier.

The rules say avoidance is the best defense, but when avoidance fails, superior firepower is a man's best friend.

*Ships of the French Arm* presents over forty of the diverse ship designs in use throughout one of the arms of human space. Each is fully illustrated and rated for use with *Star Cruiser*. These freighters, fighters, missile boats, and warships will add a wealth of background and color to the **Traveller: 2300** environment—your characters can own them or encounter them as you see fit. These are some of the best ships mankind has to throw against the Kafer onslaught—but will they be enough? \$12.00.

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# Dragon®

Magazine

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## COVER

The last three survivors of an orcish army, their standard still aloft, challenge their eleven opponents to one last fight. Jim Holloway's cover painting for this month has no title — but if you have a suggestion for a possible title, write it down and send it to us. We might print the more interesting ones in a later issue.

# LETTERS

# ***World saving***

## Dear Dragon:

Christopher DeGraffenreid made a good point in the "Letters" column in issue #123. He inquired about what was going to happen to his favorite worlds, Oerth and Krynn, now that the new campaign setting is the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting.

We all know now that the DRAGONLANCE® and WORLD OF GREYHAWK™ fantasy adventure settings will be continued, but the primary emphasis will be on the Forgotten Realms. Will any of the existing Greyhawk adventures be compatible with the Realms? Will future adventures be made so? And what about all Realms modules to be: Will they be interchangeable with Greyhawk? I think these are questions we all want answered.

Most importantly, the letter in issue #123 left out an entire fantasy setting. What about Nehwon, home of Lankhmar? Will it be continued or de-emphasized? I am the DM for some friends in this very realistic and fun world, and I wouldn't trade it for any realm. Why don't you all open up and tell us all what is happening in these many and varied worlds?

Steven Wardell  
Ridgefield CT

*Most adventures designed for one world or another might be converted to fit another game world, with a lot of luck and lots of work by the DM. No adventures are planned which will be usable with several worlds, however Modules which are designed for one world alone were created to carry the flavor of that world and its inhabitants, and this flavor doesn't carry well from world to world.*

*Warren Spector informs me that a 128-page Castle Greyhawk module is due out in January 1988, and a hardcover Greyhawk sourcebook is being prepared, much like the recently released DRAGONLANCE® Adventures volume.*

*Many of the adventures from DUNGEON™ Adventures were designed to be used in any campaign world, and a few are specific to one world (such as Oerth or Krynn). Fill out the subscription card in this issue and check it out.*

*The world of Nehwon is on hold for the time being — but watch for further developments.*

# **Swords & spice**

## Dear Dragon:

As an AD&D® game player and Dungeon Master, the game becomes a lot more fun and exciting when unique items come into play. I mean, it's not often that you find a talking sword that has the ability to take over the mind of its wielder and give him several special powers. Have you ever thought of releasing a magazine section, or even a hardback, on unique magical items of gods or heroes, telling how they were made, who made them, who were their previous owners, etc.? Backgrounds

on special items like these would be very interesting and could also spice up even the dullest dungeon adventure.

**Chad Hanneman**  
**Solon IA**

We have considered collecting all of the magical items ever described in DRAGON® Magazine and putting them together in a "Best of" collection, with some additional material as well. We've also considered doing this for all of the monsters that have appeared in "The Dragons Bestiary" and "Creature Catalog" features.

# **TSR BBS Q&A**

## Dear Dragon:

Have you ever thought of starting your own bulletin board system like the Steve Jackson Games Illuminati BBS (its number is (512) 447-4449, 300/1200 baud)? If you did this, it would give the readers a direct link with you, and we could just send you our comments via modem. The board would also allow you to put up previews and notices of upcoming games and products from TSR. You could even put up a classifieds section, which is usually the main use of a bulletin board.

Ben Franco  
Long Beach CA

We are still collecting letters from gamers who would like a BBS for TSR, Inc. The idea does seem to have some merit, though we have also found that running such a system would be a very challenging job (to put it mildly).

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## *Tucker's kobolds*

This month's editorial is about Tucker's kobolds. We get letters on occasion asking for advice on creating high-level AD&D® game adventures, and Tucker's kobolds seem to fit the bill.

Many high-level characters have little to do because they're not challenged. They yawn at tarrasques and must be forcibly kept awake when a lich appears. The DMs involved don't know what to do, so they stop dealing with the problem and the characters go into Character Limbo. Getting to high level is hard, but doing anything once you get there is worse.

One of the key problems in adventure design lies in creating opponents who can challenge powerful characters. Singular monsters like tarrasques and liches are easy to gang up on; the party can concentrate its firepower on the target until the target falls down dead and wiggles its little feet in the air. Designing monsters more powerful than a tarrasque is self-defeating; if the group kills your super-monster, what will you do next — send in its mother? That didn't work on Beowulf, and it probably won't work here.

Worse yet, singular super-monsters rarely have to think. They just use their trusty, predictable claw/claw/bite. This shouldn't be the measure of a campaign. These games fall apart because there's no challenge to them, no mental stimulation – no danger.

In all the games that I've seen, the worst, most horrible, most awful-beyond-comparison opponents ever seen were often weaker than the characters who fought them. They were simply well-armed and intelligent beings who were played by the DM to be utterly ruthless and clever. Tucker's kobolds were like that.

Tucker ran an incredibly dangerous dungeon in the days I was stationed at Ft. Bragg, N.C. This dungeon had corridors that changed all of your donkeys into huge flaming demons or dropped the whole party into acid baths, but the demons were wienies compared to the kobolds on Level One. These kobolds were just regular kobolds, with 1-4 hp and all that, but they were mean. When I say they were mean, I mean they were bad, Jim.

(continued on page 88)

# The World Gamers Guide

If you live outside the continental United States and Canada, you can be included in the World Gamers Guide by sending your name and full address (carefully printed or typed, please), plus your gaming preferences, to: World Gamers Guide, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147, United States of America.

The World Gamers Guide is intended for the benefit of gamers who would like to contact other game-players around the world, to share their interests in gaming through correspondence. Each eligible name and address that we receive is published in three consecutive issues of DRAGON Magazine. To be listed for more

than three issues, you must send us another postcard or letter. Overseas American military personnel may also be listed herein.

When listing gaming preferences, write out the complete title of the games you most enjoy. For the purposes of this column, the abbreviations listed below are used.

AD: AD&D® game  
BS: BATTLESYSTEM™ supplement  
BT: BATTLETECH® game  
CH: CHAMPIONS™ game  
CW: CAR WARS® game  
DC: DC™ HEROES game

DD: D&D® game  
GW: GAMMA WORLD® game  
MSH: MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game  
OA: AD&D *Oriental Adventures* system  
RQ: RUNEQUEST game  
RT: ROBOTECH® game  
SF: STAR FRONTIERS® game  
T: TRAVELLER game  
TMNT: TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES® game  
TS: TOP SECRET® game  
TT: TUNNELS & TROLLS game  
T2000: TWILIGHT: 2000™ game  
VV: VILLAINS & VIGILANTES™ game

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# FORUM

I'm writing this letter in agreement with S.D. Anderson's letter on experience points for magical items (DRAGON Magazine #122) and to add a few ideas of my own. Anderson was right in being mad at the thought of two adventurers just sitting down and trading magical items back and forth to go up a level. Here's an example of how and when I think experience points for magical items should be rewarded.

Cathy the Conjuror (3rd-level magic-user, intelligence 17, and 7,549 xp) kills a violet fungus (242 xp) and gets a treasure of a ring of jumping (1,000 xp) and a sword + 1 (400 xp). She should not get the experience points for the magical items until she uses them. She cannot use the sword + 1, so she would get no experience points from it.

After traveling farther, Cathy comes upon a gorge 20' wide. It's too wide to jump, so she then uses her ring of jumping to leap across. She now gets the experience points for the ring.

Cathy then kills a mobat (250xp) and gets a treasure of a shield + 2 (500 xp) and a wand of lightning (4000 xp). Having had enough adventure for one day, Cathy returns to train.

Cathy earned 242 xp for the violet grub, 1,000 xp for the ring of jumping, 250 xp for the mobat, and 10% bonus due to her 17 intelligence. She got no experience for the shield + 2 or the sword + 1 because she can't use them, nor for the wand of lightning because she didn't use it. She had 7,549 xp originally. This brings the grand total to 9,190 xp, 811 xp short (242 + 1000 + 250 + 149 + 7,549 = 9,190) of the next level.

Another idea is to give experience points on magical items gradually with use of the item. Wilbur the Warrior has just gotten a sword + 2 (800 xp). He uses it for the rest of the adventure and gets 160 xp for it. He gets 160 xp each adventure afterward until a grand total of 800 xp is reached.

Tim McNally  
Edgewood KY

Stephen Inniss' articles on familiars [DRAGON issues #84 and #86] are filled with helpful suggestions on how to use these delightful creatures. With very little modification, they would be a splendid addition to any new official game version.

Whether or not animal familiars can actually talk, a magic-user surely understands much of what the creature has to say. For beginners who want to play magic-users, the familiar can be the DM's way of offering advice. ("The toad suggests a sleep spell would be a good choice if you are going to the goblin cave this morning.")

Normal familiars add their hit points (2-4) to those of their masters. This can make a critical difference, especially if the magic-user has exercised the yearly opportunity to acquire one additional animal. In the AD&D game, the 4-sided hit die makes members of the class very easy to kill, and the magic-user PCs I've known have all needed their high constitution scores. In *Oriental Adventures*, the wu jen (magic-user) class has 1d4 + 1, which averages out the same as using a 6-sided hit die. Having one or more

familiars can give an ordinary magic-user the edge he needs to survive as an adventurer.

The magic-user going into dangerous territory, however, must leave the beloved familiar at home, or at least safely stowed in an asbestos-insulated backpack. Under the AD&D game rules, a single blow to the pet is likely to be fatal, and thus cause permanent loss of hit points to the master. This means the animal cannot serve as a real companion and helper during most game action.

The simple solution is to allow the familiar to add the magic-users hit points to its own (and vice versa) whenever they are within the 120' range. Further, it is reasonable to think that any spell or device that protects the magic-user (mirror image, minor globes, resist fire, brooch of shielding, etc.) protects the familiar as well. Now the witch can take her cat along on the broom of flying without worrying that a novice's stray magic missile might kill the animal.

Area-effect damage spells (fireball, lightning bolt, cone of cold, etc.) present the greatest danger of the magic-users survival. If the average magic-user fails to save against a lightning bolt cast by an enemy magic-user of higher level, he will typically be reduced to fewer than zero hit points. It is hard for the magic-user to avoid this kind of attack, and enemy spellcasters are likely to single them out. One way to help the magic-user is to allow the familiar to save independently against these attacks (DM's judgement—perhaps the quick little animals all save as 7th-level magic-users), and if either master or animal saves, each saves successfully. Of course, the familiar will not be allowed to hide behind the magic-user.

Inniss correctly notes that familiars will take much less damage from falls than will their masters. Actually the cat and the magic-user fall at essentially the same speed at all times, and air resistance is a negligible factor. Furthermore, bone strength compared to a body mass for small animals is typically slightly less than that of humans. In my work as a medical pathologist, I've had to calculate the forces involved in various falls. However, a DM chooses to describe it in terms of AD&D game mechanics (a good case can be made for any of several systems), falling damage is work done by the ground on the body surface that impacts on it. The amount of damage on each unit area of the impact surface determines the overall severity of the injury. This unit damage varies directly with the mass behind each unit of impact surface.

Consider the silhouettes of wizard and cat, marked by the Greyhawk police on the pavement after their fall from atop a tower. Several more ounces of wizard than of cat landed on each square inch of surface. Hence, the wizard takes more severe damage. I'd severely limit any falling damage for little creatures—say 0-1 hp per 10' drop, for a maximum of 40'.

Ed Friedlander MD  
Johnson City TN

In response to comments by Paul Griffin and Robert Waldbauer on the issue of alignment

flexibility, I propose that a new alignment be created in order to resolve the problem of overly restrictive alignments.

The new alignment would be called "false-neutral" and would hold the precept that, with all things being equal, the forces of good, evil, law, and chaos exist only in the minds of individuals and do not actually form a balance of power in the universe. The false-neutral character believes that nothing is ever "meant to be," and that there are no driving forces which tend to either support or disrupt the cosmic balance. The false-neutral character may believe that there are gods and other divine beings, but would not actually worship them or follow their creeds, because such deities exist only to serve their own interests and purposes.

The false-neutral alignment would be the antithesis of the true-neutral alignment, because its beliefs are diametrically opposed to those of true neutrality. DMs may rule that a false-neutral person cannot be resurrected after death because such a person does not have a plane of alignment as such, but may also rule that the soul or spirit of the false-neutral person goes to an extraplanar void which exists outside the other planes of the multiverse, and may be recalled back to a waiting body as normal.

Such an alignment would free individuals to perform actions which are deemed desirable at the time, without having to defy the principles of a religion or deity.

Tim Jensen  
Cross Plains WI

Ms. Curtis's article, "Whaddya Mean, Jack the Samurai?" [in issue #121] is a very necessary and useful article, but it contains some errors and omissions. First and most important are name restrictions. Not only should the use of family names be restricted to certain classes, but certain family names should be restricted from general usage. Feudal Japan was a clan society. The clan you were born into determined to a great extent your lot in life. If you were born into a high-ranking samurai family, you would most likely be a high-ranking samurai in your current life. Likewise, if you were born into a ninja clan, you would most likely be a ninja. Ninja and samurai did not come from the same family, and it was not common for high and low-ranking families to share the same family name. The DM should set aside or create lists of names (a dozen or so names in total) that could only be used by certain classes or birth rankings.

Second is women's names. While most women's names were made by adding the suffix "-ko" to common words, "-ko" did not signify rank or title. It was a diminutive (like our suffix "-ette") that meant "child." In regards to marriage, it was not uncommon for the man to take the woman's family name, instead of her taking his. This was done in marriages to high-ranking women or in families with no sons to carry on the family name.

Third is the pronunciation key. The letter "e" is pronounced as in hey; "i" as in feed; and "o" as in show. There are some other rules which could be added, though these are not critical.

Finally, players should not restrict themselves to Japanese names. Since Kara-Tur is not Japan, names from China, Korea, Vietnam, and other Oriental countries should be used. This would add a great deal of variety and character to PC and NPC names, as well as provide a possible starting point for PC and NPC backgrounds.

Peter Phillips  
Evanston IL

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# Role-playing Reviews



*Calling the gods to witness*

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## DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game, Set 5: Immortals Rules

TSR, Inc. \$15.00

*Author:* Frank Mentzer

*Editing and development:* Anne Gray  
McCready and Harold Johnson

*Cover:* Larry Elmore

*Interior art:* Jeff Easley and Larry Elmore

## *Gods of Glorantha*

A RUNEQUEST® game campaign  
supplement

Created and developed by Chaosium Inc.;  
published by The Avalon Hill Game  
Company \$18.00

*Authors:* Sandy Petersen, Greg Stafford,  
Steve Perrin, and Charlie Krank

*Editing and production:* Charlie Krank and  
Sandy Petersen

*Artist:* Tom Sullivan

## *Gods of Harn*

A HARN® campaign supplement  
Columbia Games \$13.00

*Authors:* N. Robin Crossby, Tom Dalgliesh,  
John Frazier, and Edwin King

*Editing:* Edwin King

*Production:* Dave Kowan

*Illustrations:* Eric Hotz

## *Lords of Middle-earth: Volume I*

A ROLEMASTER™ and MERPTM game  
supplement

Iron Crown Enterprises \$12.00

*Design, editing, and development:* Pete  
Fenlon, Terry Amthor, Mark Colborn,  
and S. Coleman Charlton

*Cover art:* Angus McBride

*Interior art:* Liz Danforth, James Holloway,  
and Stephan Peregrine

GM: "Okay, group: You've lost your  
weapons and shields, you're bleeding  
profusely, and the swarms of beastmen  
surrounding you are poised for the death  
blow. What do you do?"

Players (bellowing in chorus): "CLERIC!"

Player with cleric: "Hmm. This looks like  
a job for *divine intervention!*"

GM: "Go ahead and say your prayers,  
worms, but don't forget: It's been a  
*looong time* since you clowns set foot in  
a temple."

The empyreal immortals and their des-  
perate supplicants are standard trappings  
in fantasy role-playing settings. In some  
games (like RUNEQUEST® games), ritual,  
religion, and magic are integral to the  
campaign, and a character's cult affiliation  
is a powerful determinant in that charac-  
ter's survival. In other games (like  
MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE-PLAYING™ games),  
the divine is of little consequence to the  
characters or the setting. Published D&D®  
game supplements and private campaigns  
fall somewhere between, depending on  
the diverse tastes of the designers.

On a basic level, the question a fantasy  
game player character asks is: "What will  
gods do for me?" In RUNEQUEST games,  
the gods and their temples provide  
weapon- and skill-training, and magical  
spells — the bread-and-butter of fantasy  
role-playing.

In the original D&D and AD&D® games,  
clerics could cast spells *and* wear armor  
and whack people. (How's that for a good  
deal?) They could also talk to the gods, and  
there were plenty of gods to talk to, but  
the games never encouraged (or supported)  
any particularly coherent notion of the  
way the gods, religions, and followers  
interacted — that was left up to the individual.  
Many campaigns didn't even bother  
with gods. Others enjoyed routine visits by  
the gods and their heavenly or demonic  
messengers. Player characters sometimes  
went hunting the gods. "They got stats,  
right? Then we can kill 'em." (That makes  
sense to me.)

Ethical and theological beliefs were  
dropped out of the revised D&D game —  
there are clerics, sure, but let's not talk  
about gods and rituals and demons. Subse-  
quent supplements generally avoided the  
topic, though the D&D game Gazetteers  
(campaign supplements for the D&D game  
world) have reversed the trend, acknowl-  
edging the role of religions in fantasy role-  
playing (FRP) campaign settings.

This is a good thing. Gods and religions  
are powerful resources for fantasy role-  
playing, and it would be a pity to censor  
them. They play an important part in FRP  
adventuring in at least three areas:

**Mythic foundations:** Myths are the  
models for the stories, characters, and  
themes of a fantasy campaign. Mythic  
stories suggest the types of adventures  
appropriate to a campaign. The personali-

ties, ambitions, and values of the gods and their servants are good and bad examples for the mortals below. The themes of divine myths – the war between good and evil, the search for innocence and perfection, the saving grace of the trickster, the corrupting influence of power, the tragic error of noble characters blinded by pride – these are the psychologically meaty themes that set the tone for dramatic campaigns.

**Campaign setting:** Gods, heavenly messengers, priests, religious fanatics, paladins, clerical orders, divine magics, temples, evil rituals, holy wars – these are standard conventions in fantasy literature and role-playing. Fantasy campaigns are generally conceived in a primitive, barbaric, or medieval setting – periods of man's history we tend to associate with a pervasive belief in the supernatural and with organized religions in a dominant social and political role.

**Player character resources:** Who is my character? What does he believe in? What important principles does he live by? Will the gods aid and protect him, even against death itself? Can his temple teach him skills and spells? Is advancement in the ranks of the faithful a route to power and influence? Religions and beliefs help to personalize a player character, and a religion's temporal and divine resources can provide the power to achieve his ambitions and survive the dangers of FRP adventuring.

This month, we're reviewing four campaign supplements, each treating the divine elements of a major FRP system.

#### D&D® game, Immortals Rules

This is an ingenious, original, and complex system of rules for *playing* gods. In addition, it provides a rationale for travel and communication among a limitless variety of alternate universes.

You see, once there were only three Immortals. (Where'd they come from? They forgot.) They stumbled across this multiverse someone had left lying around (the Old Ones, natch), so they decided to give it Order and Purpose. They build and tend universes like we fool around in our gardens.

There are lots of Planes – Prime Plane, Elemental Planes, the Astral and Ethereal Planes, and jillions of Outer Planes. Some of these Outer Planes are monospatial Attoplanes (about 1/3" big). Some are pentaspatial Teraplanes (about 851 billion light-years big). It's pretty tricky getting back and forth among the planes, let alone farming them, but Immortals can do just about any magical effect in the D&D game system, and then some. Adventuring in planes with only two dimensions is pretty weird – but heck, that's why Immortals get the Big Dough.

The system is clever, complex, abstract, and powerful. It is also pretty demanding intellectually, with lots of neat metaphysical thought-puzzles. There's a lot of jar-

gon. The system is compatible with the D&D game, but it's really a whole new game, with new stats, attack and defense modes, and a whole new set of character motivations. Unfortunately, the written presentation of rules is not a model of clarity, and a better graphic presentation, with more charts and diagrams, might have made the abstruse rules concepts easier to deal with.

Each Immortal PC has a bewildering abundance of powers – literally, any magic spell and then some – in addition to new combat abilities. On one hand, that sounds great for the player – given that he feels like studying all the stuff – but I saw it as a GM's nightmare, with almost infinite opportunities for confusing interactions between spells and powers.

The Immortals Set is pretty bland in the myth department. There are few psychological insights into D&D game divinities – nothing in the way of epic personalities, stories, and themes. Nor is there much of a sense of good and evil. The motivations of the Immortals are abstract rather than soul-stirring. This is the biggest weakness of the Immortals Set – a lot of mechanics and grand-scale concepts, but little connection to typical D&D game adventures and campaigns. There are no explanations or examples of how the systems fit into your campaign if you weren't planning to have PC gods. There is no coherent explanation of the relationship between the Immortals, the cleric class, and religions in fantasy campaigns. What do the Immortals mean to all those PCs who never even dream of making 10th level? What do all the normal men think about the gods? Who knows?

Why doesn't the Immortals Set develop the D&D game campaign-world introduced in the Expert Set? Why doesn't it develop the role of the cleric class, with its distinctive magic spells? Why doesn't it develop the alignment system?

The Immortals Set is mechanics-oriented, not campaign-oriented. The machinery of gods is there, but the DM has to tailor his own personalities, themes, and myths to fit the campaign. The D&D game remains an open-ended system – one of its great strengths – but at the cost of missing the dramatic fantasy flavor of other better-developed campaign settings. In this sense, the Immortals Set is not really a campaign supplement, but a rules supplement. Supplements featuring the rules could develop the Immortals' roles in the D&D game campaign, but none have so far. The best example of how Immortals could fit into a campaign is Bob Blake's *Wrath of Olympus*, a 48-page module which doesn't make the role of Immortals as gods much clearer, but does show how the rules can be used to produce a pretty interesting megalevel adventure.

**Summary evaluation:** The D&D Immortals Set is really useful only for a very small audience. Few folk want to play gods, and fewer want to DM them. The

Immortals Set is of doubtful value to campaigns at subdive levels because it gives little guidance on the ways in which Immortals interact with mortals, particularly in terms of religions and the cleric class. On one hand, it is admirable for providing original concepts and mechanics worthy of Immortal PCs. On the other hand, it is disappointing in its failure to develop the already-established mechanics and traditions of gods and religions in fantasy campaigns.

#### Gods of Harn

This supplement makes no attempt to provide mechanics for the deities. The relationships between the deities, the campaign world, and PCs are described in terms of their mythic and religious trappings. The result is a colorful and dramatic treatment of the role of gods and religions in an FRP campaign.

The HARNMASTER™ system is comprehensively integrated with the HARN™ campaign world – a copiously and imaginatively developed fantasy campaign detailed in a long series of supplements over the past five or so years. *Gods of Harn* provides the myths that underlie the psychology of the Harn campaign, and shows how the religions based on those myths affect characters and institutions in the Harnic setting.

Ten gods are described in terms of their creations, their relationships within the pantheon, their individual personalities, and the histories and structures of the religions and churches established to support their worship. The gods themselves are potent fantasy archetypes – Agrik, the fire-god, who revels in pillage, slaughter, and destruction; Ilvir, the Serpent That Dwells Below, a peaceable and self-absorbed deity who physically dwells on earth in deep caverns where he spawns his broods; Larani, Shieldmaiden of the Worthy Cause and Lady of the Paladins; Morgath, Tormentor of the Unlamented Dead, the master of nothingness, and patron of necromancy.

The treatments of each of the 10 gods have some elements in common – each covers historical background, church organization, prime moral principles, clerical orders, religious practices, symbols and regalia, calendar events, and distribution of the religion in the campaign setting. A nice feature is the presentation of early church history in the form of charming tales of a founding saint of the church. Clerical orders and priestly hierarchies are described for NPC and PC clerics, while the moral principles and religious practices offer laymen characters distinctive trappings for role-playing.

Each of the gods also has elements that are personal and idiosyncratic. Some gods have otherworldly servants and companions with saintly, demonic, or neutral dispositions. Some religions are highly structured and organized; others are diffuse, individualistic, and mystical. The

gods and their religions have distinctive features and personalities – there is no sense that they've been jammed into templates like the gods in the AD&D game's Legends & Lore volume.

The presentation is appealing – well-written, illustrated with many examples and tales, and full of dramatic elements. The graphics fit the tone of the book, and the full-color plates of priestly garb, heraldry, badges, and a religious calendar are nice touches to help GMs and players visualize the icons and imagery of religion in Harn.

Do the gods really exist, or are they figments of man's imagination? *Gods of Harn* purports a tolerance for either view, though it isn't clear where divine magic (particularly divine intervention) comes from if it isn't from some supernatural being. However, in one sense, *Gods of Harn* is not particularly dependent on the actual existence of gods, since they do not apparently traffic directly with mortals on a regular basis. Most of *Gods of Harn* is devoted to the earthly church, and the personalities of the mythic gods are primarily manifested in the institutions and practices of their followers. In this sense, the Harnic religions are particularly well-developed and FRP-oriented, with plenty of rituals, orders, church politics, priestly garb, theological doctrine, iconography, saints, pilgrimages, sacred locales, and religious festivals – all the trappings of a full-scale religion. The intercult and intracult conflicts also provide good sources for campaign intrigue and adventures.

**Summary evaluation:** *Gods of Harn* is an excellent model of an FRP campaign supplement concerning gods and religions. It's a crucial reference for players and GMs in a Harnic campaign. For GMs with D&D game-style campaign settings, it's pleasurable reading and an excellent source of good ideas.

#### **Gods of Glorantha**

The myths, gods, and cults of Glorantha are fundamental elements of RUNEQUEST Gloranthan campaign setting. To start with, the rules of the game give fantasy gods and religions an important role in determining the abilities of the player character and the personality of the culture he comes from. Further, the Gloranthan campaign – the setting the RUNEQUEST game rules grew up in – was a world profoundly affected by the gods and their cults.

Taken on its own merits, *Gods of Glorantha* is an excellent product, brilliantly conceived, dramatic and impressive in scope, and presented in an original and effective manner.

However, the publishing history presents the reviewer with a difficult problem. The finest examples of Gloranthan cult supplements (*Cults of Prax* and *Cults of Terror* in their entirety, with other cults developed in other supplements) are now out of print. The prime virtue of *Gods of Glorantha* is its overview and summation of those earlier supplements. The greatest weakness of the product is by contrast to those earlier supplements.

Glorantha veterans who own the out-of-print supplements don't need me to tell you how good they were. *Gods of Glorantha* gathers all the cults together into several pantheons and, without reducing the air of ambiguity and contradiction in their conflicting world views, manages to provide a fairly coherent perspective on the religions of Glorantha. Since the history of Glorantha's cultures is primarily the history of its cult rulers and heroes, *Gods of Glorantha* also provides an overview of the history of the world of Glorantha.

In short, veteran Glorantha fans should buy this supplement, period. But you will probably like the player handouts and front of the *Cults Book* better than the encyclopedic treatment of divine figures and the references on the individual cults.

Recent and potential fans of Glorantha: If you don't own the older Glorantha supplements, my recommendation is still strong, but it comes with reservations. *Gods of Glorantha* is the best presentation of an FRP world's pantheons, period. No other comparable product covers the gods of numerous continents, nations, and cultures so coherently, while at the same time preserving the complex contradictions and conflicting perspectives of the various pantheons.

Have you ever marveled at the variety of real religions, of their tantalizing contrasts and similarities, each boldly and unself-consciously asserting that it alone has a true understanding of divine and temporal matters? Well, that's the sense you get here. The assertions and explanations of the various pantheons are incredibly confusing and contradictory, yet there's a puzzling coherence and dramatic plausibility about the whole thing.

The presentation is superior in the Chaosium tradition. The best feature, the player handouts, presents The Truth as asserted by knowledgeable informants from several pantheons (human primitive, shamanistic, barbaric, materialistic, Eastern- and Western-style imperial cultures, and dwarf, elf, and troll cultures). The Truth is presented as a series of responses to questions one in such a culture might ask of a spiritual counselor. (Where did the world come from? Why do we die? What happens when we die? Why are we here? How do we do magic?) Then, after the informant explains The Truth about the competing assertions of the other pantheons, he briefly describes the important deities of his own pantheon.

The box also contains a *Prosopædia*, a quick reference to who's who among Gloranthan gods, and the *Cults Book*, which contains a persuasively garbled and obscure overview of the theological history of Glorantha from creation to the present, along with a geographical distribution of the various pantheons and a 60-

page reference on the individual gods.

Now, here's where my reservations apply. Very few GMs need an overview of the religions of the world as much as they need detailed information on the religions in the particular region where their campaign takes place. Even veteran Glorantha campaigners don't *need* to know much about the Hsunchen, Pamalt, and Malkioni pantheons (though after years of oblique references in early supplements, the gamers are curious).

*Gods of Glorantha* sacrifices detail and color in cult descriptions for wide coverage of the world's religions. Beginning and intermediate players and GMs need more detail on local religions. For example, whereas the Lhankhor Mhy citation in *Gods of Glorantha* is less than a page long, with over half of that space devoted to cult spell descriptions, the original treatment of Lhankor Mhy in the out-of-print *Cults of Prax* is six pages long. If the earlier supplements were in print, I'd have no complaint, but as a product supporting a line that declines to keep its earlier supplements in print, the choice of wide coverage over detailed cult descriptions is a dubious one.

Given this reservation, if I had to choose *Gods of Harn* or *Gods of Glorantha*, I'd pick *Gods of Harn* simply because its focus and detail are of more practical value to players and GMs in a fantasy campaign.

**Summary evaluation:** If you're running a Gloranthan campaign, you've gotta have this. If you have the money and you're interested in classic examples of FRP campaign materials and presentation, this is a good buy. If you are looking around for models or ideas for gods and religions in your own fantasy campaign, this offers plenty of sample pantheons, but you may prefer something simpler, with a narrower focus and more campaign setting detail.

#### **Lords of Middle-earth: Volume I**

Where gods and religions are intimately involved in the fates of characters and cultures in the Gloranthan FRP campaign, the Immortals are unthinkably remote from most of the peoples of Middle-earth.

In the mythology of Tolkien, there is but one true god, Eru, and you won't find him getting involved in role-playing games. His servants, the Valar and the Maiar, are technically not much more than high-level administrators of Eru's conception, but in a practical sense, they are roughly equivalent to a pantheon, with the Valar as gods and the Maiar as the Valar's divine servants. For example, Aule the Smith, Lord of the Earth, is a Valar, and two of his Maiar servants, Sauron and Saruman, fall from grace and eventually show up as the heavies in *Lord of the Rings*. Gandalf, too, was a Maiar.

The Elves are immortals, also, but immortals with a small "i" – not in any sense divine and, incidentally, not particularly immortal, given the number of them



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that die at the hands of the Enemy and at the hands of their own kin.

According to *Lords of Middle-earth*, Middle-earth has a "seemingly inexhaustible collection of deities, pantheons, practices, and religions." However, all of them are wrong. Eru is the only god, and the Valar and the Maiar are simply his servants. Enlightened folk (Elves and Dunedain) practice a nonritualistic monotheism with no formal clergy - pretty boring stuff by FRP standards. Anyone else practicing a more interesting kind of religion is making a horrible mistake.

So much for Middle-earth religions. So why bother giving us so many pages on Middle-earth Immortals?

*Lords of Middle-earth* provides background, statistics, special powers, and principal items for 15 Valar (including Morgoth the Fallen Valar), 19 Maiar (including the wizards and the Balrog), and 91 Elves. This is a lot of information on many high-level PCs, few (if any) of which will ever interact with any character in a typical MERP campaign. What are you supposed to do with this stuff?

The most important value of *Lords of Middle-earth* is in the summaries of the histories and personalities of the Valar, Maiar, Elves, and Great Enemies of Middle-earth. In these materials lie the mythic underpinnings of the Middle-earth campaign, intrinsically interesting as background for the Tolkien classics, and useful sources for legends and themes for Middle-earth adventuring. The legends of Middle-earth are commonly tragic, where those of greatest power and ability are often corrupted by pride and a hunger for more power, and where many things bright and beautiful are destined to pass from the Earth forever. These summaries are clear, concise, and quite readable.

Also, see the section entitled "Using High Level Characters," which offers sensible advice about introducing high-level characters into a Middle-earth adventure, and some useful rationalizations for the exceptional restraint many Middle-earth immortals display in restricting the use of their magical powers.

Otherwise, the interest of the character descriptions is probably proportional to your enthusiasm for Tolkien scholarship. If you're a big fan, you'll love it. If you're a moderate fan, check out the bios of Gandalf, Saruman, Tom Bombadil, the Balrog, Sauron, Galadriel, etc., and leave the rest alone.

By the way, if you were wondering who might be an appropriate Ultimate Evil in Middle-earth now that Sauron's gone, note that two other Maiar wizards, Alatar and Pallandro, came over with Gandalf, Saruman, and Radagast. (I don't recall Alatar and Pallandro from Tolkien, but I'm hardly a Tolkien scholar.) *Lords of Middle-earth* hints that, like Saruman before them, Alatar and Pallandro have been seduced by the Dark Side, and that as Sauron's dominion dwindled, the powers of Alatar

and Pallandro grew.

Finally, if Tolkien Elves are common PCs or NPCs in your campaigns, this is a reference you'll want to have. Tolkien Elves are the model of High Heroic Fantasy - everything they do is on a large and splendid scale, and their history is filled with great deeds, tragic betrayals, and heroic battles against the Forces of Darkness.

**Summary evaluation:** Fans of Tolkien will find *Lords of Middle-earth* interesting. Most Middle-earth campaigns will have little use for the high-level characters described, though the background legends and histories of the quasi-divine Valar and Maiar and the immortal Elven kindred are useful as background information.

### Short and sweet

GURPS® AUTODUEL® game, by Aaron Allston and Scott Haring, Steve Jackson Games, \$9.95. The AUTODUEL game has all the mechanics it needs to support role-playing in the ultraviolent world of CAR WARS® games. The GURPS game is strong in game values (Steve Jackson Games has always been strong in game values), and the CAR WARS game, the inspiration for AUTODUEL material, has been a very successful board game, so I wasn't surprised to find lots of detailed rules for blowing cars, driver, passengers, innocent bystanders, and neighboring real estate into tiny bits.

I didn't expect that the AUTODUEL game would also have a fleshed-out campaign world, extensive notes on designing and presenting adventures and campaigns, and plenty of GM staging tips, both in the text and in nice marginal essays. Entertaining, impressive, and just plausible enough as a setting for vehicular homicide on an epic scale, this supplement is definitely worth a look.

PALLADIUM RPG Book III: *Adventures on the High Seas*, by Kevin Siembieda, et al. Palladium Books, \$14.95. Good, old-fashioned, prehistoric D&D game-style fantasy adventures by the shipload are presented in this game book. Islands are a perfect excuse for dumping all sorts of fantasy trash together without worrying about geographical implausibilities, and islands always have such lovely fantasy names - the Isle of Elemental Magic, the Isle of the Cyclops, Gryphon Isle, and so on. The Palladium fantasy campaign world is full of magic and monsters, just like FRP campaigns should be, and this pack contains a little bit of everything, from orcs and lost temples to pirates and crazed cult assassins.

In addition to the host of scenarios and adventure settings, this is also a rules and campaign supplement, with neat stuff like new character classes, new magic items, curses, and faerie foods. One particularly interesting piece is the section on ships and FRP combat, with rough-and-ready guidelines for creating the pageantry of seaborne fantasy battles without getting

too fussy about wargaming-style rules.

This package is 208 pages of good, old-fashioned FRP supplement. What it lacks in organization and sophistication it more than makes up for in enthusiasm and imagination.

*Dungeon Rooms*, art by Tony Ackland, Dave Andrews, and Colin Dixon, text by an uncredited staff. Games Workshop, \$8.00. A full-color floor plan is worth a thousand words, and this box contains 23 beautifully rendered, fantasy role-playing rooms - for instance, a torture chamber, wizard and necromancer's study, alchemist's lab, mortuary, barracks, mausoleum, guardroom, and so on. The rooms are printed on thick cardstock, the scale is suitable for 25mm figures, and the rooms are rendered in a sort of 3-D, bird's-eye view that reveals details of the furniture around the walls. It's great when you can dump the diagram down in front of the players and say, "There. That's what it looks like." The visual detail encourages the PCs to deal with the setting rather than with the GM. "Uh, I walk over to the bureau and pick up the water pitcher. Anything valuable or mysterious glued to the bottom?"

The delightful little booklet that accompanies the floor plans gives WARHAMMER FANTASY ROLEPLAY stats and background for the charming occupants of the rooms. How about poor Throdin the Twister, the Dwarven Torturer, whose favorite tool is the toe-cracker, who sits around playing solitaire with a marked deck and drinking cheap Estalian wine? Good, cheap, goofy FRP fun.

*Mistakonic University Graduate Kit*, by Sandy Petersen and Lynn Willis. Chaosium Inc., \$9.95. Okay. I admit it. This pack isn't really an FRP supplement. It does have something to do with CALL OF CTHULHU® games, but neither GM nor players can really use it during role-playing sessions or as campaign background. This is strictly for fans. Since I'm a fan, I adore this. The package comes with a souvenir place mat with a map of the upper and lower campuses, a diploma, a parking decal, a rear window decal with a Latin motto "*Ex ignorantia ad sapientiam, e luce ad tenebras,*" a bumper sticker bearing the school's mascot (a tentacular horror) and its rallying cry: "Go 'Pods!" - and much more.

The "School of Medieval Metaphysics Class Catalog" is also adorable. For instance, consider the following course offering:

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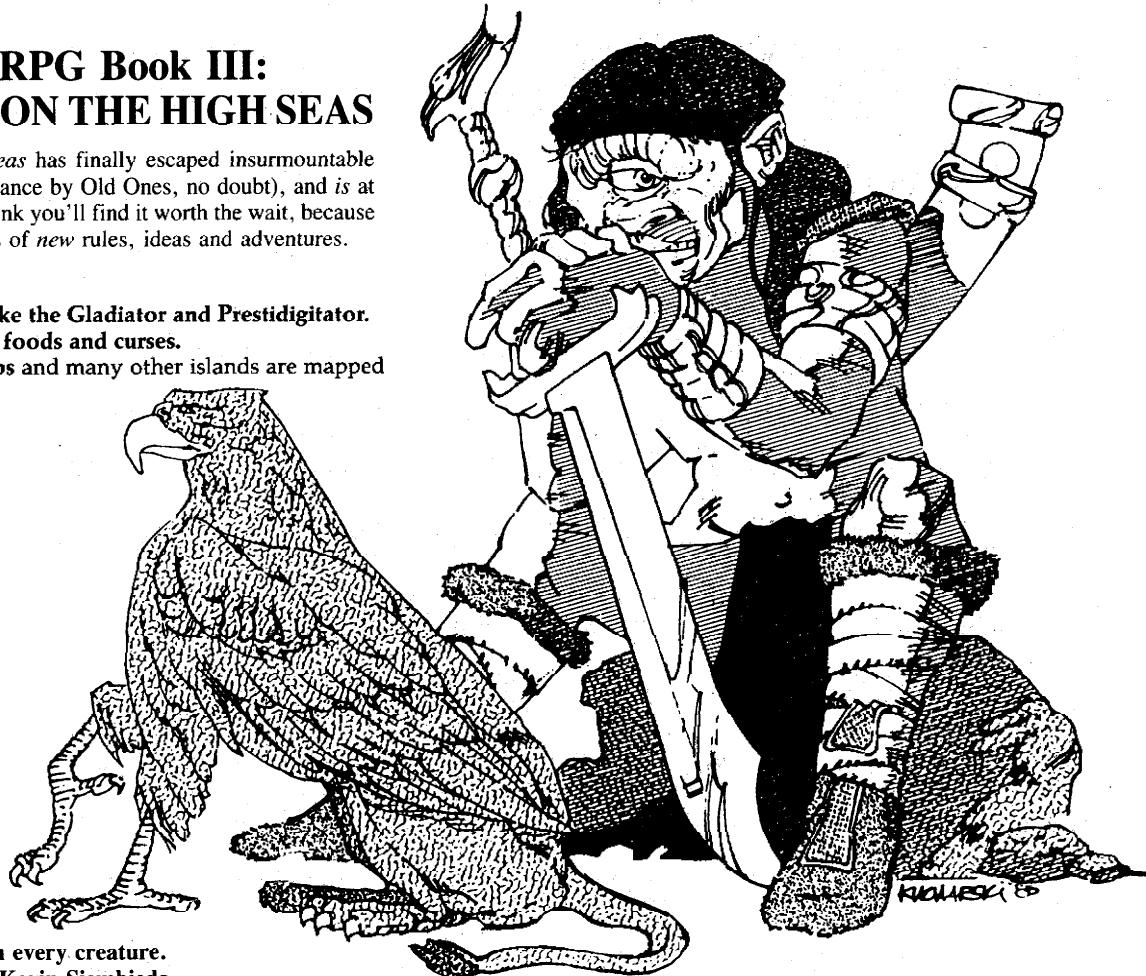
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# SAGE ADVICE

by Skip Williams

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How do you fight a thousand draconians? This month, "Sage Advice" investigates the BATTLESYSTEM™ fantasy combat supplement for the AD&D® and D&D® game systems - and provides some useful information for beleaguered Knights of Solamnia. Page references, unless otherwise stated, refer to the blue BATTLESYSTEM rulebook.

**What are the battlefield effects of infravision and ultravision? Which monsters have these abilities?**

Page 59 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide* gives the effects of infravision and ultravision outdoors. Most subterranean monsters and humanoids are assumed to have infravision, even if not otherwise noted. Most demi-humans also have infravision; see the individual character race descriptions and monster descriptions. Ultravision is a rare ability; see the individual monster descriptions to determine if a creature has ultravision. Some Lake Geneva campaigns gift dragons with ultravision, since they can "see equally well in daylight or darkness" (*Monster Manual*, page 29).

**When a unit encounters a wall or barrier, must it cross the obstacle at a right angle, or can it cross at any angle?**

An obstacle can be crossed at any angle. The unit crossing the obstacle pays the movement penalty and must go to open order, no matter what angle is adopted when crossing the obstacle.

**How do you determine if a unit is completely in or just at the edge of a woods? Is the entire unit considered to be at the edge if just one figure touches the edge?**

Only the status of individual figures matters when a unit is in or near a woods. A figure is at the edge of a woods if any portion of the figure touches the edge. Otherwise, the figure is either completely in or completely out of the woods. Thus, a unit could be half-in and half-out of a forest, with some figures on the edge.

**When can enemy archers shoot at a hero? Can opposing archers "sharpshoot" at a hero - that is, shoot at only him when he is with a unit, or alone and engaged in melee with a unit?**

If the hero is actually attached to a unit (in command or fighting with it), archers cannot pick him out. If the figure is not attached, he can be a target. A hero in melee with a unit can't be fired on because the unit he is fighting is a much bigger target than he is - besides, the hero's foes might be your own allies.

**Certain characters and monsters in the AD&D game have a natural ability to detect *invisible* creatures. How does this work in the BATTLESYSTEM supplement - is it an automatic ability?**

According to page 60 of the *DMG*, the ability is almost automatic. A creature is "exposed to invisibility" if attacked by an *invisible* creature, actually looking right at the *invisible* creature, listening carefully for movement, etc. There are so many distractions on a battlefield, however, that no unit or hero can detect an *invisible* 1:1 scale figure unless given orders to do so and told where to look - that is, the player in charge of the opposing unit or hero must state that an attempt to locate an *invisible* foe is being made and where the figures are looking. If a unit is looking, roll once for the whole unit. Only the hero or unit that successfully makes the detection roll can "see" the *invisible* creature(s), although others may be told where to look. *Invisible* figures of greater than 1:1 scale, however, have a chance to be spotted if they simply cross a hero's or unit's line of sight.

**When do heroes check morale? If a hero routs, who can rally him?**

Heroes do not check morale using the BATTLESYSTEM supplement rules, and do not rout. If an NPC hero (or other single figure) is faced with a total disaster or extreme peril, he may flee or disobey orders according to the morale rules on pages 36-37 and page 67 of the *DMG*. It is best to have a neutral referee decide when NPC heroes check morale or obedience.

**When a unit is forced into open order due to a failed morale check, does it pay a movement cost? When can it return to closed order? What**

**happens if the unit is still in melee? What is the effect on a unit that has performed a wrap-around? Since wrap-around forces the unit into open order, wouldn't the unit rout immediately?**

The switch to open order is automatic; there is no movement. Melee or wrap-around does not effect the change. The unit simply spreads out. This has no effect on the melee other than to reduce the number of figures in base-to-base contact. Units that perform wrap-arounds are not forced into open order until after the melee. If morale failure forces them into open order before that, there is no effect.

**Where exactly will routing units go if there are enemy units between them and their own lines? Do they run toward their heroes or commanders? What happens if a routing unit encounters an impassable terrain feature such as a river?**

Routing units move away from the cause of the rout along the path of least resistance. They go toward the point at which they entered the playing area, avoiding obstacles and enemy units along the way. When a routing unit encounters terrain that it cannot cross or enter, it moves along the edge of the feature in the direction that takes it away from the enemy.

**What happens when a unit that has performed a wrap-around suffers a rout? Do the figures scatter? Or does the unit pay movement cost to "unwrap," then rout directly away from the enemy?**

Generally, the whole unit routs in the same direction. It doesn't have to "unwrap" because it does not change formation. The main body of the unit routs directly away from the enemy, and the figures on the flanks follow.

**Is there any way to stop a routing unit other than rallying it?**

No, a unit continues to rout until it rallies or leaves the board.

**Do routing units have to pay a movement penalty for the about-face required to turn their backs to the enemy? Do they pay terrain costs when they move through woods or up hills?**

Routing units do not pay for the change of facing. They ignore terrain modifiers as long as the terrain is passable.

**If a routing unit's path takes it past several commanders or heroes, can each commander attempt to rally the unit?**

There may be only one attempt to rally a unit per rally phase, the number of commanders present notwithstanding.

**General note on routs:** There are so (continued on page 66)

# Call to Arms

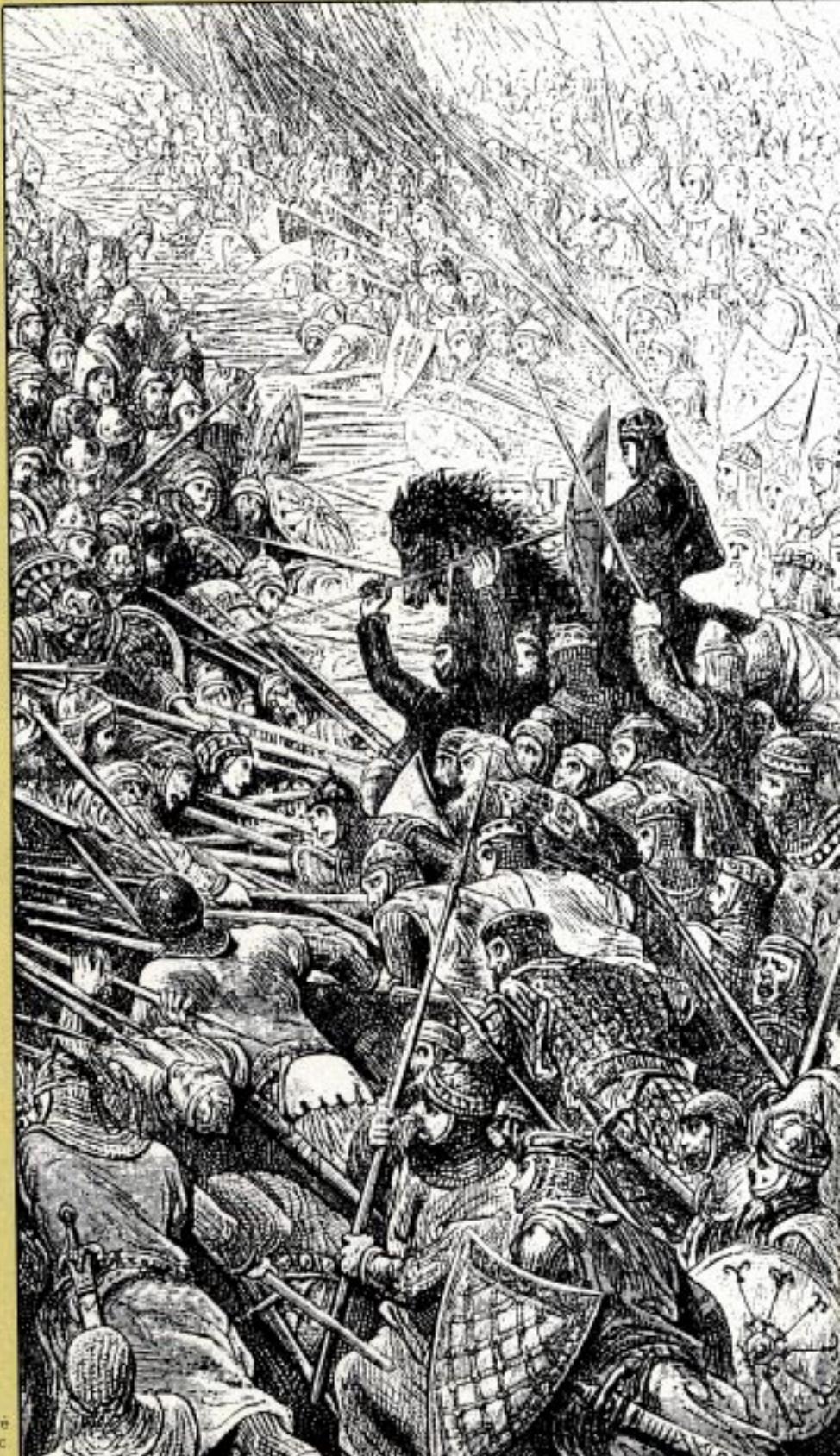


Illustration by Gustave Doré  
courtesy of Dover Publications, Inc.

*Warriors bold from legends old*

# Lords & Legends

Siegfried

Roland



Yvain

Bradamante

Illustration by Roger Blauvelt



by Kyle Gray

*In any world in which warfare becomes common or necessary, there arise those whose skill at fighting exceeds by a great margin that of their fellows. Yet even such exceptional proficiency at combat is no guarantee of a long life. Those who live by the sword all too often die by it — as some of the following leaders of battle easily show. Though drawn from medieval history and legend, these heroes may find their ways into any campaign with suitable changes in name and situation.*

*Some of the following characters are drawn from legends common to different cultures, with each culture having added its own distinctions to each hero. As a result, some of the AD&D® game statistics listed below are combined from several of these legends into one character. By researching the various resources used in each, the DM may add or subtract attributes, belongings, and histories as he chooses.*

### Siegfried

Male human  
16th-level fighter

ARMOR CLASS: - 5 (*unique ability; see text*)

MOVE: 15" (*unique ability*)

HIT POINTS: 100

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

ATTACK BONUSES: + 3 with melee weapons (*strength bonus*); + 6 with Balmung (see text; *strength and magical bonuses*; +8 vs. giants); + 2 with missile weapons (*dexterity bonus*)

DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type (+ 6 for *strength bonus* with melee weapons; + 9 with Balmung against most opponents, with double damage against giants: 2d12 + 11)

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Resistant to nonmagical weapons; owns magical devices; immune to fear; bonuses for high characteristics; see text

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

SIZE: M (6'3")

ALIGNMENT Lawful neutral

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

S: 18/00	I: 14	W: 12
D: 17	C: 16	CH: 17
CO: 14		

Siegfried (also known as Sigurd in Scandinavian legends), son of King Siegmund of

the Netherlands, was a hero of the utmost prowess. Some of his most famous adventures include the slaying of Fafnir the dragon and the sacking of the fabled Niebelung treasure. According to legend, Siegfried fell in love with the beautiful Kriemhild, sister of the three brother-kings of Burgundy, and was later killed in a treacherous plot by one of the brothers. In his youth, Siegfried was a carefree adventurer, always willing to take part in adventure for great amounts of treasure or glory, as long as it did not seriously conflict with his lawful nature.

Perhaps the most notable legend involving Siegfried is his recovery of the fabled Niebelung treasure. Numerous tales surround this event; the most popular story relates the creation of a sword with which to kill the vile dragon Fafnir. Taking the three remaining pieces of Gram, his father's sword (a gift from Odin and later broken in battle with that deity), Siegfried reforged the weapon for use against the foul serpent. Hiding in a pit near the dragon's watering hole, Siegfried stabbed Fafnir from below, mortally wounding the drake. Siegfried then bathed in the dragon's blood, which gave his skin an added layer of protection. Except for one spot – a point on his right shoulder where a leaf came to land – Siegfried's entire body was thus protected. This "Achilles' heel" played an important part in

Siegfried's death. [The blood of dragons in the AD&D® game is not likely to confer such protections; Fafnir was a unique monster.]

Retracing the dragon's path, Siegfried came to the store of the fabled Nibelung treasure. Though encountering the dwarf Alberich, Siegfried quickly bettered the guard and forced him to promise an oath of fealty. So doing, Siegfried claimed his treasure – a massive store of goods including a magical sword named Balmung, numerous magical rings, a cloak of invisibility, a set of golden armor, a wondrous helmet, and a tremendous pile of wealth and ornaments.

In other tales, Siegfried is responsible for the capture of Brunhild, a Valkyrie maiden. Against her wishes, Brunhild was married to Gunther, one of the three kings of Burgundy. Though she loved Siegfried, Brunhild conspired with her husband to murder that hero. Through methods of trickery, Gunther coerced Kriemhild to disclose the nature of Siegfried's one weakness in order to "guard it in battle." Once discovered, Gunther empowered his counselor Hagen to exploit the weakness during a hunting trip. Siegfried was stabbed in the shoulder as he drank from a pond, and he died shortly after. Upon the discovery of his death, Kriemhild swore revenge. Brunhild, unable to live with her conspiracy, killed herself on a burning pyre so that she could accompany her beloved Siegfried in his journey to Valhalla.

Balmung should be treated as a *long sword + 3, + 5 giant slayer*. Balmung

strikes fear into the hearts of all who face it, and any opponent who fights Siegfried must make a saving throw vs. spells at -4 or be subjected to *fear* (as per the magic-user spell).

By bathing in the dragon's blood, Siegfried gained remarkable protection. His skin took on a horny quality, becoming impervious to most attacks. Combined with his golden chain mail +1, shield +1, and dexterity bonus, Siegfried's dragon-enchanted skin (which reduces his overall armor class by four places) gives him an armor class of -5. Nonmagical weapons wielded by anyone can only hit Siegfried on an unmodified roll of 20, and then do only half damage. Magical weapons' bonuses are reduced by half when fighting Siegfried. Siegfried also has in his possession a cloak of invisibility named Tarnkappe, which also increases his strength to that of a storm giant (as per a *girdle of giant strength*) when he wears it. Siegfried only dons this cloak in dire emergencies, as he prefers to fight without its help.

Siegfried appears as a handsome blond youth, over 6' tall and richly clothed. There is a 20% chance that Siegfried will join a party in search of treasure, but he will insist on being the group leader and will want a share of the treasure commensurate with his battle skills.

Sources: *Das Nibelungelied*, a late 12th-century German epic available in German from Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag. The English translation, *The Nibelungelied*, is available in paperback from Penguin Books.

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### Yvain

Male human  
14th-level fighter

ARMOR CLASS: -1 (*plate mail, shield, and dexterity bonus*)

MOVE: 9" in armor on foot; 15" on heavy war horse

HIT POINTS: 85

NO. OF ATTACKS: 2

ATTACK BONUSES: +1 with *melee weapons* (*strength bonus*); +3 with *personal broad sword* (*magical and strength bonuses*); +2 with *missile weapons*; see text

DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type (*broad sword +2 with +3 to damage for strength bonus; see text*)

SPECIAL ABILITIES: Owns magical devices; see text for berserk powers; has lion companion; bonuses for high characteristics

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

SIZE: M (6'2")

ALIGNMENT: Lawful good

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

S: 18/10	I: 14	W: 14
D: 17	C: 16	CH: 16
		CO: 16

Yvain, one of the lesser-known knights of King Arthur's Round Table, is nevertheless an excellent warrior. According to several Arthurian legends, Yvain left King Arthur's court to avenge his cousin Calogrenant's honor. Upon coming to a clearing near the Magic Spring, Yvain was challenged to battle by the Lord de Landuc, the very person Yvain had set out to find. Yvain delivered a mortal blow, but his opponent lived long enough to ride back to his castle, with Yvain in hot pursuit. Yvain became trapped in the castle, but with the help of the lovely Lunete and her ring of invisibility, he not only managed to survive but ended up marrying his victim's wife, Laudine de Landuc. After Yvain successfully defended his new territories against Sir Kay, he received his wife's permission to go adventuring with King Arthur and Sir Gawain, but only after she extracted a promise from him that he would return in one year's time. However, Yvain lost track of the time and failed to return. He was thus informed by one of his lady's damsels that he need not consider returning, for he had lost Laudine's love.

Yvain went insane at this news and only

recovered after weeks spent wandering the woods as a wild man. Determined to win back Laudine's love, he set out to prove his worth through feats of arms. During this time, Yvain slew the dreaded giant Harpin of the Mountain, two demons (not the AD&D game variety, but still high-level monsters), and several evil knights. Yvain also slew a dragon in order to save a lion, which then became his personal bodyguard. After fighting Sir Gawain to a standstill, Yvain eventually won back his wife.

Yvain is always accompanied by his lion, which attacks upon command or when Yvain is hard pressed. The lion should be treated as per the *Monster Manual* (45 hp), with the addition of +3 to hit and damage with his claws and +2 with his bite, since he has little problem clawing through armor. If his lion is ever sorely wounded (down to 22 hp or less), Yvain goes into a

berserk fury, fighting at +3 to hit and damage, until he slays his lion's attackers. Yvain fights with a broad sword +2, wears plate mail, uses a shield, and rides a heavy war horse. Yvain is a handsome young man. In any encounter with him, there is a 25% chance that he is trying to prove himself to his wife, and he will engage in any adventure that offers a chance of great renown. Yvain always champions the cause of lawful good and is especially concerned with damsels in distress.

Sources: *Yvain* by Chretien de Troyes (hardcover, out of print, J.M. Dent & Sons), *Iwein* by Hartmann von Aue (paperback, available in German, Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag), and *The Knight and the Lion* by Sir Thomas Malory (the stories of "Ewayne" by Malory are available in paperback from many publishers).

## Roland

Male human  
17th-level paladin

ARMOR CLASS: -3 (*magical chain mail and shield, and dexterity bonus*)

MOVE: 12" in armor on foot; 18" on paladin's war horse

HIT POINTS: 110

NO. OF ATTACKS: 3 with long sword; all else as per paladin/cavalier, depending on weapon type

ATTACK BONUSES: +11 with *Durendal* (strength, cavalier weapon of choice, and magical bonuses); +4 with other weapons of choice (strength and cavalier bonuses); +2 with other melee weapons (strength bonus); +1 with missile weapons (dexterity bonus); all else as per cavalier/paladin (note mounted bonuses); see notes in text concerning *Durendal*

DAMAGE/ATTACK: By weapon type (special; see notes in text concerning use of *Durendal*, and consider all bonuses for strength, magical power, weapon type, and nature of opponent; other appropriate weapons possible)

SPECIAL ABILITIES: All appropriate paladin/cavalier abilities; bonuses for high characteristics; owns magical devices; see text

MAGIC RESISTANCE: 50% in 5' radius with holy sword; dispel magic at 17th level of ability with holy sword; see paladin/cavalier abilities

SIZE: M (6'5")

ALIGNMENT: Lawful good

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

SPELLS: 3 first-level, 3 second-level, 2 third-level, and 1 fourth-level clerical spells (chosen by DM)

S: 18/92 I: 15 W: 9  
D: 16 C: 17 CH: 17 CO: 18

Roland (also known as Orlando in Italian legend) was the greatest of Charlemagne's

famous paladins and is best known for the battle in which he died. Due to the treachery of his stepfather Ganelon, Roland was put in command of the rear guard of Charlemagne's army. While traversing the Pyrenees Mountains, Roland and his force of 20,000 troops were set upon by a Saracen horde of 100,000 in the Pass of Rovenaux. Even though they were all killed in the fight, Roland and his troops managed to rout the Saracen army. Roland had in his possession Olifant (a great horn used for signaling) to summon Charlemagne and his warriors. However, Roland's pride prevented him from blowing the horn until too late, thus sealing his fate. Roland's armor and defense, along with the massive destructive powers of his sword, were too much for his enemies. Even though his armor was finally ruined by the spears and arrows of 400 men, no Paynim blade touched Roland's skin. Instead, Roland died of a brain hemorrhage brought on by the strenuous blowing of Olifant. By the time Roland finally decided to summon his liege, Charlemagne was so far away that Roland had to put all his strength into a massive blast, which resulted in the bursting of his temples.

Even though dying, Roland still managed to slay quite a few more pagans, adding greatly to his already tremendous toll. He also took care of the bodies of his slain friends and tried to shatter his sword. One of Roland's main concerns was to keep his sword out of Saracen hands, and he tried to break it by swinging with his full might at a huge boulder. However, even Roland's strength was not enough to break this sword, and all he managed to do is cleave through the boulder, without even denting the blade.

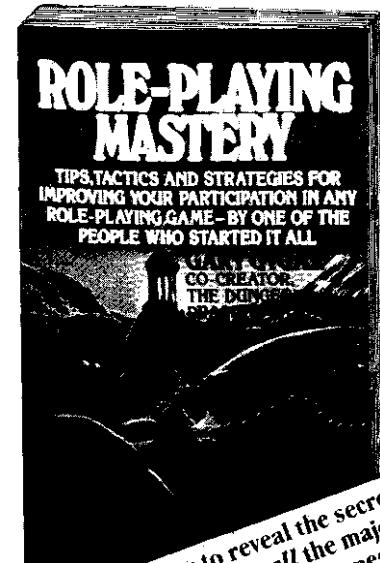
This sword, *Durendal*, was an awesome weapon: a *long sword* +7, *holy avenger*, which scored an automatic hit upon all nonmagical armor. On unmodified rolls of

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18,19, or 20, Durendal chopped through any armor, magical or not. An ancient relic, Durendal had many powerful holy relics within its hilt of gold. As such, this sword performed all of the functions of a normal *holy avenger*, and also did triple damage against any character of evil alignment, killing in one blow those of 5th level or below unless they made a saving throw vs. poison (as certain powerful good relics act as poison to an evil constitution).

Roland is a handsome man in his early thirties, usually seen astride his paladin's war horse Veillantif (45 hp). He wears chain mail +3, carries a shield +2, and is always ready for a good fight. Roland has the spell abilities of a 17th-level paladin but almost never resorts to these. Roland

also always carries Olifant, which can be heard for a range of 50 miles with great clarity, causing fear as a wand against all evil beings within this area. As stated before, Roland will not use the horn unless very hard pressed, or to save the lives of his companions (by then it will probably be too late, however). As a paladin, Roland serves the cause of lawful good, and there is a 20% chance that he will help a party in pursuit of such a goal.

Sources: *The Song of Roland*, an Old French epic available in English from Penguin Classics, paperback. [The version of Durendal (or Durandal) given here is different from that described in the "Sage Advice" column in issue #126.]

**SPECIAL ABILITIES:** All appropriate paladin/cavalier abilities; owns magical devices; bonuses for high characteristics; see text

**MAGIC RESISTANCE:** 50% in 5' radius with holy sword; dispel magic at 12th level of ability with holy sword; see paladin/cavalier abilities; note magical ring in text

**SIZE:** M (5'11")

**ALIGNMENT:** Lawful good

**PSIONIC ABILITY:** Nil

**SPELLS:** 2 first-level and 2 second-level clerical spells (chosen by DM)

S: 16	I: 15	W: 16
D: 17	C: 16	CH: 18 CO: 18

Bradamante, the beautiful daughter of Duke Aymon, was a scion of the house of Clermont and sister to one of Charlemagne's greatest paladins, Rinaldo. A paladin in her own right, Bradamante's most famous adventure concerned her search for her beloved Rogero. During this search, Bradamante battled and defeated Sacripant, King of Circassia, and Rodomont, King of Algiers. In order to free the ensorcelled Rogero, she also defeated a fighter/magic-user mounted on a hippogriff. Her search was never quite successful, as Rogero was always spirited away after the two spent only a few moments together. Finally, Bradamante went home

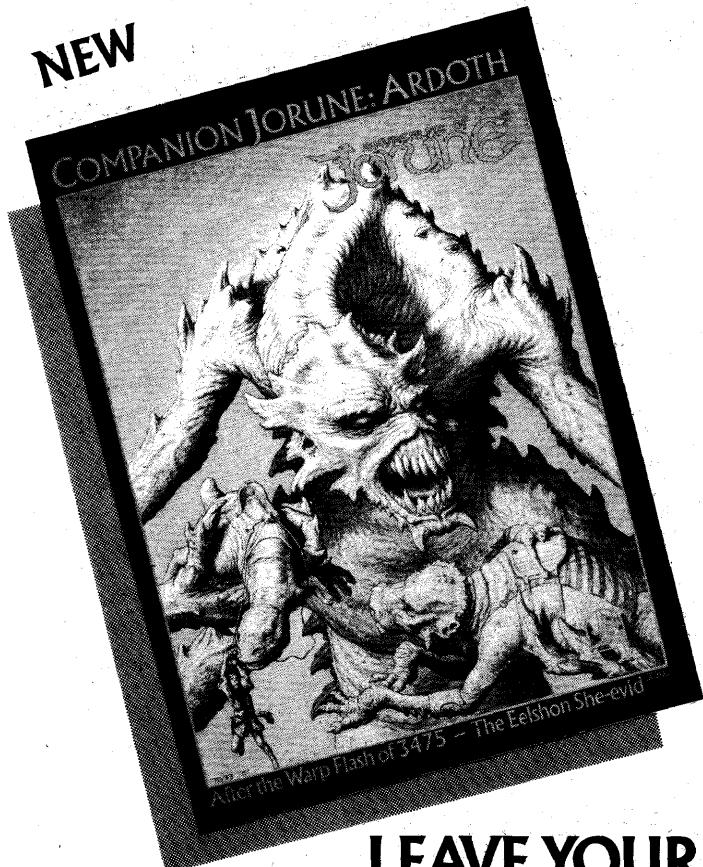
## Bradamante

Human female  
12th-level paladin

**ARMOR CLASS:** -5 (magical plate mail and shield, and dexterity bonus)  
**MOVE:** 9" in armor on foot; 18" on paladins war horse  
**HIT POINTS:** 80  
**NO. OF ATTACKS:** 5/2 with long sword; all else as per paladin/cavalier, depending on weapon type  
**ATTACK BONUSES:** +7 with holy sword

(cavalier weapon of choice and magical bonuses); +2 with weapons of choice (cavalier bonus); +2 with missiles (dexterity bonus); all else as per cavalier/paladin (note mounted bonuses)

**DAMAGE/ATTACK:** By weapon type (long sword +5 with +1 on damage from strength bonus and additional +5 vs. chaotic-evil opponents; other weapons possible, but consider bonuses for strength, magical power, weapon type, and paladin/cavalier abilities)



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- only to discover that her father had promised her in marriage to Prince Leo of Greece. Despairing for her true love, Bradamante begged a boon from King Charlemagne that she be compelled to marry no man who had not first bested her in armed combat. Prince Leo, knowing that he could not hope to defeat Bradamante, instead disguised an unknown knight to fight in his place. This knight was Rogero, who had been languishing in a Greek dungeon; upon his release by Prince Leo, he swore to do whatever the prince asked. Disguised in Prince Leo's surcoat, Rogero met Bradamante on the battlefield. The two combatants fought from dawn to dusk, with neither gaining an advantage. Finally, after much delay and intrigue, the masquerade was overturned, and Bradamante and Rogero were wed.

Known as the Knight of the White Plume and Shield, Bradamante wears white plate mail +1 and carries a sparkling white shield +3. She fights with a long sword +5, holy avenger and rides a paladin's war horse (45 hp). Bradamante also possesses a ring with the abilities of dispel magic (16th-level of effect, as per magic-user spell, usable three times per day) and invisibility (as per the ring). As a paladin, Bradamante can use clerical spells as chosen by the DM, but she prefers her proven battle prowess and resorts to magic only out of dire necessity.

Bradamante is a beautiful young woman with flowing brown hair. She always serves the cause of lawful good, and there is a 25% chance that she will assist a party in pursuit of such an objective. There is a 20% chance that Bradamante will be accompanied by her husband, Rogero; treat him as a 14th-level, lawful-good fighter with a long sword, vorpal weapon. This sword, Balisarda, automatically strikes any opponent in nonmagical armor. Balisarda also has the ability to dispel magic (16th level of ability) once per day. Bradamante is a paladin in the utmost sense of the word and should be treated as such, always doing what is right and good.

Sources: The Charlemagne Tales of the Italian poets, Pulci, Boiardo, and Ariosto, some of which are collected in *Bulfinch's Mythology* (hardcover, Avenel Books).

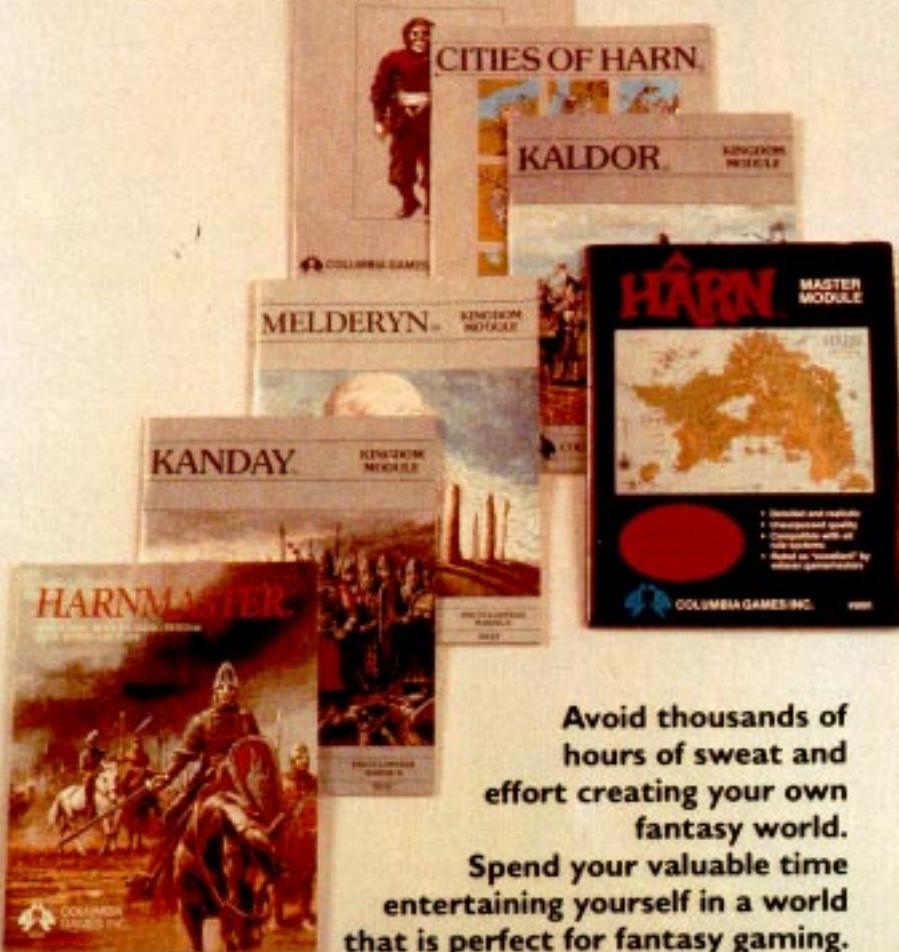
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# No Quarter!

by Arn Ashleigh Parker

Over the years of development of the AD&D® game, much has been done to expand the many and varied spell-casting classes. Magic-users, illusionists, clerics, and druids have all had their spells extensively expanded in *Unearthed Arcana*. New spell-casting classes (such as the witch) have appeared in past issues of DRAGON® Magazine. In general, there has been a considerable orientation in the AD&D game toward spell-casters and away from fighter-types. The following special abilities go far to set straight this inequality.

Fighters are hereby given a number of combat maneuvers that add to their options in a round of melee. Cavaliers, paladins, clerics, and all other classes (except for the bard class, as fighter levels are initially obtained) do not gain the use of these abilities. Rangers and barbarians may, at the DM's option, gain these abilities as well, unless it is felt that they have enough special abilities of their own. These combat maneuvers were developed from skilled practice in the fighting profession's major strength: fighting. Table 1 lists the number of combat maneuvers gained initially and per level beyond the first.

All combat maneuvers performed by a fighter, ranger, or barbarian require a level check to be successful. A level check requires 1d30 to be rolled, the result of which is compared to the character's level. A roll equal to or less than the character's level indicates success. The character's effective level for the purpose of this level check is increased or decreased by subtracting the character's dexterity-based Defensive Adjustment (reflecting battle reactions) and adding the character's Magical Attack Adjustment (representing judgment in battle); see the *Players Handbook*, page 11, for both adjustments. No other modifications, magical or otherwise, are applicable. Thus, a 12th-level fighter with both an 18 dexterity and wisdom rolls a 20 or less on 1d30 to be successful.

Only one combat maneuver may be used at a time (except for the Target maneuver); other than that, these combat maneuvers may be used as often as allowed. The intent to use a specific combat maneuver must be declared at the start of a melee round, before any attacks are declared or rolled. The combat maneuver is then made when appropriate during the round. If the

combat situation changes during the round (e.g., a fighter planning to use the Feign Death maneuver suddenly sees his foe slain by another warrior), the maneuver may be discarded if it has not already been performed. Just because a maneuver turns out to be harmful is not sufficient reason to discard it after the maneuver has been made (e.g., if a fighter uses the Feint maneuver on an orc who is smarter than the fighter is).

Furthermore, these combat maneuvers are largely meant to be used against armed, humanlike opponents. The DM must decide in all cases whether a particular combat maneuver can be used against an opponent (one cannot disarm a ghoul, for instance, nor stun a brontosaurus).

If a 30-sided die is not available, the use of 1d6 and 1d10 can produce numbers from 1 to 30. Roll 1d6 and 1d10. If the 1d6 roll is 1 or 2, the number generated is 1-10 as rolled on the 1d10. If the 1d6 roll is 3 or 4, the number generated is 11-20, determined by adding 10 to the result of the 1d10. If the 1d6 roll is 5 or 6, the number generated is 21-30, determined by adding 20 to the roll of the 1d10.

## Combat maneuvers

The various combat maneuvers are described below. Again, note that they cannot all be acquired at once, but must be learned according to Table 1.

**Parry:** Parrying normally involves applying a character's strength-based "to hit" bonus to his opponent's "to hit" roll (as per the *Players Handbook*, page 104). However, fighters with this combat maneuver may make a level check on 1d30; if successful, *all* "to hit" bonuses (with an additional +2 bonus) may be added to the fighter's parrying ability. This combat maneuver substitutes for a single melee attack unless the character's dexterity or less is rolled on 3d10, in which case the character is allowed an attack at -2 to hit immediately afterward. Thus, a 13th-level fighter may parry once and attack once in a melee round, and might even gain another attack if his dexterity check is made. Two or more parrying attempts may be made in a round only if the parrying fighter has the ability to make two or more normal attacks with a melee weapon in a round, and if he is fighting either an opponent with two or more weapon attacks, or two or more opponents.

Parrying is best used against an opponent with an especially dangerous weapon

or melee ability (weapons that decapitate or sever a limb, attacks that can immediately cripple or kill, etc.). Parrying can only be used against opponents of ogre-size or smaller which lack giant strength (19+) and which are using melee (nonmissile) weapons. No attack roll is required to use the Parry maneuver; the action is simply declared.

**Feint:** This combat maneuver is a measure of the character's intelligence, as he is attempting to fool his opponent by making a mock attack at one place merely as a distraction from the real attack, which is made immediately afterward. If the fighter's intelligence is higher than his opponent's, a successful level check grants the fighter a +1 to hit for each point of difference between the intelligence scores. If there is no difference in the score, there is no modification. If the opponent is of a higher intelligence than the character — or if the character failed his level check — a -2 is applied to the character's "to hit" chance. This ability must be used in conjunction with an attack; it does not replace an attack. It can be used once per round at most — but beware of intelligent orcs and goblins!

**Dodge:** A successful level check grants a +4 to the armor class of the fighter in situations where the Defensive Adjustment due to dexterity would also add to either armor class or to a saving throw against spells which can be dodged. Failure on the initial level check results in a -4 to hit on the character's next melee attack in that round. Furthermore, if a character who has been successful on his level check also rolls his dexterity or less on 2d12, he may make his melee attacks as he normally would. Failure on this dexterity check causes a loss of one attack in a round. The Dodge maneuver stays in effect for the whole round in which it is attempted (assuming the character remains in melee with his opponent). It can be used but once per round against a single attacker; it is useless against multiple attackers.

**Target:** A successful level check (with the appropriate modifier shown on Table 2 applied to the die roll) allows the character to select an exact area of his opponent's body where his blow is to be directed. Of course, the part of the opponent's body targeted must be within range of the character's attack. This is useful against creatures that have more than one armor class (beholders, bulettes, etc.), or if a critical hit is rolled (assuming the DM uses

such a system). This is the only ability that may be used in conjunction with any other combat maneuver, with cumulative bonuses and penalties. Failure on the level check indicates that the blow may hit, but it has a -2 to hit penalty and cannot be targeted.

**Body Bash:** On a successful level check, the fighter forces an opponent to make a strength check on 1d30 or be knocked to the ground, using the following modifications: -2 for every 2' of defender's height above attacker, +2 for every 2' of attacker's height above defender, +2 if a shield is used to bash the opponent, and -1 for each of the opponent's magical armor bonuses (not including a shield). Prayer spells, rings of protection, and the like do not have any effect on the save. A natural roll of 1 is always a save, and a natural roll of 20 always results in the defender being bashed. This maneuver only applies to humanlike opponents of ogre-size or smaller.

The effects of a successful Body Bash maneuver are found by rolling 1d4 and consulting the following list:

1. Knocked to one knee. If the bashed opponent has not made all of his attacks when he is bashed, he loses one of those attacks this round. A bashed opponent with multiple attacks by virtue of his class or by magic (not because two weapons are being used) may take the remainder of his attacks, made at -1 to hit, but not until all other melee attacks are completed against him. Additional attacks by the person who scored the knockdown, and any others who are fighting the bashed opponent, are at +1 to hit against the bashed opponent until the end of the round, when the opponent is assumed to get up.

2. Knocked to both knees. The bashed opponent loses all further attacks for one round (the current round unless initiative has already been taken, in which case the next round is lost), and is at +2 to be hit for the remainder of that time, after which he gets up.

3. *Knocked to sitting position.* The bashed individual loses one round, as above, and all remaining attacks against him are at +3 to hit. In addition, on the round following the lost round, the bashed individual automatically loses initiative while he gets up.

4. *Knocked down flat.* The bashed individual loses one round, as in #2 above. All opponents are allowed an additional attack

during the round the person is knocked down; these attacks are at +4 to hit. The additional attack applies only to hand-to-hand attacks, though the bonus to hit still applies for missile weapons.

The attacking character may still make a normal melee attack if he rolls his dexterity or less on 3d10. Otherwise, this combat maneuver replaces one attack in a melee round. At the DM's option, modifiers for opponent height may be added to the 1d4 results roll above (+1 to the roll for every 2' in height the attacker has over the defender, and -1 for every 2' the defender has over the attacker).

**Back Out:** This combat maneuver allows a character to back out of melee range and have a chance at a parting attack as he exits. The character must roll his dexterity score or less on 3d8 to obtain the parting blow, once the level check has been rolled to determine if the character will be allowed to back out. The Back Out maneuver normally replaces one attack in a round.

For example, a 13th-level fighter who has two blows per round chooses to attack normally with his first blow, but decides on his second blow that he would like to be out of melee range at the beginning of the next round (he wants to charge a different opponent without allowing his current opponent an additional attack routine against him when he flees melee range). If he successfully makes a level check, the fighter is able to back out of range this round. Furthermore, if he rolls his dexterity or less on 2d12, he gets a parting blow at his opponent.

Failure to make the level check forces the fighter to stay in melee range unless he wishes his opponent to get a free attack routine against him as he flees, and he will also not obtain a blow unless he makes the dexterity check on 3d8. (Note that if the fighter failed his level check, he cannot choose to make his dexterity check *and then* flee melee range, allowing his opponent a bonus attack routine. He would, in this case, need to choose to flee melee range before the dexterity check is made, and he would not obtain a parting blow if this was his choice. Clearly, he would be better off staying in range this round and trying to make the dexterity check, then simply charging out of range toward his new opponent at the beginning of the next round — assuming he gets the initiative!)

**Feign Death:** By successfully making a level check at -6 on the die roll when

struck by a blow, this ability allows the fighter to fake his death from the blow. A successful level check made at -6 on the die roll indicates that all viewing the character believe the character was slain, unless a percentage equal to or less than each viewer's intelligence is rolled. Only viewers of the Feign Death maneuver are allowed this intelligence check, although anyone feeling for the "dead" PC's pulse will, of course, find one. If the character is attacked while on the ground, he is at +4 to be hit, and damage inflicted upon him will be the maximum possible for each blow struck. Whether successful or not, an attack on the character upon the ground reveals the ruse.

Failing to make the level check results in a free blow from the primary weapon or melee attack of all opponents in range. Thus, a lion or a character with two weapons could each make only a single attack not a complete attack routine. Players should be prohibited from attacking an opposing fighter, ranger, or barbarian who has successfully made a level check to feign death, unless the character either views the Feign Death maneuver and makes the successful percentage die roll based upon intelligence or the character has a compelling reason to investigate further.

**Stun:** A character who scores a hit in melee with a blunt or flat-sided weapon

(excluding spiked weapons like morning stars, flexible weapons like whips or garrots, or missile weapons) may use this ability to attempt to stun his opponent. After a successful "to hit" roll is made, a successful level check indicates that the opponent of the character is stunned, leaving him at +2 to be hit and making him unable to concentrate enough to use psionics or cast spells. A stunned opponent may attack and defend himself using regular melee weapons and a shield, with a -1 to hit and a -1 on armor class. The opponent remains stunned for 1-3 rounds. No hit-point damage is done to an opponent who has been stunned. An opponent who is currently stunned when struck and stunned a second time must save vs. paralysis or fall unconscious for 1-6 rounds; subsequent stunning attacks, if the opponent remains conscious, each offer a cumulative -1 penalty on this save, as well as -1 penalties on attack rolls and armor class. No penalties can exceed -4.

When using the Stun maneuver, the guidelines in the DMG concerning attacks against helmetless opponents (page 28) should be considered.

**Disarm:** *Unearthed Arcana* outlines a system for disarming opponents on page 109. If a fighter makes his level check, however, he gains a +2 bonus to hit on the Disarm maneuver, and his opponent suffers -2 on his saving throw vs. petri-

fication to avoid losing his weapon. This maneuver replaces one of the fighter's attacks in a melee round. Failure to make the level check when attempting a Disarm maneuver still allows the maneuver to go through, but with a -2 penalty "to hit" and normal saving-throw chances for the opponent to retain his weapon. No damage is done to the opponent in any event, and the guidelines in *Unearthed Arcana* must be followed.

### Final thoughts

Only one combat maneuver may be used during or in place of a blow, with the exception of the Target maneuver. With the addition of the above abilities, fighters (along with rangers and barbarians) will become more interesting to play. Players who have fighters for characters will have more to decide than which opponent to attack. It may very well be more critical for a fighter to choose the correct combat maneuver than for a spell-caster to choose the correct spell. Undoubtedly, the above combat maneuvers add a wide range of choices to players whose characters like to settle their differences in an "up close and personal" manner.

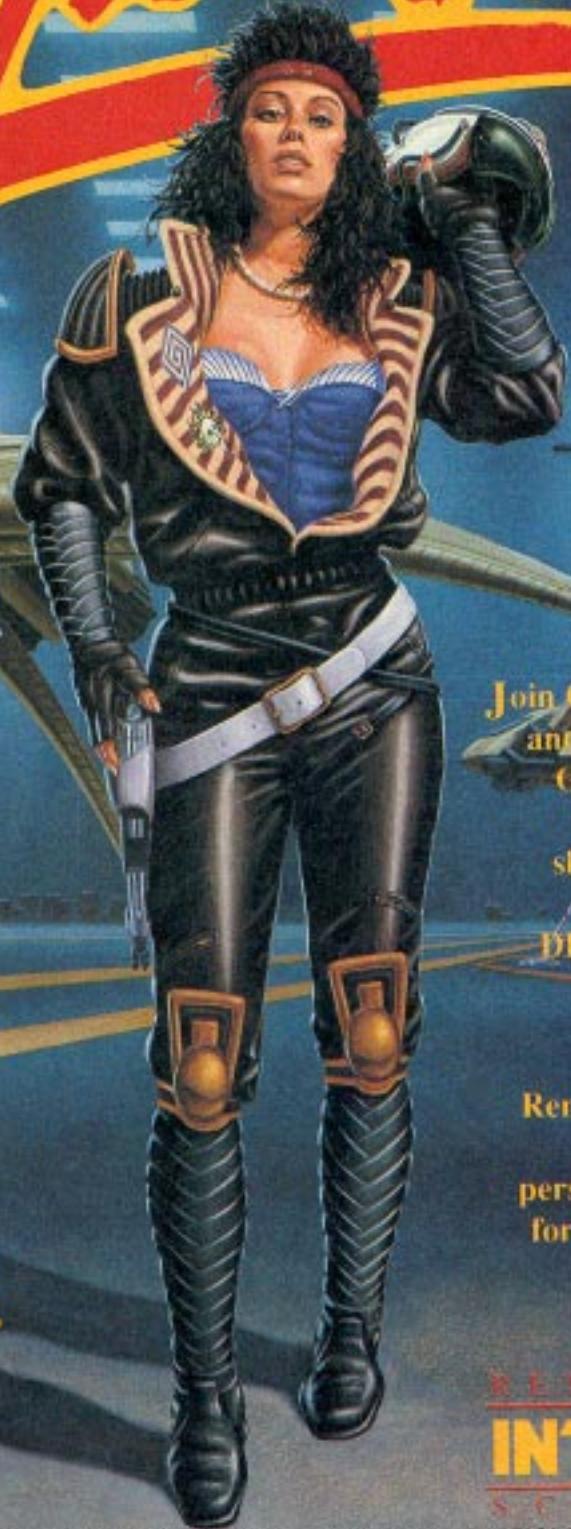
**Table 1**  
**Combat Maneuver Acquisition for Fighters**

Class	Initial number	Additional number
Fighter	2	1 per 3 levels
Ranger	1	1 per 4 levels
Barbarian	1	1 per 4 levels

**Table 2**  
**Target Maneuver Modifications**

Body region	Modifier to die roll
Foot	+2
Leg	-
Groin	+3
Spine	+3
Chest	+1
Hand	+2
Arm	+2
Shoulder	+2
Arm or shoulder (50% either)	-
Neck	+3
Face	+3
Head	+3
Face or head (50% either)	+2
Special monster parts	DM's discretion

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*A bow is an archer's best friend*

# Bazaar of the Bizarre

Illustration by Jim Mignogna





Many of the magical and mundane items in our treasure files were archery treasures, particularly bows. Rangers, archers, and other warriors from any AD&D® game world should find these to be of great help in a tight spot. A set of magical bolts is included as a bonus.

Of all bows found, 50% are long and 50% are short. A second die roll reveals whether the bows are self (50%) or composite (50%). Crossbows are 75% likely to be light crossbows and 25% likely to be heavy crossbows.

#### Bow built for strength

As stated in the *Dungeon Masters Guide* under combat (page 64), "to hit" and damage bonuses for strength do not apply to the use of bows unless they are specially improved. These specially made bows are considered to be *built for strength*. Bows built for strength are superior to normal bows and are slightly larger and heavier. They are always of the finest workmanship and quality, taking a minimum of six months to fabricate. They can be made for any strength up to 18/00 and are priced at 1,000 gp per additional damage point, as follows:

Strength	Damage	Value
16-17	+1	1,000 gp
18	+2	2,000 gp
18/01-75	+3	3,000 gp
18/76-90	+4	4,000 gp
18/91-99	+5	5,000 gp
18/00	+6	6,000 gp

It must be noted that a character with a strength of less than 16 may not use a bow built for strength; likewise, a character with an 18 strength may not pull a bow built for 18/01-00 strength. However, a character with a strength higher than that for which the bow was built can fire it, although he receives only that damage bonus the bow allows. Note that these bows are nonmagical; thus, all normal weapons rules and restrictions (saving throws, etc.) apply. All bows (including cranked crossbows) may be built for strength from scratch, but no normal, nonmagical bow can be improved to gain strength bonuses.

**XP Value:** Nil

**GP Value:** 1,000-6,000

*Created by:* Dave Monson

## Gem bow

Created long ago by a prestigious halfing bowyer and the Arch-Mage Bendalyre, these bows (of which there are only three) were created to help the halfling societies combat their enemies. Over the years, the *gem bows* have disappeared from the halfling realms, and are now lost and mostly forgotten by the race that created them. They are all *short bows* +1, are of excellent craftsmanship, and have the ability to gain additional powers.

On the face of each bow is an indentation above the handgrip. If certain gemstones are set into this notch, the bow is then capable of bestowing one of three special powers on an arrow fired. Arrows must be nonmagical to gain these powers. The gems and effects are as follows:

Gem type	Effect
Diamond	1-6 hp damage +10 hp electric shock
Ruby	1-6 hp damage +10 hp fire damage
Sapphire	1-6 hp damage +10 hp cold damage

A *gem bow* gains one charge per 200 gp value of each gem. Gems set into a *gem bow* decrease in value by 200 gp as each charge is used, eventually becoming normal stones with the expiration of their charges. These bows function normally with respect to range and rate of fire.

**XP Value:** 1,000

**GP Value:** 7,000

*Created by:* Dave Monson

## Phantom bow

This appears to be a transparent bow with a sparkling string. When the string is drawn back, a shimmering arrow appears. Two such arrows can be fired per round as with a normal bow. The glowing arrows are +2 to hit and damage; the arrows vanish with no effect if they miss their intended target. The *phantom bow* fires 1d20 +40 of these arrows, after which point the bow vanishes.

The bow makes saving throws as per hard metal with a +2 modifier. Normal and magical arrows can also be fired from this weapon, but magical arrows gain no additional attack bonus. Each normal arrow fired from the bow gains a +1 bonus to hit and damage in addition to all other bonuses. Furthermore, these arrows can be fired without detracting from the bow's longevity (i.e., the bow's magic is not decreased by firing normal arrows).

**XP Value:** 1,500

**GP Value:** 10,000

*Created by:* Bob Reitmann

## Long bow of marksmanship

This magical long bow (either composite or self) also gives a +2 bonus to the "to hit" rolls of the user in combat. However, a *long bow of marksmanship* also gives the user a +5 bonus to hit against any nonliving target (including golems, undead, etc.).

This bonus is also gained when attempting a trick shot, as long as that shot is not intended to directly harm another character or creature. In other words, the +5 bonus applies to an attempt to shoot an apple off another character's head, hitting an opponent's weapon, or any similar shot.

**XP Value:** 1,500

**GP Value:** 7,500

*Created by:* Marc Andreessen

## Long bow of heartseeking

This type of long bow (self or composite) always has a +3 bonus to hit targets. It acts as a normal magical bow, except when a sufficiently high number to hit is rolled. Then, the arrow it fires strikes directly at the target creature's heart (if it has such), slaying the victim instantly. "To hit" numbers required for this attack are as follows:

Opponent	"To hit" roll *
Up to man-size	21-23
Larger than man-size	22-23
Metal or stone**	23

\* Consider only the bow's bonus of +3.

\*\* If the foe is using a spell or device that has transformed him into this material.

Certain creatures (such as elementals, golems, and undead) do not have hearts, and so would not be affected by this weapon. Shape-shifting creatures (such as doppelgangers) are not affected by this killing power, either. However, 10% of these bows have been enchanted to be useful against vampires, such that the bow can fire a wooden arrow into a vampire's heart and slay it on the spot. Any score of 20 or better, including all bonuses, means that the long *bow of vampire hunting* has killed its vampiric target. No other beings are so affected by this bow.

**XP Value:** 4,000 (2,000 for vampire hunting)

**GP Value:** 20,000 (10,000 for vampire hunting)

*Created by:* Mark Stafford

## Bow of fire teeth

When fired, this bow ignites any arrow it shoots. In addition to regular damage, the arrow does 1-6 hp fire damage. Magical arrows must save vs. magical fire if shot from this bow; if they fail the save, they catch fire and lose all magical enchantments. If they save, magical arrows perform normally. These arrows set combustibles aflame if the combustible material struck fails a save vs. normal fire.

*Fire bows* can set fire to a maximum of 10 arrows per day. The *fire bow* gives no "to hit" or damage bonuses other than the added damage from the arrow's flames. Such bows are generally red or yellow in color and have fire runes incorporated into their ornate designs.

**XP Value:** 750

**GP Value:** 5,000

*Created by:* David E. Cates

## Bow of ice fangs

This long bow, made of ivory and mithral steel, is believed to have been first created by the Elder Craftsmen of Niflheim (the area of Hades known to worshipers of the Norse gods as the land of the dead). Duplicates of the ice fang bow have since been crafted by human and elven mages. The main feature of the *ice fang bow* is that it creates *ice arrows* from water vapor in the air. The user need only pull on the bowstring and release it; the arrows are created instantly, but may only be fired at a rate of two per round, to allow the bow's magic time to recharge. These magical arrows are +1 to hit and do double damage (2-12 hp damage) vs. fire-using and fire-dwelling creatures. If used against any other sort of being, these arrows are merely +1 to hit and damage. Each *ice fang bow* can generate a total of 51-150 *ice arrows* before its magic fades. A nonmagical *ice fang bow* is still finely crafted and is worth 1,000 gp.

Unfortunately, in hot climates (120°F and up), the effective range of these arrows is halved. In environments where the temperature is over 300°F, the *ice arrows* cannot form. If normal or magical arrows are fired from this bow, they do not gain the bonuses against fiery creatures, and the bow performs in all ways as a normal long bow.

**XP Value:** 600

**GP Value:** 3,500

*Created by:* David E. Cates

## Bow of accuracy

The *bow of accuracy* is a simple yet effective missile weapon. The magic properties of this bow are a +3 bonus to hit and damage; likewise, all ranges within normal bow range are figured as short range in regard to this weapon.

**XP Value:** 2,500

**GP Value:** 15,000

*Created by:* Andrew Salamon

## Bow of distance

Like the *bow of accuracy*, this bow gives a bonus to hit and damage - a bonus of +2 in this instance. The difference between the two, however, is that the ranges of distance for the *bow of accuracy* are double that of a normal bow of a similar type.

**XP Value:** 2,000

**GP Value:** 12,000

*Created by:* Andrew Salamon

## Bow of speed

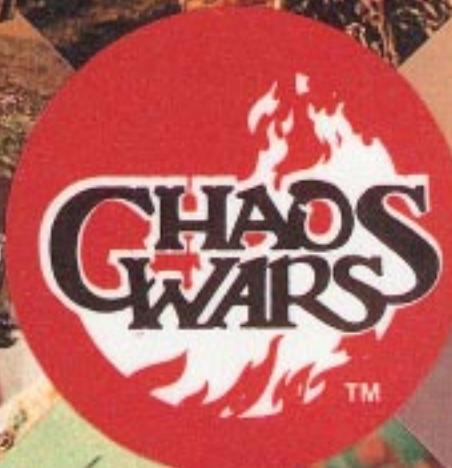
This weapon is +1 to hit and damage. If there are undamaged and nonmagical arrows within 10' of the bow, those arrows are *teleported*, nocked and ready to fire, as soon as the Bowman pulls back the string. This allows the normal rate of fire for the archer to be doubled. Some 10% of these bows are able to *teleport* any arrow within 10', magical or not, to the bow for firing. The archer can only distinguish one arrow from another if the

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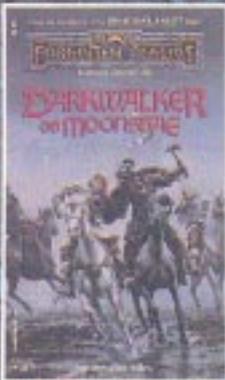
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# ONE GIANT STEP FOR DRAGONKIND

arrows used are distinctive; all arrows to be fired are chosen at random.

**XP Value:** 2,000

**GP Value:** 12,000

*Created by:* Andrew Salomon

#### Elven bow +3, last shot

This bow appears to be a normal magic bow of +1 enchantment; however, in the hands of an elf, the full powers of this weapon are evoked. Whenever an elf uses this weapon, it becomes a +3 magical weapon with ranges 50% greater than normal. The rate of fire is also increased by one arrow per round; this last arrow is fired after all other attacks have been completed for that round.

**XP Value:** 1,200

**GP Value:** 8,000

*Created by:* John M. Boback

#### Elven bow +2, goblin bane

This bow appears to be a standard long bow +1; in the hands of an elven fighter, however, its full potential is realized. The +2 bonus is gained, as well as the following characteristics: Arrows fired have double-normal ranges and strike for double damage (2d6 + 2hp damage) against any giant-class humanoid successfully hit. This class of monsters includes those which may be struck for extra damage by rangers (as per *Unearthed Arcana*).

**XP Value:** 1,000

**GP Value:** 6,000

*Created by:* Gregg Sharp

#### Cursed bow of warning

At first, this bow appears to be a bow +3, but when an arrow is fired from this bow, it always misses any living target which is of evil nature. Furthermore, the arrow's flight always alerts an evil victim and instantly directs his attention to the location of the user of the bow, negating all further surprise advantages. If the nature of this bow is discovered, the curse can be removed by magical means, such as through the employment of a *dispel* magic, *wish*, or *limited wish*, or by clerical means, such as through the employment of a *remove curse*. The curse is considered to be 12th-level magic. Once the curse is removed, the bow becomes a bow +3.

**XP Value:** Nil (1,500 without curse)

**GP Value:** 500 (10,500 without curse)

*Created by:* Dan Snuffin

#### Crossbow of enchantment

This weapon casts a spell upon any nonmagical bolt placed in it, enabling it to strike any creature that can only be hit by a magical weapon. Note that there are no bonuses to hit or to damage; the crossbow merely enables one to have a chance against unnatural monsters with nonmagical bolts. No additional benefit is bestowed upon a magical bolt.

**XP Value:** 1,500

**GP Value:** 7,500

*Created by:* Gregory W. Detwiler

#### Crossbow of Lir

This crossbow, which has a "to hit" bonus of +3, may be fired normally underwater at the same ranges a normal crossbow has on land, thereby giving underwater adventurers a badly needed missile capability. These bows are named after Manannan Mac Lir, Celtic god of the sea (*Legends & Lore*, page 28).

**XP Value:** 2,000

**GP Value:** 10,000

*Created by:* Gregory W. Detwiler

#### Crossbow of levitation

This is a magical crossbow that gives its user the ability to levitate as per the spell. While using the *crossbow of levitation*, the owner's feet are not in contact with the ground; at the least, the bow owner remains 1' above any "ground" surface. Furthermore, the only other weapon the bow owner may hold in hand is a dagger or knife. If a levitate spell is used on the possessor, the bow loses all of its power for 2-12 rounds. This crossbow has a +1 bonus to hit targets, but offers no bonuses to damage done by bolts. The user of this crossbow gains forward movement at a

rate of 1" while *levitated*, but he can be towed by flying creatures.

**XP Value:** 1,500

**GP Value:** 7,000

*Created by:* John M. Parker

#### Bolts of lightning

Also called *thunder bolts*, these bolts appear to be normal bolts until fired from a crossbow. After being shot, a *bolt of lightning* becomes a 7'-long bolt of lightning with a range equal to the maximum range of the crossbow which fired it (e.g., a *bolt* fired from a heavy crossbow has a range of 240 yards, and a *bolt* fired from a light crossbow has a range of 180 yards).

These *bolts* are +2 to hit and do 4-16 hp damage if they strike a target. A save vs. spells is applicable; if the save is successful, only half damage accrues to the creature struck. Furthermore, all creatures within a 15' radius of where this magical *bolt* hits have to save vs. petrification or be stunned for one round due to the ear-piercing clash of thunder which accompanies the strike.

*Bolts of lightning* are usually found in numbers ranging from 2-8. They are also often found mixed with normal bolts or with magical bolts of other types.

**XP Value:** 200

**GP Value:** 1,200

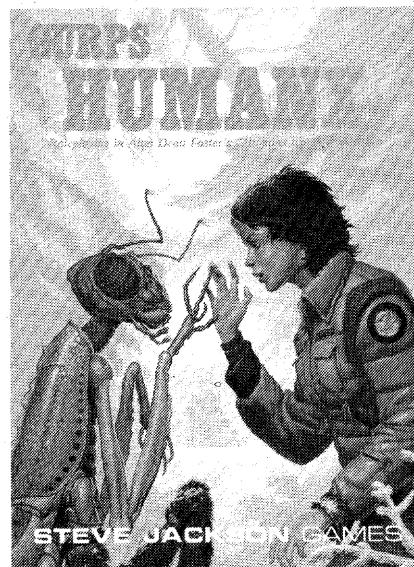
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A handy guide on handling weapons

# Two Hands Are Better

Illustration by Jim Holloway

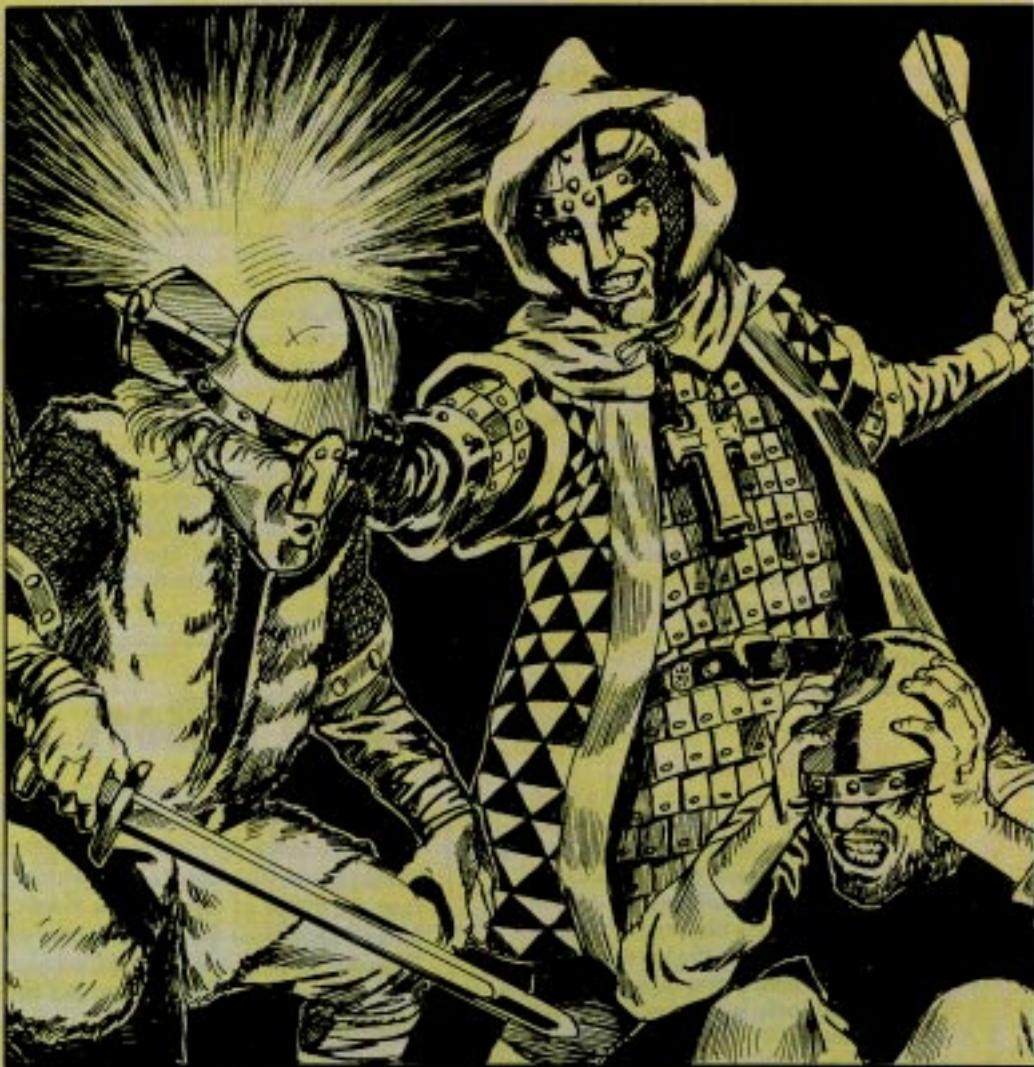


Table 1  
Weapon Categories by Length, Weight, and User's Race

	Dwarf	Elf	Gnome	Half-Elf	Halfling
<b>Secondary</b>	1'4"	1'8"	1'2"	1'9"	1'
	5½ lbs.	3½ lbs.	2½ lbs.	4 lbs.	2 lbs.
<b>Primary</b>	2'6"	3'2"	2'2"	3'6"	2'
	8¼ lbs.	5¼ lbs.	4 lbs.	6¼ lbs.	3 lbs.
<b>One-handed</b>	2'6"	3'2"	2'2"	3'6"	2'
	11 lbs.	7 lbs.	5 lbs.	8½ lbs.	4 lbs.
<b>Two-handed</b>	4'	5'	3'6"	5'6"	3'
	27½ lbs.	17¼ lbs.	12½ lbs.	20½ lbs.	10 lbs.
<b>Pole arms</b>	8'	10'	7'	11'	6'
	16½ lbs.	10½ lbs.	7½ lbs.	12½ lbs.	6 lbs.

# Than One

by Donald D. Miller

"I ready my crossbow, draw my sword, raise my shield, and with my free hand . . ."

This statement, though not likely to occur in an AD&D® game unless someone is running a Type V demon as a player character, illustrates some basic questions about the game rules. A character has, at most, two hands free with which to use weapons — but which weapons should he use with two hands? Or, if he chooses to use two weapons, which ones can he use? A halfling trying to use a 3' long sword with one hand would be like a human trying to swing a two-handed sword with one hand.

Several categories of weapons are hereby defined. A primary weapon is one used one-handed in the user's favored hand; a *secondary* weapon is used one-handed in the hand not favored by the user, at the same time the user has a primary weapon. Primary weapons may be used in either hand, though if used in the hand not favored, the weapon has a penalty to hit targets of -2. *One-handed* weapons are used only in one's favored hand and not with a secondary weapon. *Two-handed* weapons can only be used with both hands at once. *Pole arms* are two-handed weapons mounted on a haft, and are well described in *Unearthed Arcana*. Thus, all secondary weapons can be primary weapons, all primary weapons can be one-handed weapons, and any one-handed weapon can be used with two hands (though it produces no bonus to do so, except in the case of the bastard sword).

The reverse of each of the above statements, however, is not necessarily true.

The way in which a weapon may be used depends mainly on its length and weight. (Who's going to lift a 200-lb. hammer?) The balance and mobility of a weapon, reflected in its speed factor, also affect its use. Due to the difficulty involved in using a weapon in one's "off hand," secondary weapons are necessarily small and light, and have speed factors of no more than four. Primary and one-handed weapons usually have a length between one-third and two-thirds the user's height, with primary weapons being the lighter of these weapons, having speed factors of six or less. Larger and excessively heavy weapons require two hands to be wielded effectively. Weapons longer than the character is tall should be considered as pole arms, and their length should not exceed twice the user's height. (No, I haven't forgotten about pikes.)

Since humans are the dominant species in the AD&D game (my apologies to all dwarves and elves reading this article), the way demi-humans use weapons is based on human usage. A little time in the nearest library can give an interested individual an idea of how a certain weapon was normally used, and this information may be extrapolated with ease.

The *DMG* provides a list of the average strengths of each of the demi-human races (page 15), so the weight a demi-human is able to lift can be stated as a percentage of the weight a human can lift. After deciding appropriate length and weight limits for humans in each of the weapon categories, each of the demi-human races is allotted their percentage of the acceptable human weight. Usable weapon lengths are calculated in a similar manner, using the ratio between the average heights of humans and other races.

Since elves and half-elves are generally smaller and lighter than humans, their weaponry is limited to smaller and lighter weapons. With the elvish bonuses for using bows, long swords, and short swords, elves are not greatly handicapped by these limitations. Dwarves and half-orcs may lose the use of some weapons due to length, but they are not penalized in respect to weapon weights. Due to their muscular stature, dwarves are able to use heavier weapons than normal humans can. Gnomes and halflings, being the smallest of the demi-human races, are limited to using the smallest and lightest

weapons. A bonus to the weight allowed for gnomes and halflings has been given to put them on more competitive terms with the other races.

Characters who are notably larger or stronger than average may be given a bonus in the weapons they are able to use. A 5'-tall dwarf should be able to use the weapon restrictions for either dwarves or elves (whichever is better). Table 1 shows the maximum allowable lengths and weights of weapons that a character of one of the various races could *use* in each of the weapon categories. Remember that 1 lb. equals 10 gp weight, and refer to pages 26-27 in *Unearthed Arcana*.

Certain weapons require a little special consideration. Spear-type weapons (javelins, lances, pikes, etc.), due to their easier balance and ample handle space, should be considered as being half their actual length. Flexible weapons (flails, whips, etc.) should not be allowed for use with another weapon because of their difficulty to control. Since the bastard sword was designed to be used with either one or two hands, its user should be given a bonus in its use with two hands; the actual bonus is left to the DM's discretion. Remember that swords should not be used as pole arms.

All of the weapons in *Unearthed Arcana* are listed in Table 2, along with how they may be used by a demi-human, semi-human, or human character. The weapons are listed as primary (P), secondary (S), one-handed (1), or two-handed (2). Pole arms are listed as two-handed weapons for easier reference. Please remember that the listings in Table 2 are minimum figures, and that a weapon listed as being secondary could always be used as a primary, one-, or two-handed weapon. Consequently, the next time a dwarf swings his battle axe, he had better use both hands. Depending upon the campaign, the classification for some weapons may vary (e.g., some half-orcs might use two-handed swords, some halflings might use hand axes one-handed or spiked bucklers as secondary weapons, some elves might use halberds, etc.). Nonetheless, a careful look at weapon sizes and weights is encouraged.

[A variation on the use of two weapons at once appeared in DRAGON® issue #68, page 7 ("Be a two-fisted fighter"), reprinted in the Best of DRAGON Magazine Anthology vol. 4, page 45. Variant height and weight tables for humans and demi-humans appeared in DRAGON issue #91, page 10 ("Realistic vital statistics").]

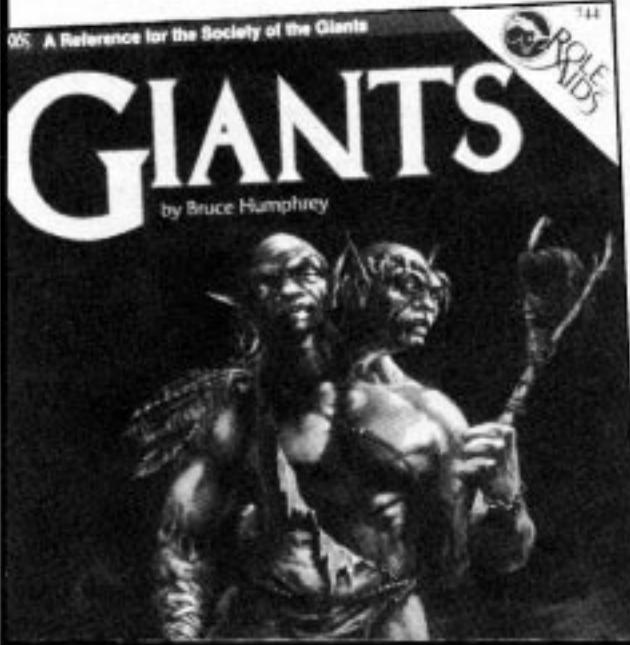
Half-Orc	Human
1'9"	2'
5 lbs.	5 lbs.
3'6"	3'9"
7½ lbs.	7½ lbs.
3'6"	3'9"
10 lbs.	10 lbs.
5'6"	6'
24½ lbs.	25 lbs.
11'	12'
15 lbs.	15 lbs.

**Table 2**  
**Required Numbers of Hands for Weapons**

Weapon type	Dwarf	Elf	Gnome	Half-Elf	Halfling	Half-Orc	Human
Aklys	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Atlatl and javelin	1	1	-	1	-	1	1
Axe, battle	2	2	2	2	-	2	2
Axe, hand	P	P	1	P	2	S	S
Bardiche	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Bec de corbin	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Bill-guisarme	2	-	-	-	-	2	2
Blowgun	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Bo stick	-	2	-	2	-	2	2
Bow, composite, long	-	2	-	2	-	2	2
Bow, composite, short	2	2	-	2	2	2	2
Bow, long	-	2	-	2	-	2	2
Bow short	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Caltrop	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Club	2	P	2	P	2	P	P
Crossbow, hand	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Crossbow, heavy	2	-	-	2	-	2	2
Crossbow, light	2	2	2	2	-	2	2
Dagger	S	S	P	S	P	S	S
Dart	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fauchard	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Fauchard-fork	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Flail, footman's	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Flail, horseman's	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fork, military	2	2	2	2	-	2	2
Garrot	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Glaive	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Glaive-guisarme	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Guisarme	2	2	2	2	-	2	2
Guisarme-vouge	2	-	-	-	-	2	2
Halberd	-	-	-	2	-	2	2
Hammer	P	P	1	P	2	S	S
Hammer, lucern	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Harpoon	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Hook fauchard	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Javelin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Jo stick	2	P	2	P	2	P	P
Knife	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Lance, heavy	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Lance, light	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Lance, medium	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Lasso	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mace, footman's	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
Mace, horseman's	P	P	1	P	2	S	S
Man catcher	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Morning star	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Pick, footman's military	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Pick, horseman's military	P	P	P	P	1	P	P
Pike	-	2	-	2	-	2	2
Ranseur	2	2	-	2	-	2	2
Sap	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Scimitar	2	P	2	P	2	P	P
Sling	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Spear	1	1	2	1	2	1	1
Spetum	2	2	2	2	-	2	2
Spiked buckler	S	S	S	S	-	S	S
Staff, quarter	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Staff sling	-	2	-	2	-	2	2
Sword, bastard	-	2	-	2	-	2	1
Sword, broad	2	2	2	1	-	P	P
Sword, falchion	2	2	2	1	-	P	P
Sword, khopesh	2	2	2	1	-	1	1
Sword, long	2	2	2	P	-	P	P
Sword, short	P	P	P	P	1	P	S
Sword, two-handed	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Trident	2	1	2	1	2	1	1
Vouge	2	-	-	2	-	2	2
Whip	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

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# In Defense of the

by Tim Merrett

A shield embodies protection, safety, and succor in the heat of battle. Everybody with two cents of AD&D® game knowledge grabs a shield for all 1st-level characters that can use one. "That's one more point of armor class," they declare smugly. But is it that easy? Does everyone have an inborn talent for shield use, or is it that characters don't need to have any specific knowledge to properly handle one? ("Here, boy, take this. If somebody takes a swing atcha', throw it in front of ya. An' do some cuttin' yerself.")

A shield is like many other pieces of equipment in the AD&D game. The purchase of a set of thieves' tools, for example, does not grant the ability to use them. The same is true of a weapon. Thus, we have our present dilemma: Is it fair to assume that a person could use a shield to full advantage without prior training? Probably not. For example, an inexperienced PC might not be able to use the shield in a manner which would not interfere with his swing. He may expose himself at a bad time as a result, allowing the enemy an easy strike. Furthermore, a shield the size of a buckler presents its own problems: It is so small that it would take a good deal of practice to use it for defense.

Now assume that a PC has learned to use all shields in general. Is it logical to say that all shields provide the same amount of protection? How can something the size of a buckler cover a defender as well as a large shield? Certainly, a buckler is more mobile, but it is not necessarily as effective as its larger counterparts. Follow this train of thought a little further. In DRAGON® issue #57, Len Lakofka tells us that nearly two-thirds of all blows are caught by a shield. This would seem to make the shield far more effective as protection than the single point of armor class it presently provides.

#### A new shield system

To put this into game terms, characters should be required to take a weapon proficiency in shield use in order to use a shield properly. In addition, characters should be required to take further proficiencies to gain full advantage of the various shield types. Table 1 should be consulted when considering shield use.

The armor-class column shows how much protection each shield provides if

the user is sufficiently proficient. The to hit column gives penalties to hit for all attack rolls that are suffered by a nonproficient user of a shield. Additionally, the nonproficient user gains but one point of armor class no matter what shield is used (the exception to this being the buckler; such a shield would be useless for defense, but could still be used for attacking, as described on page 78 of *Unearthed Arcana*).

Note the addition of a new shield, the mantlet, which was mentioned in previous issues of DRAGON Magazine. The mantlet was actually employed in hand-to-hand combat during the Middle Ages. Oval or rectangular in shape, the mantlet covers a 6' creature from head to toe. Attached to the bottom of the mantlet is a hinged spike that can be swung out and driven into the ground to provide a standing defense. This shield weighs 15 pounds and is considered very bulky. A mantlet should sell for 20 gp.

When a single shield proficiency is taken, it is assumed that the character has taken a basic course in the use of all shields. This single proficiency allows the shield-user to do the following: disregard the "to hit" penalties given in Table 1; use a buckler properly (reducing armor class by one point); and, use all other shield types with enough ability to reduce armor class by two points. Each additional proficiency taken provides another place of armor class for the pertinent shield used until the maximum protection allowed for each is reached as shown on Table 1. Thus, after three proficiencies are taken, all shields are usable to full advantage.

In order to arrive at the armor classes given for each shield, several factors have to be decided - the most important being the sizes of the different shields. The buckler is stated as being 1' in diameter. By extrapolating from the encumbrance charts, we assume that a small shield is 2' long and that a large shield is 4' in length. We can also deduce that the widths of the four shields are from smallest to largest: 1', 1½', 2', and 3'.

Additionally, a table on page 64 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide* states that a target of missile weapons receives beneficial modifiers to armor class for any cover or concealment it might have. This would also hold true for melee combat; it's a lot harder to hit someone hiding behind cover. Because of its more mobile defense, a shield qualifies more as concealment than as cover against missile fire - unless, as in

# Shield

the case of the mantlet, a user decides to hide behind it. Table 2 illustrates this use of a shield. The initial concealment figure is from the *DMG*, page 64. The percentage in parentheses is a conjectural figure of the degree to which a 6'-tall creature can be concealed by each shield. Although not a perfect match with the *DMG*'s figures on page 64, this does provide, a sound basis for correlation to shield protection.

When figuring a shield's protection, it is important to base the percentage figure for concealment on that provided for a 6' creature. A large shield would thus act as a mantlet to a creature only 4' tall, but would be considered small to a creature 12' in height.

Magical shields provide a special case. If a shield is enchanted, it acts as if the bearer has at least one point of shield proficiency (assuming the bearer can use shields). The bearer, also receives the magical bonus as usual. If the bearer already has proficiencies, he receives whatever bonus is applicable.

Because shields now provide a varying amount of protection, a determination must be made of shield type each time that a shield is found. Of all such shields found, 75% will be large (good for humans). Small shields have a 15% chance to be found, and bucklers and mantlets each have a 5% chance for appearance. Of course, the DM can always predetermine what is found.

## Shields as weapons

A shield can also be a very effective offensive tool. Remember the movies wherein the hero uses a shield to run over or bash his enemies into submission? The combat system in the AD&D game is simple enough that adding these tactics would not clutter it. There are actually provisions for it in the game now.

The buckler is the only shield that can be used for attack and defense in the same round. Characters need not be proficient to attack with a shield. The player must state that a PC is going to attack with his shield before any rolls are made that round. The three forms of shield attack are pummeling, pinning, and shield-rushing.

If a player is using System I, the first method of unarmed combat described in *Unearthed Arcana* (page 106), these attacks are resolved in the same manner as are pummeling, grappling (pinning), and overbearing (shield-rush) attacks. Pinning

differs from grappling only in that there must be a wall or some sturdy object or force against which to pin the opponent. Note that if a shield-rush is successful, an effort to pin the opponent to the floor might then be attempted.

The exceptions to these rules of attack are the buckler and mantlet. The former always attacks as described in *Unearthed Arcana*. The latter, because of its size, cannot be used to pummel an opponent.

System II, the second method of unarmed attack described in *Unearthed Arcana*, is a bit more complex and requires the further definition of a shield's usefulness. In pummeling, all shields are considered large, hard objects (the buckler and mantlet excluded as before). If the defender can still effectively employ his shield, it is figured into his armor class. Pinning an opponent with a shield works in the same manner as does a grappling attack, with a couple of modifications. The defender of such an attack would be able to use his shield for defensive armor class. In addition to the five methods given to break free of a grapple, a pin may be automatically broken after one round if the defender's strength is no more than four points lower than that of the attacker. Conversely, if the attacker's strength is five, or more points less than the defender's, he cannot successfully pin the opponent. Shield-rushing and overbearing attacks would not differ in use.

## Final thoughts

On the whole, this system does not adversely affect game balance, but it allows for a more realistic use of the shield. At the same time, it gives characters something to work for. One might ask: "Why make characters use valuable weapon proficiencies to learn shield use?" The reason is that it is not desirable for everyone to be completely proficient with

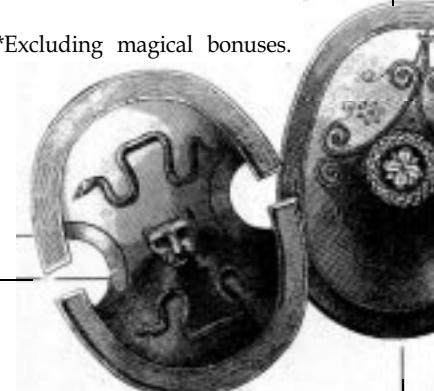
shields. The additional protection given would make it far and away the best non-weapon proficiency. Without this system, most characters would choose shield use to avoid suffering from attacks. But if weapon proficiencies are required, these characters are not likely to have many slots to spare until weapons proficiencies are gained. Remember: A character with an 18 dexterity, complete proficiency with a mantlet, and a suit of full plate armor has a frontal armor class of, -7! That type of protection must be earned.

This system can be altered to fit any individual campaign. One might decide to restrict this bonus to fighters and rangers, in the same manner that weapon specialization is treated. This may not be such a bad idea. One might also rule that, after becoming completely proficient with shields, each additional proficiency taken in shield use provides a +1 initiative bonus in striking the first blow. Shields should count for more, and these are just a few suggestions to make them do so.

**Table 1**  
**Protection by Shield Type**

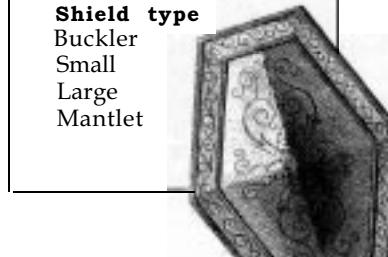
Shield type	Max. AC bonus*	"To hit" penalty
Buckler	1	0
Small	2	- 1
Large	3	- 2
Mantlet	4	- 3

\*Excluding magical bonuses.



**Table 2**  
**Percentage of Target Concealed**

Shield type	Concealment	AC bonus
Buckler	25% (12%)	+ 1
Small	50% (33%)	+ 2
Large	75% (88%)	+ 3
Mantlet	90% (100%)	+ 4



# Fighting for Keeps

by Roy G. Schelper

Blood steams in the snow. A weary fighter stands amidst the corpses of the vile creatures he has slain. Jewels and gold are heaped about. He counts his treasure, and when his tallying is done, he smiles smugly. Then, gazing heavenward, he shouts, "Hey, DM! I've just made 9th level! When da I get my keep?"

Faced with this situation, many Dungeon Masters simply grant the land for the freehold. This is often due to a desire to avoid large-scale battles which are often difficult to manage using the normal AD&D® game's combat system. Although the simple grant is perfectly acceptable, there is an alternative that can add an entirely new dimension to any campaign: the BATTLESYSTEM™ fantasy combat supplement. You can use this supplement to transform a boring task into an epic quest for a keep.

#### The value of land

There are several good reasons to avoid a straightforward land grant. First of all, in any feudal milieu, land ownership equals money and political power. If that land also includes a fortified structure, then it also equals military power. Agriculture is the primary means of producing wealth in most feudal societies; wealth and power are thus derived from the control of the means of production. A castle with any fortification value at all is costly to take if its owner decides to rebel or defy his overlord. A noble's power is directly based upon the number of holdings under his direct control, modified by each holding's productivity. It is sometimes the case that a noble is actually more powerful than his king; the Dukes of Burgundy were often more powerful than the French monarchs who ruled them. Even monarchs hold personal demesnes, which produce income and often include castles that provide the royal power base.

Consequently, any lord is highly reluctant to relinquish any land or castle, since that would reduce his own wealth and power. Occasionally, a property might fall heirless or to a minor, but the crown soon pounces upon these windfalls with alacrity. English history, for example, reports cases of unwed heiresses suddenly assigning their inheritance to the crown and entering convents. The convents generally cooperated with the crown because they

received the luckless girls' dowries as their share. Land, in short, always belongs to someone, and few are the lords who simply give it away. While the debate over realism in fantasy is far from the point of this article, if a realistic campaign world is desired, don't simply pass out land to any fighter who obtains the necessary experience points.

A keep should be earned. To even be in a position to do this, the character must have performed some great service for a monarch or great lord. (An alternative would be for the PC to purchase a noble title for a large sum - say, 500,000 gp. Feudal rulers were always short of cash, since most of their income was in the form of goods and services.) Depending upon the PC's status, this grant might also include induction into the lowest rank of nobility, because ownership of a castle and a title were virtually synonymous.

However, given the previous discussion on the rarity of vacant holdings, the DM should provide a catch to the deal. One possibility is that the title is clouded, and the property is currently held by an evil baron. In another example, the land could be in an area that was once part of the kingdom, but is presently outside its borders. Another possibility is that the castle is owned by a rebellious lord, and the holding is in forfeit to the crown. Regardless of which of the myriad possibilities is chosen, the PC should be required to swear fealty before the overlord reveals the fine print: The castle is yours - if you can take it.

This oath of fealty is taken seriously; to be forsaken is considered an act of rebellion. In many cases, oathbreakers are outlawed, with bounties offered for their heads. Players should be made aware that the oath is not simply a nice bit of chrome that can be dropped just because "their" castle actually belongs to someone else at the moment.

An oath of fealty cuts both ways, though, and the overlord also has obligations as well. Indeed, the entire fabric of feudal societies is based upon an elaborate series of agreements between peasants and nobles, nobles and overlords, and overlords and monarchs. The overlord must give as good as he gets.

#### Raising an army

Once the PC has received his grant and sworn his oath, the raising of an army may begin. Unless a war has just ended or

# *supplement*

the area has a large population surplus, the number of troops available for hire will be quite limited in both number and quality. To expedite the raising of a large force, DMs should use Table 1.

If there are insufficient PCs to act as unit commanders, the questing PC needs to recruit captains. The DM can create these NPCs and have them simply show up searching for employment (or Table 2 may be employed instead).

When the PC finds troops for hire and a leader to command them, these characters must be paid. All NPC commanders and troops demand an enlistment bonus of one month's pay, plus their first months pay in advance. The players should understand that these characters are not followers but expert hirelings. If they are abused or cheated, they desert or mutiny. Also, all of the units must be provisioned and maintained. To simplify this process, use Table 3.

During the period that the quester is raising his force, all the units that have already entered service must be paid monthly, fed daily, and equipped as necessary. Conflicts between restless, idle troops and local citizens are always possible. Such conflicts can be used at the DMs discretion to reflect the difficulty of being an army commander. Furthermore, for an army to be at maximum effectiveness, a variety of support personnel and equipment are required. Some of the required personnel and equipment and their costs can be found in Table 4.

## Foes and more foes

Now that the questing army has been formed, it's time to create the hostile force. This task is very similar to that of stocking a dungeon, except that it is not advisable to generate these forces randomly. First, examine the PCs' forces. Next, determine what sorts of beings are available to their opponents. Give extra weight to spell-casters in the party, because even a mid-level one can neutralize large numbers of troops. Consider the alignments of the monsters. Also, think about the current owner of the land to be taken. Is he despotic? Can he levy troops locally? Does he have allies and vassals?

These considerations will assist the DM in creating the opposing commander (which is the next step). Make sure that he is powerful enough to have taken or earned the land he holds. Next, examine the PCs to determine what sort of heroes are going to take the field against the

enemy. (Unless you're feeling very confident or unless the party is small, don't try to match the party's numbers.) While you're creating enemies, give them any magical equipment deemed necessary and logical for them to have.

Once the hostile force and its commanders are created, give some thought to what type of defense the hostile lord will employ. Will he sit behind his walls, attack madly, or launch a cunning ambush? In any event, the enemy commander should be assumed to have extensive knowledge of the local terrain and climatic conditions. If the nature of the terrain is not known to the PCs and they do no scouting, the DM might prepare a nasty surprise for them.

## Battlefields and victory

The forces have been selected. Spells have been memorized. The objective is clear. Swords have been drawn, and the battle is nigh. But where will the combatants fight? What if it rains?

The easiest answer to these questions is to conduct the battle on a featureless plain of 36" X 48" on a sunny, summer day at nine o'clock in the morning. That is also the most boring answer. A grove of trees, a stream, or a village can provide a focus for the battle. Under certain circumstances, such terrain features can also provide special victory conditions. Remember that every type of feature added to the battle also adds complexity. Nonetheless, if the situation warrants dense forests or steep hills, don't hesitate to use them.

Regardless of the terrain you decide to employ, it's a good idea to have the battle in daylight to simplify sighting problems. The weather, on the other hand, is an aspect of the battle that can be quite critical. Rain, fog, or high winds can ground air units; mud or snow can cripple mounted units; and intense heat or cold can debilitate men and beasts. Weather can be determined using the system found in the BATTLESYSTEM rules, but there are other methods you can use. In any case, weather provides an opportunity to add many different, intriguing possibilities.

Everything has been determined now except the victory conditions. It is possible to have a simple fight to the death - whoever kills all his opponents first wins. However, this type of combat lacks finesse. There are no hard and fast rules for deciding who wins; too many factors may come into play. Consider the relevant factors, including the battlefield, the point of the

quest, and the nature of the opponents. For example, a raid on the baggage train would have different victory conditions than an assault on a keep. The best bet is for the DM to use his own judgment.

## A quest for keeps

The remainder of this article is a demonstration of the various techniques previously discussed. What follows is a sample "keep quest" for a party of eight PCs, ranging in experience from 8th to 12th level, two of whom are magic-users. Initially, the party's forces consist of one unit of short-bow archers, two units of heavy infantry, and one unit of light cavalry. BATTLESYSTEM statistics follow under each scenario description.

The central PC in this case is Rialto, a 12th-level magic-user of Imperial descent. Rialto provided a very important series of services to the Emperor, who rewarded him with the title Warden of the Western Marches. Unfortunately, this bequest lies in a region that has been outside the Empire's borders for well over 300 years. To have more than an empty title, Rialto must raise an army to take his land. Rialto recruits his comrades to assist him in his quest. He then learns of a further complication: War has broken out along the only feasible route to his new lands, and humanoid opponents are everywhere.

All abbreviations for units are as per page 5 of the BATTLESYSTEM supplement rule book. The saving-throw categories have been combined into "Saves," and weapons information has been similarly condensed. "SA" stands for "special abilities," and "LRC" stands for "Level/Race/Class."

## Scenario 1

### The Battle of Newbridge

The party and army have marched for one month and are now within the Imperial-humanoid war zone. When they are about six miles from the last major city before the frontier (coincidentally, Rialto's home city), they encounter refugees. The fleeing people tell the party that the invaders have crashed through the frontier defenses and seem intent on attacking the town. Also, the party is informed that a major battle is being fought outside the city. Moments later, the PCs' rear guard reports that a large group of monsters is approaching (evidently some local monsters are marching to assist their brethren). Left unhindered, these creatures will

strike the Imperial rear guard in the midst of battle, with disastrous consequences. The party must stand and fight.

### The battlefield

A rapid river is the critical terrain feature in this scenario; it can only be crossed at the bridge. Also, there is a small village surrounded by a 4' wall. Consult Map 1 for further details.

### Initial deployment

The PCs' forces deploy first within 12" of the bridge on the east side of the river. The monsters deploy 9" from the eastern edge of the map north of the river.

### Victory conditions

The monsters win if they exit 20 or more unrouted units off the western edge of the map. The party wins if no monsters exit the western edge of the map. Any other result is a draw.

### The PCs' forces

"Leo's Crusaders": Regular infantry; AC 4; #FIG 10; Unit Commander PC; HD/fig 10; Ratio 10:1; LRC 1/human/fighter; MV 9"; Size M; Saves Fl; AR 20; ML 13; long swords; SA can form shield wall.

"Dalwin's Hammers": Same as above, but with a different Unit Commander.

"Aldo's Archers": Regular bowmen; AC 8; #FIG 10; Unit Commander PC; HD/fig 10; Ratio 10:1; LRC 1/human/fighter; MV 12"; Size M; Saves Fl; AR 20; ML 11; short bows and daggers.

"F Troop": Regular cavalry; AC 8; #FIG 10; Unit Commander PC; HD/fig 20; Ratio 10:1; LRC 1/human/fighter; MV 24"; Size L; Saves Fl; AR 20; ML 13; lances, horseman's maces, and light horses.

### Hostile forces

"Meanies": Regular orc; AC 6; #FIG 16; Unit Commander Snarler, CR 6"; HD/fig 10; Ratio 10:1; orcs; MV 9"; Size M; Saves Fl; AR 19, -1 in daylight; ML 13; DL 11; scimitars.

"Hackers": Same as above, except for Unit Commander Gorp, CR 6".

"Woods Terrors": Regular goblin cavalry; AC 6; #FIG 12; Unit Commander Quibble, CR 12"; HD/fig 30; Ratio 10:1; goblins and warg wolves; MV 18"; Size M; Saves Fl; AR 20; ML 13; DL 11; spears and daggers.

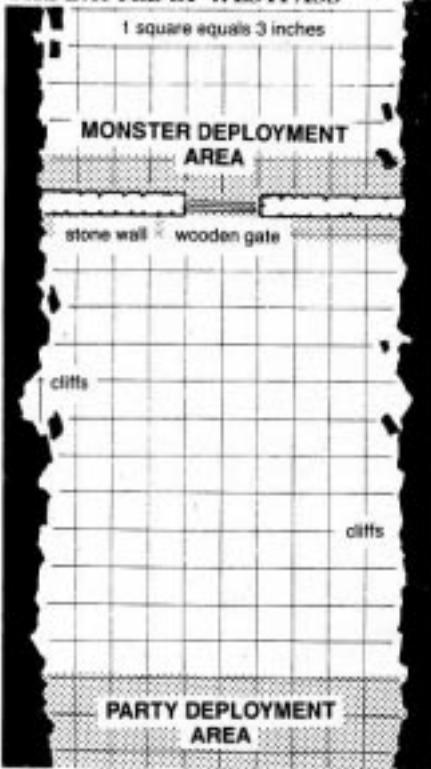
"Bloody Spears": Regular bugbears; AC 5; #FIG 16; Unit Commander Grisly, CR 6"; HD/fig 15; Ratio 5:1; bugbears; MV 9"; Size L; Saves F3; AR 16; ML 12; DL 10; spears.

### Heroes and commanders

Varn: Fl0; Army Commander; S 15, I 13, W 11, D 11, Co 16, Ch 17; AC -1; CB +2; human; Saves Fl0; HD 10; CR 18"; hp 72; MV 9"/15"; long sword +3; #AT 3/2; THAC0 9; AR 24; SA shield +3 and potion of extra-healing; AL LE.

Map 2

### THE BATTLE OF WESTPASS



Joebob: Hero; AC 3; Ettin; Saves F10; HD 10; hp 68; MV 12"; large and small clubs; #AT 2; THAC0 12; AR 27.

Samendave: Same as Joebob (hp 61).

Puddentane: Same as Joebob (hp 55).

### Scenario 2

#### The Battle of Westpass

After the battle at Newbridge, the PCs push on toward the goal. Avoiding the contending armies, they enter the mountains – but the only pass is fortified and held in force by humanoid invaders. The season is late fall; winter is near. The PCs hear rumors that the invaders may be retreating. They must force the pass quickly or be caught between two forces.

### The battlefield

The battle takes place in a narrow mountain pass bounded on the north and south by cliffs 400' tall. A 5'-high wall, pierced by a wooden gate, spans the pass (see Map 2).

### Initial deployment

The monsters deploy first within 3" of the wall. The party deploys within 6" of the eastern edge of the map.

### Victory conditions

If there are no unrouted units on the map, the monsters win. If there are no monster units within 6" of the wall, the party wins. All other results are considered a draw.

### The PCs' forces

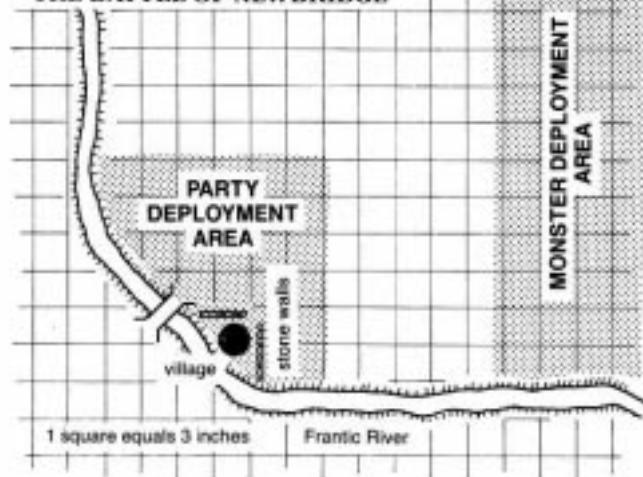
Same as Scenario 1, minus any permanent losses.

### The pass garrison

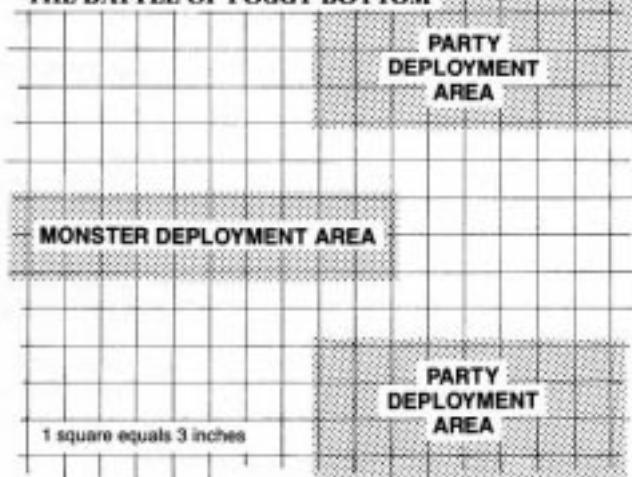
"Sharpers": Regular goblins; AC 6; #FIG 16; Unit Commander Smedley, CR 4"; HD/fig 10; Ratio 10:1; Goblins; MV 6"; Size S; Saves Fl; AR 20, -1 in daylight; ML 10; DL 10; short bows.

"Breakers": same as above, except for Unit Commander Snarl, CR 4".

MAP 1  
THE BATTLE OF NEWBRIDGE



MAP 3  
THE BATTLE OF FOGGY BOTTOM



"Red Maimers": Regular gnolls; AC 5; #FIG 12; Unit Commander Gnarly, CR 6"; HD/fig 20; Ratio 10:l; gnolls; MV 9"; Size L; Saves F2; AR 16; ML 12; DL 10; pikes.

"Scum": same as above, except for Unit Commander Grazzy, CR 6".

#### **Heroes and commanders**

Fallou: F14; Army Commander; S 16, I 11, W 12, D 13, Co 17, Ch 16; Saves F14; AC 0; CB + 1; human; HD 9 + ; CR 19"; hp 90; MV 18"; mace +2 ; #AT 2; THAC0 6; SA boots of speed and plate mail + 1; AL CE.

Naz: MU8; Deputy Army Commander; S 9, I 16, W 8, D 16, Co 6, Ch 11; AC 8; CB 0; human; Saves MU 8; HD 8; CR 9" ; hp 24; MV 12"; dagger +1; THAC0 18; AR 33; SA spell use *dimension door, ice storm, fly, fireball ( X 2), mirror image, rope trick, web, magic missile ( X 3), and shield;* ALNE.

Igor Bic: Fire giant; Hero; AC 3; CB 0; Saves F11; HD 11; hp 70; MV 12"; huge sword; THAC0 10; AR 25; SA hurl rocks, immunity to fire.

Efgor Bic: Same as Igor Bic (hp 62).

### **Scenario 3**

#### **The Battle of Foggy Bottom**

After forcing its way through Westpass, the party skirts the land of the invaders. During the conflict at Westpass, the PCs were able to liberate three captured units. These men were so grateful that they offered to serve Rialto for a time. When the party reaches the Western Marches, a group of disaffected peasants are similarly recruited.

The weather turns very contrary, and a persistent fog sets in. The party's force slowly marches across the plains, guided by a flying PC. Suddenly, the guide discovers an ominously large force on a collision course. The holder of the sought-for keep has received reports of the party's approach. He has elected to sortie from his castle, confident that his powerful army could crush his rivals in the field. The party rapidly uses its advanced warning and the fog's concealment to set an ambush, hoping to use surprise to offset their inferior numbers.

#### **The battlefield**

This time, the map is a featureless plain 36" X 48".

#### **Initial deployment**

The monsters deploy first. All units are in closed formation, one behind the other, in the same order that they are listed, with 1" between units. The leading unit is 30" from the western edge of the map, and the column must be at least 15" from either the northern or southern edge. Party forces are deployed in any legal formation within 12" of either the northern or southern edge of the map, but within 24" of the eastern edge.

**Table 1**  
**Troop Availability**

#### **Roll/month**

#### **(1d100) Available forces**

01-03	No forces available
04-10	100 archers (short bows and leather armor)
11-20	100 infantry (short swords, small shields, and chain mail)
21-30	100 cavalry (light war horses, long swords, and leather armor)
31-40	100 cavalry (heavy war horses, heavy lances, and chain mail)
41-50	100 infantry (long swords, large shields, and chain mail)
51-60	100 archers (long bows and leather armor)
61-65	100 dwarven infantry (axes and chain mail)
66-70	100 elven infantry (long swords, long bows, and leather armor)*
71-75	100 halfling slingers (slings, daggers, and leather armor)*
76-80	200 zero-level peasants (no equipment)
81-90	100 infantry (banded leather armor and spears)
91-95	100 cavalry (compound short bows, scimitars, leather armor, and light war horses)
96-97	100 elite elves (Fl/MUI) (long swords, long bows, and scale mail) **
98-99	100 2nd-level infantry (two-handed swords and plate mail)
00	100 hippogriff airmobile cavalry (short bows, long swords, and leather armor)

Unless otherwise specified, all units are 1st level. All forces include sergeants at a ratio of one per nine fighters.

\* These forces may use Skirmish formations.

\*\* The DM should choose one offensive and one defensive spell, and allow the commander to decide which has been memorized before battle begins.

**Table 2**  
**Captain Availability**

<b>Roll/month (1d12)</b>	<b>Available captain</b>
1	None available
2-5	5th-level human fighter
6-7	6th-level human fighter
8	7th-level human fighter
9	8th-level human fighter
10	5th-level elven fighter
11	5th-level dwarven fighter
12	5th-level half-orc fighter

**Table 3**  
**Monthly Wages and Maintenance Costs**

	<b>Wages</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>
Short-bow archers	360 gp	30 gp
Long-bow archers	720 gp	30 gp
Slingers	540 gp	30 gp
Light infantry	200 gp	30 gp
Heavy infantry	400 gp	30 gp
Light cavalry	540 gp	45 gp
Heavy cavalry	1,080 gp	45 gp
Horse archers	900 gp	45 gp
Elite troops	1,500 gp	35 gp
Airmobile	3,000 gp	120 gp

All costs are based on 100 men (90 soldiers and 10 sergeants). Increase costs appropriately for larger units. All costs are based on 1st-level units; as units gain levels, they demand 25% pay increases per level. The monthly pay for an NPC captain is 100 gp per level. Maintenance for officers is included in that of their unit.

**Table 4**  
**Support Personnel and Equipment Costs**

Special personnel	No. required per 100 men	Monthly cost	Initial cost
Leather worker	1	30 sp	5 gP
Pack handler	5	30 sp	250 gP
Teamster	2	5 gP	275 gP
Armorer	3	100 gP	400 gP
Blacksmith	2	30 gP	300 gP
Camp follower	10		

Initial costs include all necessary tools and equipment for the hirelings to do their jobs. For very short campaigns, forces may do without these specialists.

**Table 5**  
**Weather Table**

Roll/turn (1d6)	Weather condition
1	Fog lightens
2-5	No change
6	Fog thickens

If the fog lightens, the weather becomes clear. If the fog thickens, it becomes a heavy fog. If a heavy fog thickens, treat it as no change in weather. If a heavy fog lightens, it becomes fog. For the ill effects of fog, consult the BATTLESYSTEM supplement rules, page 21.

#### **Special conditions**

- At the start of the battle, the weather is foggy. Each turn after the initiative phase, beginning with the second turn, the party rolls 1d6 and consults Table 5.
- On the first game turn, the party automatically has initiative.

#### **The PCs' forces**

Same as Scenario 2, less any permanent losses, plus the following units:

"Exon's Extras": Regular infantry; AC 4; #FIG 10; Unit Commander PC; HD/fig 20; Ratio 10:1; 2/human/fighter; MV 9"; Size M; Saves F1; AR 20; ML 11; DL 12; long bows.

"Fudd's Wildcats": Regular cavalry; AC 4; #FIG 10; Unit Commander PC; HD/fig 20; Ratio 10:1; 1/human/fighter; MV 18"; Size L; Saves F1; AR 20; ML 13; DL 14; long swords.

Peasant levy: Mob; AC 9; #FIG 20; Unit Commander none; HD/fig 6; Ratio 10:1; 0/human/fighter; MV 12"; Size M; Saves F0; AR 21; ML 9; DL 9; fauchards.

#### **Hostile forces**

"Crashing Boars": Regular orc cavalry; AC 6; #FIG 12; Unit Commander Gronk, CR 8"; HD/fig 40; Ratio 10:1; orc and giant boar; MV 12"; Size M; Saves F1; AR 19, -1 in daylight; ML 14; DL 13; spears.

"Green Guts": Regular gnoll infantry; AC 5; #FIG 12; Unit Commander Sneer, CR 6"; HD/fig 20; Ratio 10:1; gnolls; MV 9"; Size

L; Saves F2; AR 16; ML 12; DL 10; spears.

"Numbskulls": Regular hill giants; AC 4; #FIG 12; Unit Commander Smokey; HD/fig 42; Ratio 5:1; hill giants; MV 12"; Size L; Saves F8; AR 17; ML 14; DL 12; huge clubs.

"Iron Guard": Regular infantry; AC 3; #FIG 12; Unit Commander The Black Knight; HD/fig 30; Ratio 10:1; 3/human/fighter; MV 6"; Size M; Saves F3; AR 18; ML 13; DL 12; two-handed swords.

"Hell on Wheels": Regular chariots; AC 3; #FIG 4; Unit Commander Lioneddes CR 9"; HD/fig 60; Ratio 10:1; lions and humans; MV 12"; Size L; Saves Fl; AR 16; ML 12; DL 11; spears and javelins.

"Griffon Airmobile": Regular cavalry; AC 8; #FIG 12; Unit Commander Ace; HD/fig 40; Ratio 10:1; griffons and humans; MV 12"/30"; Size L; Saves F1; AR 20; ML 13; DL 12; javelins and short bows.

#### **Heroes and commanders**

Baron Demento: F20; Army Commander; S 17, I 15, W 9, D 15, Co 16, Ch 18; AC -3; CB +2; human; Saves F20; HD 9+; CR 24"; hp 110; MV 6"/15"/12"; *long sword* +3; #AT 2; THAC0 0; AR 15; SA *shield* +2, *plate mail armor* +3, *ring of flying*, *brooch of shielding*, *helm of teleportation*, and heavy war horse with chain-mail barding; AL CE.

The Black Knight: F14; Unit/Deputy Army Commander; S 16, I 12, W 8, D 17, Co 17, Ch 16; AC -1; CB +1; human; Saves F14; HD 9+; CR 18"; hp 92; MV 9"/18"; *broad sword* +3; #AT 2; THAC0 4; AR 19; SA *scale mail* +2, potion of *extra-healing*, and medium war horse; AL LE.

Smokey: Fire giant; Unit Commander; AC 3; CB 0; Saves Fl; HD 11; CR 8"; hp 76; MV 12"; huge sword; THAC0 9; AR 24; SA immune to fire.

Ace: A10; Unit Commander; S 14, I 14, W 8, D 18, Co 15, Ch 16; AC 2; CB +1; human; Saves T10; HD 8; CR 13"; hp 47; MV 12"/30"; *dagger* +2 (poisoned); THAC0 14; AR 29; SA *leather armor* +2, *wand of magic missiles* (47 charges), *ring of feather falling*, potion of *invisibility*, and mounted on a griffon; AL LE.

#### **Aftermath**

While the BATTLESYSTEM supplement is perfect for conducting entire wars and monstrous invasions, it can also be used for small-scale actions. Furthermore, if PCs are required to win their castles, it then becomes an indispensable aid because it permits the DM to conduct small battles with only modest bits of work. Also, the players will feel that they have truly earned their freeholds. All in all, the BATTLESYSTEM supplement is a very valuable tool for this purpose. If you are going to fight, then fight for keeps!

[Further information on mustering troops appeared in Tables and Tables of Troops" in DRAGON® issue #99, and "Armies from the Ground Up," in issue #125. Ambushes are discussed in "In the Heat of the Fight" in this issue.]

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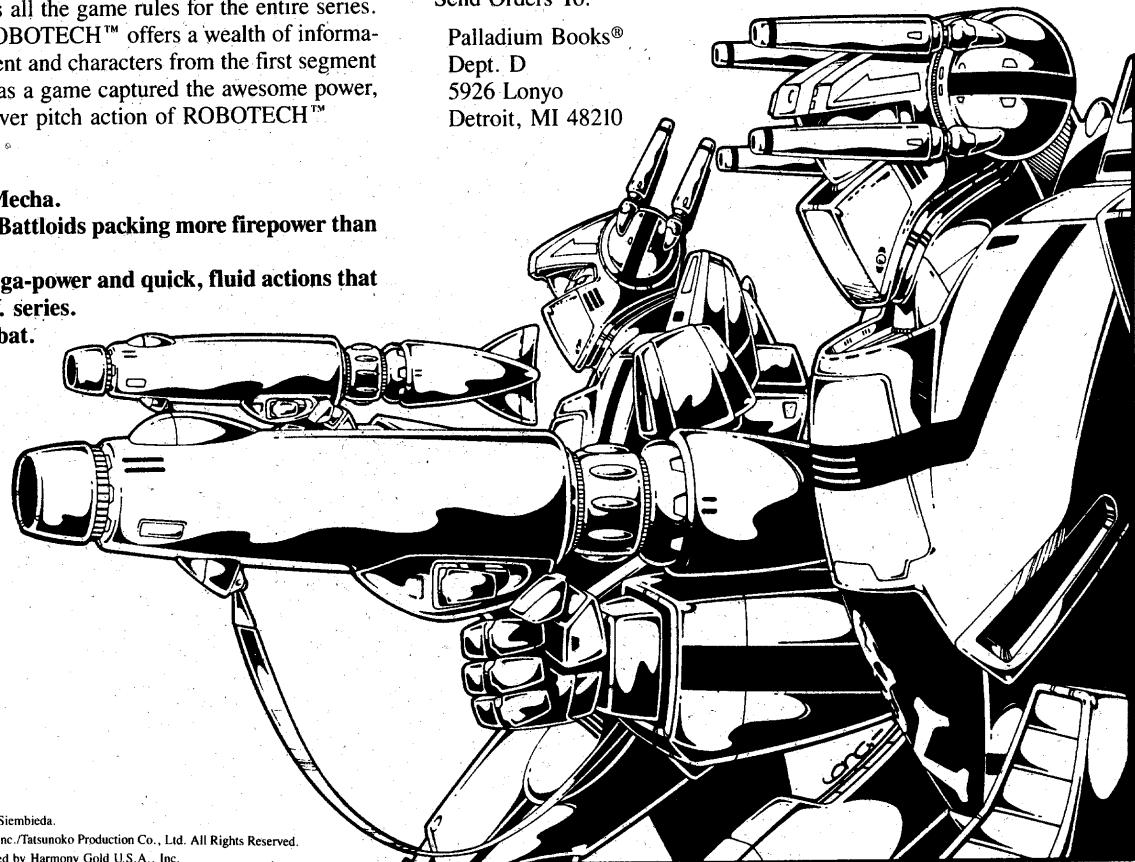
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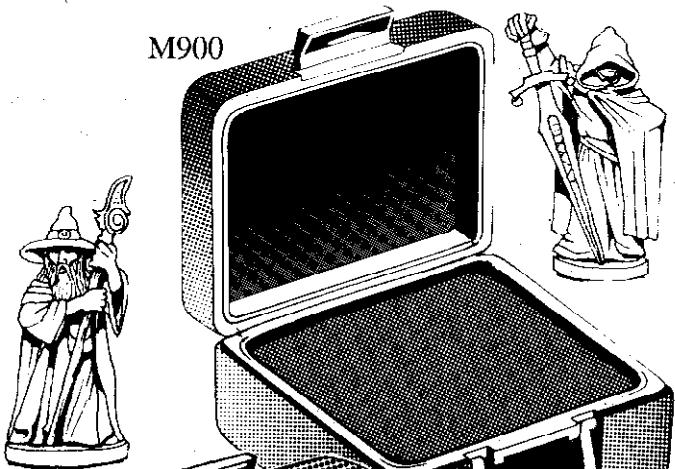
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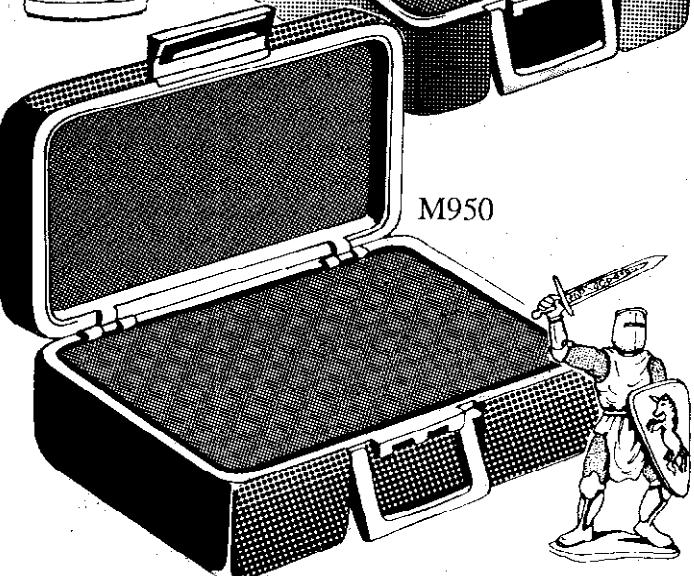
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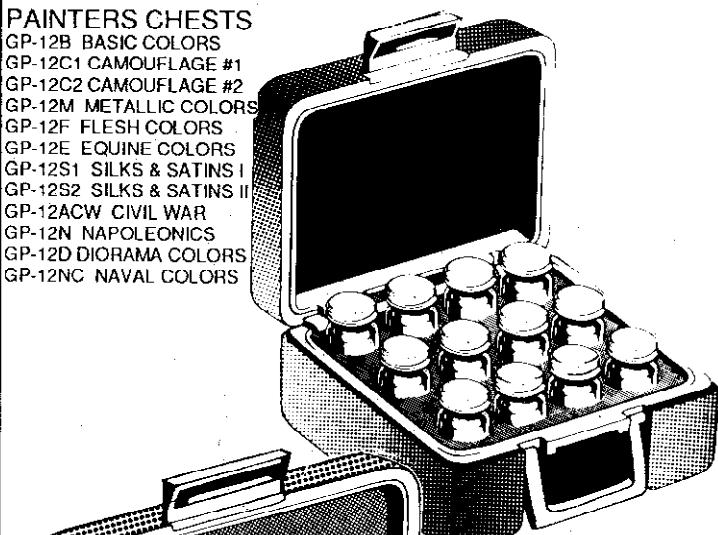
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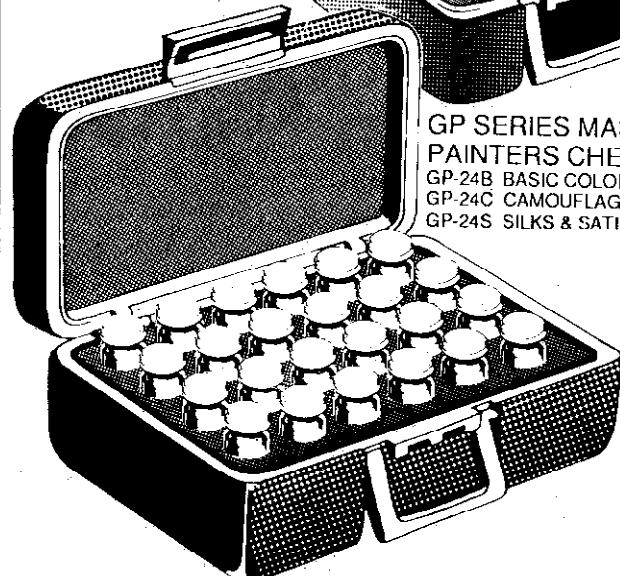
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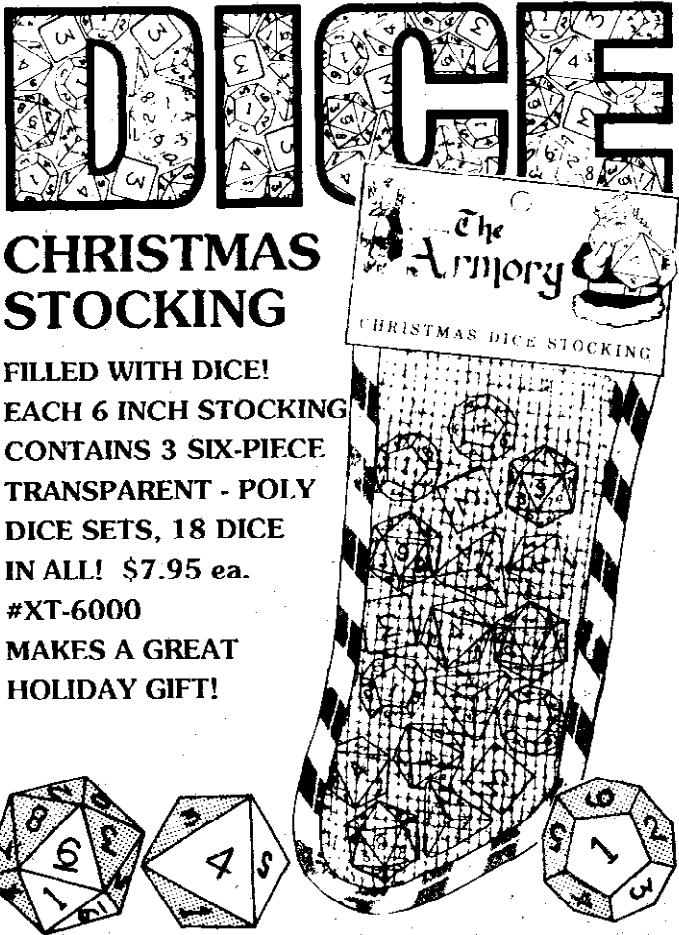


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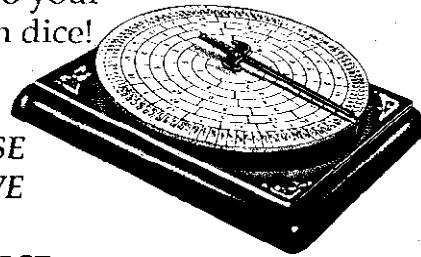
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# In the Heat of the

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by Sean Holland

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Tired of meeting the same old orcish mobs? Want to spring a new combat situation or two on your players? This article expands upon several ideas involving combat as presented in the AD&D® game rules, along with some new ideas on the subject.

### Ambush!

An ambush is a surprise attack made from concealed positions. It should take at least a melee round to prepare an ambush in the best of terrain (dense forest or jungle) and hours in the worst of terrain (plains or desert). Ambushers gain a +2 bonus on surprise rolls over their targets, unless their targets have stated that they were looking for ambushes, in which case the chance of surprise is normal.

A character who has a reduced chance of being surprised (such as a ranger or monk) has twice his normal chance of being surprised by a successful ambush (that is, an ambush when the victim was not looking for ambushers). If he is not surprised, he will have noted the telltale signs of the ambush just before it was sprung, but was not able to warn any others he was traveling with. If a character with a reduced chance of surprise is looking for ambushes, he has a 10% base (30% base for a ranger) with +3% per level chance of spotting the ambush before he walks into it. If the ambush is spotted before it is sprung, those warned about the ambush are not surprised by it.

Some ambushes involve blocking off routes of escape. The most common ways of doing this are with concealed pits around 4' deep (sometimes with sharpened stakes in them), trees felled so that they block the road, and ropes or nets strung across the route. The only disadvantage to an ambush is that once it is set, it cannot be moved. If your target takes another route, try again another time.

Most ambushes are conducted with missile fire; as a result, cover and concealment adjustments to armor class come into play (see the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, page 64). Ambushes are the favored attack form of bandits, brigands, humanoid raiders, and many adventurers.

### Spooking

In strange terrain with unfamiliar and weird noises around them, people tend to

become spooked, nervous, and jumpy. To resist being spooked, a character must save vs. spells, adding +1 to the save for every three levels the character has. If the save is failed, the character is -1 to hit and -1 to save against fear. Wisdom bonuses to the save apply. A henchman or hireling must make a morale check (at -10% if his employer or the leader of the party is spooked). If the morale check is failed, the character suffers the same effects as the PCs, except that he also has -5% to his morale. Spooking lasts until the unfamiliar terrain is left, a *bless*, *aid*, *prayer*, or *remove fear* spell is cast on the affected individual, or whatever is causing the spooking is defeated.

Strange terrain differs from race to race and culture to culture. Dark tunnels with dripping water and strange moans may be spooky to a human or elf, but not to a dwarf. An elven forest that echoes with elven songs is spooky to a goblin or orc. A mist-shrouded, blackstone castle that echoes with organ music is spooky to just about everyone. Beings immune to fear, like trolls and cavaliers, cannot be spooked. Obviously, undead are immune as well.

### Mob frenzy

Frenzy is a state of mind wherein violence is more important than personal survival. The effects of frenzy are such that the affected individual has +1 to damage and +1 to saves against mind-affecting spells. Individuals need make no morale checks until they have sustained at least 50% casualties (and those at no penalties). However, frenzied individuals have a -1 penalty to their armor class and to saving throws against illusions. Frenzy is dispelled when the affected individuals fail a morale check or a save against fear (successful or not) is made.

Only humans and humanoids with intelligences of 14 or less can be excited into a state of frenzy. It requires someone with a high charisma (16+) to excite a group into frenzy, and takes five minutes per point of average intelligence in the group to excite the group into a frenzy. This time is reduced if the group that is being whipped into a frenzy is intoxicated; reduce the time by 10% if slightly intoxicated, by 25% if moderately intoxicated, and by 50% if greatly intoxicated. Frenzy and intoxication effects (see the DMG, pages 82-83, for intoxication effects) are combined and cumulative.

# Fight

Player characters who willingly listen to someone who is trying to whip them into a frenzy may try to resist. To avoid being whipped into a frenzy, a saving throw vs. spells must be made. Characters with an intelligence or wisdom of 15 + automatically resist if they choose to do so.

Great barbarian and humanoid leaders whip their troops into a frenzy before an important battle, and agitators whip irate mobs into a frenzy to cause riots. Frenzied mobs do not take orders well, and are usually just pointed in the right direction to attack whatever crosses their path.

## Berserkers and battle lust

Berserkers can generate the ultimate form of frenzy, sometimes called battle lust. In this state of mind, nothing matters more than the destruction of the enemy. Even suicidal attacks are made while a character is berserk. The effects of this state are as follows: The berserker has either twice his normal number of attacks, or his normal number of attacks at +2 to hit; he is immune to mind-affecting spells, including *fear*; and he never checks morale. A berserker also remains conscious and able to fight at zero hit points. Berserker bonuses and intoxication effects are cumulative, because berserkers often drink before going into combat.

In addition to the (human) berserkers listed in the *Monster Manual*, many humanoid tribes have berserkers. A nonhuman berserker gains +1 hp per hit die it has in addition to the bonuses listed above. Thus, an orcish berserker would have 1 + 1 HD, a hobgoblin berserker would have 1+2 HD, and a frost-giant berserker would have 10 HD +1d4 hp + 10 hp for being a berserker. Berserkers will not use missile weapons, although they may use thrown and hurled weapons.

All humanoid tribes may have berserkers, although no more than 5% of the tribe's warriors may be berserkers. Minoths, lizard men, troglodytes, derro, and tabaxi (who call their berserkers "blood-stalkers") are other races that occasionally have berserkers. Of all the races of giantkind, only fire and frost giants have berserkers, and then only rarely. Some clans of northern dwarves also have berserkers, and there are rumors of small groups of berserk drow warriors. When calculating the experience-point value of a berserker, the ability to go berserk is considered a special ability. Berserkers may receive other special ability

bonuses from the ability to go berserk (such as four or more attacks per round).

## Fanatics

Fanatics hold a set of beliefs with such conviction that they are willing to die to uphold them or to convince others of the validity of their beliefs. Most also believe that if they die in the service of their cause, their souls go directly to Paradise. Fanatics have +1 to hit and damage, and +1 to save against magic cast by those who oppose their religion. They never have to check morale. Fanatics who fail a save against *fear* lose all fanaticism bonuses until the *fear* wears off.

True fanatics are rare; in addition to their great fighting ability, they are noted for their great intolerance of outsiders and hatred of unbelievers. Dervishes and elite temple guards are the main extent of human fanatics, although others are occasionally encountered. A humanoid tribe might be taken over by a shaman who might be able to make the tribe into a group of fanatics, but this is extremely rare. Some drow raiding parties have members who are fanatical.

Player characters who are true fanatics should not be allowed in campaigns, because of their great intolerance. Under certain conditions (such as fighting the high priest of an enemy religion), PC paladins and clerics might be able to gain fanaticism bonuses, but such bonuses won't last.

A fanatical individual is not subject to frenzy (as described above) unless the condition is caused by a high priest (or other great leader) of their religion. If affected by frenzy, the bonuses and penalties of each state are cumulative.

## Unusual terrain

*Shipboard.* Fighting on a ship is difficult because the deck is constantly moving. If a character on shipboard does not have "sea legs" (experience on shipboard), he has -1 to hit and -1 to his dexterity – a condition which lasts for 1d4 days until he becomes accustomed to the movement of the ship.

*Desert and deep snow.* Both of these terrain types hamper the movement of those unaccustomed to them. A person unfamiliar with such conditions can move at two-thirds his normal rate and has -1 to his dexterity until he has learned the terrain, which takes 1-4 days.

## Battle standards

Battle standards are used as symbols for a group of warriors. They also serve as rallying points in the chaos of battle. There is a certain mystique about battle standards that causes warriors to fight for them, knowing no greater dishonor than to lose their standard. A group of warriors will have only one standard, which is carried by a standard-bearer. A brave and experienced warrior, the standard-bearer is often dressed in unique raiment. Being a standard-bearer is a great honor. When the troops that follow the standard are within 60' of it and can see it, they have +1 to hit and +5% morale. If the standard is captured by the enemy, the warriors who follow the standard will counterattack to get it back. They will fight for one round for each full 25% morale they had at the start of the battle (including the bonus for the standard). During these counterattacks, the warriors retain their +1 to hit and make no morale checks. If the standard is lost following these counterattacks, the warriors who follow it are penalized -20% to their morale.

Battle standards vary tremendously in appearance from group to group. For a human nation, a standard may be a gold-trimmed flag or the eagle of a Roman legion; for orcs, a collection of painted skulls on a long spear; or for lizard men, a dragon's claw on the end of a pole.

## Tribal champions

A tribal champion is the best fighter in his tribe. He does all of the fighting for the chief of the tribe in return for gifts and the honor of the position. Tribal champions have the same armor class, hit dice (or hit points), and attacks as a chief of that race (i.e., an orcish tribal champion is AC 4, has 13-16 hp, and attacks as a 3-HD monster). A tribal champion has +1 to hit with all weapons commonly used by the tribe in hand-to-hand combat. All champions have great strength and gain +1 to all damage rolls (in addition to any other strength bonuses the race may have).

Tribal champions are more common in tribes of lawful alignment, but any tribe may have one (or more) tribal champions. Civilized societies also have their champions, though these are often high-level fighters or cavaliers.

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# A Menagerie of Martial

by Len Carpenter

The martial arts system of *Oriental Adventures* is among the best new additions to the AD&D® game in years. With the many martial style combinations and special maneuvers provided on pp. 102-5, the DM can design a number of novel fighting styles for an Oriental campaign. But not every DM has the time to experiment with the system until a good selection of martial arts styles is finally put together. Also, few DMs want to be limited to the four real-world martial styles on p. 101. Presented here is a collection of 20 different styles for use in the campaign.

The 20 styles presented are divided into two groups. The first 12 styles, named for assorted animals, are among the most ancient styles known in my campaign. These styles are studied by members of most Oriental character classes, although monks constitute the majority of the students. The second group consists of eight newer styles created to address the specific self-defense needs or martial philosophy of a given class. The origins, ideals, and techniques of these 20 styles are discussed later.

Some martial arts styles given here include maneuvers that vary from the official rules. These are noted in the style descriptions below. The DM may wish to consider how these changes affect play before including them in the campaign.

One rule change recommended heartily is that the naganata be included in the list of weapons able to perform the martial arts weapon style maneuvers (see footnote "f" on p. 42 of *Oriental Adventures*). The naganata is viewed as not just another pole arm in the Orient; it is an important close relative of the spear. The spear and naganata are often taught side by side within a school or style. Both weapons are wielded in similar ways and are used to play similar roles. If the spear may be used to perform the weapon style special maneuvers, then so should the naganata. The naginaki, a weapon intermediate between the spear and naganata, may also be used to perform weapon style maneuvers, although the naginaki is not nearly as popular as the spear or naganata.

The martial styles presented in this article are not intended as detailed simulations of real-world martial arts systems. Although a few bits and pieces of martial arts history and tradition are included in

these styles, as a whole, these styles are unique to my campaign. Accurate comparisons cannot always be drawn between actual martial arts systems and styles created for a fantasy world. The tiger style presented here is not a depiction of tiger-claw kung fu, but is simply my version of how the holy monks and nuns of ancient times were advised by the gods to study the tiger to become great fighters.

The 12 animal styles are but a few of the many martial arts systems founded after long, patient study of the combat methods of animals. A person might spend years or even decades in the wild, observing an animal to master every attack, defense, movement, and tactic of the creature. From this single-minded study, ancient ascetics developed the first known martial arts systems.

The early monks studied many types of animals - mammals, birds, insects, reptiles, and even rare magical beasts. Consequently, a wide variety of maneuvers and styles evolved. Radically different systems often arose from studying the same animal, since an animal may teach many lessons to different students. The tiger system of one school might concentrate on the tiger's stealthy moves and grand leaps, while another tiger style might focus on the great cat's powerful claws and bite.

Historically speaking, a bewildering variety of styles arose to compete for the attention of potential students. Rivalry between teachers was fierce. Arguments often flared over varying interpretations of the same style, and bloody feuds were fought between promoters of different styles.

Eventually, these many styles coalesced into major schools with large followings. A pupil would identify their school by describing themselves as a student of a particular animal. These major schools gave birth to many variations and sub-styles, but most martial artists could find common roots in one or more of the great animal styles. Many lesser styles passed into obscurity with the major schools or the petty secrecy of teachers who refused to pass on hidden knowledge.

A number of important new styles evolved out of the great animal schools. Some styles combined the attacks and maneuvers of older animal styles to create hybrid systems. Others were created to best exploit the strengths of newly devised weapons, such as the nunchaku, tonfa (tui-fa), or sai.



*nature, and animal.*

# Arts

Some styles were designed to suit the needs of a specific group. Ninja cultivated the secret martial arts systems of ninjutsu. Women of the court practiced with spear and naganata, and learned to use many unobtrusive weapons to defend themselves. Holy pilgrims perfected styles that provide the gentle strength to overcome any aggressor. Of the many specialized styles to command specialized followings, eight are described below, after the 12 animal styles are discussed.

The tables below list the important data of the 20 martial styles, reflecting the format of Table 68 on p. 101 of *Oriental Adventures*. The tables also note what weapons, if any, are taught in a given style. Other weapons that are sometimes favored by a given style are discussed in the style descriptions following the tables. Some weapons are forbidden to certain character classes, of course, so schools should be flexible enough to accommodate the requirements or limitations of a student's character class.

Footnotes indicate special features of or changes in a particular special maneuver. These changes are discussed in greater detail in the style descriptions. Those changes deemed unacceptable by the DM may be ignored or replaced by other official special maneuvers.

## The 12 animal styles

**Bear.** The bear is a fitting teacher for the student of the wrestling art. The bear strikes hard, grapples a foe with crushing locks, and cannot be moved if he does not wish to move. The bear never yields or weakens. The bear thinks only of attack, never of defense.

The student of the bear must emulate the ferocity and indomitable will of the bear to master this wrestling style. The student learns to strike with crushing or stunning blows and to resist being moved or thrown. But most important, the student of the bear masters the use of all locks and holds.

No particular weapons are favored in this style, and none are commonly taught to the student. The student uses whatever weapons are common to his class, although the student usually prefers powerful weapons that require great strength to wield, such as the tetsubo, or two-handed sword. This style is popular with bushi and yakuza.

**Cat.** The cat style was designed after long study of the small, quick felines such

as the civet, lynx, and even the common domestic cat. This style promotes speed, active defense, and deft footwork instead of the crushing power of those styles based on the great cats. The student of the cat learns to attack with speed and surprise, overwhelming the foe with a flurry of well-placed blows. The student must be swift on defense, relying on footwork and deceptive moves to avoid attacks.

The martial artist learns to survive great falls and regain his feet instantly, and aspires to become as adept at leaping and springing as the felines he studies. The student trains hard with a partner to learn to follow and counter any motion made by the opponent. He also works with his teacher to gain total awareness of his surroundings, and to move and fight in the dark as easily as any cat. Through this great awareness, the practitioner is able to kick an opponent behind him by performing an agile body twist.

Students of the cat favor knife fighting, slashing with twin daggers just as the cat uses its claws. This style is popular with women, who also train with the naganata. The cat style is examined by certain ninja to adapt the Blind Fighting maneuver to many ninja styles.

**Cobra.** The student of this style must spend years in intense study of this deadly, yet shy creature. The cobra picks its moment of attack with great care, then strikes with exquisite precision and power. The cobra hits its prey where it is most vulnerable, then locks onto the victim with an unbreakable death grip. The cobra style employs pure, offensive power, trusting deadly skill to gain victory before its foe strikes back.

The student of the cobra must study anatomy to be able to hit hard at the opponent's vital points. The jaws of the cobra inspire this style's powerful locks. Ultimately, the student aims to learn the difficult Distance Death maneuver, striking the foe at range just as the cobra may spit death at its prey.

No particular weapons are preferred in this style. The cobra system is a favorite of ninja and highly aggressive warriors.

**Crane.** The crane fights with a broad array of weapons. It can strike vital points with its beak, kick with its long, slender legs, and smash with its great, sweeping wings. The crane is a canny fighter, retreating when necessary to study an opponent, then returning to strike again. The crane wisely avoids or deflects an

opponent's attack, then responds with a swift cutting blow to a vital point.

The student of the crane seeks to use all of his natural weapons with equal skill. The martial artist can strike vital areas with both foot and fist. On defense, the student must be able to dodge an attack or deflect a missile through superb footwork. His mind must be alert and strong.

Just as the crane uses many natural weapons to best effect, so, too, must the student of the crane master different weapon combinations to give the student the most effective mode of attack. A number of weapon sets are taught in the crane style. The weapons studied depends upon the student's teacher or school. Weapons are combined in two-hand styles to give the fighter a broad range of attacks. Common weapon pairs are: two jo sticks, two nunchaku, two sai, sword and jitte, sword and war-fan (gunsen), and sai and chain. Other, stranger combinations are taught by some schools.

**Dragon.** The student of the dragon studies one of the most exciting of all styles. The dragon teaches his students the use of powerful kicks by the example of his sweeping tail. The dragon's great strength and claw strikes inspire the student to use his fists with overpowering force. The dragon's crushing jaws instruct the martial artist in the use of an immobilizing lock. The student duplicates the dragon's natural armor by developing iron-hard skin of his own.

Students of the dragon favor weapons of high damage potential, such as the slashing naganata or halberd. The kau sin ke is taught in all schools of the dragon style in order to emulate the sweeping smash of the dragon's tail. The chain is occasionally taught for the same reason. The dragon style is popular with all types of warriors.

**Dragonfly.** The dragonfly style is perhaps the most mysterious and rarest of all animal styles. The student of the dragonfly strives to become as light and agile as the flitting insect he observes. The dragonfly moves quickly, strikes precisely, and has total control over its motion and energy.

The student must train hard to master both his physical and spiritual energies so that he may master the energies of others. The student allows his ki to flow and merge with his opponent's energies, then takes control of his opponent's ki so that he may direct his opponent's motion and energy wherever he wills. In this way, the student may deflect any attack, follow and

**Table 1**  
**The Twelve Animals**

Martial arts style	Number of attacks	Damage	AC	Principle attack	Special maneuvers	Weapons
Bear	2/1	1-6	8	Hand	Lock 1,2,3,4 Strike 1,2 Vital area 2 Movement 3 Mental 3	None
Cat	3/1	1-4	6	Hand	Movement 1,5 Throw 1,2 Push 2 Kick 3 Mental 2,4	None
Cobra	1/1	1-8	8	Hand	Vital area 1,2,3,4 Strike 1,2 Lock 1,3	None
Crane	1/1	1-6	5	Hand & foot	Vital area 1,2,3 Weapon 1,2 Strike 2 Movement 4 Mental 1,3	Varies
Dragon	1/1	1-8	8	Foot	Kick 1,2,3 Strike 1,2 Lock 4 Mental 5	Kau sin ke
Dragonfly	1/1	1-4	5	Hand	Push 1,2,3 Vital area 3 Movement 4 Mental 1,2,5,6	None
Hawk	3/1	1-6	8	Hand	Strike 2,3 Lock 1 Vital area 1 Kick 2	None
Leopard	2/1	1-6	7	Hand	Movement 1,5,6 Strike 1,3 Kick 2 Lock 2 Mental 2	None
Mantis	2/1	1-6	7	Foot	Kick 1,2,3 Lock 1,2 Movement 4,5 Mental 1	None
Monkey	2/1	1-6	6	Hand	Throw 1,2,3,4 Weapon 1 Movement 2 Lock 1,3	Bo stick, jo sticks
Snake	2/1	1-4	6	Hand	Movement 1,2,4,7 Lock 1 Vital area 1,3 Throw 2	None
Tiger	2/1	1-8	8	Hand	Strike 1,2,3 Lock 1 Kick 2 Mental 2	None

counter any move, or send any opponent reeling with but the slightest and most gentle touch.

The student's mastery of his own body provides him with superior defense. The student learns the special Mental 5<sup>1</sup>maneuver, Flowing Water, which allows the martial artist to become as evasive and agile on defense as the flitting dragonfly. The Flowing Water maneuver improves the

student's Armor Class by 2 through swift, defensive moves. The Flowing Water state can only be achieved when the student wears no armor and is unencumbered by heavy gear (see Table 2 footnotes).

The ultimate achievement of the dragonfly style is the ability to levitate. Levitation is taught only to those students who are most dedicated and who prove worthy of this secret teaching.

Weapons are almost always ignored by the students of the dragonfly in favor of the ability to master one's inner energy. This style is rarely studied by anyone other than monks or shukenja.

**Hawk.** The hawk is a hunter greatly revered for its swift attack and infallible aim. The student of the hawk emulates the birds talons through powerful fist blows, choking locks, and accurate finger strikes

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**Table 2**  
**The Eight Specialized Styles**

Martial arts style	Number of attacks	Damage	AC	Principle attack	Special maneuvers	Weapons
Bone Breaker	2/1	1-6	7	Hand	Strike 1,2 Vital area 1 Weapon 2 Lock 3 Mental 2,4,5 Vital area 1,2,3 Strike 1 Weapon 1,2 Throw 3 Mental 2,4	Ninja-favored weapons
Dark Hand	2/1	1-6	6	Hand	Movement 1,2,4,5 Kick 1,3 Throw 2 Mental 2	Ninja-favored weapons
Eight-Legged Man	3/1	1-4	8	Foot	Throw 1,2,4 Push 1 Movement 3,6 Mental 1,2,3,5 <sup>1</sup>	None
Eye of the Hurricane	1/1	1-4	5	Hand	Lock 2,3,4 Weapon 1,2 Push 1 Throw 4 Mental 1,2,3	None
Fist within Glove	1/1	1 - 4	6	Hand	Kick 1,2,3 Weapon 1 Lock <sup>2</sup> 2,3 Movement 4 Mental 5	Varies
Oaken Grip	2/1	1 - 6	7	Foot	Weapon 1,2,3 Vital area 1 Movement 2,4 <sup>3</sup> Throw 4 Mental 1,2,3	Varies
Silken Spear	1/1	1-4	6	Hand	Lock 1,2,3 Weapon 1,2 Strike 2 Throw 3	Spear, naganata
Sword Breaker	2/1	1 - 6	8	Hand	Movement 4 Mental 1,2,3 Lock 1,2,3 Weapon 1,2 Strike 2 Throw 3	Sai, jitte

<sup>1</sup> The Mental 5 maneuver in this style is not the Ironskin maneuver, but is instead the Flowing Water state that improves Armor Class by 2 through speed and agility.

<sup>2</sup> The Lock maneuvers of this style require the use of a special weapon.

<sup>3</sup> This Movement 4 is the Arrow Cutting special maneuver that allows a character to deflect missiles when using a weapon.

to nerve centers. The student's flying kick is inspired by the hawks diving attack.

Students of the hawk usually disdain the use of weapons, preferring to rely on their own natural weapons instead. The hawk style is advanced by those who consider offense vastly more important than defense.

**Leopard.** The leopard provides lessons in the importance of speed, cunning, and awareness of one's surroundings. The leopard stalks silently, seeks an opening, and strikes with a burst of blinding speed. The great cat's moves are subtle and deceptive. The rake of its rear claws is its deadliest attack.

The student of the leopard trains his

body to move with grace and rhythm, and to make deceptive feints to produce an opening. The student copies the leopards pounce through mighty leaps and flying kicks. The leopards trick of trapping its prey with jaws and foreclaws to rake with its rear claws is studied closely, so that the student may trap his foe with a Locking Block maneuver, followed by sharp kicks to the body. The final goal of the student is to copy the leopards sudden attack by mastering the Speed (Movement 6) special maneuver.

Students of the leopard prefer weapons that simulate the leopards slashing claws, such as the dagger, short sword, or kama. The leopard style is popular with those

who want to combine speed with power in a combat system.

**Mantis.** Although the mantis is a small insect, its great skill enables it to defeat insects much larger than itself. The student of the mantis copies the insect's grasping forelegs by using a hooked hand position that allows the martial artist to score blows and make strong arm locks. The hopping movements and footwork of the mantis are duplicated by the many kicks and great leaps of the student. The importance of fluid footwork is constantly stressed by the teacher, since footwork is the key to the defensive moves of this system.

Weapons are occasionally taught to the

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students of the mantis, though no specific weapon is universally favored. Weapon choice is a matter of character class or the teacher's personal preference.

**Monkey.** The monkey is an agile, acrobatic fighter who defeats his enemy through trickery and cunning. His deceptive moves lure a foe into making mistakes that the monkey takes advantage of. The monkey uses his environment to the fullest. Trees and foliage may be used to escape a foe, swinging vines to maneuver into good position, and sticks to smash an opponent at range.

The student of the monkey must master the rolls and falls of his simian teacher. The monkey's grasping hands are studied for the student to learn strong throws and crushing locks. The monkey, stylist often battles from a low, crouched position, and learns to fight even when forced to the ground.

The monkey's use of sticks and tree limbs as weapons inspires the student to master the bo and jo sticks, and occasionally other stick- or staff-like weapons such as the tonfa, kiseru, or tetsubo. But the student must thoroughly understand that a cunning mind is always the best weapon.

A few students of this style study a variation called the "horse-monkey," which is based on the observation of the strong great apes. Students of the horse-monkey learn the Strike 3 (Eagle Claw) maneuver instead of the Movement 2 (Prone Fighting) maneuver learned by those who observe the smaller monkeys. The horse-monkey style has a base AC 7 instead of the AC 6 of the monkey style.

**Snake.** The snake stylist studies not only the cobra, but a variety of snakes to learn a great many lessons. Some snakes bite and lock onto their prey, while others use a constricting attack, using their entire body as a weapon. The snake has control over every fiber of its body. The snake strikes swiftly on attack, twists away to avoid counterattack, and curls back to strike again. So superior is the snake's

body control that it cannot be held or hindered.

The student of the snake aims to master every aspect of his body's motion. The student must be able to avoid any attack through deceptive turns and twists, and to return to attack suddenly. Ultimately, the student achieves such great physical control that he cannot be magically slowed.

The student learns to strike an opponent's vital points and to capture his foe with a choking constriction. The student can attack and defend in any position without hindrance, even when forced to a prone position. He can regain his feet as swiftly as the snake rises to strike.

No particular weapons are favored in this style, though a variety are taught by different schools. The weapons taught vary from region to region. The snake style is sought out by martial artists who wish to combine an evasive defense with a solid offense.

**Tiger.** The tiger is the most respected and feared of all hunters. The tiger stylist is taught to overwhelm his opponent with crushing blows and kicks before the foe can return the attack. The tiger's jaws instruct the martial artist in the use of a choking lock. The tiger's pounce inspires this style's flying kick.

Students of the tiger often employ great, slashing weapons in combat, such as the naginata or halberd. Weapons are often disdained by students, however, as this style does not lack power.

#### The eight specialized styles

**Bone Breaker.** The bone breaker art is one of two specialized styles studied exclusively within ninja clans. This style combines the power of the tiger and cobra styles with the speed and awareness of the cat style. Masters of the art of bone breaking learn to score hard fist blows, strike vital nerve points, and disable a limb with a sudden attack. The ninja also trains to smash an opponent's weapons with his own.

The ability to fight at night is crucial to a ninja, so the student must master the cat's ability of blind fighting. The ninja also trains to toughen his flesh to avoid injury. This Ironskin maneuver seems to be based on the mystic ki training of ninjutsu rather than the study of the noble dragon.

The ninja always learns to perform the weapon breaker maneuver with two weapons typically taught within the ninja clan. Popular ninjutsu weapons include the sai, jitte, spear (shakujo yari), bo stick, and chain.

To teach the bone breaker art to one who is not a member of the ninja clan is an offense against the clan — one that carries a mandatory death sentence.

**Dark Hand.** The dark hand is also a secret system closely guarded by a ninja clan. Its origins are similar to that of the bone breaker style, save that this style relies more on the attacks of the cobra style and the defensive speed of the cat.

The ninja trains in the use of weapons to catch or shatter an opponent's weapons. The weapons taught in this style include all martial arts weapons favored by ninja. To teach this style to an outsider means certain death.

**Eight-Legged Man.** This style finds its origin in the footwork and kicks of the mantis combined with the offensive speed promoted by certain feline styles. The student of this style relies heavily on fast, precise footwork to place himself in a position to attack with as many kicks as possible. A master of this rare art moves in the manner of a spinning top, delivering a flurry of kicks to targets in every direction. Variations of this style are likened to the spider or octopus because of the many foot strikes of this system.

The practitioner of this style trusts his offensive speed and footwork to overcome any foe, rather than the crushing power or active defense of other systems. The student must develop strong, willowy legs to accomplish the difficult kicks and bounding leaps that are taught. Since footwork is all important, a downed fighter must regain his feet without hesitation to remain in the battle. An awareness of everything around the martial artist allows him to lash out in all directions with furious kicks.

Weapons are totally ignored in this style. This style is aggressive and physically demanding, and is not popular with gentle pilgrims or those lacking the will to practice constantly.

**Eye of the Hurricane.** This difficult system finds its origin in the dragonfly style, with important techniques borrowed from the monkey and feline styles. The student of this art strives to unite body and mind to achieve a state of spiritual perfection and tranquility. In addition to the necessary physical skills, the student of this art must learn patience, clear thought, and an understanding of the minds of others. While all else may be chaos and confusion, the student of this art remains calm and serene within the eye of the hurricane.

This system stresses defensive speed and control of the opponent's actions above all else. The student cannot be harmed by the violent forces around him. Any attack is deflected away harmlessly, followed by a gentle strength that subdues the foe rather than injures him. Any attempt to move the student is met by a mystic ki power that roots the martial artist to the ground.

The student can push himself to achieve bursts of sudden offensive speed, but his primary goal is to always remain swift on defense. Like the student of the dragonfly, the master of this style learns the Flowing Water maneuver (Mental 5), which allows him to improve his Armor Class by 2 when unarmored (see Table 2 footnotes).

Weapons are uniformly ignored in this style. The eye of the hurricane system is popular with monks, shugenja, some wu jen sorcerers, and other martial artists of a

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spiritual or mystical mind.

**Fist within Glove.** This style is popular with mendicant pilgrims, monks, nuns, and other peaceful folk who require a self-defense system that provides good protection without obvious armament. This style teaches restraint and discipline in all things, with violence used only as a last resort. An aggressor should be subdued with as little fuss and harm as possible in this style. The student always tries to avoid, or even run from, a potential conflict; if necessary, though, he can defend himself or others with his simple pilgrim's staff or bare hands.

The student practices with unobtrusive weapons, such as the bo stick, jo sticks, kiseru, tonfa, or other weapons that appear as simple agricultural tools or common items of the traveler. Peace is maintained by a gentle and harmless demeanor - not by open displays of force. A pilgrim can handle any bandit or mercenary he encounters, but never displays any hint of aggression or challenge that might invite attack. His true power is always well-cloaked, like a fist concealed within a silken glove.

Another common weapon of the pilgrim is a hardwood flute about 2'-3' in length. This flute is treated as a jo stick in combat, but whistles a swirling tune as it is swung about in battle. Some monks and shukunja are reputed to carry magical flutes that allow the owner to transform his ki power into spell-like songs, similar to the instruments of the bards. Each flute's set of spell-songs is unique.

**Oaken Grip.** This style is inspired by the kicking and footwork of the dragon and mantis, but promotes the use of powerful hardwood weapons. The student learns solid footwork for defense and flamboyant kicks for offense. He trains his body to be resilient and resistant to injury.

The practitioner of this style uses the three-piece rod, nunchaku, or tonfa to deliver crushing blows. These weapons are also used to catch an opponent's weapon or to grab an arm or disable a limb with a lock of oaken strength. When using one of the weapons of this style, the student may perform a Locking Blow maneuver or an Incapacitator maneuver. If attempting a lock maneuver without one of the aforementioned weapons, the attempt is made at -2 on the "to hit" roll, since the student is specifically trained to use a weapon. No weapons other than those mentioned above may be used to perform an oaken lock.

**Silken Spear.** This style is commonly taught to women of the court, from an exalted empress to an ordinary handmaiden. A noblewoman is expected to fight when necessary to defend herself or her clan. She must learn to employ weapons, common implements, and her environment to defeat any foe.

The use of weapons is essential to this style. The woman is expected to master the spear and naginata together to per-

form the weapon-style special maneuvers. The woman also learns the art of Arrow Cutting, which allows her to deflect missiles with the spear or naginata. In the Arrow Cutting maneuver, the martial artist uses the weapon to knock arrows and other missiles aside, rather than dodging or deflecting missiles with the hands.

The woman may use the steel cloth spear (Weapon 3) to perform the other weapon special maneuvers; she may also use it to knock aside missiles with the arrow cutting art. If the woman does not have a spear, naginata, or steel cloth spear, she may still attempt to deflect missiles, but at -4 on her saving throw (this allowed due to the heavily stressed training with the weapon).

A woman trained in the silken spear may fight unarmed if need be, though she prefers to use or improvise weapons if she can (she can turn a simple piece of silken cloth into a flashing spear, if necessary). Some women even learn to use a simple stool or bench as an effective weapon (treat such a weapon as a tonfa with a speed factor of 6-8).

Occasionally, noblewomen are taught to conceal weapons on their person in case of emergency. They may hide a dart or dagger in the sleeve or carry an elegant fan that conceals a rigid set of steel ribs (treat as a gunsen). Small razors may be hidden under long fingernails; these razors may also be poisoned (treat as a nekode with a speed factor of 1 for purpose of damage). The kanzashi, a sharp-pointed, ornamental hairpin that often contains a lethal poison, is commonly worn. Treat the kanzashi as a nekode that inflicts 1-3 damage to small- or man-sized opponents and 1-2 damage to large foes.

Female ninja, or kunoichi, often learn this style so they may more easily infiltrate a royal court and play the role of a handmaiden or lady's bodyguard. A kunoichi spy will, of course, conceal a vast arsenal in her clothing or costume.

**Sword Breaker.** The sword breaker style was developed by local police forces to deal with unruly swordsmen. Constables or community defenders of the bushi or yakuza class often study this art to defend themselves and their towns from drunken samurai or other lawbreakers.

The sword breaker style combines strong wrestling moves with the skills of catching and breaking a samurai's blades. The student usually learns the use of the sai or jitte to catch and shatter a criminal's weapon. The jitte is learned by most constables, while elite police officers favor the sai as a symbol of rank. Other weapons are studied, including the bo stick, jo sticks, tonfa, or chain. These weapons are favored by poorer communities, since they may be easily made or adapted from agricultural tools. The sode garami is also a popular weapon with police since it may be used to entangle and subdue a criminal.

This style, or a variation thereof, is occasionally studied by sohei or palace

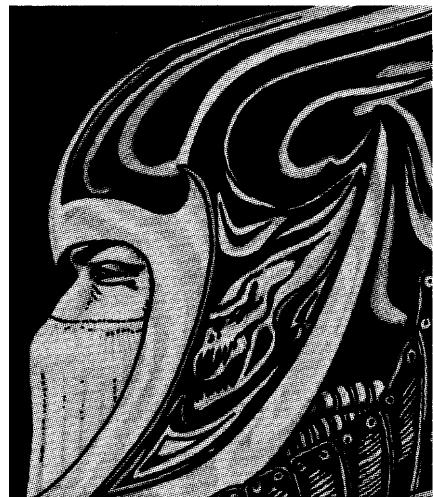
guards in order to disarm and subdue a foe without wounding him. To spill blood on sacred palace grounds or within a holy temple is sacrilegious in some lands.

### Concluding thoughts

In designing a new martial arts style, the DM should strive to create something special while keeping the power of the style within reasonable limits. Try linking different special maneuvers into logical, yet imaginative styles that center around a solid idea. An intriguing animal, a colorful phrase, an informative martial arts book, or a flamboyant movie stunt may provide a good starting point for a novel martial arts style. Try giving a special maneuver a unique twist to make it more original. Look for a new way to use a martial arts weapon or play with various martial style combinations to see what new combinations fall out of Table 69.

Don't be afraid to experiment with radical ideas outside the regular campaign. Within the campaign, limit the more unorthodox martial styles to NPCs until you are sure such styles are suitable for PCs. Err on the side of caution. Novelty is fun and desirable, but becomes an aggravation if martial artists become too powerful. Martial arts combat benefits the game only when it is fair and well-balanced, not when it produces inhuman killing machines who ruin the campaign.

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"Great gods of winter," breathed the heavily clothed figure as he fought screaming winds to squeeze shut the door behind him. "Nothing worse than a breeze on flat snow." He turned to face into the room he had just entered. "Hiya, Echord. How'ya doing?"

The bespectacled, seemingly middle-aged man seated at the desk across the room looked up from his book as his friend brushed snow off his parka. "Can't complain." He paused long enough to take a folded piece of parchment from the desk and mark his place with it before closing the book. "I haven't seen you here in a while, Filnan. You still haven't learned to knock."

Filnan ignored this comment as he moved toward his scholarly friend and sank into a chair across from him. "I got to talk to you about something important," he began, pulling back his hood and ruffling his thick blond hair with a mitten hand. Ice cracked on his beard and hung unnoticed from his bushy eyebrows. "Did you hear that we're all having trouble again? Folks just a ways north of Mak-Tsu-Shung are complaining that snow-people from World's End Peaks have started coming down on raids. We've even had a few drop in ourselves. Some folks've been hurt — some others killed."

The older man waited, expecting Filnan to say more. When Filnan failed to pick up the conversation, the older man sighed. "That's terrible news, my friend, but why come to me? You knew that might eventually happen when you decided to move up there. World's End is the homeland of every frost-beast there is. You even told me so. If those creatures intend to come down from the peaks and attack, there's not much I can do about it."

The two stared at one another without anger. Ten years of life in this mountainous land of glaciers, bone-cold wind, and reticent people had burned away all but a deep and abiding sense of respect for one another. Not that they ever saw eye to eye, Echord thought.

"Look," Filnan said, shifting in his seat, "we really do need some help here; I'm serious. The only things I know for sure about abominable snowmen are that you never see 'em till they're right on you, they look like big white monkeys, and they like to tear people into little pieces and stuff them into their mouths. That doesn't help us do anything about it. The folks around Mak-Tsu-Shung — you know them. They're not fighters at all — their granddaddies, maybe, but now they're just tundra villagers, goat herders. Those walking snowballs aren't gonna call off their raids just 'cause the fight ain't fair. We gotta know what to do about it. I have a family and friends there now."

Echord looked thoughtful and nodded, eyes fixed on Filnan. "I imagine that's what

keeps the snow-people coming back every so often. They prefer a meal that fights ineffectively. Up there by the Worlds End, you're it."

Filnan grimaced and turned away. "No doubt. Well, that's why I came here. We don't know much about them. But you—"

"—are a sage, you read a lot, and you might know something useful!" Echord finished for him, and smiled in a tired sort of way. He shuffled the papers about his desk to create a suitable place to leave his book, then arose and walked to the bookcase that covered half the east wall. "I do seem to remember having something concerning these creatures. Bought it from a caravan mage. Living as close to the yeti as we do, I thought it might someday come in handy." He stopped his search to pull one relatively small and slim book from the line-up. "Ah, here we are."

Blowing the dust off the cover, the scholar walked back to his seat and settled in his place, opening the creaking book. "In case you haven't noticed, this is not the most-used volume of my collection," he said, leafing through the first few pages. "But its contents are not totally alien to me. Let's see what we can come up with."

Filnan sat back as he watched his friend at work. Echord had always been the intelligent one, ever since their youth. Each dive into the depths of knowledge was like a game, even when the stakes were considerable, as they were now. Echord hated to come up short on information — to "lose." He took his studying very seriously. His knowledge and Filnan's sword arm had kept them both alive here after their fellow adventurers were lost to an avalanche, many years ago. Now, neither man wished to leave this snowbound land. It had its hazards — but it was home.

"Well, this is interesting," the scholar said as he stopped on one page. "Taxonomists have typically associated the yeti with the primates, but the creatures also appear to share certain characteristics with bears. According to this, their ancestry may be of one or the other, or possibly a mix of both. The yeti seems to have the instincts of the carnivorous ape and gorilla bear, both of which may be distant relatives."

"Of course, yeti dwell only in very cold climes, it being much more comfortable since their normal body temperatures are much lower than most blooded living creatures." Echord read a bit more and chewed his lower lip. "Their peculiar internal biological processes require cold atmosphere to maintain life, and in turn produce an even colder one. They'll live in plains, hills, or other areas of extreme cold. They're hard to spot in the snow-covered plains . . . white fur, of course. . . . Hmm. They also seem to be smart enough to learn to use this to their advantage, and so gain surprise when they hunt. And they like shallow caves."

Echord raised a finger as he read, as if lecturing to one of his classes long ago at his academy. "It seems that the yeti are

quite fierce and aggressive in their disposition, but among their own kind they are said to be quite congenial. Should they happen to encounter any other beast or being, they respond fiercely, to ward away the threat before they attack. They beat on their chests, hurl stones, strut about, flail their arms, and hoot loudly in a manner which echoes for great distances. If the intruders do not leave, they are soon surrounded and attacked. If they do leave, they are stalked and attacked soon enough. Any meeting with these creatures is bound to lead to conflict."

"I'll remember that next time I drop in on them," the younger man murmured with a sigh. He rubbed his face, removing the last of the melting snow. These details were not what Filnan had come to hear, but he knew Echord's thorough, methodical nature of investigation was unstoppable, even when it was not necessary. Before he had even opened his friend's front door, Filnan had already resigned himself to waiting patiently until the desired material arose. In the meantime, he sat back and waited for revelation.

Echord simply continued. "Unlike most other primates, the yeti do not care for their young long after birth. Usually, the young must fend for themselves at an early age, looking and fighting for food and such. This makes them strong, fierce — and rare as well. These beasts are not particular about what meat they eat, though one of their favorite meals is human flesh."

"So I've noticed," Filnan mumbled.

"The yeti are quite strong and are not ones to be toyed with by the careless. The physical strength of the average yeti is comparable to that of a hill giant, which is greater than that of any human alive.

"Additionally, they have a special talent for inducing great fright in their opponents. More than a few who have survived yeti encounters have testified to an unnatural sense of horror upon gazing into a snowman's pale eyes. The majority agree to the description of it as a mind-chilling sensation, leaving the blood as water and the skeleton as jelly, though not everyone is affected in exactly the same manner. The most experienced of fighting men seem to have some resistance to this power, however." He glanced up. "Still, I wouldn't suggest you go out and wrestle with one, no matter how good you are!"

"Don't worry," the visitor dryly assured his host. "I wasn't planning on it. Anything in there about how to stop them from rampaging through small towns?"

"Patience, my friend. Unless you can tell me that we have a hungry yeti grumbling at my doorstep, you've nothing to lose by being patient." Readjusting his reading glasses, Echord returned to the text of his book. "Well, since the yeti is a cold-blooded, cold-dwelling creature, I would imagine that heat would not please one. Have you tried lighting fires around town? Bonfires on the outskirts at night? How

about fire arrows? Anybody up there know how to prepare them?"

Filnan stared into space for a moment. "Fire," he finally said. "Of course. It wouldn't be too difficult to . . ." Filnan's voice trailed off, his visage darkening a bit as he glanced at the wind-whipped snow flying beyond the clouded windowpane. "But I'm not sure how long that'd last. It's a bit beyond a kite-flying breeze out there. As for fire arrows — they make more sense, but I have no pitch to prepare effective ones for combat purposes. The lamp oil here is useless for this sort of thing. And if I can't do it, no one can, since I'm still the best archer in town, in case you haven't heard lately."

"No, I haven't heard lately, but I can always count on you for that, eh?" Echord turned back to the flipping of pages. "You know, I see nothing about it in here, but it seems to me that if you raise a creature's body temperature enough above normal, it'll eventually die, right?"

"Yeah, sure." Filnan was mumbling again. "I had an uncle die from green fever, remember?"

"Of course I do." The man was beginning to take on the distant look he always did when he was thinking hard. "The human body temperature is fairly high. Your uncle's just went a little too high and stayed there a little too long. But though the yeti's internal temperature is much lower, it can still get a fever?"

Filnan's wandering eyes came to rest on Echord again. "That's true. But I hope this is leading somewhere?"

"Well," Echord continued, looking down at the book, "I'm not — ah, here it is." He stopped turning pages and settled a finger on the top part of one. "You've fought yeti, right? Have you ever noticed that a yeti seems to radiate cold about him?"

Filnan looked away and half-smiled, but he didn't look amused. "Yeah. I got into a fight with one. I was with my boy Mahong when he was playing in the snow. Thought I heard something, drew my sword, turned around, and the damned thing was right there behind me. Before I could move, it had smacked my sword away, knocked me down, and was about to tear my face off when old Torkens ran up and jammed his spear through its neck. I think the yeti cracked a rib on me, but the cold was worse than being crushed. That ugly thing was colder than the Hells' eighth plane. And you know what? Mahong thought it was all so funny that he just laughed and laughed."

Echord chuckled softly. "That sounds like your boy. But a creature cannot actually radiate cold. Cold isn't really a presence of something, it's an absence of something — heat, actually energy of a sort. Nothing can radiate a lack of something."

Filnan looked confused but thoughtful. "I think I follow you, but I definitely hurt more from cold than from having my chest mashed in when that yeti got me."

"True." Echord took on his patient expression, like a teacher explaining an elusive concept to a student. "But nevertheless, cold isn't radiated; not like that, anyway. Still, because of its low body temperature, if a yeti were to find itself in surroundings where the temperature was higher than its own, it would pick up some of the heat. Heat energy travels from areas of greater concentration - warm areas - to areas of lesser concentration - cool areas - like any other diffusing action."

"You're losing me," Filnan warned.

"I'm simply saying that the yeti doesn't radiate cold, but that, by way of a kinetic vacuum of sorts, it absorbs the heat. The temperature of the surroundings drops, losing energy, while that same energy is absorbed by the yeti, whose internal temperature rises slightly."

"You mean that if a snowman drained enough people of their body heat, it might get a fever? I'm not sure I'd want to experiment with that."

Echord assumed his patient look again. "Not necessarily body heat; the heat energy can come from virtually anywhere. How well are your homes heated?"

"Not all that well, really. We've let things slide a bit since the yeti attacks started, and the wind's caused some damage to the walls and roofs. We're thinking more about defense lately. Some of the guys have been thinking about building a palisade around the town, or hauling rocks in by sled for walls. Bad neighbors from Worlds End and all that."

sade around the town, or hauling rocks in by sled for walls. Bad neighbors from Worlds End and all that."

"Maybe you should look into better heating. It could be that your fireplaces are keeping out more than frostbite. The yeti would dare not get close to a really warm area."

The younger man looked startled. His eyes began to brighten. "Yeah, that makes sense."

"The very sight of fire itself might deter them from attack, in fact," Echord continued. "Maybe a heated metal fence would help guard the rest of the town better than a big wooden fence - if you're very careful about its design and construction, that is. Most metals are wonderful conductors of heat, you know."

"Yeah," Filnan repeated, sitting forward in his chair. "You know, there's a group of gnomes a few miles from town. They probably have a metal shop back in their caves. I haven't seen 'em around much, but they might be friendly enough to help. . . . This just might work." His eyes returned to his friends face as his voice regained its vigor. "Would you mind coming over to Mak-Tsu-Shung and explaining all this to the guys? They're not likely to listen to all this coming from strong-but-uneducated me. It'll sound a little more reasonable from you; they know you. Maybe you could help design this stuff, too."

Echord let out a long sigh as he closed the yeti book on a finger, suddenly recalling Filnan's lack of appreciation for the figuring and details involved in mechanics and sciences. He always treated it like some mathematized branch of magic whose workings were best left to others. The idea Echord had proposed was vague, at best, and would need work; after all, he had just mentioned it off the top of his head less than a minute ago. But Filnan seemed to be getting somewhat excited over it already, and knowing him as Echord did, he wouldn't likely calm down until the plan's execution was underway.

"I suppose so," he finally assented. "Maybe tomorrow afternoon. I've nothing that absolutely demands my attention then." He pulled his finger from the book as he rose to return it to its place among its fellows. When he turned back, he saw that Filnan was also on his feet, his face revealing a relieved grin.

"A heated wall sounds like crazy stuff, but only you could make it work. You always were the one to figure out a puzzle." Filnan clasped Echord's hand when he walked back. "Thanks a lot. I can't wait to see the guys' reactions. Y'know, they didn't believe you could help us at all. We thought we were gonna die."

"Glad to help," Echord assured him, following Filnan to the door. "But keep in mind, a heated wall won't be foolproof by any means. It's more of a general deterrent. You will still have to keep on your toes. In the meantime, why don't I give you the name of a friend of mine who specializes in preparing certain types of fire arrows. . . ."

## Notes

Yeti are actually biological relatives of both the lower primates and the bears. They are most closely related to the mountain gorilla, to which many of the yeti's typical habits and instincts might be compared. Yeti mate and bear young much as do any other lower primates. After that, the young stay with the parents for only two years after birth; they don't stay dependent on their parents as long as do most other primates. Any young encountered with a group of yeti will typically be just old enough to fight effectively on their own. This early separation and independence from the parents causes them to hunt for food at a relatively early age, limits their population growth to those strong enough to survive, and accounts for part of their racial ferocity.

Female and male adults have the same sorts of AD&D® game statistics. Yeti become adults at five years of age. Young yeti (at two, three, and four years of age) have 1+1 to 3+3 HD, and do 1-2/1-2, 1-3/1-3, or 1-4/1-4 hp damage with their claws. Chill damage from young yeti amounts to 1-6, 2-8, or 2-12 hp damage. The power to frighten opponents by gaze only comes with full adulthood. All yeti are immune to cold attacks because of their thick fur and

## I'M THE NO-SASE OGRE.

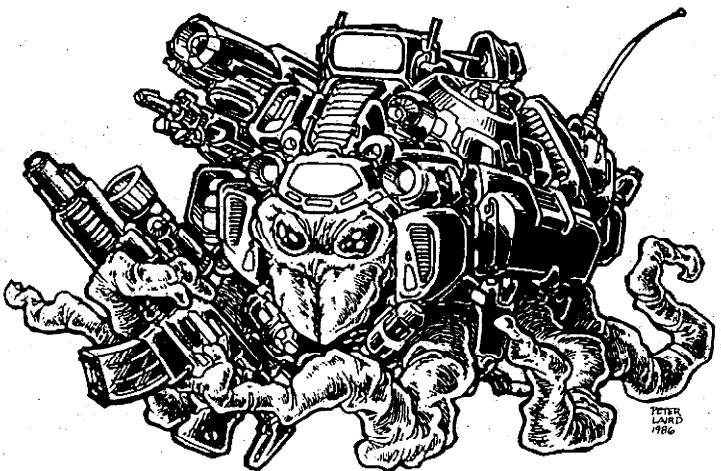


It's quite possible that your manuscripts and I have already met. If the editors receive a gaming article, but the author has not sent a self-addressed, stamped envelope with the manuscript to allow for a reply, the editors give the manuscript to me, and . . . well, let's not dwell on that.

Give the editors (and your manuscripts) a fair break. With each article you send us, enclose a SASE large enough to permit the easy return of the manuscript, should it require rewriting or be unsuitable for use. Canadians and residents of other countries should enclose international postal coupons, available at local post offices.

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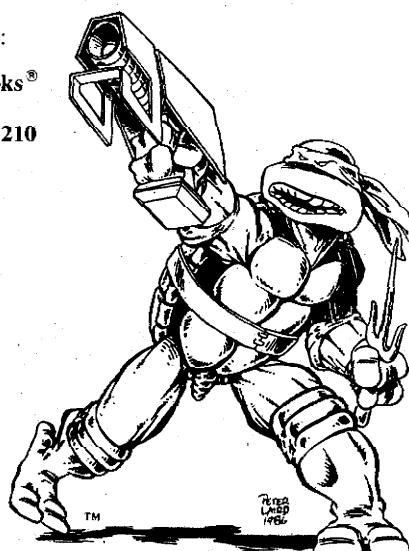
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fat layers, as well as from their unique biology.

If a yeti is captured at an early age, cared for, fed properly (they have voracious appetites) and kept in a suitable arctic climate, the creature could be tamed and raised in much the same manner as any other domesticated animal. Usually, such domesticated yeti will follow their instincts and leave "home" after a few years for the icy wilderness. As a result of their early domestication, however, these yeti are often less ferocious than the average abominable snowman. Those yeti that stay at home (30%) grow up to be very loyal to their caretakers.

The strength of a typical yeti may be determined with a 1d12 as follows: 1 = 18/90-99, 2-4 = 18/00, 5-9 = 19, 10-12 = 20. The only weapons a yeti will use are hurled rocks, which gain bonuses to damage from this great strength. A hurled rock does a base of 2-8 hp damage, has a range of 120 yards (40 yards being the short-range limit and 80 yards the medium-range limit), and is about 6" in diameter, weighing about 10-12 lbs. Yeti hurl them with one hand like shot-puts.

According to the *Monster Manual*, any creature surprised by a yeti in combat must save vs. paralysis to avoid looking into the yeti's pale blue or colorless eyes. Anyone failing such a save becomes "rigid with fright for 3 melee rounds and can be

automatically struck twice and squeezed by the yeti." This effect does not take place against creatures which are normally immune to fear of any sort, including cavaliers, most undead, and generally mindless creatures. It is believed that the unusual crystalline coloring, together with a strange and faint pulsating of light within the creature's eyes, is responsible for this effect. Such pulsating dies when the yeti does, thus ending any more fear-striking gazes from the creature.

Also stated in the *Monster Manual* is the yeti's particular vulnerability to fire, as it takes 150% damage from any such attacks. This also applies to any other form of heat-based attacks. Yeti aren't particularly bright nor fearful, but usually stay away from fire and other obvious sources of heat, for they realize this weakness and take pains to avoid it.

Yeti absorb heat from their surroundings. If grabbed by a yeti, as described in the *Monster Manual*, a victim suffers 2-16 hp cold damage. After a yeti has caused chill damage equal to its own hit-point total, it begins to feel weak, suffering -1 on "to hit" rolls and an additional -1 for each additional 8 hp chill damage caused. This chill damage is actually causing the yeti to warm up internally, disrupting its metabolism. When this "to hit" penalty reaches -6, the yeti passes out, becoming feverish and remaining unconscious for

2-12 turns. At -9, the yeti dies from severe overheating. Generally, it takes about three turns for a yeti to recover from each -1 of "to hit" loss suffered, providing the creature is still alive. This condition may also be inflicted by absorbing heat from sources other than people. Greater sources of such heat contribute more than the 2-16 hp drained from humans, just as relatively cooler sources contribute less. Heat or fire attacks contribute half their unadjusted (prior to the addition of the extra 50%) damage value in addition to the 150% damage taken.

This cold radiation fades away gradually after a yeti dies. The internal biological and chemical functions which maintain such an extremely low body temperature eventually cease within a dead yeti, and the body then begins to approach the temperature of its surroundings, thus decreasing the effect of the radiation of cold. In terms of hit points, the damage inflicted is typically reduced by 10% for every two turns that the yeti has been dead (this may be adjusted up or down in unusually warm or cool air temperatures). Consequently, two turns after death, cold damage from a yeti will be multiplied by .9, by .8 after four turns, .7 after six, etc. After 20 turns, the yeti's internal temperature will be close enough to the surroundings' that cold damage will be nil, and the body may be safely investigated.  $\Omega$

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CAPTAIN BOOMERANG™ © 1987 George "Digger" Harkness

DEX:	8	STR:	4	BODY:	5
INT:	4	WILL:	5	MIND:	4
INFL:	5	AURA:	4	SPRIT:	4
INIT:	17 (20)	HORN POINTS:	40		

SKILLS: (linked)  
 Acrobatics/Dodging: 8\*  
 Charisma: 3  
 Gadgetry: 8\*  
 Martial Artist: 3

#### WEAPONRY/EXOTIC:

(Boomerang): 10

#### EQUIPMENT: At Right

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Secret Society of Super-Villains™ (High Level)  
 Criminal Underworld (High Level)  
 Flash™ (Low Level)  
 Task Force X™ (High Level)  
 MOTIVATION: Mercenary (Greed)  
 WEALTH: Affluent  
 OCCUPATION: Reluctant Govt. Agent  
 RACE: Human

George "Digger" Harkness, an Australian outlaw, arrived in the United States at the same time W.W. Wiggins Co.™ was mounting a search for a boomerang expert to become their commercial spokesman, "Captain Boomerang." Harkness used the job as a cover for his robberies until the Flash caught up with him during a jewel heist. Frequent encounters with the Flash made him a prominent member of Flash's Rogues Gallery™.

During Darkseid's™ recent attack on the heroes of Earth, Harkness was offered a way out of prison through working for Task Force X. In exchange for his services on a secret mission, he would be granted a pardon for his crimes.

His failure to keep quiet about the existence of the task force, resulted in his being assigned 'permanent' membership in the force with limited freedoms. This halfway-house existence has allowed him to secretly take up a third identity as the Mirror Master™, and perform crimes in the New Orleans area.

He is a master of his weapon, and like Green Arrow, has developed an arsenal of specially modified tools to fit every need. He is reluctant to stick his neck out, preferring to dodge or talk his way out of dangerous situations if he can — or just talk, period. His speech is rife with Australian slang.

#### WEAPONS

Captain Boomerang uses a constantly changing array of gimmicked boomerangs. Samples follow.

#### Sonic Boomerang™

DEX:	0	STR:	0	BODY:	5
CHARGES:	1				
COST:	90 HPs	+\$1200			

POWERS:  
 Sonic Beam: 7 (10)

#### Razorang™

DEX:	0	STR:	0	BODY:	5
CHARGES:	4				
COST:	71 HPs	+\$500			

#### POWERS:

Claws: 5

Note: Use of this boomerang is considered Killing Combat.

#### Bafflerang™

DEX:	0	STR:	0	BODY:	5
CHARGES:	1				
COST:	85 HPs	+\$1200			

#### POWERS:

Flash: 7 (5)

#### Smokarang™

DEX:	0	STR:	0	BODY:	5
CHARGES:	1				
COST:	80 HPs	+\$1200			

#### POWERS:

Fog: 7

#### Regular Boomerang

DEX:	0	STR:	5	BODY:	5
CHARGES:	NA				
COST:	64 HPs	+\$500			

Captain Boomerang can make up to 2 attacks with a boomerang, one on the forward half of the throw, and the second as the boomerang returns. Even if he misses the target on the forward throws, he still has a chance of completing the attack on the return arc.

If he misses his target accidentally or intentionally (in order to blind-side his opponent), he makes a trick shot. Combining the two column shift-to-the-right penalty of a standard trick shot with the one column shift-to-the-left for a blind-side attack, Digger gets a one column shift-to-the-right penalty on the intentional attack. If the forward throw missed accidentally, he picks up at least one additional column shift-to-the-right. Use the Universal Modifier Chart to determine how difficult it will be for the boomerang to still hit the target, even though it wasn't aimed perfectly.

The second (return) attack always occurs at the end of the combat phase, after all other actions have been completed.

# Arcane Lore

## *A legacy of illusions*

by Arthur Collins

"In the Name of His Gracious Majesty, King Scopwine of Downing, His Majesty's Clerk of Probate in and for the County of Aethelshire, to Hugh Fowler of the said County, Greetings:

"Inasmuch as the Clerk of Probate has been given the task of discovering the heirs and assigns of the late Pharkos Deliquesens, reputed Illusionist, who died intestate on the 14th instant, and inasmuch as you, Hugh Fowler, are issue of the deceased's sister, thrice removed, you are requested to present yourself at the office of the Clerk of Probate in Thanbury on the 7th immediate in order to assist in settling your uncle's affairs.

"Virtually all that remains of your uncle's personal property following the mysterious circumstances attendant upon his demise is a portion of his library. Herewith is appended a catalogue of said property, which property's value is to be set against the legal fees required to settle his affairs and just debts, the surplus (if any) to come to you and any other proper and lawful heirs which the Clerk of Probate may discover. . . ."

When the great Pharkos Deliquesens died (eaten up by demons, it is said), he left behind a double legacy of illusions. The first legacy of illusions he left was to his young nephew, Hugh Fowler, who inherited a fable of wealth that was as real as snowmen in July. His second legacy of illusions he left to all who were of his craft: his great *Cyclopedias Phantastica*, a compilation in 10 volumes covering some 80 years of arcane research. In this monumental work, Pharkos Deliquesens recorded some hundred or so spells, most of his own discovery.

It is perhaps fitting that Pharkos died as he had lived. Dedicated to pursuing his never-ending curiosity, his quest apparently got the better of him in the matter of researching the proper summonings of demons through illusionary magic. Equally dedicated to never giving a sucker an even break, or paying a debt that he could avoid, Pharkos managed to cheat both his nephew and his colleagues, since the only property to survive his rather messy demise was his library, which Hugh Fowler promptly sold to a secondhand bookstore to get what little he could out of his uncle's estate. And so disappeared for all time the great *Cyclopedias Phantastica*, as anguished illusionists were to find out too late to do anything about it.

However, one volume did resurface years later. *Volume III* came to light (as such books so often do) at a church rummage sale, where it was bought by a used-book dealer, who sold it to someone who later donated it to the library of a home for delinquent cats. There, it was finally located by a sage of the University of Darcurry, who purchased it and wrote a monograph about it. From that source comes this synopsis of the 10 surviving spells of Pharkos Deliquesens: all that remains of his life's work - a legacy of illusions.

### Color Blindness (Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 1 Components: V  
Range: 3" CT: 1 segment  
Duration: 3 turns ST: Neg.  
AE: 1 creature

Explanation/Description: The *color blindness* spell causes the recipient creature to be unable to distinguish colors. All vision is in black and white. Various *cure* spells cannot remove this effect, and only a successful *dispel magic* or *dispel illusion* can remove the defect before the spell's

expiration if the creature fails its initial saving throw against this spell. The negative effects of this spell can be difficult to moderate but can be important. Normally, many gems, beasts, potions, banners, plants, and so on are distinguished from similar things by color; a being who is color-blind is unable to use color to distinguish between them. The positive effects of color blindness include a + 2 (or + 10%) bonus in locating concealed or camouflaged objects, and a - 2 (or - 10%) penalty assessed against persons hiding in shadows from the color-blind person. Thus, brownies (invisible in natural surroundings) can be seen on a 10% chance, while shadows are only 80% undetectable. Likewise, color-blind characters other than elves and half-elves have a 1 in 6 chance of finding secret or concealed doors, while *color-blind* elves and half-elves get a + 1 to do this. The surprise potential of opponents is affected if they use camouflage to enhance their chance of surprise.

### Tunnel Vision (Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 1 Components: VS  
Range: 1" CT: 2 segments  
Duration: 3 turns ST: Neg.

AE: 1 creature

Explanation/Description: This spell reduces the recipient creature's field of vision to the area that is directly in front of it, a space 60° wide. All peripheral vision is replaced with a gray shading. Consequently, the creature's armor class is reduced by -4 against all opponents but those the creature directly faces, and at very close quarters (e.g., in hand-to-hand combat), its armor class is reduced by -1 (even against beings the recipient meets face-on). Various *cure* spells cannot remove this effect, and only a *dispel magic* or *dispel illusion* can remove the defect before the spell's expiration if the creature fails its initial saving throw vs. spells. This defect allows for surprise and back-stabbing attacks to be made from the side (thieves and assassins, take note). Saving throws against back or side attacks are made at -2 (except for those vs. poison).

### Blandness (Alteration)

Level: 2 Components: V,S,M  
Range: 0 CT: 2 segments  
Duration: Perm. ST: None  
AE: 1 pint or pound of material

Explanation/Description: This spell can only be cast on nonliving material. Its effect is to render the material completely tasteless and odorless. Color, texture, and so on are not affected. Thus, a poisonous substance could be inserted in food, and could only be detected by suspicious color, texture, or consistency, by the use of a spell such as *detect magic* or *detect poison*. *Detect illusion* is the only spell which gives the caster a chance to detect the use of this spell on foodstuffs. The material component of this spell is a dram of distilled water, available from any alchemist.

**Echoes** (Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 2 Components: V,S,M

Duration: 2 rds/lvl CT: 3 segments

AE: 1 creature ST: 1/2

Range: 3" + 1"/level of caster

**Explanation/Description:** This spell causes every sound within the recipient creature's hearing to reverberate loudly in his mind as if the victim were in an echo chamber. It becomes very difficult for the recipient to understand speech, to pick out one sound from another, and the like. The recipient often tries to tiptoe in an exaggerated fashion to try to reduce the noise level which only it hears. Sometimes the recipient merely collapses in a moaning heap. No coordinated action with other creatures is possible for the recipient, and the victim lashes out at any person attempting to contact it closely. Fighting and making saving throws are at -2, and there is a -2 penalty to armor class. If the saving throw is made, the recipient fights and saves at -1, with a -1 penalty to armor class. Either way, its auditory nerves receive a great hammering. Creatures with keen hearing (such as cats, bats, predators in general, rabbits, and so on) run and hide in order to find quiet, or simply crouch in a corner. A silence spell or a deafness spell laid on over the echoes cancels its effects (as well as all sound) for the duration of those spells. The material component is a little tin gong or cymbal.

**Numbness** (Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 3 Components: V,S

Range: Touch CT: 3 segments

AE: being's limb ST: Neg.

Duration: 1 turn/level of the caster

**Explanation/Description:** This spell causes a limb of the recipient's body to go numb. Only arms, legs, tails, tentacles, and wings can be so affected; heads and trunks of bodies cannot (the trunk of an elephant is considered a tentacle). The spell-caster must make a successful "to hit" roll to affect the part he desires, as per the following table:

Body part	"To hit" penalty
Striking tentacle, clawed arm	+0
Lowered wing	-1
weapon-holding arm	
Leg or foreleg	-2
Raised wing, active tail	-3

Tentacles, arms, and active tails are assumed to be in use for attacking the spell-caster or his allies. Some further modifications may be required, and some common sense must be shown in moderating these hit probabilities. A dragon raising its wings high over the illusionist's head may well have those wings out of all reach, while a gnome illusionist fighting a giant would not have to stoop or lunge below his normal height to touch the giant's leg. In general, the term "striking tentacle" can refer to any limb within easy reach; "weapon-holding arm" can mean any limb close but active; "leg" can mean any limb for which the illusionist might have to lunge or spring; "raised wing,

active tail" can mean any limb that moves very fast or is positioned so as to be very awkward to reach. Helpless, sleeping, or bound opponents can be automatically touched. The spell causes the limb to lose all feeling for the duration of the numbness, with consequent loss of dexterity and judgment. The following specific penalties accrue to a numbed limb (and its owner):

1. Overall dexterity loss in the limb numbed is -4, with attendant penalties on attack or defense, thieving abilities and so on. The recipient is -1 to hit with that limb for the duration of the spell, and missile-firing penalties may be assessed in addition to dexterity loss.

2. Walking on a numbed limb gives a 20% chance each round of tripping. A numbed wing reduces flying movement rate by one-third, maneuverability class by one step, and causes the flyer to require two rounds to become airborne. Also, the movement rate for a creature with a numbed leg is reduced by one-third.

3. Objects grasped by a numbed limb have a 60% chance each round of slipping from its grasp. Creatures attempting to break free from the grasp of a numbed limb get a +30% (or +6) to their attempts to do so. Damage inflicted by a numbed limb's clutch (e.g., a bear's hug) is at -1 per die of damage (but never zero, if damage is to be assessed).

4. Wounds to the numbed limb are not felt. As a result, each numbed limb causes the victim to believe he has suffered 25% less damage than he has actually taken. The DM should count up the total damage taken by the character in each round, then tell the player of the numbed PC that the PC has taken only three-fourths of that amount of damage. The DM should keep a separate tally of the PC's hit points with the true (unmodified) damage score. Thus, the PC may run out of hit points and fall unconscious at an unexpected moment when it seemed the PC had a few hit points left.

5. The armor class of the recipient is also adversely affected. A general penalty of -1 is assessed, unless that limb's use is more vital (e.g., a shield arm).

6. All penalties for numbness are cumula-

tive, so if more than one limb is *numbed*, the recipient suffers more ill effects.

**Remove Smell** (Alteration, Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 3

Components: V,S,M  
Range: 0 or 6" CT: 3 segmentsDuration: 1 turn/level of caster  
AE: 1 creature or object  
ST: None or neg.

**Explanation/Description:** This spell has two forms. In its first manifestation, it renders the spell-caster or any one other creature or object undetectable by smell for the duration of the spell. No saving throw is required for this form of the spell. In its second form, the spell is cast upon a living creature, depriving it of its sense of smell for the duration of the spell. The recipient of this form of the spell gets a saving throw. Note that attacks such as *stinking cloud* are ineffective against a being who cannot smell. Caustic fluids will still burn, however.

*Remove smell* works by affecting the olfactory nerves. In its first form, all particles normally emitted by the recipient creature or object are masked by carrying the spell's dweomer to all available olfactory nerves that might detect them. In the second form, the dweomer is applied directly to one creature's olfactory apparatus, rendering it incapable of sensing any particles from any source. The material component is a sliver of soap.

**Lapse** (Enchantment/Charm)

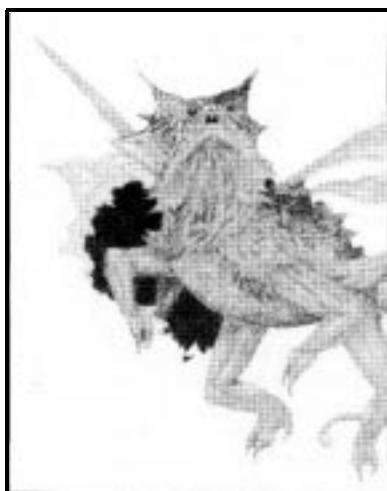
Level: 4 Components: V,S,M

Range: 0 CT: 4 segments

Duration: Special ST: Special

AE: 1 creature

**Explanation/Description:** This insidious spell is not cast directly upon its victim. Rather, any small object or substance can receive the dweomer, which then delivers its magical charge to the first creature that touches it. Typical "triggers" would be a comb, a wine cup, a ring, a paving stone - any solid object of relatively small size. The first creature that touches the "trigger" is affected, with no saving throw allowed at that time. Nor does the recipient know it has been affected, though subsequent spells such as



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*detect charm* will discover something is amiss.

Once triggered, the spell causes a lapse in the victim's memorization of spells, to occur at some future time (an inconvenient time, the caster hopes, but there are no guarantees). Whenever the recipient attempts to cast a memorized spell (as opposed to a spell read from a scroll or cast from a magical item), the lapse comes into effect. Any spell-caster, including magic-users, illusionists, clerics, druids, rangers, paladins, etc., can be so affected, and even monsters that cast spells as part of their normal set of abilities (certain dragons, liches, titans, etc.) are subject to this spell. Note that natural abilities concerning flight, breath weapons, and so forth are not affected.

When the victim prepares to cast a spell, he must make a saving throw vs. spells; failure indicates a malfunction of memory during which time the spell-caster cannot think of any spells at all. Spells so "forgotten" are not lost, however; the *lapse* passes within 2-5 rounds, and the spell-casting victim may then cast spells normally. Of course, this spell is wasted if a fighter, barbarian, or other class using no spells becomes the spells victim. *Lapse* has proved insidiously popular with assassins capable of spell-casting, when going after a spell-casting victim.

Making one's initial saving throw against this spell does not indicate the spell has failed, however. Once affected, the recipient keeps on making saving throws until a *lapse* occurs by failing one, whereupon the spell's duration expires. This spell is, of course, usually banned in areas frequented by spell-casters. A successful *dispel magic* eliminates this dweomer.

**Anesthesia** (Enchantment/Charm)

Level: 5 Components: V,S,M  
Range: Touch CT: 1 round  
Duration: Special ST: ½  
AE: 1 creature

Explanation/Description: By means of this spell, the illusionist renders the recipient unconscious and insensate for a period of time. Duration is two rounds per level of the caster minus the hit dice or level of the recipient. Thus, a 10th-level illusionist casting this spell on a 15th-level fighter would be able to anaesthetize the fighter for five rounds ( $(2 \times 10) - 15 = 5$ ). An affected creature *must* roll a saving throw, which decreases duration by one half if successful (2½ rounds in the example above).

While *anesthesia* has obvious benefits for medieval surgery, it has other properties which make it more interesting in game terms. Its greatest asset is that it adds a +10% to system-shock survival rolls while the recipient is *anaesthetized*, and it reduces saving throws in general by -4. This makes it easier to perform certain magical operations upon the recipient, with less worry over killing it in the process. The spell's greatest liability is that the -4 saving-throw penalty endures beyond the expiration of

the *anesthesia* for 20 rounds minus the hit dice or level of the recipient. In terms of combat, an *anaesthetized* creature may be killed automatically by any opponent without even rolling to hit. Only living creatures susceptible to *charm* spells are subject to the spell's effects (undead, golems, etc., are unaffected). The recipient's magical attack adjustment or resistance to *charm* spells may affect the saving throw. The material component is a poppy flower.

**Seizure** (Enchantment/Charm, Illusion/Phantasm)

Level: 6 AE: 1 creature  
Range: 0 or touch CT: 4 segments  
Duration: Special ST: Special or neg.  
Components: V,S,M or V,S

Explanation/Description: Like the *lapse* spell, above, this spell can be cast upon a trigger object, which then delivers the spell's potential to the first creature that touches it. Saving throws for the *seizure* follow the same pattern as for a *lapse*: repeated saving throws until a failure occurs. In case of a *seizure*, a saving throw is rolled at the start of every round of melee combat in which the victim is involved. Note that the mental attack adjustment for superior or inferior wisdom affects this saving throw.

The recipient of this spell does not know that it has a *seizure* lying in wait, although a *detect charm* would notice the spell's aura on the recipient. However, the illusionist can also cast this spell in an immediate form by touching the recipient, in which case there is no material component. The recipient then gets one saving throw vs. the spell, and either has an immediate *seizure* (failed saving throw) or the spell is wasted (successful saving throw).

The effects of a *seizure* upon the recipient cause him to collapse in fits, thrashing wildly about while making choking noises and strangled cries. The body quivers and convulses. This lasts for 2-5 rounds, ending in one round of the victim being stiff in a state of rigor, followed by 2-5 rounds of unconsciousness. The victim is virtually helpless for 3-18 rounds after regaining consciousness, and is unable to fight or engage in spell-casting or strenuous activity. Thereafter, the victim is able to react normally, though with a -2 on saving throws, attacks, and defense for 5-20 rounds more (with a 10% chance of spell failure when casting any spell during that time).

While thrashing about, the victim takes 1-4 hp of damage per round unless restrained. The victim strikes aimlessly at his restrainers with all limbs, inflicting no damage except to those with AC 9 or AC 10 (50% chance of 1 hp damage per round). In the one round of rigor, the victim must save vs. death magic at +2 or choke, dying 1-3 rounds later, unless someone is nearby who can prevent the choking with simple aid. The final result of a *seizure* is a temporary loss of 1-4 points of strength and constitution, which are recovered at a rate of 1 point each per day (no system shock roll is required).

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(continued from page 14)

many variables affecting the actions of a routing unit that it is impossible to cover every possible situation. Players and referees must apply some common sense when adjudicating routs; just remember that a routing unit wants to get away from whatever caused it to rout, and will try to exit the battlefield at the same point that it entered.

**The illustration on page 11 ([7.8]) of the BATTLESYSTEM rulebook shows a wheeling movement and gives the movement cost as 5". Can a unit perform a double wheel and go twice as far, or half a wheel and go only half as far?**

There is no fixed cost for wheeling; you have misinterpreted the example in the rules. A wheeling unit pivots on one of its "corners," the cost of the wheel being determined by the total movement of the figure that is farthest from the pivot point. A unit may wheel as far as its movement allowance allows. The 5" cost shown on page 11 is just an example.

**Can magic spells be disrupted by missile fire or melee in a BATTLESYSTEM supplement as they can be in a normal adventure?**

Attacks during the initial missile phase will not disrupt spell-casting because spells are cast later in the round. For missile fire in the magic and missile phase, simply make an initiative roll (this is separate from the roll in the initiative phase); spell-casters losing this roll have their spells disrupted if they are struck by missile fire (a single spell-caster that is with a unit is immune to missile fire, like any other hero). Spells are cast before melee, so a unit cannot disrupt a spell by fighting the spell-caster. Note, however, that another hero can launch missiles or melee attacks at a spell-caster and keep him occupied until the duel is over. See page 18 of the rulebook for more details.

**The rules give movement penalties for crossing walls and other obstacles. Is it possible for a unit to move along the top of a wall? What are the movement penalties for doing so?**

A figure or unit can move along any terrain feature that has space to hold it and strength to support it. The penalties for such movement vary from case to case. Decide if such movement is possible and what the penalties are before the game.

**Can mounted spell-casters use their spells while their mounts are moving?**

Flying or riding spell-casters must have a stable platform in order to cast spells. If using a fly spell, the spell-caster must be hovering or "coasting." A land mount must be stationary for spell-casting. Some common sense applies to this rule. A carpet of

flying, for example, is stable as long as it isn't performing violent maneuvers, and a howdah will be stable if the creature it's strapped to isn't routing or charging.

**What do you do when the total number of melee casualties inflicted on a unit exceeds the total number of figures that the unit has in melee (base-to-base) contact with the enemy?**

According to designer Doug Niles, a unit must always remove all casualties inflicted during melee, even when the number of casualties exceeds the number of figures in melee contact. A unit in any kind of formation always fills gaps during melee (see pages 9-10 of the rulebook).

**How much damage does the spell insect plague do in a battle?**

*Insect* plague does no damage in the BATTLESYSTEM supplement rules. It just creates an obstacle and causes units to rout or check morale (see the *Players Handbook*, page 50).

**Does the insect plague spell have any effect upon heroes, monsters, or units made up of creatures with more than 2 HD?**

Any unit inside the *insect plague* must check morale each round if the unit's creatures have 5 HD or less. Individual heroes and characters are affected normally, suffering damage and obscured vision.

**How can 1" -wide BATTLESYSTEM supplement counters defend a castle wall?**

Rules for handling sieges are included in module DL 8, *Dragons of War* (TSR 9141). If you don't want to buy the module, simply build or draw your fortifications to the BATTLESYSTEM supplement ground scale and place your figures or counters on them, one counter deep. This is unrealistic, but it's the easiest way to use fortifications with the game. If you're a stickler for accuracy, place the counters one counter width apart from each other. This represents each counter's personnel spread out along the wall. A unit deployed in this fashion is still considered to be in closed order.

**What is THAC0? How do I find it?**

THAC0 is an acronym for the phrase "To Hit Armor Class 0." You get the THAC0 number from the combat tables of the AD&D or D&D game rules. Just look on the appropriate attack table and take the numerical entry required to hit AC 0.

**What happens when a unit on a forced march comes into contact with an enemy unit? The rules seem to indicate that something terrible is supposed to happen.**

A unit cannot execute a forced march if the forced march will bring it into contact

with an enemy unit. How this restriction works out in practice depends on the situation. For example, a unit with a movement rate of 12" can make a forced march of up to 18". The unit cannot use a forced march to make melee contact with an enemy unit that is more than 12" worth of movement away. If the unit makes a forced march and comes into contact with an enemy unit before it has exceeded its normal 12" movement rate, it loses its 6" forced march bonus as it must follow rule [7.8] on page 11; the unit suffers no other penalties. If a unit making a forced march can see an opposing unit that lies just beyond the marching unit's normal movement limit, the marching unit comes to a halt at the limit of its normal movement rate (the troops are assumed to have stopped to catch their breath before melee). However, if the unit accidentally runs into a hidden or *invisible* unit after it has exceeded its 12" movement, it is stopped and ambushed by the hidden force. In the melee phase, the hidden force gains the initiative and inflicts damage on the moving unit before the moving unit can return the attack.

**The seventh-level druid spell *changestaff* creates a 12-HD treant that loses hit dice when it takes damage. How is this "staff/treant" treated in the BATTLESYSTEM supplement rules?**

The resulting creature enters the battle as a 1:1-scale figure, and uses the hero rules on pages 17 and 18 when attacking. The staff/treant is a single creature, but it acts only as commanded by the druid and cannot act independently, nor can it animate normal trees. If attacked, the staff/treant's statistics are altered as appropriate from round to round.

**If the rules say that a figure can take two wounds before being killed, does this mean that a figure can suffer two wounds, with the third wound killing it?**

No. The second wound kills the figure.

**The text describing a change of facing on page 11 does not seem to match the accompanying diagram. If the unit on the right did a left-face, wouldn't the relative positions remain unchanged? The actual result looks more like a wheel.**

You are correct. A change of facing does not alter the relative positions of the figures in the unit. The figure labeled "MV COST 1/3 MV ALLOWANCE" should be replaced by a unit figure exactly like the one to the left of it, but with arrows pointing off to the right.

**Rule [7.8] seems to indicate that a unit can perform a wrap-around during the movement phase even if it does not have the initiative. Is this correct?**

No. Rule [7.8] (page 11) applies only to units that move into base-to-base contact with an enemy unit during their own movement phase. Movement under this rule is not the same as wrap-around movement as described under rule [7.11] (page 12). Figures in a unit moving under rule [7.8] may not change direction in any way once even a single figure in the unit makes base-to-base contact with the enemy. The figures can only move straight ahead.

**When is a melee round finished?**  
**Do units that come into contact simply fight until one of them routs or is annihilated?**

A melee (game) round is over when each side has made one attack (remember that melee attacks are assumed to take place simultaneously). If there are still figures in base-to-base contact after this, move on the next phase of that BATTLESYSTEM supplement Game Turn. A battle is finished when one side is either destroyed, routs, withdraws, or is otherwise rendered incapable of continuing the fight.

**How do you include a PC in a unit? Is he one of 10 people in a particular figure or is he the eleventh? How does the PC affect the unit's AR?**

The PC or NPC hero does not belong to any particular figure in a unit; he is an extra assigned to the unit as a whole. A hero affects a unit's AR or other statistics only when he is averaged in with the rest of the unit when the unit's roster is prepared (see page 5). This must be done before the game starts. This is not a very good way to use a hero. If this is done, the hero does not fight on his own. The unit's improved stats account for the hero's presence. Most heroes who fight with units attack separately according to their own AR, using the rules on pages 17 and 18.

#### Do woods effect melee?

No, but they do prevent units from charging.

**Can missile fire occur in woods if both the target and the attackers are within the woods?**

No. The tree trunks, leaves, branches, etc., get in the way.

**What exactly does the prohibition against premeasurement mean? Do players have to describe their units' actions in minute detail before placing the ruler on the table?**

Detailed descriptions of a unit's actions are not necessary. The premeasurement rule is there to prevent players from using their rulers as aids to decision making. For example, a player cannot measure the distance between his unit and an enemy unit, then decide not to try to charge the enemy unit because the distance is too great. In this case, the player would have to move his unit as close to the opposing

unit as its normal movement allowance will take it.

**The rules list bonuses for flank and rear attacks. What prevents opposing units from simply running around behind their enemies and attacking them from the rear? Wouldn't the defending unit just turn around to face the enemy?**

Units in the BATTLESYSTEM supplement can't just run around to the rear of enemy units in order to gain combat bonuses. The movement rules on pages 11-13 make this a virtual impossibility. Units can't simply turn around to face an enemy who attacks from the flank or rear, as large numbers of people don't react as quickly as individuals do. There is no penalty for returning a rear attack - only a bonus for making a rear attack. Some creatures in the defending unit can turn around to return the attack, but this disrupts the unit and makes defense more difficult.

**Do heroes have to pay movement costs to change facing? If not, what prevents them from simply turning around when attacked from behind, or running around behind a unit or another hero to make a rear attack?**

Heroes change facing for free. Heroes can make end-runs around units and attack them from the rear if they have enough movement. When a hero is attacked from behind, he remains with his back to the enemy for one attack at most. If an opposing hero tries to run around him and attack from the rear, it can be assumed that he turns to face his attacker as long as he knows the attacker is there.

**Does the AD&D game's third-level, magic-user spell fireball get larger outdoors? That is, does the size of the fireball convert from feet to yards outdoors? Page 73 of the *Players Handbook* seems to indicate that this is the case.**

The area of effect of all AD&D game spells remains the same outdoors as indoors ( $1'' = 10'$ ), but the range of the spells increases, from  $1'' = 10'$  indoors to  $1'' = 10$  yards ( $30'$ ) outdoors. The reference to "yards" in the spells description is completely in error.

**When figuring the BATTLESYSTEM supplement point cost for heroes, what do you charge for psionics? How much for each major and minor ability?**

There is no fixed cost for major or minor psionic disciplines. The referee (or the players, if there is no referee) must decide which spell or magic item each ability approximates; the point cost for the ability is the same as the equivalent spell or magic item. Since most disciplines are usable as long as the character possessing them has psionic strength, treat them as innate spell abilities (100 points per spell level).

**How far can an elf or other woodland creature see in woods?**

Page 21 of the rules says that elves and other woodland creatures can see and cast spells up to 6" away. Other creatures are limited to 1".

**Dragons can use their breath weapons as both pass-through fire and split-fire. In which phases can dragons use their breath weapons?**

A dragon (or other creature with a breath weapon) may breathe during the missile and magic phase, or during the movement phases if it uses pass-through fire or split-fire. Breath weapons and other effects that are usable only once per round are not usable during the initial missile phase:

**Could a dragon using split-fire stay put, breathe, then move half its movement allowance? What about other units capable of split-fire?**

A bow-armed unit could do exactly what you describe simply by firing during the initial missile phase, but a dragon could not. You must decide how strictly to apply the split-fire rule - strictly speaking, a split-firing unit must move half its movement, fire, then complete its movement. You can, however, be a bit more flexible than this. Many miniatures players allow split-firing units to use their missiles any time before the half-move mark; if you use this rule, it is best to limit the unit to one-half a normal move after it fires, as you have suggested. Note that in this case the split-firing unit could move less than half a move at the owning player's option.

**What are the effects of the various "draconian deaths" in Krynn, the DRAGONLANCE® saga world - particularly the Baaz turn-to-stone, the Bozak explosion, the Kapak acid, and the Sivak flame deaths?**

The Baaz ability is ignored during mass combat (entrapped weapons are soon freed, and secondary weapons can be employed), but it does affect character vs. character combat. Bozak, Sivak, and Kapak effects cover areas so small that they usually cannot affect an entire figure, and thus can be ignored. In the event that they do cover an entire figure (see page 23), they generate 10 dice of damage for each draconian figure eliminated (wounding a draconian figure produces no effect) and are treated like any other magical attack. In any case, the Kapak acid remains behind, forming a barrier  $1/3''$  deep (extending back from the point where the melee took place) and as wide as the figures that produced it. This acid damages units or figures that cross it or stand in it. Such units suffer one die of damage for each creature that contacts the acid (if any part of a figure touches the acid, all creatures in the figure are considered exposed).

# The Dragon's Bestiary

## *Slimy, gross, and yucky*

*After carefully researching our files, we found that we had only two slimes to offer you for this month's Bestiary. But they're the very best slimes, of course.*

### XADOR'S FLUID

*Created by:* Thomas M. Kane

FREQUENCY: *Rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 3

MOVE: 6"

HIT DICE: 6

% IN LAIR: 100%

TREASURE TYPE: *Nil*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1 hp per turn

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Entrapment, suffocation*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Nil*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Animal*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

SIZE: 3-18 square feet (*see below*)

PSIONIC ABILITIES: *Nil*

ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: *Nil/Nil*

LEVEL/XP VALUE: V/400 + 6 per hp

This creature is a form of sentient slime or jelly, usually found in rocky, damp areas where it blends with more common molds. It is dangerous to PCs, but not as outwardly damaging as other such beings. In fact, resourceful characters might use this substance to their advantage. Xador's fluid is a clear, runny material, covering about one square foot for every two of its hit points. To feed and reproduce, this fluid must absorb nutrients from the flesh of a living creature. Xador's fluid can sense the presence of such beings from heat emissions within 10'.

Anyone within 10' of Xador's fluid is subject to its sudden attack. If the fluid makes a successful "to hit" roll, it has

flowed over its victim. It then combines with living skin, hardening it to the consistency of rock. The victim is solidified, as if coated with a thin layer of plastic, and must save vs. death magic. If the save is successful, the fluid has been kept out of the nose and mouth. Otherwise, the victim loses consciousness in one round and dies 1-4 rounds later unless his mouth is freed. Even if suffocation is avoided, Xador's fluid drains 1 hp per turn (10 rounds) from its victim as it consumes the victim's fluids. After 5-8 days, the solidified fluid flakes off, reliquifies, and divides in two. Each new fluid then seeks its own victim.

A *barkskin* spell destroys solidified Xador's fluid. A blow with a weapon can also shatter hardened Xador's fluid. Every 3 hp damage done to the fluid inflicts 1 hp damage on a solidified character. Damaging the Xador's fluid for 4+ hp frees the mouth and nose of a victim, if such an intent is declared. If the trapped character makes a *bend bars/lift gates* roll, or if damage equal to the fluids hit points are inflicted, the fluid flakes off, destroyed.

This creature is named for Lord Xador, an evil noble who punished miscreants by solidifying them in this fluid. Their hardened forms were then displayed as statues and destroyed before the fluid reproduced. Various uses for Xador's fluid may occur to inventive PCs. Of course, a means of capturing the fluid must be established (it cannot eat through any material other than living flesh). As one example of the uses of Xador's fluid, a gallon jar of the fluid may be used as armor in an emergency, if five rounds are spent applying it. This allows AC 3 for the user, who can wear only normal clothing at most under the fluid. The fluid must be applied to allow for the movement of joints, of course. The few who have tried this say the "armor" feels painfully tight, and they

cannot sleep while "wearing" it. Such armor ("Xador's mail") is no more cumbersome than padded armor. However, the "wearer" loses 1 hp to the actions of the fluid every turn, and the fluid (which, in one-gallon size, has 6 hp and can cover three square feet) still reproduces in 5-8 days if the "wearer" is slain before then.

Additionally, a small bit may be applied to the knuckles in one round, allowing pummeling as if a dagger pommel were used, or it may serve to immobilize prisoners. Of course, failure to remove the fluid within a few hours may slay the captives. Xador's fluid must envelope at least one man-sized victim every two weeks, or else it will dry up and die.

### QUAGMIRE

*Created by:* Scott Bennie

FREQUENCY: *Rare*

NO. APPEARING: 1

ARMOR CLASS: 6

MOVE: 2"

HIT DICE: 6

% IN LAIR: *Nil*

TREASURE TYPE: *Incidental*

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-3

SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Entrapment, smothering, surprise on a 1-5*

SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Surprised on a 1*

MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*

INTELLIGENCE: *Semi-*

ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*

SIZE: *L*

PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

LEVEL/XP VALUE: VI/550 + 6 per hp

Quagmires, or living quicksand, are strange creatures related to assorted oozes that live in marshes. Quagmires are virtually undetectable, blending in perfectly with the terrain. They can sense heat sources (i.e., warm bodies) in a 240-yard radius, and often emit a variety of attractive scents to lure animal prey. When a victim comes within 10' of a quagmire, the creature grabs it with a pseudopod ("to hit" roll required) and draws it quickly into its body, smothering it in 2-8 rounds. The victim of a quagmire may make one *bend bars/lift gates* roll to break its grasp; otherwise it cannot attack. The quagmire can swallow the following numbers of creatures in a single day: four smaller-than-man-size, two man-size, or one larger-than-man-size. If a quagmire is killed, the victim may be pulled free; otherwise, in six hours, the victim is considered digested and cannot be raised from the dead.

Quagmires devour organic matter, even leather, bone, and paper, but will leave deposits of metal and gems (the undigested remains of their victims). Quagmires are huge, with "pools" 30' in diameter not unknown. They are believed to reproduce by fission. Because quagmires blend in with their surroundings, they have no true coloration.

Ω

# CHAOS MARAUDERS

OI, YOO LISSUN UP!!!

IMAJIN DIS SCROGGIN' BIG ARMY OF ORCS WALKIN' MILLIONS OF MILES NORF TO MAD DOG PASS, DEN GETTIN' BORED AFFTA FIVE YARDS. AN' ENDING UP BASHIN' ONE ANUVVA IN. IMAJIN DA RUHKHUNS, DA LARFS, DA MAYHEM AND DA FACES OF YER RIVALS WHEN YOU GET SLOSHED ON THEIR GROG. AN' IMAJIN DA..DA..DA.. ECK I'VE FERGOTTEN.

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# The Role of Books



## Romulans, role-playing, and robots

©1987 by John C. Bunnell

### THE PARADISE TREE

Diana L. Paxson

Ace 0-441-65134-8 \$2.95

*The Paradise Tree's* plot springs mostly from the seeds of modern horror fiction, with drug research, a diverse cast of occultists, and a partly completed computer adventure game grafted into a twinning whole. By contrast, Diana Paxson's carefully gentle characterization and mythic, nearly religious depiction of magic are solidly rooted in the soil of traditional fantasy. This makes for an unusual hybrid that may or may not fit easily into the

literary forests of its forebears.

A very light touch of science fiction also shows in the tale's background Ruth Racusak's "RainbowMac" pushes personal-computer technology several steps forward, generating television-like graphics at the stroke of a light pen, and David Mason's graduate-level gene-splicing work with marijuana derivatives seems rather advanced given the casual atmosphere in which it occurs. Paxson, though, presents these elements with an easy understatement that lets writer and audience alike take them for granted

But scientific predictability cannot help David and Ruth when separate events draw them into the same web of occult intrigue. When minor mystic Joseph

Roman unleashes David's "Paradise drug," parts of Ruth's "Forbidden City" game take on dreamlike reality, attracting far darker forces in a chase and confrontation that cut across several dimensions of Paxson's variant Berkeley. Characters from the author's earlier *Brisingamen* appear to help balance the scales of power, and both risen and fallen archangels stride to battle before the tale is done.

None of this describes how *The Paradise Tree* feels in the reading — which in turn helps describe Paxson's writing. While the pages are turning, she suspends disbelief with enough energy to hold critical analysis at bay. Yet afterward, while each twig and branch remains memorable, the shape of the tree itself is elusive. Frequent viewpoint changes give the novel a definite ensemble quality with Ruth the nominal lead, but Paxson's pruning can be uneven. *Brisingamen* heroes Karen and Michael barely share a leaf between them, seeming out of place and nondimensional. Del Eden, also from *Brisingamen*, has more growing room, but Paxson wavers between making her a major branch or the root of a cycle larger than either novel written so far. (In which light, how do the earlier book's Norse gods mix with this novel's clearly Judeo-Christian forces?) And two other shoots need more fertilizer — Ruth's romantic interest is so subtly developed that the final scene seems too sudden, and Ariel, an occult dabbler who serves as the plot's catalyst, receives no viewpoint sequences at all.

In some ways, the narrative dynamic of *The Paradise Tree* resembles nothing so much as the give-and-take mingling of an RPG-character party, with different players assuming prominence as the evening progresses and others occasionally missing a game session. That prompts two observations — first, that where an RPG campaign might be said to resemble a perpetually creeping tangle of ivy, a novel needs to bear more resemblance to a free-standing oak; and second, that perhaps the reason Paxson's novel seems more unsettling than satisfying to a game-playing reader is that an RPG devoted to serious contemporary fantasy doesn't yet exist.

Still, while Paxson's tree may lack the technical symmetry to draw scientists' eyes, it will likely welcome tire swings, tree houses, and wayward squirrels. All the reservations over structure and detail can't mask *The Paradise Tree's* ability to pull readers into its story — and that, after all, is any author's first goal.

### SEA OF DEATH

Gary Gygax

New infinites 0-441-75676-X \$3.95

### DARK WALKER ON MOONSHAE

Douglas Niles

TSR 0-88038-451-4 \$3.95

One novel tells of the Forgotten Realms — a land whose history will be familiar

when this column appears, but is not yet known as it's typed. The other is a tale of Greyhawk, a world well known to AD&D® game players, but visited only rarely of late. Both novels draw directly on materials developed for AD&D games, and while the common heritage is clearly visible in both books, there are major differences in the tales as well. One thing, however, can be stated with some certainty: Neither story is the equal of the DRAGONLANCE® novels that set the standard by which game-based fiction can be measured.

Of the two adventures, *Sea of Death* has more of the obvious trappings of a role-playing campaign. Gygax's Gord the Rogue is virtually the only human in a many-segmented quest which pits him against countless waves of monstrous and magical adversaries, and sends him over nearly all the western half of Greyhawk's continent. The sound of authorial dice-rolling can be detected behind a sizable percentage of Gord's encounters, especially in the magical and physical combat scenes, where the melee-round structure is almost painfully obvious.

Game mechanics are far less evident in *Darkwalker on Moonshae*, in which author Douglas Niles generally succeeds in capturing the vaguely remote and slightly druidic character of the Moonshae Isles. AD&D game inspiration shows instead in the readily apparent character classes of Niles' cast and in the presence of certain creatures from the rule books — notably a mischievously engaging faerie dragon.

Different readers will find virtues in each novel. Gord's tale has more pure action and offers a solid pattern for adventure designers seeking lessons in scenario crafting. *Darkwalker*, on the other hand, has a stronger sense of story; the larger threat of invasion directed at the Moonshae Isles is carefully meshed with growing, individual conflicts involving young Prince Tristan and those around him. In their own ways, both books are well-crafted, but where *Sea of Death* is basically a potboiler, Niles has attempted a somewhat more ambitious tale.

Unfortunately, while *Darkwalker on Moonshae* is strong on atmosphere and boasts an unusually memorable roster of bit players, it suffers from structural problems. The scenes involving evil god and head villain Kazgoroth, though necessary to offer readers insights on the larger conflict, tend to defuse rather than heighten the suspense — especially as Kazgoroth acquires allies. Unwieldy plotting is partly to blame, and other factors also contribute. Niles sometimes comes across as an overeager sportscaster, offering too much analysis of the game and depriving his audience of its full intensity. It's as if his "video-and-audio balance" isn't quite on target. (The problem doesn't arise in *Sea of Death*, where Gygax's style of storytelling is less cinematic and more radiolike, channelling all the detail through the narrator's voice.)

Each series promises more installments to come. Niles closes *Darkwalker* with a scene calling for a direct sequel, and three more Gord books are announced in the back of *Sea of Death*. Both have room to improve, as Niles learns from his initial effort and Gygax turns to a short story collection. Most fascinating, though, is the fact that these very different chronicles are the offspring of a single game system. Generalizing about AD&D game novels simply isn't safe anymore.

### ISAAC ASIMOV'S ROBOT CITY

#### (BOOK 1: ODYSSEY)

Michael Kube-McDowell

Ace 0-441-73122-8 \$2.95

"Marketing gimmick" is literally written all over this concept. The *Isaac Asimov's Robot City* title block fills nearly half the cover, while Michael Kube-McDowell's byline is barely an eighth of an inch high and difficult to read against the pastel-dominated artwork. The book's story is only marginally complete, and it concludes on a stinger straight from the serials. Yet with all the worst modern publishing trends weighing it down, *Odyssey* still successfully emulates Asimov's treatment of robots and weaves a readable — if somewhat thin — space saga.

In his introduction, Asimov takes care to disclaim any actual writing and firmly defends his decision to permit younger writers to enter into his universe. That makes Michael Kube-McDowell's achievement a distinctive one, as *Odyssey* almost precisely captures the Asimovian brand of smoothly civilized logic-chopping typical of the original robot stories. There is some unfamiliar technology, and alien species appear in Asimov's cosmos for the first time, but for the most part, the dialogue's crisp flavor and amnesiac hero Derec's cool adaptability compare neatly with Asimov's own characters and prose.

Where *Odyssey* follows this traditional pattern, the quality of the tale is solid, so that style and conflict — the latter relying on purely Asimovian finagling of the Three Laws of Robotics — show no real flaws. Where it tries to expand into less familiar territory, the results are less certain. The two aliens Derec meets reveal little of their cultures and motives. The technology of the elusive Key to Perihelion fits only awkwardly into Asimov's universe. And the murder puzzle sprung as the book ends threatens to reprise that of Asimov's classic *The Caves of Steel*.

It isn't fair to pass final judgment on *Odyssey* this early in a planned six-book sequence. Too many issues and ideas remain for future volumes to flesh out, and the nature of the collaboration between Asimov, Kube-McDowell, and other *Robot City* contributors is still far from clear. If succeeding books can effectively connect the series' developing literary and scientific insights with those of Asimov's own tales, discussing the project's

merits will be worthwhile. If not, only a look at the full series will show where the causes of failure lie.

The good things about *Odyssey* inspire guarded optimism about *Robot City's* potential, but the need to wait for five more chapters doesn't inspire great patience. It's possible that readers who follow the cycle to its conclusion will consider the time well spent — but it's more likely that they'll drift away before they get there.

### DRAGONHARPER

Jody Lynn Nye

Tor/Crossroads 0-812-56404-9 \$3.50

Most adventure gamebooks are really puzzles rather than stories — which is fine for gaming devotees, but not very rewarding to those who like reading. *Dragonharper* is different: It is a genuine story in which a gaming element has been incorporated. That's good news for readers (especially fans of Anne McCaffrey's Pern), but not as exciting for role-players. But despite the weakness, Jody Lynn Nye's adventure starts the "Crossroads" line of story/games on an auspicious note, and is easily one of the very best such books written since the concept's invention.

The familiar setting definitely figures in *Dragonharper's* appeal. While Nye avoids drawing into her plot the dragons themselves, other aspects of Pern's culture receive more attention, often (though not always) in ways that recall scenes from McCaffrey's own novels. There are starring characters from those tales (mostly in cameo roles), visits to a lively gather and an important, remote sea hold, and neatly placed scenes underlining the subtle tensions between the various classes of Pernese society.

Unlike its parent novels, however, Nye's tale is not a saga of cultural conflict. Rather, it is a straightforward yarn whose purpose is simply to take journeyman harper Robinton from point A to point B. Though in one sense that makes the story a pure travelogue, Nye weaves several cleverly spun subplots into the pattern that show off her characters and backdrops to good advantage, and seeing the journey through is by no means a foregone conclusion.

*Dragonharper*, in fact, may be the first RPG gamebook to require as many rolls against charisma as physical combats, in order for readers to complete their voyages. The flyleaf copy advertising "full use" of the usual six character statistics isn't far from the truth in this regard, and the simple proficiency-oriented game mechanics work quite well. There is also a good balance between dice-governed choices and those ruled by the reader's judgment.

More than that is difficult to find. This particular tale relies very little on items acquired along the way, and Nye has an unfortunate tendency to write the same

descriptions and dialogue into too many parallel plotlines, lessening the sense of variety that normally typifies multiple-plot stories. Then, too, only singularly bad luck or extreme recklessness are likely to prevent Robinton from successfully arriving at books end - Nye's suspense is largely in the story rather than the game.

But even if Dragonharper can't match a full-fledged RPG or a genuine McCaffrey novel, it is far and away beyond the juvenile writing found in most multiple-plot fiction published to date. Future "Crossroads" books may or may not equal or surpass the standard Nye sets (there was only time to read one of the three that crossed my desk barely ahead of deadline), but exploring popular literary universes obviously has potential. If the series can continue to offer quality storytelling as well as absorbing games, its publishers are likely to have a winner on their hands.

#### **THE LUCK OF RELIAN KRU**

Paula Volsky

Ace      O-441-83816-2      \$2.95

As fantasy novels go, *The Luck of Relian Kru* isn't especially distinctive. The humor is clever but not hilarious, the evil wizard is hardly more insane than the average, the romance is relatively bland, and the plot is more episodic than smoothly structured. Why, then, is it worth discussing in this space? Because it is the product of a warped imagination worthy of several Dungeon Masters put together, and there are just too many adaptable ideas to ignore.

Scrivvulch the Stick is a prime example. As court assassin to a baron who is accidentally offended by one of Relian Kru's more bizarrely colored outfits, he pursues the title character throughout the novel. But this is no ordinary death-dealer; his appearance is disarmingly benign, his manners are impeccable, and he displays a mastery of misdirection that would kill anyone but Relian several times over in the space of a chapter. (If one of the weapons hidden in his cane fails to do the job, there's always the whispering campaign that casts Relian in the utterly convincing - but false - image of a master criminal). If NPC assassins were more like this, the class might not be on its way out of the AD&D game's second edition rules.

Then there's Crekid, the little magical snake that quite literally binds Relian in the service of crazed mage Keprose Gavyne. With his tail firmly between his teeth, his grip on Relian's neck is both dangerous and unrelenting, and it takes a good deal of diplomacy and ingenuity for Relian to eventually regain his freedom. (The presence of a love interest for Crekid, in the form of a female counterpart locked to the neck of fellow captive Mereth, is a beguiling complication.)

Keprose himself isn't entirely without his moments. All his energies are bent on the eventual destruction of a shadowy enemy

across the valley from his tower, and his scheme for achieving that goal involves the Frankensteinian process of cloning four copies of himself in an effort to multiply his powers. The unlucky Relian's role in the affair is that of chief ingredient-collector for the necessary potions and rituals, and it's not difficult to imagine parallels applicable to individual game worlds.

A number of other minor elements add to the cheerful insanity - an innkeeper who is also a poet, a local economy founded on the hazardous collection of rare eggs, and Relian's own apparent knack for being in precisely the wrong place at critical moments. Paula Volsky is clearly enjoying herself in this tale, and it shows in both the characters and their surroundings. While there may be more sophisticated novels and stories more meaningful or thought-provoking, *The Luck of Relian Kru* has an unabashed cleverness about it that gives it a sense of mild-mannered fun. Dungeon Masters who take time to follow Relian's adventures will be chuckling all the way back to their notebooks.

#### **THE ROMULAN WAY**

Diane Duane and Peter Morwood

Pocket      O-671-63498-4      \$3.50

The wealth of historical data on *Star Trek*'s most enigmatic race makes this novel required reading for players of the RPG based on the series. But writers Diane Duane and Peter Morwood have made *The Romulan Way* much more than a reference book; it is one of the very best *Star Trek* novels published to date, and the first in which neither James T. Kirk nor Mr. Spock put in an appearance.

Instead, the focus is on Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy and a highly secret mission into Romulan territory, to ascertain the status of a deep-cover spy whose reports to the Federation are long overdue. Carrying out the assignment requires McCoy to have himself captured and taken to the Romulan homeworld, where he will be tried on various espionage charges left over from a television episode and an earlier Duane novel. In the Romulan script, the scenario ends with McCoy's execution. In the doctor's there is another ending - but to say any more would spoil a superbly engineered climax.

The first half of the book is slow-moving at times, as Duane's and Morwood's emphasis favors the historical storytelling and moves rather rapidly through the events leading up to McCoy's arrival on ch'Rihan. It's a mistake, though, to skip the alternate chapters of what is billed as the Federation agent's survey text on Romulan - pardon, Rihannsu - culture. Threads introduced in the cultural commentary turn up again woven into the intrigues of McCoy's situation, and the background actually offers its own kind of suspense.

Yet while Duane and Morwood present an incisive portrait of Rihannsu past and present in a compact but startling pack-

age, there are one or two touches that tread perilously close to excessive cuteness. Most noticeable are the bit players named for 20th-century science-fiction writers; sharp readers will find at least two, including a primary scriptwriter of TV's animated *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™* cartoon series. Less obvious but more dangerous is the treatment of Naraht, the first Horta in Starfleet, whose eternal witty optimism threatens to become a cliche. Since the authors have made him a recurring character, they need to add depth and vulnerability to round out his personality.

In the end, both criticisms are essentially nit-picking at the edges of a genuinely exceptional novel. While Duane and Morwood may need to refine their technique slightly, no *Star Trek* chronicler after them can afford to disregard their handling of *The Romulan Way*. Luckily for novelists, screenwriters, and gamers, fulfilling the responsibility should be a memorable pleasure.

#### **THE PIG, THE PRINCE & THE UNICORN**

Karen A. Brush

Avon      0-380-75062-7      \$2.95

Quadroped is a pig - not a reincarnation, not a polymorph, not even a druid using his shapechanging powers. But gamers confronted with any of these situations can look to Karen A. Brush's engaging, whimsical tale of Quadroped's adventures for advice on how to manage characters who don't have the luxury of having hands.

Actually, there's a great deal more to Brush's story, which involves a gate that must be locked against the incursion of a mysterious Black Unicorn from the realms of Chaos, four dangerous and largely unknown Warlords bent on preventing the Key Bearer from locking the gate, and a host of allies who are thoroughly disgruntled to find that the Key Bearer this century is a small white pig.

Brush balances several potentially discordant tones in her narrative with a remarkably gentle dexterity. There's humor: The Key carries a warning about which one character observes, "The inscription is so melodramatic it *must* be real," and the Gate it unlocks is of unexpected construction. There's derring-do: Quadroped and his human allies must face genuine danger on their way to the lost cavern of the Gate, including time in castle dungeons and tense chases up and down steep mountain slopes. And there's romance of the best kind, involving characters who will give up everything for the right cause or person without making a fuss about it.

The result of the combination is a story which is both lightheartedly down-to-earth and quietly powerful on the occasions when it's necessary. There is something of fairy tales and myths in it, and those who detect resonances of C.S. Lewis and Nar-

nia in Brush's writing aren't entirely wrong. But the novel is more immediate than a fairy tale, and less oratorical than the Narnian books sometimes were. *The Pig, the Prince & the Unicorn* is a story of unexpected dimension, especially in its ending. Readers may chuckle as it begins, but when they close the book, there will be faraway expressions in their eyes. It will be intriguing to see what Karen Brush writes about next.

#### Recurring roles

Excellent first novels are always good news, but second novels which surpass them are even better and rarer treats. *Fireshaper's Doom* (Avon, \$3.50) is one of these, as Tom Deitz continues the struggles between Georgian teenager David Sullivan, and the unpredictable forces of the Sidhe of legend. This time, the stakes are higher on both sides, and Deitz gives every indication of having several more equally impressive tales up his sleeve. Few writers match personal crisis with epic conflict as effectively, and the chance to read this novel in manuscript was a much-appreciated privilege.

New additions to series are in generous supply this month, with decidedly mixed results. On the plus side is *The Witches of Wenhar* (Del Rey, \$3.95), in which Barbara Hambly revisits Sun Wolf and the Starhawk of *The Ladies of Mandrigyn*, this

time battling prejudice, ill-understood magic, and unseen death in a beleaguered desert realm. As usual, the characters are expertly drawn and the plot is deviously clever.

Meanwhile, *The Legion of Videssos* (Del Rey, \$3.95) is pulled in several new directions in Harry Turtledove's saga of Romans stranded in an alternate world. Magic and romance become prominent now, though warfare is never far out of sight, and there are hints of real fireworks yet to come. If anything, the saga is even harder to classify at this point.

Piers Anthony really does seem *Out of Phase* (Ace/Putnam, \$17.95) in his latest addition to the "Apprentice Adept" sequence. While the action in his alternate frames of fantasy and science fiction is as furious as ever, there is a flatness in the prose that hints at a certain lack of enthusiasm. Though the protagonists are now the sons of the original heroes, this tale has too much of its predecessors in it to seem especially original.

It has been a long time since the first two books appeared, but Carole Nelson Douglas finally returns to the story of Kendric and Irissa in *Keepers of Edanvant* (Tor, \$15.95). Unfortunately, the novel suffers from the very same holding-action problems that plagued its predecessor, *Exiles of the Rynth*. Large chunks of the tale consist of characters procrastinating

rather than accomplishing anything, and only very late in the novel does Douglas cure her cast of both kinds of chauvinism. Her new publishers seem just as puzzled; the book is billed both as the end of the original trilogy and the beginning of another.

More surprising is *A Night in the Netherhells* (Ace, \$2.95), Craig Shaw Gardner's closing entry in the trilogy about Ebenezum, the wizard allergic to magic, and Wuntvor, his well-meaning but inept apprentice. Where the first two books were fresh and entertaining, this one seems to have run out of steam, relying on pure slapstick to carry the tale. Most of the jokes are built on old material, and the tale reads more like a forced march than a voluntary stroll.

Gardner is better represented in *Magic in Ithkar* (Tor, \$3.50), which finds the Andre Norton/Robert Adams shared world series reduced to mass-market size from its original trade paperback presentation. There are several other clever tales as well - authors included range from Esther Friesner to Timothy Zahn and Sandra Miesel. The common denominator, magical devices somehow misused, may give gamers ideas, but the tales are average, and the series hasn't grown noticeably since the first volume. (What in the world is the point of arranging stories in alphabetical order by the author's last name?)



## Seven Swords, Seven Worlds One Dream

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But the greatest warriors of the Seven Worlds were saved, and now they have been reborn into a world gone mad. These heroes are the one hope for a shattered humanity, because they carry the dream that makes them

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L E A D I N G      E D G E

G A M E S

©1987 by Hartley  
and Patricia Lesser

A stunning series of software entertainments is on its way to your computer — centered on the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game. Based on a licensing agreement between TSR, Inc. and Strategic Simulations, Inc., signed in May of this year, AD&D® games will grace the Commodore 64/128 machines, IBM PCs and compatibles, and members of the Apple II computer family sometime during the spring of 1988. Releases for the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga will follow.

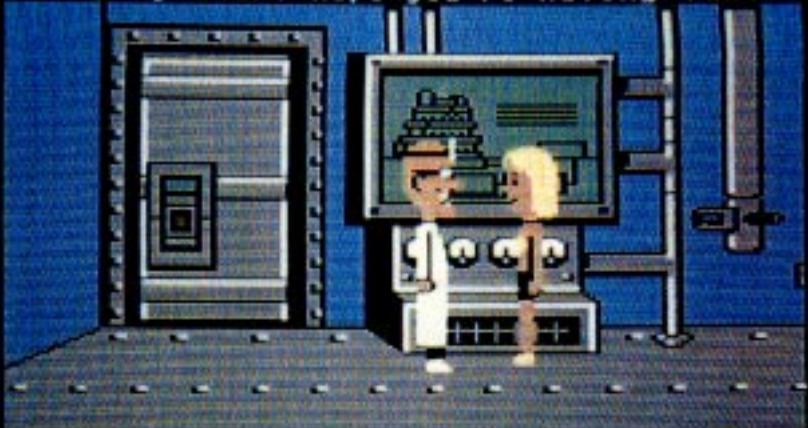
This is an exciting event — one that many other computer software developers would have dearly loved to have obtained. To be the only company to actually offer TSR's AD&D game in computer form is quite a coup for SSI. We intend to keep you fully informed of progress on the initial series of games, as well as offering "sneak peeks" at the games in development when we can. After meeting with Joel Billings (president of SSI), Chuck Kroegel (vice president of Research and Development), Keith Brors (programming project leader), and Victor Penman (game developer), we think the AD&D game offerings could be the reason many gamers purchase their first computers next year.

There was fierce competition for the AD&D game license rights between 10 companies. Joel Billings indicated that SSI first contacted TSR over a year ago to see if it was interested in selling the licensing rights to the AD&D game. "At that time, they weren't," Billings said. "They kept us in mind, so when they — almost overnight — decided to sell the license, we went and saw them. This was around April of this year. We received the license, I believe, because of our R&D capability. That was really the bottom line — an R&D staff that knows AD&D games, plays AD&D games, and enjoys AD&D games. A lot of the other companies didn't have the capabilities in-house for this kind of project. We were able to show them that we at SSI would really champion the product. The people here really feel honored to be doing computer AD&D games. If you're doing fantasy games, the AD&D game is the one to do.

"We took six computers to TSR and showed them everything we've done on every computer, and we basically showed them six or eight fantasy games that we've worked on. We showed them all different kinds of games. We tried to say: 'Look, we've done more different kinds of fantasy games than anybody else. Other companies may be stereotyped into a particular style of game. We aren't.' The only thing we had to sell them on was the fact we would add that extra polish — graphics — to this game, which our previous games haven't had. We also developed some routines just for this project, so when we went to TSR, we showed them

# The Role of Computers

Well, my dear. Hope you're having fun!



Scenes from the LucasFilm adventure *Maniac Mansion*, distributed by Activision (see page 78 for details). *Maniac Mansion* is ™ and ©1987 LucasFilm Ltd.



Push      Open      Walk to      New Kid      Turn on  
Pull      Close      Pick up      Unlock      Turn off  
Give      Read      What is      Use      Fix

*TSR, SSI, helpful hints, and  
a whole new ball game*

what we had done in the last month. We didn't even have the contract when we did this. This will be the number-one fantasy product in the marketplace."

According to vice president Kroegel: "I believe TSR chose SSI because we showed that we would have more focus on their product, that we wanted this project more than the other companies, and that their project wouldn't be lost in another firm's huge product line. We showed TSR how well they could work with our own R&D department. We have the resources and graphics capability and game development to complete this project well. I think TSR was afraid that someone would only complete this project halfway and not do the project justice."

Exactly what area of the AD&D game environment will SSI's products encompass? "At this point, we're working on one part at a time," said Keith Brors. "This is an enormous project, especially when you consider the other adventure games on the market today. Their scale is quite large. We want to put the feel of [the AD&D game system] in the game, and to have it large enough for people to adventure in, so that it will be something different than what has been played or was on the market before."

"The computer game that Keith is working on will take place in the Forgotten Realms," added Chuck. "This is the new world that TSR has produced. In fact, TSR has even carved out a space where our games will take place on the [FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting] map [for the] first adventure. . . . The TSR staff is actually designing the first scenario for us. They're going to be making paper modules of that same adventure as well. There might even be a novel — a true multimedia approach."

The SSI involvement goes far beyond just a single game, however. According to Victor Penman: "We are actually doing three major project groups under this license. One is an arcade-style game that is being done under contract by another company. The second is a computer-assisted AD&D game (CAADD), and that is one that will be primarily done by outside programmers and artists. The intention of this offering is to provide Dungeon Masters with computer assists to take care of the bookkeeping that is attendant to playing AD&D games. Encounter generation and map functions will be handled by the computer, allowing the DM more time for creativity. The third project is the one that Keith is doing the programming on, where the computer will, in fact, act as the DM. Players will have the option of purchasing modules from SSI to run with Keith's program, and I think the plans also include programs that people can use at home to make their own AD&D game modules."

The flagship of the TSR licensing arrangement will revolve around the stand-alone, computerized fantasy role-playing game. This is the first program

that will be released.

"What Keith is doing is equivalent to producing the *Players Handbook*, the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, and the *Monster Manual* in one program, and also allowing users to create their own modules. The core set of rules and adventuring procedures that allow it all to happen are in this first program," added Victor.

Keith indicated the programming is being done in assembly language, which makes the program run very quickly as this is the native "tongue" of any computer system. Two other programmers work with Keith on the computerized AD&D game project. The initial releases will be for the Commodore 64/128 computer system and IBM micros and compatibles. These will be followed by the Apple II version. Of interest is the fact that SSI uses the Apple II computer as the development machine for their Commodore 64/128 product lines. The IBM version will also offer an Enhanced Graphics Adapter (EGA) option of play for those systems possessing EGA boards and Enhanced Displays. Pricing has not yet been set, although Chuck indicated the program pricing would be competitive with current market offerings.

SSI has already received all of the basic information on the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting, and TSR is well into the creation of the first scenario, with the Creative Services team headed by Jim Ward. Chuck expects delivery of the first scenario by January 1988.

We asked Keith exactly how he was going to incorporate the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, *Players Handbook*, and a scenario all in one package for the Commodore machine without slow operation and multiple disk-loads because of memory constraints.

"Most of the core system will be loaded immediately into the computer's memory. There will be a lot of core routines, like the magic items and the characters, loaded into the machine. Every so often, a new block of data will be loaded in as you move overland — a small section of map at a time, a 16-by-16 area. When you move off that area, another 16-by-16 area is accessed via disk-load. It's such a small amount of data, it only takes a second to do it, so there will be no delay in the game."

As the IBM micro has more memory, we asked if the IBM version would have improved performance over other versions.

"You might well see such improvement," said Keith. "The drives are much faster, and there's more memory. And with the ST and Amiga versions, the graphics will be improved as well, as you have so much more memory to work with."

According to Victor, the first SSI package will include the core program and a module you can play with it. "Periodically, we'll be releasing more modules to be played with that first core package," Victor said. "It'll be a lot like buying your AD&D game books and the modules that go with them.

The core package is the Handler program, and the modules are then played with it. We anticipate a variety of locations for these adventures at different levels of difficulty, [and] the modules can go in a number of different directions. I expect we are going to work on whatever the public wants. TSR, beyond working on this first scenario, may also work on several other modules as well."

According to the group, one of the interesting aspects to the Handler program is that a lot of the second-edition AD&D game rules are incorporated into the offering. These will be the same rules that are going to be published by TSR in paper form. . . . Chuck also believes additional modules could become available every four to six months from SSI, after the Handler and first module releases.

The SSI release will look far better than games currently on the market — at least, that's what these three SSI experts indicated in our conversation. Some of the ideas and distinctive elements will be based on another of SSI's current fantasy adventure games, *The Wizard's Crown* (reviewed in DRAGON® issue #114). But the big difference is the new emphasis SSI is putting into the game's graphics.

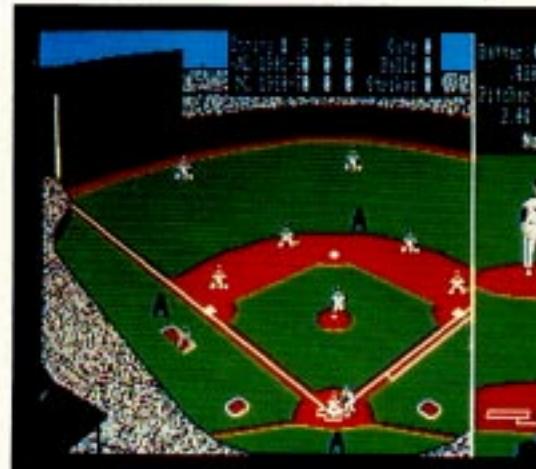
"In the past, when SSI was primarily a wargames company, graphics were not as important as game play," said Victor. "Now the graphics will be better, making this product more of an improvement than any other. We're committed to carrying out state-of-the-art graphics all the way down the line, so we're dedicated to game sophistication and a new level of graphics more so than anything we've done to date."

"We currently have a new 3-D system that is better than anything else out there right now," said Chuck. "It's better than *The Bard's Tale II* by a considerable degree."

"That includes a lot of new ideas," Keith added, "such as an overhead projection so you can self-map. You can keep your own maps if you get lost or something. Also, you'll be able to see the objects and monsters that you are about to confront, even when they're not in the same square as you. I don't know why no one else has done this yet."

"The 3-D system is one of the things that impressed TSR," indicated Victor. "We gave them a demonstration of it, with the types of developments we are coming through with now, and demonstrated the graphics capability we're going to be showing in the game. That's why it's difficult to compare our system with what's on the market today. Much of the stuff we're using for the AD&D game hasn't been released yet."

The graphics system won't see release as a stand-alone, commercial product by SSI, according to Kroegel. "It's like a good cook. Other chefs have available to them the same ingredients as we have; it's just a matter of how they're put to use. Three-D perspective is one ingredient a lot of com-



Left: The action begins in *Earl Weaver Baseball*, from Electronic Arts. Below: The game's co-designers, Eddie Dombrower and Earl Weaver (see page 78).



panies use, but we're also adding other ingredients that will make this game far superior to anything out there. What we have is available to anyone else out there who wants to dig into the technology."

"We're going to add a few new twists that we haven't seen in the market," continued Chuck. "It will have state-of-the-art animation that is used as a reward for having done something, having achieved something, in the program. You can basically eat up all of your memory by having animation. We wish to use animation appropriately in our game, in areas where it will make a real difference. We have put more of our time, energy, and resources into this product than any other project in our history. We've been working on this project for three months, and we have three or four programmers at work on the game full-time."

"And this doesn't take into account the time that TSR has already put into the scenario," added Victor.

"That's the other ingredient that other companies just don't have," continued Kroegel. "Anybody can say that they've got a fantasy role-playing game, but SSI is going to be the only company to have the AD&D game. Anything else is a rip-off. We have the original! And that is why we encouraged TSR to at least do the first module. We felt that these are the people who keep up with this environment - the people who founded it, continued it, and made it successful. TSR knows something, and we wanted our first module to have that something that only TSR can offer."

According to the game's project leader, the game suits anyone who has played the D&D® or AD&D games, and the transition into computerized gaming will be very smooth. Those who have played other fantasy games on the market will also find game participation easy. The novice player, one who hasn't played AD&D games or hasn't used a computer, can use this, too, and enjoy the program immediately. Even experienced AD&D game players will find the introductory module a worthwhile experience. The aim of SSI is to offer modules that are challenging to a variety of experiences, with different modules

offering different levels of challenge, much as an AD&D game paper module aims at specific-level characters.

"Really," said Chuck, "the crux of the game, in the role-playing of it, is: What are you trying to accomplish? Do you have the role-playing elements you're looking for? Do you have room for character development? Does everyone have different abilities, and a chance to use those abilities? I feel that even the advanced AD&D game player will enjoy this game. There are a few options we're considering putting in the game at some point, to allow you to input your favorite paper-module character. The long-range plan is to allow the characters from a continuing AD&D game to be input into this product."

After the flagship Handler program and the first module are released, the Assist program - the Dungeon Master utility program - will debut. "We see the Computer Assist program as addressing the second part of the market," said Victor Penman. "The Handler program is a mass market [program]; anyone can use it. It's a game that everyone will enjoy very much. The CA is aimed at people who are running AD&D game campaigns, or who want to run AD&D game campaigns. All of the work that this entails for the DM, including the reading of the rules and implementation of the rules, will now be managed by the computer. We're taking [some of] the work out of being a DM. We're freeing the DM up to do more creative stuff. There are screens for the DM, piles of paper and rules that he or she has to constantly reference, and we intend to incorporate these materials in the CA program. The DM will be able to call up a character, call up encounters, allow the computer to generate characters, manage combat, handle encounters, even create dungeons on demand anytime."

"We'll also enable the DM, if he or she wants, to call up an illustration of a monster on the computer screen to show it to the adventure party. The computer will also know if the party has seen this particular monster before; it will tell the DM that, and if the party hasn't seen [the monster], it'll just present the picture on

the screen without identifying it. Well, that may or may not help the party. The program will also do a lot of preparatory work for the DM. It'll also print out lists and any character information, and tell you exactly what the stats are."

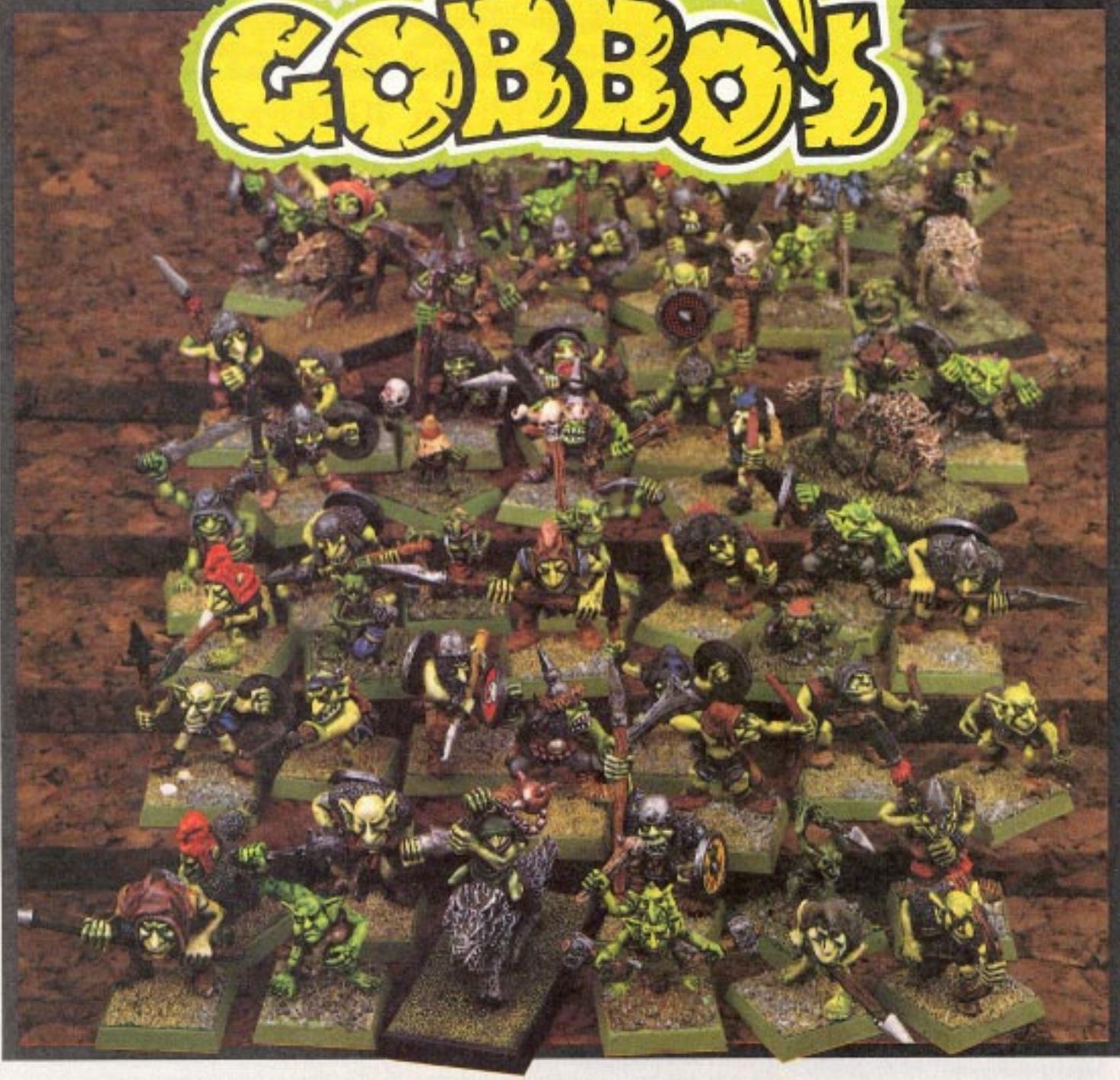
"Also, it'll be able to individualize the encounters. With a lot of other computer fantasy games, all of the monsters you run into are the same. With the CA program, this doesn't have to be. You can have individual personalities and individual abilities for a wider range of monsters. You can have one wimpy orc and one great orc, for example, but the party doesn't know which one is which until they actually start the combat. So there will be a lot more detail that would be practical to put into a game. Typically, I think, there is a trade-off between detail and playability. Detail has a tendency, when relying on a human to find records and do maps, to slow down games. We're putting the detail and the maps into the computer; it'll handle it, and the detail will be there without slowing down the game, with the computer handling the boring work."

With the CA program, the DM will set up basic configurations before running the game. How does he want experience points to work? How does he want alignment to work? These matters will be under the DM's control from the beginning.

Victor added that he wants to hear from anyone who might have ideas for these game modules, as well as from readers who have done programming and might be able to offer insights into the development of this series. Write to: Strategic Simulations, Inc., 1046 North Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View CA 94043-1716.

This is an extremely exciting project, with the finished product resulting in an element that the role-playing industry has needed for some time. Once these games make their entry into the marketplace, they will make role-playing games a far more practical exercise in entertainment. The computer will manage activities it can best deal with, while the people manage what they do best: the creativity aspect of role-playing games. We'll keep you apprised of the progress of the project.

# GOBBO'S



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## New software adventures

### Activision, Inc.

2350 Bayshore Parkway  
Mountain View CA 94043  
(415) 960-0410

Of major news is the Activision and Chicago-based FASA Corporation agreement to jointly develop a new type of adventure software based on FASA's highly successful BATTLETECH® series of science-fiction adventure and role-playing board games. This will bring together both role-playing and military strategy, with the computer versions being a natural evolutionary step due to the storing and processing of large quantities of data. FASA released the BATTLETECH game in late 1986, and followed up with CITYTECH®, AEROTECH®, MECHWARRIOR® and BATTLEFORCE® games (all top-sellers). Watch for a Summer 1988 release for the first game, in Commodore 64 and IBM PC and compatibles formats.

Activision is also the distributor for a brand new LucasFilm graphic adventure entitled *Maniac Mansion*. Due to a new storytelling technology incorporated into this game, there are at least five successful endings, which means you can play the adventure time and time again with different characters and challenges each time you play. Full animation is supported, as well as 55 unique three-dimensional rooms and more than 450 objects. *Maniac Mansion* is for the Commodore 64/128 and the Apple II family of computers.

*Aliens: The Computer Game* is a new release by Activision in Apple II format. This game recreates the blockbuster motion picture, and features scenes, pieces of dialogue, and six different arcade-style game segments which tie in closely to the movie's story line. This game is already available for the Commodore 64. The Apple version will be \$34.95. Also of good news is that Activision, for the first time in four years, has reported a profit! Their earnings were over \$500,000, compared to a loss of nearly \$2 million last year.

### Aegis Development

2210 Wilshire Boulevard #277  
Santa Monica CA 90403  
(213) 392-9972

Earlier this year, Aegis released Arazok's *Tomb*, a graphic adventure game, for the Apple Macintosh. They have now released the game for the Commodore Amiga computer. Written by Rick Alves and Jo An Roberts, Arazok's Tomb combines stunning graphics, sound, animation, and synthesized speech in this role-playing text adventure. The adventure takes place in Scotland, where the players are searching for Daphne, who is trapped in Caer Arazok's Tomb. Once you find the right trail, you have to fight and outwit enemies of all kinds (for \$49.95).

### The Avalon Hill Game Company

4517 Harford Road  
Baltimore MD 21214  
(301) 254-9200

The first statistical basketball game licensed by the National Basketball Association has made its debut courtesy of TAHGC. NBA players pick their starting lineups, send in substitutes, and send calls for the fast break and full-court press. Each player's stamina is rated by the number of minutes he can play. Included are 20 great basketball teams from a variety of eras, as well as a stat keeper, an animation feature that lets you see each play, and three modes of play. This program is available for the Commodore 64/128, Apple II family, and IBM PC and compatible computers for \$39.95.

### Data East USA

470 Needles Drive  
San Jose CA 95112  
(408) 286-7074

Data East has obtained a permanent injunction against Epyx, Inc., which had released *World Karate Championship, U.S.* District Judge William Ingram has issued an order for the permanent injunction and impoundment that restrains Epyx from further sale or distribution of the computer game *World Karate Championship*. The injunction is based on court findings that the work violates and infringes upon Data East USA's copyright on its game Karate Champ. Epyx must recall from both customers and distributors all copies of the infringing work.

### IntelliCreations

19808 Nordhoff Place  
Chatsworth CA 91311  
(818) 886-5922

*Alternate Reality - The Dungeon* is finally released for the Commodore 64/128, with versions for 8-bit Atari computers and Apple II systems expected later this year. *The Dungeon* is a sequel to *The City*, and can be played with a character created in *The City* or with a new character entering the mysterious world populated by beings beyond description. *Alternate Reality - The City*, already out for the C64/128, Apple, Atari, and Atari ST systems, will be available for the Macintosh and IBM micros this year.

Other new IntelliCreations offerings include: *Tomahawk*, a helicopter simulation for the Atari and Commodore; *Force 7*, a science-fiction action and adventure game for the Commodore, Atari 8-bit, and Apple II systems; and *Dark Lord*, an introductory graphics/text adventure in which the Dark Lord takes you into the Alterworld, where you must destroy an evil wizard. This is for the Apple and Commodore systems.

### Electronic Arts

1820 Gateway Drive  
San Mateo CA 94404  
(415) 571-7171

That fantastic Steve Jackson board game, *Ogre*, is now released by Electronic Arts in a format for the Macintosh (\$39.95). Already available for IBM's and compatibles, Atari 8-bit systems, Atari ST, Commodore 64/128, and Amiga, this computer-enhanced version of the classic strategy game is for one or two players, and pits an incredible solo-fighting Cyber-tank, the Ogre, against a more conventional force of infantry, armor units, and command posts.

Other new distributions under Electronic Arts' Affiliated Label program include: *221 B Baker Street*, where you return to Victorian London to relive the adventurous days of Sherlock Holmes; *Road To Moscow*, a fine strategy game product that relives the war in Russia between 1941 and 1945; *Battles in Normandy, June-July 1944*, an exciting strategy war game based on the Allied invasion and the fighting around the beachhead that followed; and *Russia: The Great War In The East: 1942-1945*, another strategy game that recreates the climactic four years of conflict that raged from the shores of the Black Sea to the tundra of the Arctic Circle.

### Mini-Review

#### *Earl Weaver Baseball*

\* \* \* 1/2

In keeping with our feeling that role-playing games encompass any software entertainment that allows you to play a role other than your own, real environment, we highly recommend this baseball role-playing game from Electronic Arts. Without question, this is the finest baseball simulation ever to grace the screen of a Commodore Amiga. Thankfully, IBM PC and compatible owners will also be able to obtain this game in MSDOS format before Christmas.

Earl Weaver, ex-manager of the Baltimore Orioles, is modern-day baseball's "winningest" manager, and he has imparted all of his knowledge into this game, which is creatively programmed by Eddie Dombrower, with digitized sound by Teri Mason. On an Amiga, there are split screens showing the playing field as well as the batter and the pitcher, camera pans that follow a hit baseball, slow-motion and close-ups.

But there's far more. You may select to manage (or manage and play) the game at a variety of difficulty levels. Control of the game is through the keypad, joystick, or mouse, with each defensive or offensive action being extremely easy to initiate. An onscreen play option allows you to select any offensive or defensive move you wish, even with another "manager" sitting at your side controlling the other team. This offering also allows you to customize your own ballpark or pick one of several famous ballparks to play in. You can go to

# MEGATRAVELLER

## Science-Fiction Adventure in the Shattered Imperium

The vast interstellar Imperium has ruled its 11,000 worlds for more than a thousand years, straining at its limits to guard its borders and keep the peace within them. Until now, the Imperial government has succeeded. But now the emperor has been assassinated, and rival forces are competing for the throne. Powerful forces are at work tearing the empire apart.

As former citizens themselves, the players must make their stand in the midst of this chaos, supporting one faction or another in the ongoing civil war. They can be wary merchants, squeezing out profits from those in need of goods; mercenary soldiers, willing to market their combat proficiency; or even valiant space-warriors, fighting for the side they feel is right. In any event, the adventuring environment is ripe for the bold traveller who seeks power or glory amid the ashes of the crumbling Imperium.

MegaTraveller is the first true updated edition of Traveller, incorporating only the most advanced rules and systems developed over the last decade, tailored to fit the chaotic environment of the shattered Imperium. MegaTraveller consists of three basic rules books.

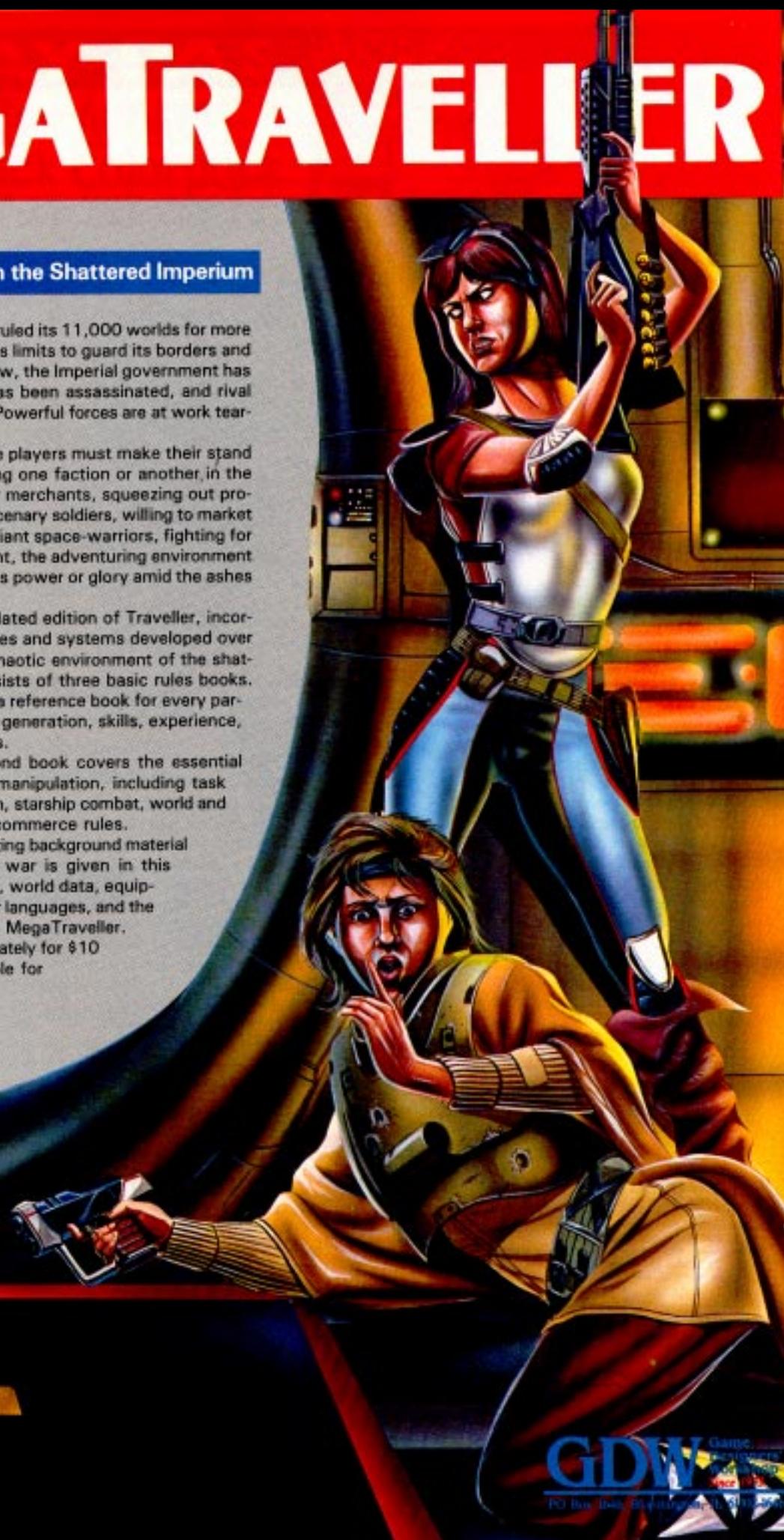
**The Players' Manual:** Intended as a reference book for every participant, it includes tasks, character generation, skills, experience, personal combat, and psionics rules.

**The Referee's Manual:** This second book covers the essential elements of universe creation and manipulation, including task resolution, starship and vehicle design, starship combat, world and system generation, and trade and commerce rules.

**The Imperial Encyclopedia:** Supporting background material for the Imperium and the ongoing war is given in this volume, including library data, maps, world data, equipment lists, word generation for major languages, and the forms and charts necessary to play MegaTraveller.

These books will be available separately for \$10 each. The boxed set will be available for Christmas and will cost \$30.

The struggle for the Imperium is on. Can you affect its outcome and change the face of the future?



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the Commissioner to start a new baseball league or division, clone existing players and make them into your own players, even recolor your players' uniforms. Players may be traded and drafted as well.

Add the actual crack of the bat as it smacks the baseball, the roar of the crowd, and you have realistic baseball play - an offering that is without peer. We had heard from some beta-testers that they didn't think the game allowed for high scoring. Well, our second game was a 14 to 3 romp, and the third game, in which we played against "Earl" (the computer), we lost 15 to 2! Other game scores ranged in the 4 to 1, 8 to 3; and 13 to 11 range.

Player's statistics can be updated automatically after every game, and you are always able to examine every player's abilities and past performance to make certain you select the best players and put them in the most useful position in your lineup. During the game, you can check the speed of each pitch via the Radar key or make note of Wind direction. Conferences on the mound can also become important, as the activated pitcher and the catcher inform you of how each feels the pitcher is performing at that moment in the ball game.

Should you ever feel lost, you can check with "Earl" to see what play he would recommend at any point in the game. His cryptic messages can be very helpful; you might be in the mood to steal second base, but Earl may caution against such a move because of factors you hadn't noticed! As we have already expended nearly all of our free time playing *Earl Weaver Baseball*, we are quite certain that this Electronic Arts offering is the best sports-simulation game of the year! It's going to take one heck of a lot for another new offering to bat a home run like this one has done.

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Released in multiple machine formats is the exciting sequel to *The Pawn*. The new

release is *The Guild of Thieves*, available for Commodore 64/128, Commodore Amiga, Atari ST, Atari 8-bit systems, Apple II family, Macintosh, and IBMs and clones. This is an illustrated adventure that takes place in Kerovnia, and includes witty dialogue, outstanding graphics, wry humor, and challenging puzzles. Eight-bit versions are \$39.95 and 16-bit versions are \$44.95.

### PBI Software

1163 Triton Drive  
Foster City CA 94404  
(415) 349-8765

Now there's a fantasy adventure game in full stereo sound! From PBI comes *The Tower of Myraglen*, for the Apple II GS computer. With digitized sound and spectacular graphics, the setting is a medieval time; the forces of evil are about to defeat the forces of good. You are the last remaining Knight of Justice. Your duty is to save the Kingdom from the dark side. You need not only weaponry but altruism as well. You must find treasures, weapons, spells, armor, and potions to aid you; you will also find 30 different monsters who are going to do their best to stop you (\$54.95).

### The Clue Corner

The game hint for this month is from Jerry Biewer, of Morton Grove, Ill., for *Bard's Tale II*:

"First of all, mapping is very important. I feel it has helped me to succeed in getting the first and second segment of the Destiny Wand. The first segment is in Fanskar's Castle. If you are starting with freshly made characters, they should seek out the starter dungeon and stay in it until they reach 14th level or higher. The group should consist of at least one monk, two paladins, one hunter (because of their ability to "critically hit"), two spell-casters, and one bard. The code for "The Dreamspell" can be learned from the Strange Mage found in Colosee. First, you must finish the tombs and then solve the puzzle that the Strange Mage gives you."

Thanks, Jerry, for your advice. We cer-

tainly intend to follow your words of wisdom.

*Might & Magic* Hint #1: If you managed to find your way into the dungeon beneath Portsmith and have come across a bronze gate, a less-than-warmer Princess could help you out!

*Phantasie* I Hint #1: Can't find a way out of the second level that you seem to be perpetually stuck in? Hope your active character isn't allergic to water - move him or her into the pool and look around!

*Phantasie* I Hint #2: A Minotaur is the only key to entrance into the Dungeon of the Dosnebian Clerics.

*Shard of Spring* Hint #1: At the Tower's 6th level, there is a seemingly impassable force field. One way to bypass this field is to see what's in the basement and capture a rod, killing its possessor.

*The Pawn* Hint #1: Sometimes, a great many actions that seem impossible are that way because an incorrect verb is used. For example, for a moving experience, try the verb "lever."

### Just rewards

As more and more software-based role-playing games are released, the ability to recognize those that make a major contribution to our enjoyment seems to slip by in the press of business. We would like to present annual awards, at least in print, to those games that you (our readers) and we (the authors) believe are the finest of the floppies. In order to manage such a task, we are asking for your help. We certainly have our own opinions, but with many thousands of you also enjoying computer games, your input is necessary to make this award truly meaningful.

If you have a minute and are truly enamored with a specific game, we would like to receive your ballot nominating that entertainment as the best game of the year for that system. Simply get a postcard, write your own name and address, the name of the game, and the system you play the game on, and mail your correspondence to Pattie and Hartley at: 179 Pebble Place, San Ramon CA 94583 (no telephone calls, please). If you have any comments you'd like to write about the game on your postcard or in the letter, add them. And don't forget: We're still looking for game hints from you gamers, and we will publish the best we receive each month.

Just to let you know what's coming up, the following games are currently under review:

Appearing next issue: *Phantasie III* from Strategic Simulations.

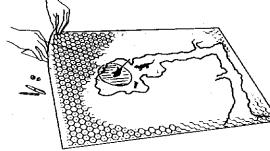
Appearing in the following issue: SDI and *Shadowgate* from Mindscape.

Appearing within the next few issues: *Alternate Reality - The Dungeon* from Datasoft (IntelliCreations); *The Eternal Dagger* from Strategic Simulations, Inc.; and *Wizardry IV - The Revenge of Werdna* from Sir-Tech Software, Inc. Until next month, *game on!*

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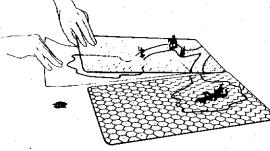
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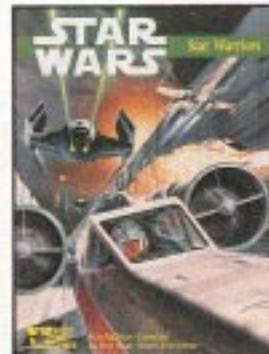
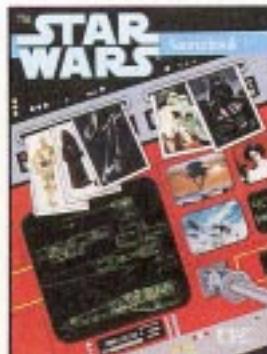
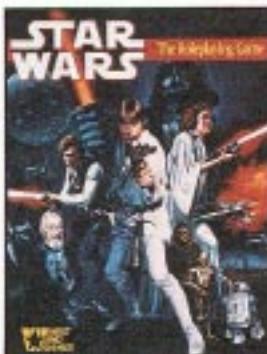
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# The Marvel-Phile



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**by Warren Spector**

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Everybody loves the ever-lovin', blue-eyed Thing, also known as Benjamin J. Grimm, Bashful Benjamin, or good ol' Benji. He was one of Marvel Comics' first and best characters, introduced back in the good ol' Stan and Jack days as one of the strongest creatures ever to walk the face of the Earth. But, like every other memorable Marvel character since, his superpowers never overshadowed his basic humanity. He may have been a rocky, orange-skinned nightmare creature, but he was always, above all, a man.

For years, the best writers in comics plumbed the depths of Ben Grimm's soul, poking, probing, investigating this man trapped in the body of a monster. The Thing appeared in book after book, story

# One Thing After Another



after story, his popularity increasing all the time. Nobody seemed to notice just how one-dimensional a character he was, is, and probably always will be.

I can hear the screams of protest already, but it's true — for all the years of character "development," Ben Grimm remains today what he was when he first appeared — a guy who beats up foes and then broods about being a monster. (I guess beating and brooding makes him two-dimensional — so sue me!)

If you're getting the idea I don't like the Thing, you're wrong. Dead wrong. I love the big orange gorilla. And when I got the chance to write a MARVEL SUPER HEROES® adventure gamebook, there was no other character (with the possible exception of Iron Man) I was as hot to tackle as the Thing. I leaped at the chance, signed the contract, and reread every Thing adventure I could get my hands on.

Then, with visions of the Thing, his pals in the Fantastic Four, the Inhumans, and the Unlimited Class Wrestlers dancing in my brain, I sat down at my computer, waiting for the Muse to strike. I waited . . . and waited . . . and waited. For weeks, nothing resembling a plot came to mind.

After what seemed like forever, I had an

epiphanic moment — all the Thing could do was punch. I was trying to come up with a brilliant, daring new story about a character who doesn't think (much), doesn't use weapons or equipment (which would have lent a little variety to the inevitable fight scenes), and has no arch-villains to call his own.

As an adventure gamebook hero, the Thing was shaping up to be a bust. Then, it hit me: The Thing as we knew him, in this world, was one-dimensional, but the character always seemed to have hidden depths. Why, for example, did he act like an idiot all the time? Here's a college graduate, ace test pilot, and rocket jockey talking like a grade-school dropout. How come? Were there circumstances that could force Ben Grimm to use his head rather than his muscles?

And that was just the beginning. I got to thinking about how Ben Grimm's life might have changed if fate had dealt him a slightly different hand. Before I knew it, I was playing "What If?" in the finest Marvel Comics tradition. Not long after, with some help from Allen Varney and my wife, Caroline, I had my adventure gamebook, *One Thing After Another*, plotted out.

To find out exactly what happens, you'll have to read *One Thing After Another*, but it isn't giving too much away to say the plot involves travel to other dimensions and encounters with Things (and Ben Grimms) that you — and our own beloved Thing — never dreamed of.

What does all of this have to do with The Marvel-Phile? We're getting there. It was right about the time I finished the Thing gamebook that Roger Moore, the esteemed editor of this publication, asked me if I'd be interested in writing a Marvel-Phile article. Being steeped in Thing-lore at the time, I naturally mentioned all my "What If?" Things and asked if he'd be interested in game statistics for them. Being weird by nature, Roger said, "Sure, I love 'What If?' stories." So that's why you're about to read an article about Things you've never heard of before.

First, let's go over the basics on our Thing, the one we all know and love (trust me; things get weirder as we go along).

Born as Benjamin J. Grimm, the world knows him as the Thing, one of Earth's mightiest heroes and a member of the renowned supergroup, the Fantastic Four. He grew up on Yancy Street, one of New York's worst slums, a place where alcoholics (like his father) end up, a place where gang members (like his brother) often die violently in battles over "turf." For a while, it looked as if Ben would come to a bad end, too, but then his Uncle Jake stepped in. With Jake's support and encouragement, Ben got into a good high school and found that he had a brain in his head. Ben also found that he was a pretty good football player — good enough to get a scholarship to Empire State College.

At State, Grimm became a gridiron star. His roommate — Reed Richards — was a

star of a different sort. A real egghead, Ben called him; a stick-in-the-mud. Despite their differences, Ben and Reed became the best of friends. One day, Reed told Grimm his greatest dream — he wanted to build a spaceship capable of taking mankind to the stars. Ben jokingly offered to pilot the ship for him.

After graduation, Grimm became an Air Force fighter pilot, then an ace test pilot. Reed became a research scientist, working to make his dream of spaceflight a reality. Finally, the dream came true. Reed had developed a rocket ship capable of traveling through outer space and, remembering Ben's promise, asked him to pilot the ship on its maiden flight. That's when things got complicated. The government wouldn't allow Reed to go up in the ship he had designed, so Reed planned a secret test flight of his own.

It was a fateful decision — one that changed the course of Ben Grimm's life and, some would say, of human history. One night, Grimm, Reed Richards, Sue Storm (soon to become Reed's wife), and Johnny Storm (Sue's teenaged brother) crept aboard the spaceship and took off! All went well for a time, but then the ship was bombarded by unexpectedly high levels of cosmic radiation. The rays sliced through the ship's untested shields, exposing the crew to the unknown effects of the mysterious radiation. One effect was obvious: The ship went out of control and plummeted earthward. Only Ben Grimm's piloting skill managed to prevent a disastrous crash. The spaceship was demolished, but the passengers were unhurt.

Unhurt, yes, but changed, both by the experience and by exposure to cosmic rays. The rays gave Reed Richards the ability to stretch his body into fantastic shapes. Sue Storm found that she could become invisible and project impenetrable force fields. The cosmic rays gave Johnny Storm the ability to burst into flame; in his flame-form, he could even fly!

Grimm was the most changed of all, though. He turned into a 500-pound, orange-colored, rocky-skinned monster, capable of uprooting trees and lifting cars as if they were toys. In fact, he is now capable of lifting up to 85 tons!

That day, Reed Richards became Mr. Fantastic, Sue Storm became the Invisible Woman, Johnny Storm became the Human Torch, and Ben became the everlovin', blue-eyed Thing. Together, they formed the Fantastic Four, and they've been fighting evil and injustice ever since. That's the way historians of the Marvel Universe tell the story — but what if things had gone differently? That, in large part, is what *One Thing After Another* is all about.

For example, imagine a world in which Reed Richards bowed to the government's wishes and didn't go up in his spaceship, a world in which Sue and Johnny Storm died in the ship's crash — but Ben survived as the Thing, with no control over his fury. That would have left a rampaging

Thing with no one around to calm him down. This Thing might have become the monster everyone expects a rocky, orange-skinned horror to be. Anyone who's read *Fantastic Four* #1 knows how crazed the Thing was right after the crash. What if he never calmed down? The Hulk might have had some competition for most out-of-control, superstrong freak the world's ever seen!

From there, it was easy to imagine that the "normal" Reed Richards would devote his life to curing his old friend. What if one of the attempted "cures" backfired, exposing the Thing to further doses of cosmic radiation? The result might be an even stronger, more monstrous Thing about 40' tall: a Thing Kong!

This Thing Kong is even stronger than everybody's favorite rocky, orange superhero, and he's got the brain of a five-year-old. It's not that he's a villain - he just doesn't know his own strength (sort of like Dragon Man, only bigger and stronger). Like all Things everywhere, he's got a thing for Alicia Masters - he'll do anything to get his paws on her, up to and including climbing the Empire State Building! (This fixation with Alicia can be a good way to introduce the brute into your campaign.)

In addition to a 40' Thing, there are some other oddities about this alternate world: Dr. Doom is a good guy, and the VVD (Victor Von Doom) Enterprises building is on the site of 4 Freedoms Plaza - but you'll have to read the book for more about that. Here are the Advanced MARVEL SUPER HEROES game statistics for Thing Kong:

## THING KONG™

### Divergent universe menace

F IN (40)	Health: 222
A TY (7)	
S UN (100)	Karma: 18
E MN (75)	
R PR (4)	Resources: 0
I PR (4)	
P GD (10)	Popularity: 0

### KNOWN POWERS:

**Body Armor:** Thing Kong's hide is even denser and more protective than the Thing's. It provides Amazing protection against physical attacks, Remarkable protection against energy attacks, and has Amazing protection against fire.

**Protected Senses:** Thing Kong has the same basic physical makeup as the Thing we all know and love, but like a child, he tends to be sensitive to loud noises - or sonic attacks. He has only Excellent protection from sonic attacks.

**TALENTS:** None (aside from wreaking Hulklike havoc and climbing tall buildings with beautiful women in his paws).

### CONTACTS: None.

Continuing our whirlwind tour of the dimensions, we come upon one in which the Thing, perhaps driven slightly insane by his outer-space experience, returns to behavioral patterns established during his childhood days on Yancy Street. Ben Grimm, the punk kid and gang fighter grows up to become a super-strong crime boss.

The streetwise Ben Grimm of this world used his great strength not for good, but to forge a criminal empire second only to the Kingpin's. Reed, Sue, and Johnny (perhaps with Spider-Man providing a little help) are the Thingpin's bitterest enemies. The Thing of our world arrives in this alternate dimension to find the "Thingpin's" criminal headquarters in a skyscraper on Yancy Street. A gang war between Kingpin and Thingpin is about to start, and all New York quakes in fear. Alicia Masters has been kidnapped - the first casualty in the bloody war to come. It's a mess only the Thing can put right.

The Thingpin is orange, rocky, and strong, but he's gotten a little soft. Not being the sort to go off saving the world and fighting bad guys, he's built an army to do the real work of running a criminal empire. He's a little out of shape, a little soft around the edges, but has a mind honed to a keen, cruel, criminal edge. He's bad news!

---

## THINGPIN™

### Divergent universe villain

F RM (30)	Health: 164
A GD (8)	
S MN (63)	Karma: 76
E MN (63)	
R EX (20)	Resources: RM (35)
I RM (26)	
P RM (30)	Popularity: 0

### KNOWN POWERS:

**Body Armor:** Like the Thing of our world, the Thingpin has dense, rocky armor, and it's every bit as effective as the Thing's own - Incredible protection against physical attacks and Excellent protection against energy attacks, with Incredible resistance to fire.

**Protected Senses:** The Thingpin's senses equal our Thing's, giving him Remarkable protection against sonic attacks.

**TALENTS:** The Thingpin was a pilot once, long enough ago to have lost the keen edge necessary to be more than a fair jet jockey (he now has underlings to do his flying for him). The same is true of his fighting abilities: The Thingpin had military training in his youth, but his tendency to let others do his fighting has made him a less effective martial artist than the Thing of our world.

**CONTACTS:** The Thingpin has friends in high places everywhere: politicians, contractors, and movie stars all flock to him because not doing so can be disastrous. He knows everybody and pulls just about everybody's strings. Those who don't give in to his subtle pressures find themselves face to face with members of his personal army of thugs.

The last Thing we'll meet may be the oddest - he's not rocky, or orange, or super-strong at all, but he may be my favorite "alternate Thing" of all. Imagine an alternate world just like the Marvel Universe, with a Fantastic Four and a Thing like the ones we know - but this Thing used Doctor Doom's time machine to go back in time to the night before the fateful rocket flight that created the Fantastic Four. Imagine the Thing preventing his younger, human self from going on that flight. All it would take would be a tap on the jaw, and Ben Grimm would be out like a light; Reed, Sue, and Johnny would either go up in the ship and return as the Fantastic Three (the Terrific Trio?) or call off the flight because they didn't have a pilot. In either event, Ben Grimm would never become the Thing, and would never worry about being a monster ever again.

Well, the plan sounds good on paper, but in *One Thing After Another*, it has some unexpected side effects. Without a qualified pilot, the ship crashed, killing Reed, Sue, and Johnny! Obviously, Ben Grimm couldn't become the Thing if he didn't go up in the ship. Imagine, then, a world without a Fantastic Four or a Thing, a world in which a lonely Ben Grimm had to survive on his wits and natural talents, rather than on his cosmic-ray enhanced muscles.

Such a man might drift from job to job, trying out as a professional football player or giving thought to a career as a military fighter jock. What would happen, though, if he ended up working as a test pilot for a private firm - like Stark Enterprises?

A man like Ben Grimm - strong, streetwise, intelligent, an ace pilot - might become Tony Stark's right-hand man. He might fly his boss to Southeast Asia, might watch his boss die of shrapnel wounds to the heart. He might find himself captured by the Communists and thrown into a cell with a brilliant research scientist who creates a suit of powered armor. Ben Grimm might become the Iron Man of such a world!

Using the powered armor, the Ben Grimm of this world returned home to become the head of Stark Enterprises. Working with Stark Enterprises' researchers, he improved the armor's basic design and changed its outer form. Wanting something that would strike fear into the hearts of evildoers, he'd naturally emulate the form of the person (or Thing) which terrified him the most: the form of the orange-skinned, rocky creature that had stopped him from going up in the rocket

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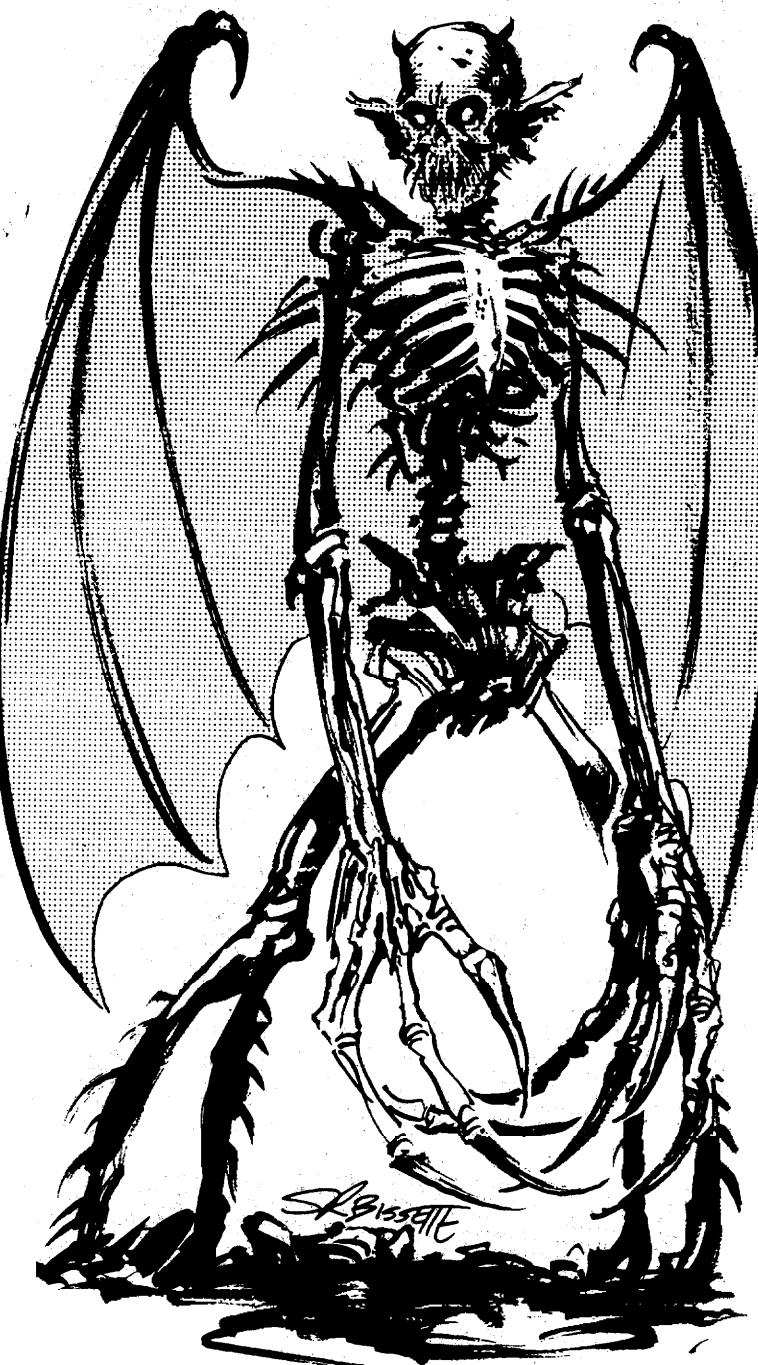
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ship with Reed Richards years before!

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The Ben Grimm of this world is a great hero and a brilliant man, but he is not without troubles. Remember, his best friends died in an accident he could have prevented, if the Thing of his future hadn't prevented him from being on Reed's ship. He watched as Tony Stark died at the hands of the Communists. His whole life is built on the deaths of others, and that's driven him a little over the edge. The Ben Grimm of this world is a little bit of a fruitcake, but that only makes him more interesting.

## DOCTOR GRIMM™

Divergent universe hero

F EX (25)	Health: 180
A RM (30)	
S AM (50)	Karma: 86
E MN (75)	
R IN (36)	Resources: EX (20)
I EX (20)	
P RM (30)	Popularity: RM (35)

### KNOWN POWERS:

**Body Armor:** The Thing Armor used by Doctor Grimm provides Amazing protection from physical attacks, as well as from heat and cold. Its resistance to corrosives is Incredible. The armor provides Monstrous protection from energy attacks, radiation, and electricity. Without the Thing Armor, Doctor Grimm's FASE scores are all Good (10).

**Repulsors:** These rays emanate from gloves of the Thing Armor and can do Amazing damage at a range of 10 areas.

**Roller Skates:** Rocket-powered roller-skate wheels can be lowered from the Thing Armor's foot-shaped boots. These allow him to move at Excellent speeds (up to 10 areas per turn). Note that the Thing Armor of this world is too bulky to fly like the Iron Man of our world - this is the trade-off for the Thing's terrifying visage.

**Gas Defenses:** If anyone tries to remove the Thing Armor from its wearer, the suit emits a knock-out gas of Remarkable intensity.

**NOTE:** These are the powers possessed by the suit of Thing Armor in *One Thing After Another*. Doctor Grimm has other suits of armor available which may give

him far different powers - anything in Iron Man's arsenal (and a couple of things Tony Stark never imagined) is possible!

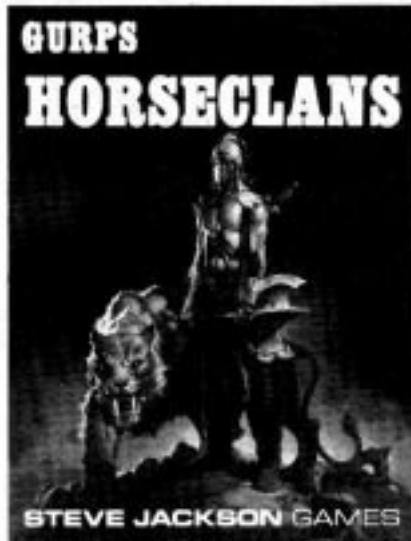
**TALENTS:** In addition to Ben Grimm's natural abilities as a pilot, the Ben Grimm of this world is skilled in electronics and business.

**CONTACTS:** Ben Grimm has good connections with the government and the military. He often does research and design work for the S.H.I.E.L.D. of this world.

There you have it: three of the Things you can encounter in *One Thing After Another*. Incorporating them into your campaign isn't as hard as you might think - the Marvel Universe is chockful of interdimensional travel devices, and time machines are a dime a dozen.

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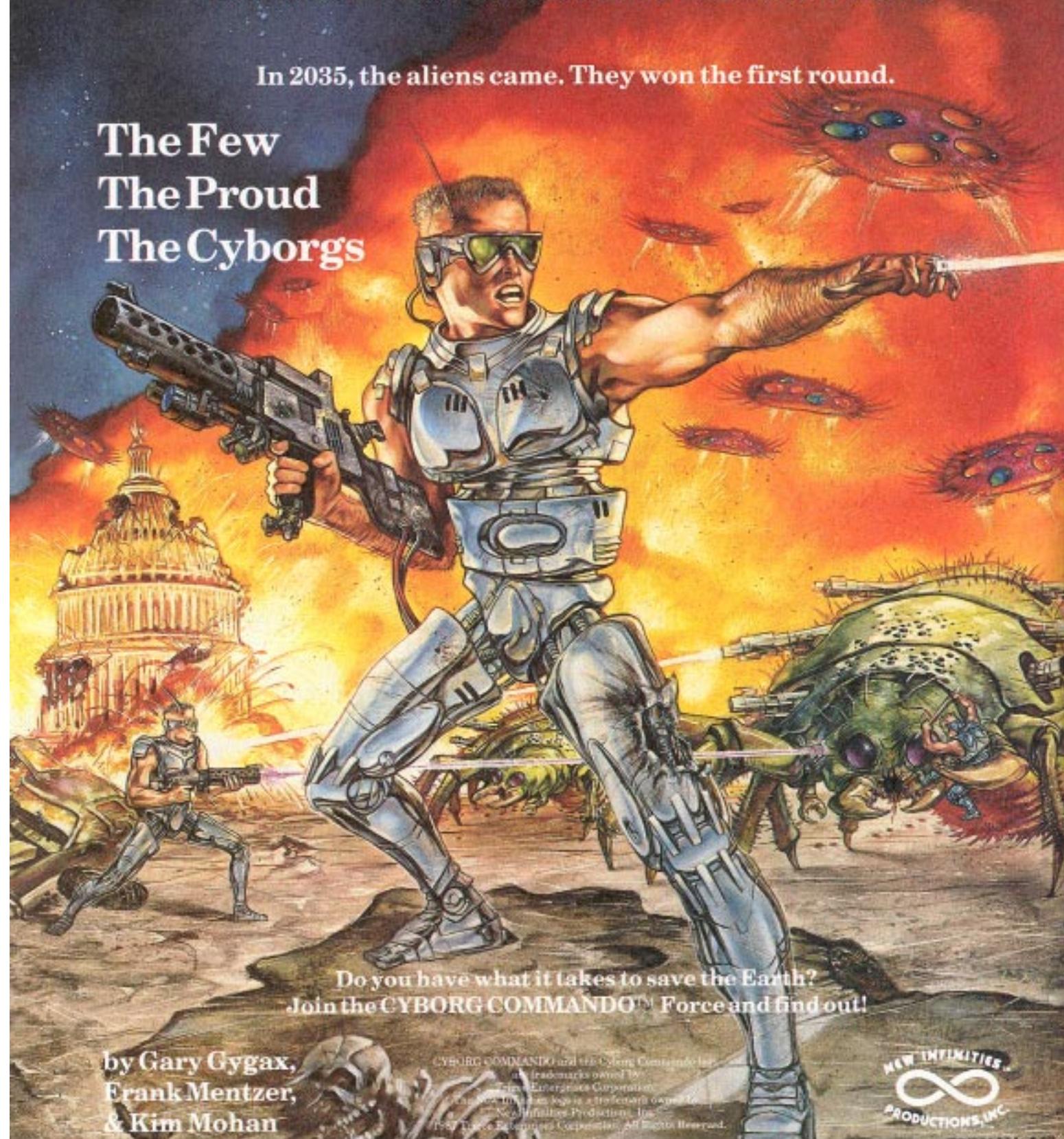
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(continued from page 3)

They graduated *magna cum laude* from the Sauron Institute for the Criminally Vicious.

When I joined the gaming group, some of the PCs had already met Tucker's kobolds, and they were not eager to repeat the experience. The party leader went over the penciled map of the dungeon and tried to find ways to avoid the little critters, but it was not possible. The group resigned itself to making a run for it through Level One to get to the elevators, where we could go down to Level Ten and fight "okay" monsters like huge flaming demons.

It didn't work. The kobolds caught us about 60' into the dungeon and locked the door behind us and barred it. Then they set the corridor on fire, while we were still in it.

"NOOOOOO!!!" screamed the party leader. 'It's THEM! Run!!!'

Thus encouraged, our party scrambled down a side passage, only to be ambushed by more kobolds firing with light crossbows through murder holes in the walls and ceilings. Kobolds with metal armor and shields flung Molotov cocktails at us from the other sides of huge piles of flaming debris, which other kobolds pushed ahead of their formation using long metal poles like broomsticks. There was no mistake about it. These kobolds were *bad*.

We turned to our group leader for advice.

"AAAAAAGH!!!" he cried, hands

clasped over his face to shut out the tactical situation.

We abandoned most of our carried items and donkeys to speed our flight toward the elevators, but we were cut off by kobold snipers who could split-move and fire, ducking back behind stones and corners after launching steel-tipped bolts and arrows, javelins, hand axes, and more flaming oil bottles. We ran into an unexplored section of Level One, taking damage all the time. It was then we discovered that these kobolds had honeycombed the first level with small tunnels to speed their movements. Kobold commandos were everywhere. All of our henchmen followed. We were next.

I recall we had a 12th-level magic-user with us, and we asked him to throw a spell or something. "Blast 'em!" we yelled as we ran. "Fireball 'em! Get those little @#+\$%\*&!!"

"What, in these narrow corridors?" he yelled back. "You want I should burn us all up instead of them?"

Our panicked flight suddenly took us to a dead-end corridor, where a giant air shaft dropped straight down into unspeakable darkness, far past Level Ten. Here we hastily

pounded spikes into the floors and walls, flung ropes over the ledge, and climbed straight down into that unspeakable darkness, because anything we met down there was sure to be better than those kobolds.

We escaped, met some huge flaming demons on Level Ten, and even managed to kill one after about an hour of combat and the lives of half the group. We felt pretty good — but the group leader could not be cheered up.

"We still have to go out the way we came in," he said as he gloomily prepared to divide up the treasure.

Tucker's kobolds were the worst things we could imagine. They ate all our donkeys and took our treasure and did everything they could to make us miserable, but they had style and brains and tenacity and courage. We respected them and loved them, sort of, because they were never boring.

If kobolds could do this to a group of PCs from 6th to 12th level, picture what a few orcs and some low-level NPCs could do to a 12th-16th level group, or a gang of mid-level NPCs and monsters to groups of up to 20th level. Then give it a try. Sometimes, it's the little things — used well — that count.



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Lord Godalming's Journal -

On this bleakest of days, the 13th March, 1898 Anno Domini, I have learned that my greatest fear has, indeed come true. He who we thought laid to rest has returned to cast his foul shadow over the living world once more, and is again spreading his vile plague! How this can be I know not, as I saw him perish before my very eyes at the culmination of our perilous pursuit through the Carpathians, where we also lost our fellow adventurer Quincey Morris - yet the facts of his wretched Un-Dead existence cannot be denied. The strange tales in the newsheets, the mysterious happenings, the bloodless corpses, and now the letter from Professor Van Helsing.

Together, with my dear friend John Seward, the Professor and I are to form, again, into a band of Hunters as we first did eight years ago - though now I fear for the aged Professor's health. Sadly, Jonathan Harker is committed though he has sent a wire advising me that he will help in any way he can. We three must not be stopped and will search to the four corners of the Earth if needs be. This time we dare not fail... this time Count Dracula must be destroyed!

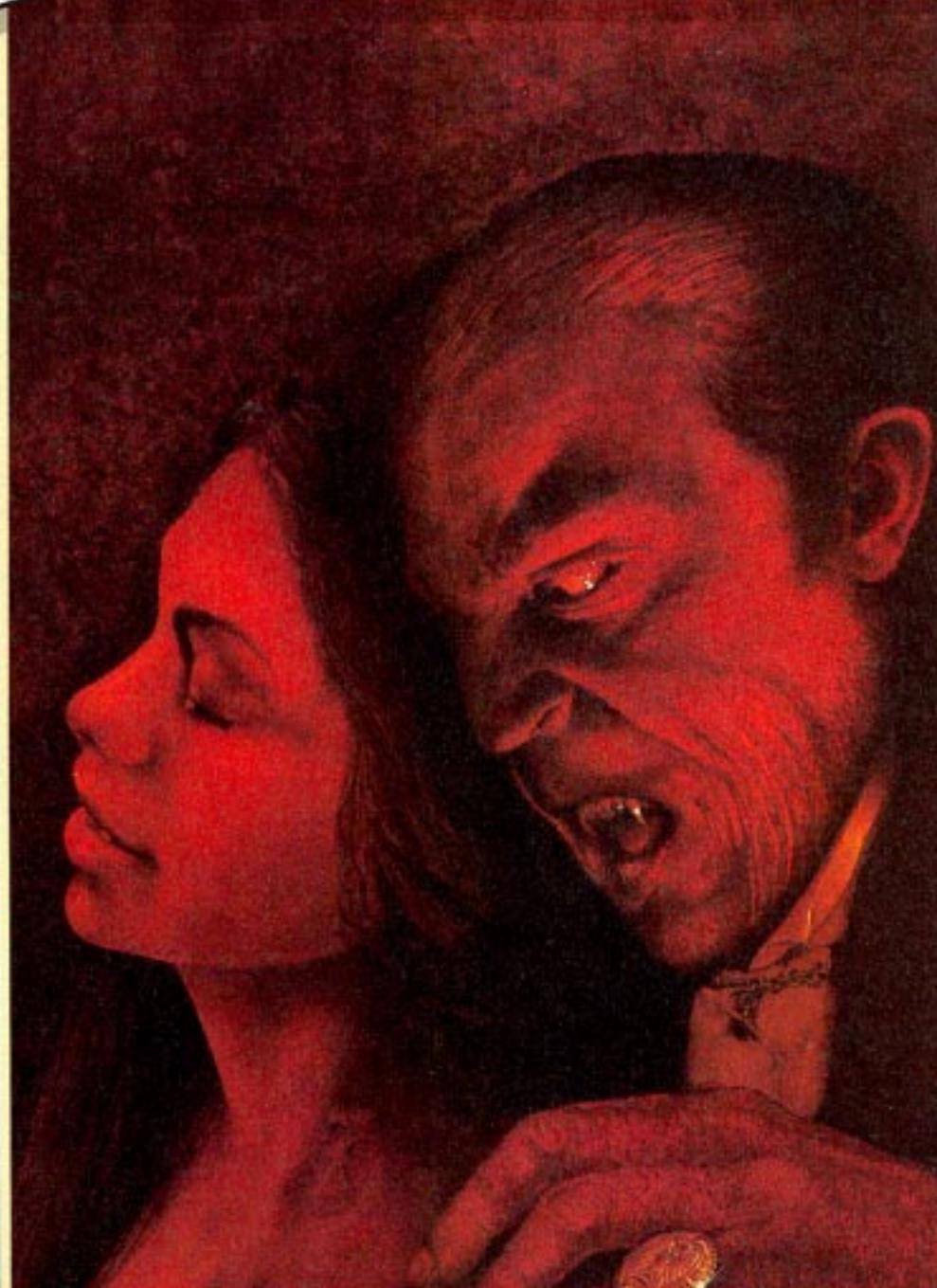
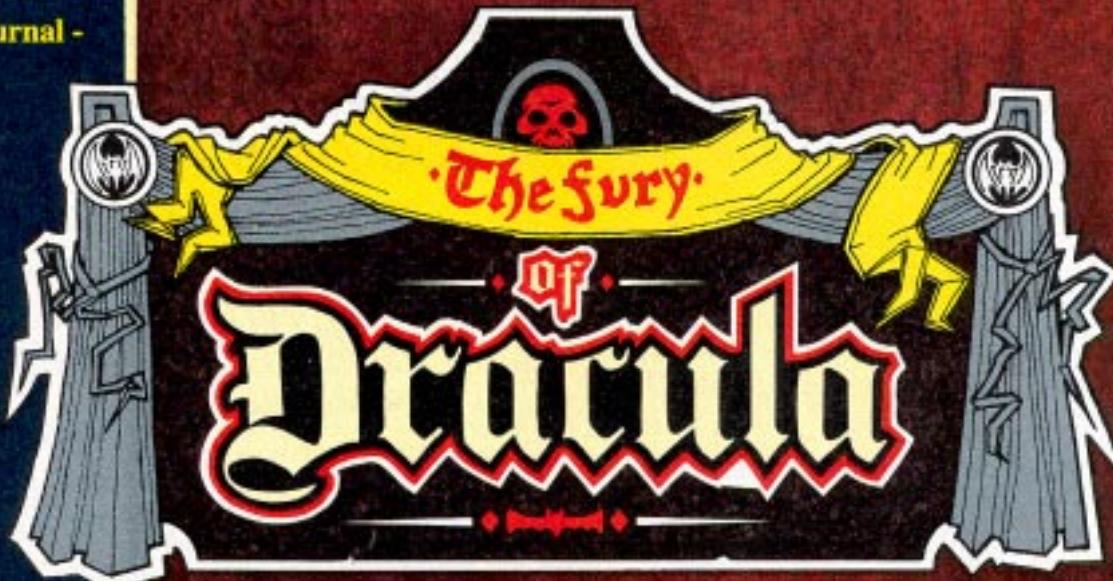
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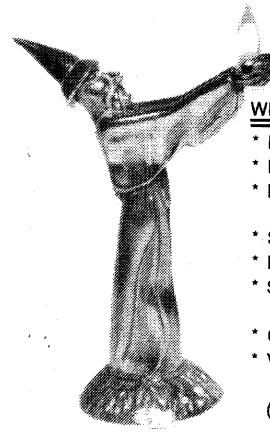
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A game convention is the perfect place to make new friends who enjoy the same hobbies you do — whether you like boardgames, role-playing games, miniature wargames, or just shopping around. If you've never attended a game convention before, please check out the Convention Calendar feature in this issue for the game convention nearest you. Take some of your own gaming friends along, too — and make it an experience to remember.

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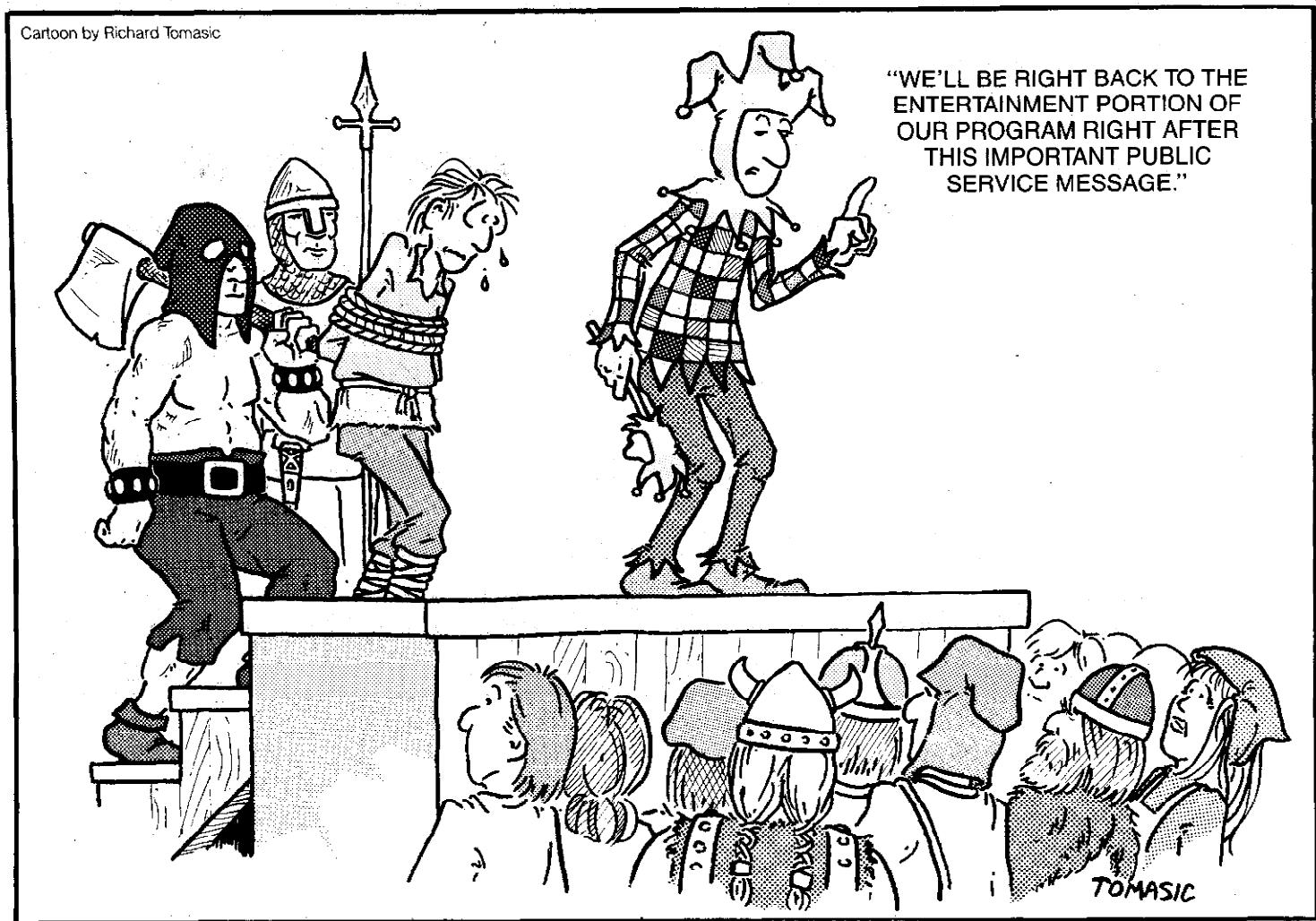
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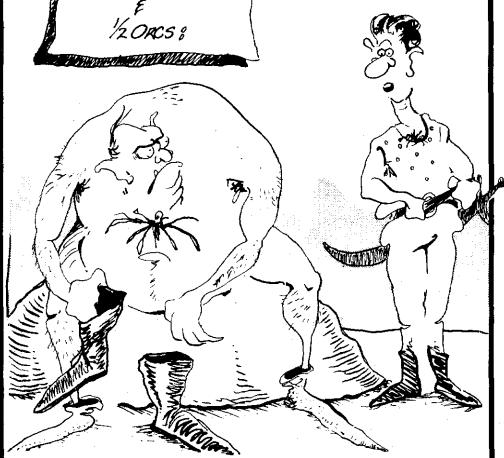


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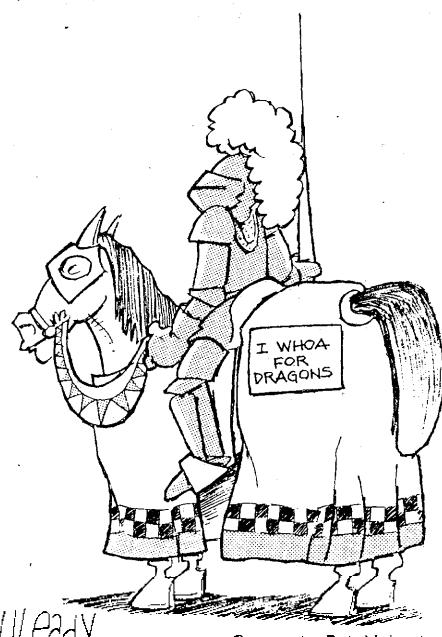


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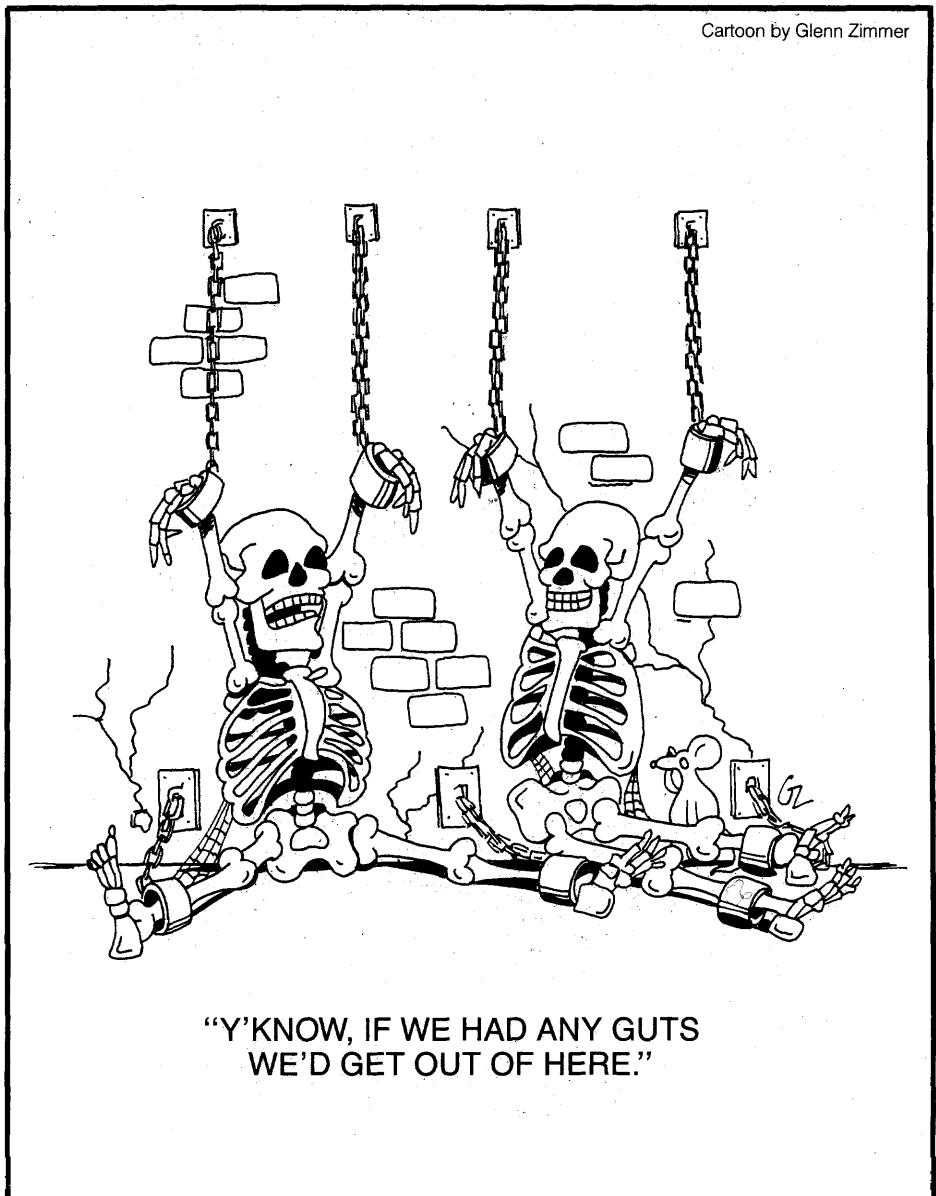
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# CONVENTION CALENDAR

## Convention Calendar Policies

This column is offered as a service to our readers around the world. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines **must** be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on 8½" x 11" paper. The contents of each listing should be short, succinct, and under 150 words long.

The information given in the listing **must** include the following information, in the following order:

1. Convention title and dates held;
2. Site and location;
3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
4. Special events offered;
5. Registration fees or attendance requirements; and,
6. Address(es) and telephone number(s) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.

Convention flyers, brochures, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements run the risk of not being considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Domestic and foreign conventions are welcome.

**WARNING:** We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that over a quarter of a million readers see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility!

Convention listings should be mailed by the copy deadline date to Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, PO. Box 110, Lake Geneva WI 53147. Copy deadline dates are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. For example, the copy deadline for the March 1988 issue is the last Monday of January 1988. Plan ahead; early listings pay off!

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, **please contact us immediately!** For any questions or changes related to this column, please call either Robin Jenkins or Roger E. Moore at TSR, Inc., at (414) 248-3625.

\* indicates a Canadian convention.

● indicates European convention.

## CHICAGO MODEL & HOBBY SHOW

### November 5-8

Sponsored by the Radio Control Hobby Trade Association (RCHTA), this third annual trade and

hobby show will be held at the O'Hare Expo Center in Rosemont, Ill. A car track, boat pond, retail store, and static model area are featured again this year, with product displays by model railroad manufacturers. Over 2,000 retailers and distributors will attend this event, as will thousands of experienced modelers. Write to: CHICAGO MODEL & HOBBY SHOW, 2400 East Devon Ave., Suite 205, Des Plaines IL 60018; or call: Susan P. Lind at (312) 299-3131, or toll-free at (800) 323-5155.

## SAN DIEGO GAMING CONVENTION

### November 6-8

This three-day gaming convention will be held at the Hotel San Diego, 339 West Broadway Street in San Diego, Calif. Events include a wide variety of role-playing, board, and miniatures game tournaments, along with a large dealers' room and a host of open games. Registration is \$20 at the door. Special two-day and one-day registration fees are available at the door. Write to: SAN DIEGO GAMING CONVENTION, P.O. Box 881424, San Diego CA 92108; or call: (619) 569-1685 between 8 A.M. and 5 P.M.

## SCI CON 9, November 6-8

Sponsored by the Hampton Roads Science Fiction Association, this science-fiction convention will be held at the Sheraton Beach Inn in Virginia Beach, Va. Larry Niven is the guest of honor, with I? Craig Russell as artist guest of honor and Bernadette Bosky as fan guest of honor. Featured events include panels, readings, videos, a costume contest, an art show, and much more. Registration is \$18 at the door. Huckster's tables (limit of 2, including one membership per table) are \$50 each. Room rates at the Sheraton Beach Inn are \$45 for a single and \$51 for a double. Write to: SCI CON 9, P.O. Box 9434, Hampton VA 23670.

## FIRST VERCINGETORIX TOURNAMENT

### November 7-8

This Ancient-period miniatures tournament will take place at the Carrefour Europe room in Chamalieres, France. Starting at 10 A.M. Saturday morning, this tournament runs until 11 P.M. Sunday evening. The 1st Vercingetorix Tournament is sponsored by the Association de Jeux Chamalierois. Write to: Donnat Jean Marc, La Tuilerie, 63230 Pontgibaud, France. Food and lodging are available at the convention site for an additional fee.

## ROCK-CON XIV, November 7-8

This year's ROCK-CON gaming convention will be held at the Wagon Wheel Resort in Rockton, Ill. Special guests include Gary Gygax, Jim Ward, Tom Wham, and Lou Zocchi. Special features include over 60 different gaming events, along with a dealers' room with over 40 exhibitors. Other events include a miniatures-painting contest (prizes awarded) and various miniatures competitions. Admission for both days is \$5, with no additional gaming fees. Convention hours are 10 A.M. to midnight Saturday and 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on Sunday. Write to: ROCK-CON

XIV Information or Game Scheduling, 14225 Hansberry Road, Rockton IL 61072. Make all checks payable to Black Hawk Distributors.

## EARTHCON VII, November 13-15

This science-fiction convention, sponsored by NEOFSA, Inc., will be held at the Holiday Inn Westlake, 1100 Crocker Road, in Cleveland, Ohio. Guests of honor include R.M. Meluch, Jay Sullivan, Kenneth Shulze, Alan Tuskes, Sheldon Jaffrey, and Jim Young. Sponsored events include videos, dealers, a masquerade, panels, filksinging, an art show and auction, a media display room, and much more. Registration is \$22. Write to: EARTHCON, P.O. Box 5641, Cleveland OH 44101.

## GICON IX, November 13-15

This biannual fantasy role-playing game convention will be held at the Ramada Inn in Grand Island, Nebr. Events include many completely original FRPG modules for various systems in competition for prizes. Other events include a competition for fantasy miniatures painting and an authors' competition for short story and poetry writing. Prizes will be awarded to all top finishers. An overall convention champion will also be named. Registration is \$15. For more information, send an SASE to: GICON IX, 3077 South 40th Street, Omaha NE 68105.

## XANADU IV, November 13-15

This science-fiction convention will be held at the Ramada Inn on Music Valley Drive in Nashville, Tenn. Poul Anderson is guest of honor. A number of RPGA™ Network tournaments will be featured, along with a few events sponsored by D.A.G.R. Memberships are \$20. Write to: William Tracy, c/o XANADU SF Con, P.O. Box 23281, Nashville TN 37202-3281.

## PENTACON III, November 14

This one-day gaming convention will be held at the Whistler Ballroom and Grand Wayne Gallery in the Grand Wayne Center located at 120 W. Jefferson in Fort Wayne, Ind. An RPGA™ Network AD&D® tournament is featured, along with other AD&D® tournaments, miniatures battles, fantasy and science-fiction role-playing games, a flea market, a miniatures-painting contest, and the awarding of door prizes. A dealers' and manufacturers' room is also available. This convention runs from 9 A.M. to midnight. Write to: NIGA/PENTACON, P.O. Box 11133, Fort Wayne IN 46856; or call: Michael Durant at (219) 422-9964.

## NOVOCON 3-D, November 21

This one-day gaming event, sponsored by the Ohio Gaming Association, will be held from 10 A.M. to midnight at the University of Akron in Akron, Ohio. Numerous role-playing games and miniatures competitions will be sponsored, along with an auction, a dealers' room, and various other activities. Membership fees are \$5 for the day, with no additional event fees. Write to: NEO-GS, Box 412, Cuyahoga Falls OH 44222.

## CONTEX V, November 27-29

This science-fiction convention will be held in Houston, Tex., at the Hobby Airport Holiday Inn over Thanksgiving weekend. Guests include Elizabeth Scarborough, Real Musgrave, Roland Schmidt, and Fran Booth. Events include tournament and open gaming, a painted-miniatures contest, a video songtape contest, an art show and auction, a masquerade, film and video rooms, writers' workshops, panels, talks, demos, a 24-hour con suite, flea-market tables, and a

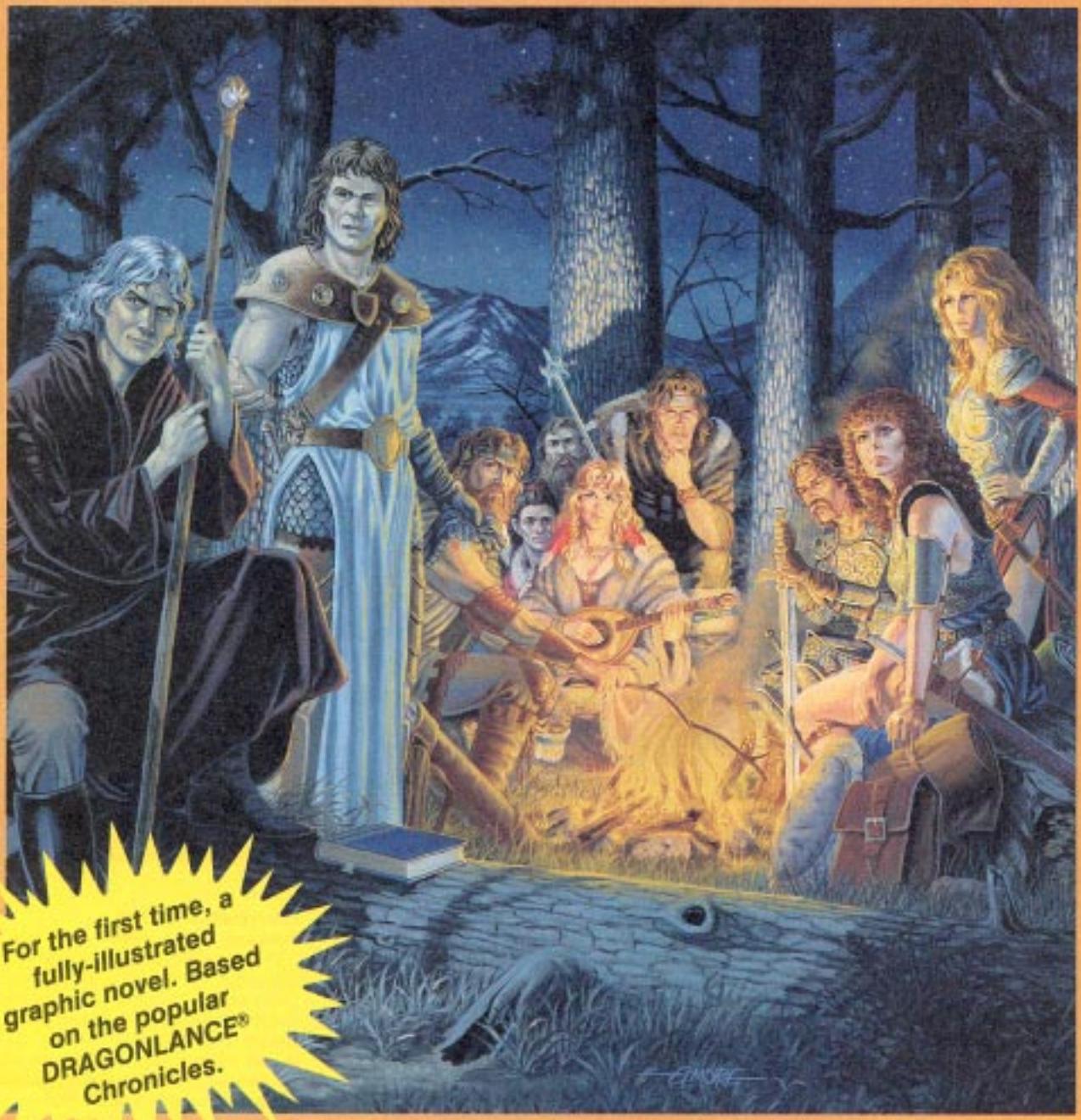
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dealers' room. Three-day memberships are \$20 at the door. Write to: Friends of Fandom, PO. Box 266996; Houston TX 77207-6996, or call: (713) 475-8228.

#### DALLAS FANTASY FAIR November 27-29

Sponsored by Bulldog Productions, this comic-book, science-fiction, and film supershow takes place at the Marriott Park Central, 7750 I-635 at Hwy 45, in Dallas, Tex. Guests include Carole Nelson Douglas, Steve Erwin, Kerry Gammill, and many others. Other features include a huge dealers' room, a professional art show, an art contest, an art auction, video rooms, a masquerade, numerous workshops, previews of upcoming motion pictures, and a variety of gaming events and open gaming competition. Tickets for this event are \$25 after November 1. Write to: Bulldog Productions, PO. Box 820488, Dallas TX 75382; or call: (214) 349-3367.

#### DRAGONMEET BALTIMORE

November 27-29

Sponsored by Games Workshop U.S., this science-fiction and fantasy gaming convention will be held at the Marriott Inner Harbor Hotel in Baltimore, Md. Events include all types of games, with an extensive miniatures gaming schedule taking place over the length of this three-day affair. Gaming events are sponsored around the clock, with a program of films and videos showing concurrently. A miniatures-painting workshop is also held at no additional expense to registrants. This workshop features artists spotlighted in the "Tabletop Heroes" section of *White Dwarf Magazine*. Registration is \$20. One-day registration is \$7.50 at the door. Write to: Timothy D. Olsen, Games Workshop, 231 Park Avenue, Baltimore MD 21201; or call: (301) 752-1493.

#### PELI-CON '87, November 27-29

This convention will be the first comics and gaming convention sponsored in the New Orleans area. Held at the Clarion Hotel on historic Canal Street in Downtown New Orleans, PELI-CON '87 will take place just blocks away from the ever-popular French Quarter. Guest artists from several comic-book publishers will be present for panel discussions and autograph sessions. Other guests will include Ned Cameron, George Alec Effinger, Pat Adkins, David "Zeb" Cook, Mike Curtis, and Kirk Alyn. Game events featured include an AD&D® game tournament, an AD&D® game trivia contest, Pente, BATTLETECH™, and BATTLETECH® game competitions, and a variety of miniatures, board, and role-playing games. Prizes will be awarded for most events. Other features include a film and video room, a dealers' room, and a 24-hour gaming room. Write to: PELI-CON '87 Convention Committee, 5200 Conti Street, New Orleans LA 70124.

#### SEME TRIATHLON INTER-CLUBS

November 28-29

This fifth annual convention will be held at les Salons d'Honneur de l'Hotel-de-Ville in Boulogne-Billancourt, France. Sponsored by the gaming group Fer de Lance, this event claims to be the largest role-playing game convention in France. Featured events include AD&D® and CALL OF CTHULHU® game tournaments, along with numerous board, war, and miniatures games. For information regarding registration costs, write to: Catherine Lefebvre, 36, rue du Loup Pendu, 92290 CHATENAU-MALABRY, FRANCE; or call: (16.1) 46.31.04.05.

#### TROPICON VI, December 4-6

This science-fiction convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Oceanside in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Guests of honor include George R.R. Martin and Gail Bennett. Panels, movies, trivia, videos, filksinging, and gaming are featured. Registration is \$15 after November 1. Tickets for the banquet are \$19 if purchased before November 30. Write to: SFPS Secretary, PO. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale FL 33307.

#### EVECON 5, January 1-3, 1988

The "first and friendliest convention" of the new year will be held at the Stouffers Concourse Hotel on Route One in Crystal City, Va., across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Guests include D. Allen Murphy, Nancy Janda, Hal Clement, and many others. EVECON 5 features a solid mix of science-fact, science-fiction, and fantasy events, including a costume party, a computer room, and open gaming. Preregistration is \$15 until Dec. 1; thereafter, registration is \$20. For more information, send an SASE to: FANTEK-EVECON, Box 128, Aberdeen MD 21001.

#### UNIVERSE 88, January 1-3, 1988

This game convention will be held at the Airport Hilton and Towers in Los Angeles, Calif. Featured events will include over 150 game tournaments (fantasy role-playing games, board games, war games, and family games), an exhibition room, films, seminars, and more. There will also be a full program of science-fiction and fantasy events. Admission is \$19.50 until December 5, and \$25 at the door. Write to: UNIVERSE 88, Dept. D, PO. Box 2577, Anaheim CA 92804; or call: (213) 867-4140.

#### CONFUSION, January 15-17, 1988

This science-fiction convention will be held at the Southfield Hilton in Southfield, Mich. Room prices are \$55 per night. Guests of honor include Joe Haldeman, Larry Tucker, Marta Randall, and David Cherry. Membership fees are \$15 until November 25, and \$20 at the door. Write to: AASFA/CONFUSION, PO. Box 8284, Ann Arbor MI 48107.

#### PROJECT...GENESIS II, January 17, 1988

This PATCO protoriginal convention celebrates its second incarnation at Chiminello's Hall, 2221 N. Weber in Fresno, Calif. Featured tournaments include AD&D®, BATTLETECH®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, CHAMPIONS™, and other games. Open gaming will be available, along with a Swap Meet for those wishing to buy, sell, or trade old games or gaming material (table space required). Preregistration for this event is \$3 for the day if paid before January 10; thereafter, registration is \$5. Tables for the Swap Meet are \$10 for an entire table and \$6.50 for half a table. Write to: PATCO, c/o Phil Pitt, 5415 E. Washington, Fresno CA 93727; or call: (209) 255-4682.

#### NEW ORLEANS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FESTIVAL, January 22-24, 1988

This science-fiction and fantasy event will take place at the Pallas Suite Hotel, Canal Boulevard, in New Orleans, La. George R.R. Martin, George Alec Effinger, and others are guests of honor. Registration is \$15 at the door. Write to: NEW ORLEANS SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY FESTIVAL, PO. Box 791089, New Orleans LA 70179-1089; or call: (504) 482-0908.

#### CHIMERA CON V, January 29-31, 1988

This science-fiction and fantasy convention will be held at the University of North Carolina

campus in Chapel Hill, N.C. Guests of honor include Nancy Springer, Hugo and Nebula Awards winner Orson Scott Card, Colleen Doran, Allen Wold, Lisa Cantrell, and Mark van Name. Events include a costume workshop and contest (costumed guests receive \$1 off admission for Saturday registration), an Outer Limits Cantina Variety Show, filksinging, gaming, panels, and more. Admission prices are \$6 per day, \$11 for two days, and \$15 for all three days. Preregistration for all three days is \$12.50. Write to: 15-A University Gardens, Chapel Hill NC 27514; or call: (919) 933-3003.

#### WARCON '88, February 5-7, 1988

Texas' oldest gaming convention will be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. The featured event is an RPGA™ Network AD&D® Open Team Tournament. Other events include a variety of board games, miniatures events, and role-playing game tournaments, a dealers' room, and 24-hour open gaming. Registration is \$7, and \$9 (RPGA™ tournament fee included) if paid before the convention; at-the-door fees are \$9 and \$12 (RPGA™ Network tournament fee included). For further information, contact: MSC NOVA, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77844; or call: (409) 845-1515.

#### GENGHIS CON IX, February 12-14, 1988

Join the Horde as GENGHIS CON IX moves to winter quarters at the Airport Hilton in Denver, Colo. This convention is sponsored by the Denver Gamers Association and the Colorado Military Historians. Events include all varieties of board, miniatures, computer, and role-playing games. The ever-popular game auction will make another appearance this year. Special gaming events include competitions in VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC, TITAN; CIVILIZATION, KING-MAKER, and ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER. The Colorado Military Historians will also sponsor one of the first qualifying rounds for the WRG Ancients National Championships. Registration is \$12 until January 31, 1988, and \$15 thereafter. Write to: Denver Gamers Association, PO. Box 2945, Littleton CO 80161.

#### ORCCON 11, February 12-15, 1988

Brought to you by STRATEGICON, the people who also brought you ORIGINS '86, this gaming convention will be held at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel. Role-playing, wargame, computer game, and family board game tournaments are offered, as well as various seminars and demonstrations, a flea market, a game auction, and an exhibitors' area. Write to: ORCCON 11, c/o DTI, PO. Box 8399, Long Beach CA 90808; or call: (213) 420-3675.

#### CONTEMPLATION 88

February 26-28, 1988

This science-fiction, fantasy, and gaming convention will be held at the Ramada Inn in Columbia, Mo. Guests of honor include Jerry and Roberta Pournelle, and Larry Niven. J.R. Daniels is the artist guest of honor, and Keith Berdak is fan guest of honor. Events include an art show and auction, numerous panels, a masquerade, a video room, a hucksters' room, gaming events, and more. Membership fees are \$10 until December 16; thereafter, fees are \$14. Write to: CONTEMPLATION, PO. Box 7242, Columbia MO 65205.



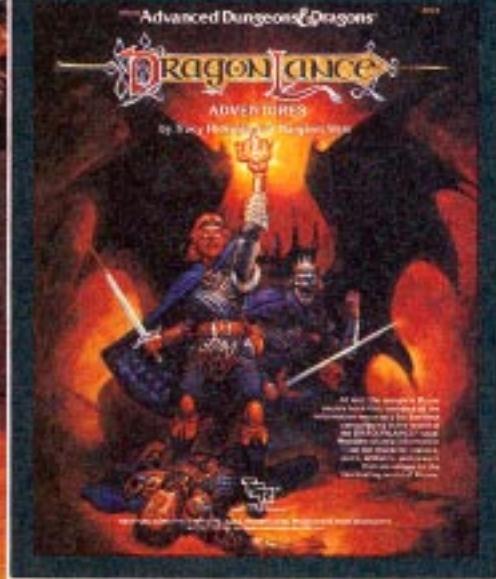
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# SNARF QUEST

#51 BY ELMORE

AFTER STOPPING OUT OF TOWN,  
IN THE DESERT...

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO KILL YA  
NOW... YA MORON, JUS' DRIVE US  
BACK TO TOWN SO WE CAN GET  
WHAT'S LEFT OF EFFIM AND GIVE  
HIM A PROPER BURIAL.

OKAY-OKAY... IT  
WAS ALL AN ACCIDENT,  
I PROMISE!!

LATER... BACK IN THE CITY...

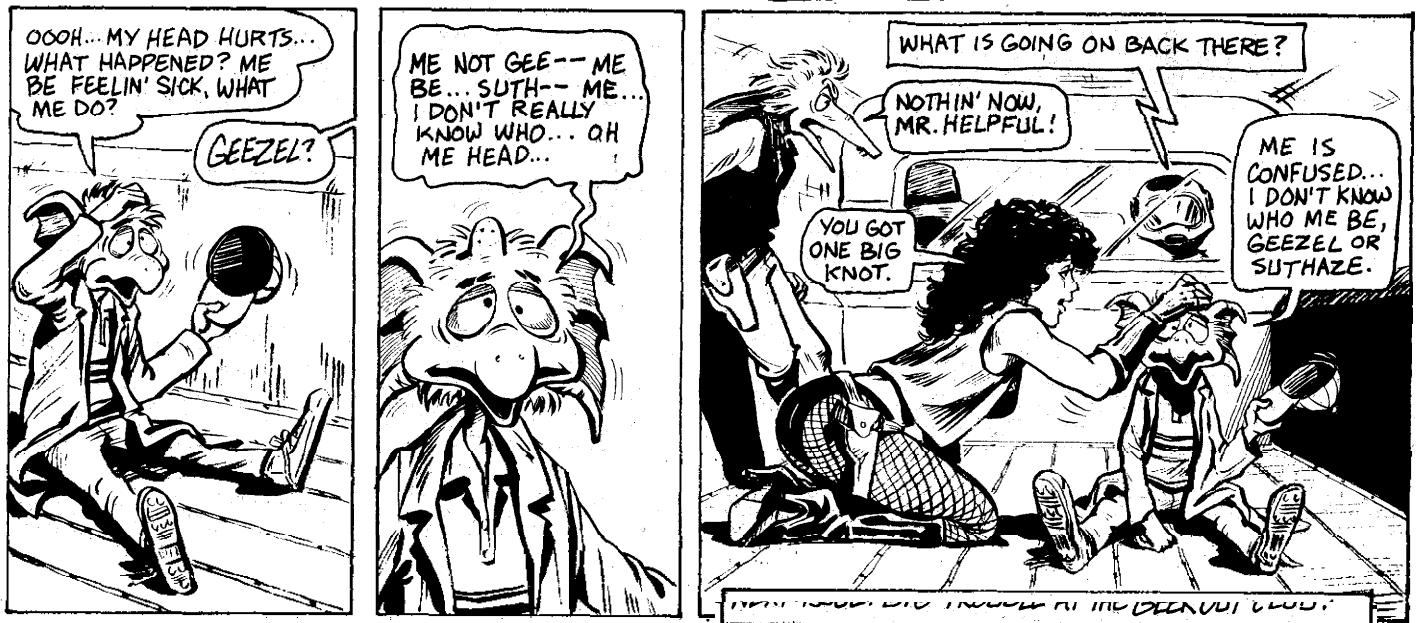
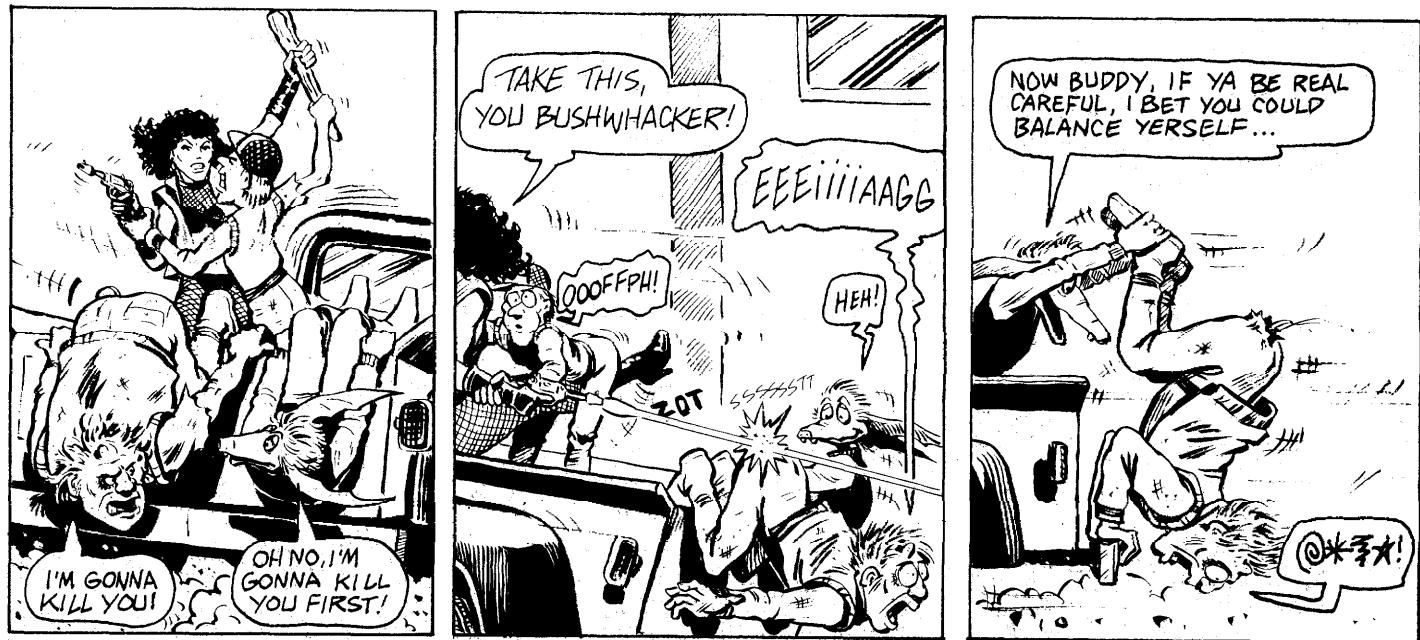
WE'VE BEEN AROUND  
DIS BLOCK THREE TIMES  
AN' DERE IS NO  
SIGN OF EFFIM.

PERHAPS SOME  
HUGE VULTURES! CARRIED  
HIS LITTLE REMAINS AWAY.

LOOK, DERE IS DA VULTURE!  
B.B., PULL OVER TO DA RIGHT,  
AN' STOP!







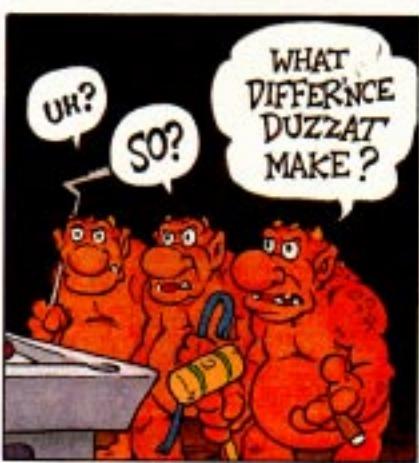
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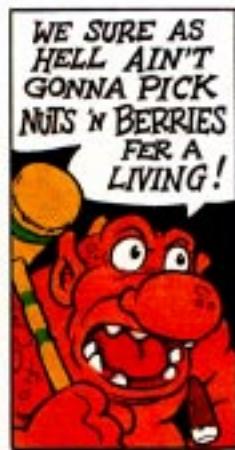
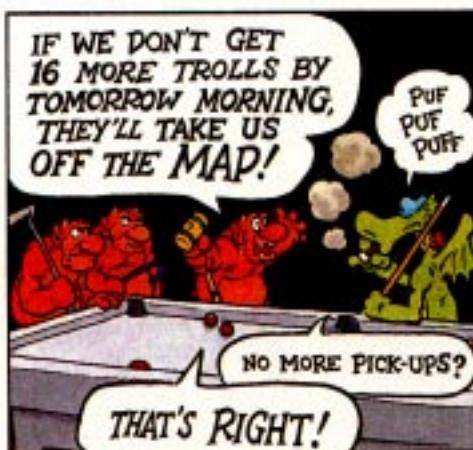
# The Magic Returns

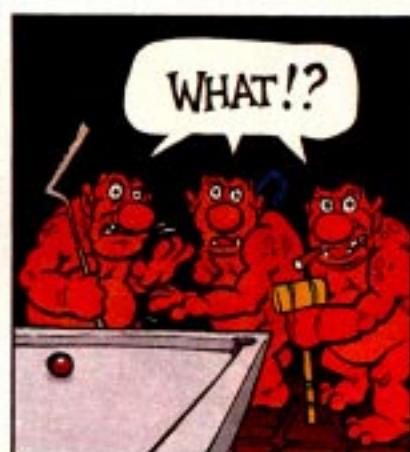
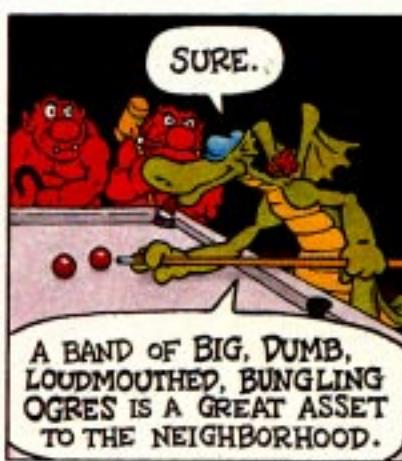
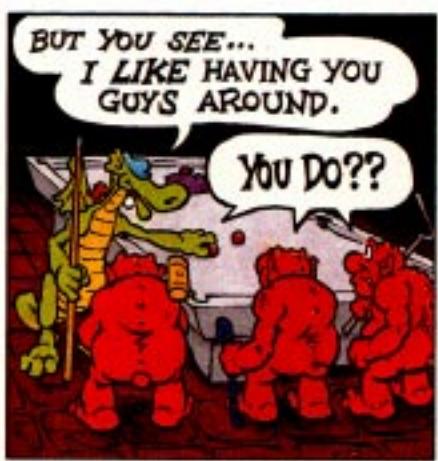


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