

masters, but applicable and interesting to all D&D freaks. The featured speakers will be Rob Kuntz, Dave Arneson and Gary Gygax. More information on this will be forthcoming in SR 6(Vol. II, No. 1).

The second seminar is on Swords and Sorcery by one of the most eminently qualified writers in the field: Fritz Leiber! Just ruminate on those possibilities for a while.

The EPT fans have not been forgotten. We are planning an EPT seminar to be held by Professor Barker, so save your questions for GenCon, and get the answers straight from the source.

GenCon IX will feature more tournaments, particularly in the areas that were overfilled last year. That means more fantasy, among others.

This year we are going to try to compile lists of preferred places to stay and eat, with rates and reservation numbers where applicable.

Contrary to other noise you may hear, GenCon is the #1 convention, as well as being the oldest. We have no intention of letting those facts change. Plan on being here in August; you won't be sorry.

## WHAT IS THE NATIONAL WARGAME CONVENTION?

We attended Origins I in Baltimore last summer, and it was indeed a fine convention. Certainly it had a few flaws, but all conventions do — even those which have been in existence for years — and for a first-time event it seemed nearly perfect. In fact, the only major complaint we heard voiced was about the big delay in entry for pre-registrants. So Origins I was a good convention, but now there are some very misleading claims being made for it by Avalon Hill, and we think it is time to set things straight.

Now AH intimates that Origins was the sole “national” convention. Origins, according to AH, was “THE” convention. Somehow one is also led to believe that the event was also the largest. Interesting contentions, but they are just not true! Here are some facts regarding GenCon:

When the first GenCon was held — a one day affair in 1968 — there were only about 100 gamers there, but they came from both the East and West Coasts and not just the Midwest. The same has been true of all succeeding GenCons, and the percentage of persons from 500 or more miles distance has risen considerably. GenCon VIII was attended by gamers from some 30 states and Canada, including Colorado, California, New York, Florida, and Texas, about 25% of the fellows traveling over 500 miles to attend. So much for the question of whether or not GenCon was ever anything other than a true national-type convention for wargamers from all regions of the North American Continent (and we would happily host gamers from anywhere in the world for that matter!).

Strangely enough, Avalon Hill describes GenCon in one of its advertising flyers as: “the Premier American wargame convention”, as well as stating that it is “the nation’s wargame convention”. This is certainly high praise and a strong statement of the position the event holds in the hobby. With credentials of that nature, how can there be any question as to which convention is “THE” event? Putting aside the relevancy of such a question, it seems clear that GenCon still retains the crown, and claims to the contrary must be suspect as publicity grabbers rather than factual statements.

Origins I was attended by approximately 1,500 persons according to Avalon Hill. This is a VERY respectable figure, especially for a first-time convention and even considering the tremendous publicity campaign which was run to boost attendance. Only one other wargame convention drew as many wargamers, GenCon VIII. Wargamers certainly supported GenCon, for attendance was a whopping 1,800, and in the microcosm of “name” gamers there were as many “big names” at GenCon as there were at Origins.

Before anyone jumps to the wrong conclusions, this is in no way an attack upon Origins or AH. We are proud of GenCon, justifiably so, and it is merely a matter of putting on record the actual case. We support Origins, and when the second convention is held we will be in Baltimore ready to play! Yet we will allow no other event to steal GenCon’s glory. Perhaps next year some other convention will exceed it in attendance, but we intend to do our best to make certain that GenCon remains the premier event, the convention most fun to be at, the one with the greatest diversity of games and tourneys. From such competition all conventioners are certain to benefit. See you at GenCon IX!

## CREATURE FEATURES

### Rakshasa:

(f. Rakshasi)

Number Appearing 1-4

Armor Class -4

Move 12"

Hit Dice 7

% in Lair 20%

Treasure Type F

2 claws 1-3 pts. each, bite for 2-5 pts.

Highly Intelligent

Only Magical Weapons can Harm

Alignment = C

Known first in India, these evil spirits encased in flesh are spreading. They are fond of a diet of human meat, and as masters of illusion they can easily gain this end. Rakshasas are able to employ ESP and then create the illusion of what those who have encountered then deem friendly, and they then withhold attack until their prey can be taken off-guard. Although capable of using weapons, they prefer to attack with their claws and teeth. Rakshasas are also capable of using both Magic-User’s spells (up to 3rd level) and Cleric’s spells (1st level). It is not affected by spells under the 8th level. Rakshasas cannot be harmed by non-magical weapons, magical weapons below +3 do but one-half damage, but hits by crossbow bolts blessed by a Cleric kill them. If more than 1 Rakshasa is encountered in its lair the group will be a male and 1 or more females.

### The Slithering Tracker

Number Appearing 1

Armor Class 5\*

Move 12"

Hit Dice 5

% in Lair 15%

Treasure Type C

Touch = save vs. Paralysis

Intelligent

Alignment = N

\* treat as Armor Class 1 unless opponent able to detect invisible objects readily.

This monster is transparent and almost impossible to discover (5% chance of spotting). It inhabits dungeons and other dark places, and does not normally attack its prey immediately (10% chance of immediate attack). The Tracker usually follows the chosen victim to the place where the victim sleeps, and only when its prey is asleep will the Tracker strike. Because of its semi-fluid body, the Tracker can flow through openings as small as a rat hole or a large crack under a door. Attack is by contact with the exposed flesh of its prey, and the secretions of the Tracker will paralyze the victim unless a save vs. Paralysis is made. Once paralyzed, the Tracker will draw all the plasma from the body of its prey in 6 turns.

### The Trapper

Number Appearing 1

Armor Class 3

Move 3"

Hit Dice 12

% in Lair 70%

Treasure Type G

Crushes for 4+AC of victim/turn

Regenerates at 1 pt./turn

Intelligent

Alignment = N

Trappers are amorphous in form, so they are able to shape themselves to the form of the floors of the places they choose to await prey. A typical Trapper is able to cover an area of up to 400 square feet, and giant specimens can cover as much as 600 square feet. The trapper also has the advantage of being able to alter its coloration to blend with the color of the floor or ground upon which it rests. Being of a consistency almost as hard of stone, Trappers are nearly impossible to detect (95%) by any normal means. Usually a trapper will wait until its prey is near its center (where it often creates a protuberance which resembles a chest or box) and then suddenly closes itself upon the unsuspecting victims. The Trapper then crushes them doing a base damage of 4 plus the armor class of the victim per turn of crushing. Those entrapped are unable to use weapons, for the great musculature of the Trapper prevents it. It must be killed or faced with certain death to make it free its prey. Its treasure is kept beneath it. Trappers are resistant to fire and cold (half or no damage).