Issue No. 6 April/May 1978
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**Please mention WHITE DWARF when replying to advertisements.**
This is the sixth issue of White Dwarf and that means effectively a year of publication – with many more to come we hope. Time usually brings change and White Dwarf is no exception to the rule.

Firstly, would everybody please note that we have moved our editorial office to 1 Dalling Road, Hammersmith, London W6, and all correspondence should be sent to that address from now on.

Secondly, we would like to remind all those people who began their subscription to White Dwarf with issue 1 that renewals are now due. Now here's the bad news; the price has increased to 60p per issue as from issue 7 to keep in line with rising print and paper costs. A small contribution is also needed to cover postage and packing so the annual subscription will now be £4.00.

Thirdly, and here's the good news, we are pleased to announce two improvements with respect to the appearance of White Dwarf. This issue, as you might have noticed, contains justified text which means no more jagged right-hand margins. Next issue will be the first to have the luxury of a full colour cover and for that we hope to obtain the talents of John Blanche who is renowned for his colour art.

No doubt in another twelve months' time more changes will be announced. We try to give readers what they want but we are always open to suggestions as to how to keep on improving White Dwarf. If you have any interesting contributions, comments or criticisms, why not send them in? It all helps.

CONTENTS

COMBAT AND ARMOUR CLASS
A realistic approach to armour class by Roger Musson

THE FIEND FACTORY
An assortment of new monsters edited by Don Turnbull

FIGURES REVIEW
Archive Miniatures reviewed by John Norris

NEWS
What's happening in the SF/F world

A PLACE IN THE WILDERNESS
A wilderness scenario for D&D by Lew Pulsipher

OPEN BOX
SF/F games reviewed

LETTERS
Readers' views and comments

TRAVELLER
The new SF role-playing game reviewed by Don Turnbull

KALGAR
The Sword & Sorcery hero written and drawn by David Lloyd

TREASURE CHEST
A miscellany of D&D additions

CLASSIFIEDS & HELP!

Editor: Ian Livingstone
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Published by: Games Workshop

Artwork by: Polly Wilson, Alan Hunter, Christopher Baker

Contributions: The Editor will be pleased to consider any previously unpublished articles or artwork for inclusion in WHITE DWARF. If you have any interesting contributions, comments or criticisms, why not send them in? It all helps.

COLOUR PRINTED BY:
THE PENTAGON PRINTING GROUP
BATEMAN BUILDINGS, SOHO SQUARE, W1.

Display advertising rates and trade enquiries available on request.
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Vol. 1, No. 6
Issue number 6

166-41 Powells Cove Blvd.
Whitestone
New York 11357

Tel: (516) 344-3603

Ballooa Game Company
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I would make an interesting survey to solicit contributions up and down the country from DMs and players on the question of "D&D." The one thing I dislike most about "D&D," I strongly suspect most of the answers returned would be on some aspect of combat. The combat system in D&D has so many faults with regard to realism that it would be difficult to enumerate them all. There is the thorny problem of critical hits, for example: slitting a man's throat with a dagger theoretically does 1-4 points of damage, and if he has thirty or so to spare he presents, in the Churchillian idiom, "some neck." Now, whereas any DM with a bit of gumpition will allow a dagger in the jugular to be fatal without question, the same problem crops up in impossibly many ways. Consider what would happen if you chained up a 1st level magician with 1hp and an 8th level fighter with 45hp, both sain, armour, outside the cave of your friendly neighbourhood red dragon. Said dragon ventures forth, decides he likes offerings to be burnt ones, and gives them both a quick blast of fiery breath. Can't dragons use toothpaste like everyone else? They both take 30 points of damage, with the result that the magician is burnt to a crisp, while the fighter, though singed, is amazingly enough, still alive. How is that? Has finding a thousand gold pieces caused his skin to turn to asbestos? A man's a man for all that; whether they should both be fried or they should both survive. Nor will I accept the argument that the man with less hit points is more likely to die of stock, since dragon breath is a lot more than a touch of heartburn.

Then there are the usual difficulties of hit location, and the fact that characters seem to receive wounds in the abstract rather than in a more immediate sense, since they often go merrily hacking away despite the fact that they have been reduced to the grand total of one hit point, and are probably limbless by now. They then, if they survive, grab the loot and dodge from the DM in full plate regardless of the damage they have suffered. Now, there are of course, several systems which DMs may or may not have taken into account on tables of combat matrices to find out if a blow has hit or not. This assumes the character involved is fighting normally, and also all dexterity bonuses. This is, therefore, different from the next category.

Encumbrance Armour Class (EAC)

This is a tricky one. Assume someone the other end of a long corridor hurls an unfriendly-looking lightning bolt at you. Does it count as a hit? The answer is simple: he lunges, parries, jumps out of the way, swings from chandeliers etc. Whereas the average D&D fighter just stands around and waits to get hit. Clearly the importance of dexterity in combat has been underrated.

Combat Plate Armour Class (CPC)

This is your usual run-of-the-mill thing that you cross-index on tables of combat matrices to find out if a blow has hit or not. This assumes the character involved is fighting normally, and thus takes into account not only all magical bonuses, but also all dexterity bonuses. This is, therefore, different from the next category.

Target Armour Class (TAC)

This is basically what you are wearing. For this purpose, plate is always AC2 regardless of whether it is +2, +4 or normal.

Armour Class (AC)

This is your usual run-of-the-mill thing which you cross-index on tables of combat matrices to find out if a blow has hit or not. This assumes the character involved is fighting normally, and thus takes into account not only all magical bonuses, but also all dexterity bonuses. This is, therefore, different from the next category.

Gygax universe in which the game system in D&D re-creates entirely faithfully. But the more this hypothetical mythology departs from what is conventional in most fantasy writing, the more the player is able to identify with the game. Now, conjure up an image of your favourite Sinbad or Tarzan, Aragorn or Conan. What is he wearing? Nothing very special, usually, lost it be a leather loincloth. Now think of your favourite D&D fighter— a walking sardine-can of magic points! Armour of the kind you've been anything to go by. Not someone you would expect to see swinging the red dragon's head on a creaker. Admittedly one thinks of, say, Lancelot fully armoured (on his horse and lancing a lot, though, and not on foot down a dungeon), but since when did you last see Sinbad clanking around like the tin man would it? Yet when Sinbad gets into a sword-fight with half a dozen fire elementals, he does all right out of it with nothing but a silk shirt to protect him. Try doing the same in D&D, and, armour class 9, you will find yourself very swiftly torn to shreds. How does Sinbad do it? The answer is simple: he lunges, parries, jumps out of the way, swings from chandeliers etc. Whereas the average D&D fighter just stands around and waits to get hit. Clearly the importance of dexterity in combat has been underestimated.

So what do I propose? In most fantasy accounts of melee, there is a lot of thrust and parry, and the first one or two blows that actually land usually decide to combat. Ultimately I think there should be a combat system (I'm working on it) in which as one goes up levels one gains no more hit points but becomes progressively more harder to hit. This would take a lot of balancing to get absolutely right, but I will try to demonstrate the lines along which I am thinking.

The first step, which I have already brought into effect in the Egesyazaryan Dungeons, is the following rule: if a character who is trained in fighting (ie a fighter, monk, beserker, etc) chooses to wear no armour, his armour class in combat is 20 minus his natural score. This number may never be more than 20, but it may be less than 2 if exceptional dexterity on a natural 10 is rolled. Thus if our unarmoured Conan has a natural 18, he will fight at a stunning AC-1. If he encumbers himself with armour, the gain in protection exactly balances the loss in agility, unless magic allows otherwise. Therefore a fighter of AC10 has a very easy time of it when he meets a 1st level fighter, AC11 of 10 he is AC3 still, and he is so fortunate to be dextrous to the extent of AC12 that even a stunning AC-1. If he encumbers himself with armour, he gains in protection exactly balances the loss in agility, unless magic allows otherwise. Therefore a fighter of AC10 has a very easy time of it when he meets a 1st level fighter, AC11 of 10 he is AC3 still, and he is so fortunate to be dextrous to the extent of AC12 that even a stunning AC-1.

This rule supercedes the "avoid attack" rule which gives one a penalty of 14 AC5 unarmoured, and AC6 still if he picks up a shield, though chain mail will bring him up to AC5 of 16 he fights as AC4; dexterity of 10 and he is AC3 still, and he is so fortunate to be dextrous to the extent of AC12 that even a stunning AC-1. If he encumbers himself with armour, the gain in protection exactly balances the loss in agility, unless magic allows otherwise. Therefore a fighter of AC10 has a very easy time of it when he meets a 1st level fighter, AC11 of 10 he is AC3 still, and he is so fortunate to be dextrous to the extent of AC12 that even a stunning AC-1.

It will, though, be clear that there are implications in the phrase "armour class in combat." The bonus will not apply if the character is lying down while someone fires arrows at him. In fact the very phrase "armour class" includes a number of things which might not apply in combat or may not be taken into account without thinking about it. We can thus distinguish several different trosses of armour class calculation. There are a follows:

1. Combat Armour Class (CAC)

This is your usual run-of-the-mill thing that you cross-index on tables of combat matrices to find out if a blow has hit or not. This assumes the character involved is fighting normally, and thus takes into account not only all magical bonuses, but also all dexterity bonuses. This is, therefore, different from the next category.

2. Encumbrance Armour Class (EAC)

This is basically what you are wearing. For this purpose, plate is always AC2 regardless of whether it is +2, +4 or normal.

3. Target Armour Class (TAC)

This is your usual run-of-the-mill thing which you cross-index on tables of combat matrices to find out if a blow has hit or not. This assumes the character involved is fighting normally, and thus takes into account not only all magical bonuses, but also all dexterity bonuses. This is, therefore, different from the next category.

4. Combat Plate Armour Class (CPC)

This is basically what you are wearing. For this purpose, plate is always AC2 regardless of whether it is +2, +4 or normal.

5. Combat and Armour Class (CAC)

This is your usual run-of-the-mill thing that you cross-index on tables of combat matrices to find out if a blow has hit or not. This assumes the character involved is fighting normally, and thus takes into account not only all magical bonuses, but also all dexterity bonuses. This is, therefore, different from the next category.
If the DM finds his characters getting too powerful, there are two restrictions which can be slipped in; one is the introduction of fatigue factors in some manner, so that after fighting so many rounds, defence starts slacking-until a good rest can be had — and if an unpleasant wanderer turns up during the rest, the consequences may be severe. This, I think, is desirable. Another matter of personal taste is the abolition of plate armour, or at least, its reduction to a breast-plate, either by crippling the new system. Assume your 10 hit point character has just been walloped by a golem for 20 points of damage. I would suggest a saving throw should be applicable rather than automatic fatality. Under the new system, a character reduced below 0 hit points would make two saving throws, firstly to make the first throw meant instantaneous death, failure to make the second was a mortal wound (with chance of using magical remedies) and making both resulted only in incapacitation of fatigue factors in some manner, so that after fighting so many rounds, defence starts slacking-until a good rest can be had — and if an unpleasant wanderer turns up during the rest, the consequences may be severe. This, I think, is desirable. Another matter of personal taste is the abolition of plate armour, or at least, its reduction to a breast-plate, either by crippling A monk with a dexterity of 14 would be AC6 until he reached 6th level, when he would go up to AC5 and continue to increase normally. If he started out with a +1 ring of protection he would increase from AC5 to AC4 when he went up to 6th. It should also be noted that a Prone Armour Class of the defender which is called into question with regard to surprise attacks and missile fire (ever trying parrying an arrow?).

Now, I'm not suggesting that you should carefully note down all these on a character sheet; my character sheets tend to look like a dozen C-60 cassettes at its crudest, so that the equilibrium considerations should be taken into account whenever the practical need arises.

The next consideration is the fact that as a character gains experience in fighting, not only should his ability to hit things increase, but in ability to stop things hitting him. Currently I am considering letting a fighter who wears no armour shifting his AC by -1, whereas he gains +2 on hits, and reneging this bonus if armour is worn. However, even in plate parrying improves with practice. But to increase defence by decreasing AC as well as gaining hit points would make characters too powerful. So ultimately I should like to see a system like this; when a character goes up a level, he increases his hit points by one die as per normal up to a base maximum of 10 hit points (modified up or down according to constitution). This represents the maximum amount of damage a human being can take. When the maximum is reached no further hit dice are added. However, right from the start, whenever a character increases his class decreases by one — from 2 to 1 for those humanoid juggernauts in plate, and from 9 to 8 for magicians. This may mean that when a fighter man gets up several levels he will be totally invulnerable to say, kobolds; which I think is perfectly fair and realistic. For what hero worth his sodium chloride ever got out-fenced by a kobold? And note that if the kobolds are cunning they could still get him with missile fire or a surprise attack — which I think is the only realistic way they could get him. To go through most fights without a wound is much more likely than having first hit points where possible.

And when a wound is inflicted, its effect is all the more severe — again realistic. A light wound from a flying dagger may be shrugged off, but a decent hack with a sword should stop anyone in their tracks and make them think twice about continuing.

This change also puts magic into a better perspective. Healing potions become less of an every-day necessity, but become more of a personal item reserved for even a high-level character. Magic armour also becomes more powerful, and the DM should consider how much of the +5 variety he hands out if he doesn't want people's AC disappearing off the end of his chart. If the DM finds his characters getting too powerful, there are two restrictions which can be slipped in; one is the introduction of fatigue factors in some manner, so that after fighting so many rounds, defence starts slacking-until a good rest can be had — and if an unpleasant wanderer turns up during the rest, the consequences may be severe. This, I think, is desirable. Another matter of personal taste is the abolition of plate armour, or at least, its reduction to a breast-plate, either by crippling using -1 to save, or — by simply making it technologically unknown. This gets rid of that awkward problem that arises when a wolf attacks some character done up head to foot in steel; on a roll of 20 the wolf blows for 1-6, but how the devil do you bite plate armour?

The final thing to consider is death (isn't it always?) under the new system. Assume your 10 hit point character has just been walloped by a golem for 20 points of damage. I would suggest a saving throw should be applicable rather than automatic. Under the new system, a character reduced below 0 hit points would make two saving throws, firstly to make the first throw meant instantaneous death, failure to make the second was a mortal wound (with chance of using magical remedies) and making both resulted only in incapacitation. This is the last of my little collection. In the case of your 10 hit point character has just been walloped by a golem for 20 points of damage. I would suggest a saving throw should be applicable rather than automatic. Under the new system, a character reduced below 0 hit points would make two saving throws, firstly to make the first throw meant instantaneous death, failure to make the second was a mortal wound (with chance of using magical remedies) and making both resulted only in incapacitation. This is the last of my little collection. In the case of your 10 hit point character has just been walloped by a golem for 20 points of damage. I would suggest a saving throw should be applicable rather than automatic. Under the new system, a character reduced below 0 hit points would make two saving throws, firstly to make the first throw meant instantaneous death, failure to make the second was a mortal wound (with chance of using magical remedies) and making both resulted only in incapacitation. This is the last of my little collection. In the case of your
A regular feature introducing new and interesting monsters, edited by Don Turnbull.

Inventive monster designers among the readership permitting, each issue of White Dwarf from now on will present a batch of new monsters for the delight of those DMs who seek more variety in the inhabitants of their dungeons. Each monster so presented will earn for its author the next issue of White Dwarf free — it is hoped that this small award will encourage readers to submit monster designs since the feature cannot exist without them; we are in your hands. Please send your entries to The Fiend Factory, c/o White Dwarf. Remember — one free issue per monster published!

Entries must, however, be complete — incomplete entries will not be printed. With the best will in the world, we can’t be expected to invent a beast’s AC, the damage it does if it hits etc. Designers must include necessary information otherwise their creations may never see the light of day.

Since it looks as though you are stuck with me as assembler of this column, at least until the White Dwarf management slings me out in favour of someone more charitable and less patronising, it might help prospective entrants if I were to indicate, briefly, the more important qualities I think a monster should have in order to qualify for publishing, since I have been asked to select for inclusion only those which I think would be interesting (though perhaps fatal) to meet and which bring a breath of novelty.

First, a monster should either be volatile or, of effectively immortal, should have a specific purpose other than slay-er, player-characters. I enjoy the type of beast, like the Census-Taker (invented by Cheryl Lloyd) which prevents powerful parties from ramaging around the ‘easy’ levels picking up treasure without noticeable danger (the Census-Taker generally teleports parties to a ‘floor’ appropriate to their strength). Both these creations cry out from Alabans & Emissaries — Lee Gold’s apo which is a constant source of new beasts. But the monster which normally aims at extracting blood from player-characters, whether purposefully or in defence of treasure or territory, should be mortal, and furthermore should be killable by some means reasonably likely to be discovered. The monster which can’t be hurt by weapons or magic and which plays a party at will until someone shouts ‘Thursday’ — it may be psychologically interesting but is not, generally speaking, worthy of more than passing note. I do not however make it a requirement that a monster should be killable by any strength of party — a weak party usually has the option of running away, so a powerful beast can still qualify.

Secondly, it must be deployable. The ultra-powerful beast with all sorts of fascinating qualities is likely to lead a solitary life in the nethermost depths so perhaps isn’t worth making too much of a fuss about. This is not to say that this feature will only include beasts which can realistically be found on ‘easy’ floors (though I do say there is a dearth of interesting yet relatively weak monsters), but there are limits. If you have created a 4008 beast with AC around .10, 95% magic resistance and four 4D12 attacks each round, it would have to be exceptionally interesting to qualify for inclusion in the Factory.

Thirdly, I have little regard for monster designers who treat their creative work as though they were filling a hat-stand — a few miscellaneous hats hung on top (claws, bites, horns, tails and the like), arrays of coats and scarves hung from the pegs (dragon wings, gnat eyes, snaks tails) and a few umbrellas of mixed parenthood in the centre (magic resistance, spell use, goss which petrifies, breath which poisons). Anyone — but anyone — can ‘create’ a new monster by rolling on random tables, and anyone can create the tables; but the result is not likely to be interesting because it is not likely to be coherent. I believe a monster should be vaguely credible and moderately self-consistent, and I like to see evidence of creative thought on the designer’s part. However I do not object to biological improbability per se — after all, the existence of magic is pretty improbable for a start, yet in the D&D universe we accept it without question.

Finally, a monster is much more interesting if it has surprising, even asinine or humourous qualities. This can’t be expected of all monsters, but it is welcome when it appears.

Now to the collection for this month.

The Needleman
by Trevor Graver

No. appearing:
Armour class: 6
Movement: 8" 
Hit points: 3D8+4
Treasure:
Tacle:
Alignement: Lawful/Evil
Monsterrnark:

Lawful/Evil

This beast looks rather like a spined Zombie but is not a member of the Undead. It originated as the result of a Raise Dead spell imperfectly executed on a corpse in a shallow grave on a bed of pine needles; these became imbedded in the flesh. Within a range of 20' it can fire 1D6 needles, for 1D4 damage each, with the accuracy of a short-range arrow. It is about 112 or more to
hit AC2). It takes triple damage if hit by magical means and attacks Elves on sight.

Comments: An unusual and interesting monster on the lines of a weak Manticore. I presume it is particularly magic-prone because the magic in its creation went wrong, while it attacks Elves because they are wood-dwellers (or at least some of them are) and therefore associated with pine-needles. Should it really be called the Asparagus? It is, after all, a pine-killer . . . .

**The Throat Leech**

by Ian Livingstone

No. appearing: 1–6
Armour class: 9
Movement: 1” (in water)
Hit Dice: 1 D8
Treasure: nil
Attack: 1 blood-suck 1–3 plus special Choke
Alignment: Neutral
Monstermark: about 1.5 (level I in 12 levels)

The Throat Leech is always found in fresh water (streams, Pools, fountains etc.) and is 1” in length, resembling an incipicuous twig floating on the water. When an adventurer (or monster) drinks, the Leech will swim into his mouth and fasten itself onto the soft flesh at the back of the throat, sucking blood at 1–3 each melee round until it becomes comatally distended. Each melee round there is a 50% chance that the Leech will cause the adventurer to choke, causing an additional 1–4 damage; the victim will die if he chokes for three consecutive melee rounds. When filling water bottles from a fresh-water source, there is a 10% chance that a Throat Leech will be taken in.

The Throat Leech is a small nuisance-value monster which is readily adaptable to almost any dungeon design and provides an incentive for parties to keep together and act cooperatively.

**Bonesnapper**

by Ian Livingstone

No. appearing: 1–3
Armour class: 4
Movement: 6”
Hit Dice: 4 D8
Treasure: nil
Attack: type C
Choke: 1 bite (1D6) and 1 tail (1D4)
Alignment: Lawful/Evil
Monstermark: 26 level III in 12 levels

Bonesnappers are small descendents of carnivorous dinosaurs, 6” in height and nevertheless fierce fighters. Their favourite pastime is to gnaw bones, which action sharpens up the many teeth in their powerful jaws; they are particularly fond of human jawbones adorning its lair. Should a party enter a dungeon cavern and discover human jawbones about the place, be sure a Bonesnapper is not far away . . . .

Comments: The possibilities of trade between Bonesnapper and non-human player-characters are endless . . .

**Mite**

by Ian Livingstone

No. appearing: 1
Armour class: 2
Movement: 9"
Hit Dice: 0D8
Treasure: nil
Attack: 2 fists (1D4 each) plus Heat Metal
Alignment: Neutral
Monstermark: 0.8 (level V in 12 levels)

Mites are mites 2” in height, humanoid with large heads and evil faces. They inhabit networks of narrow tunnels above and below main dungeon corridors and their screeching feet and high-pitched twittering voices can often be heard by roving groups of adventurers. However they are rarely seen and will never openly attack. They attempt to ensnare the lone adventurer or unwary straggler using tripwires, or, tripwires and other such means, bundling him off before help arrives. Those captured by Mites are cabled, stripped, beaten and then, somewhat later, returned helpless to the main corridor at the mercy of wandering monsters. The only known way of fighting these creatures is first to smoke them out of their tunnels, blocking or covering all the other exits which can only be detected by Elves.

Comments: A nuisance-value monster which is readily adaptable to almost any dungeon design and provides an incentive for parties to keep together and act cooperatively.
The Disenchanter resembles a spindly, dromedary-like animal with a long snout like a vacuum-cleaner; in colour it is a pale electric blue, slightly translucent – sometimes it can be seen to shimmer slightly. The creature has the power to detect magic on which it feeds, drawing its sustenance from the powerful enchantments used to create magical objects. Should the beast encounter a party, it will be able to detect the strongest magical item carried and will attempt to fasten its snout on the object in question. Once it scores a hit, it drains all the magic out leaving the item unmarked but non-magical (artifacts and very powerful items may get saving rolls at the DM’s discretion).

Even allowing for the high dexterity of the Disenchanter’s prehensile snout, the ease with which any item can be attacked will depend on its size, and the beast may decide to go for something easy like a magical shield rather than try to get at a small but very potent item in a backpack.

Ironically, the Disenchanter can only be hit by magical weapons; these will not ‘disenchanted’ merely by hitting the beast – only with its snout can it ‘de-gauss’ magical items.

Comments:
Now that one of these beasts has been encountered in the Greenlands dungeon, by an annoyed and aggrieved party, I can vouch for its effectiveness both as a device for keeping magic reasonably low and a novel and interesting beast. I like to think it makes a vulgar slurping noise while in the process of eating enchantment, with perhaps even a soft and reverent belch if it particularly appreciates the quality of the magic it has just devoured.

All statistics exactly as ordinary Goblins.

No Monstermark.

This creation looks exactly like an ordinary Goblin, but it gains hit points when struck, the addition being equal to the ‘damage’ rolled. It can only lose hit points (and be killed) by such means as casting Cure Light Wounds on it, or by sitting on its chest and forcing feeding it with healing potions.

Comments: A fiendish creation indeed! One of the most interesting I have come across. It reminds me of the dancing sword in the Greenlands dungeon which every three rounds, leaves the hand of the wielder and remains poised horizontally in mid-air while the unfortunate warrior is caused to dance for three rounds, after which it returns to his hand... Why a Goblin? As the designer remarks, ‘Why it is that Goblins are particularly susceptible to this strange disorder is one of the great mysteries of the world!’ But a Troll with Nilbogism would be a truly mighty opponent, and they are bad enough already. Inventive readers will be able to contrive other scenarios like the one which follows: great fun for the DM and until the secret is out, quite awe-inspiring to the players.

Roger obviously felt that more explanation was necessary so sent us a scenario which explains in more detail the oddness of Nilbogism, together with some background ‘information’:

“This is a weaker manifestation of Nilbogism – overly heavy use of magic strains the fabric of the space-time continuum and can occasionally lead to very strange effects which are usually, thank goodness, very locally restricted. Thus the Nilbog which is a Goblin suffering from a peculiar spatio-temporal reversal. In its more extreme forms, Nilbogism manifests itself in ways calculated to baffle even the most imaginative adventurers; an example occurs in the following scenario:-

A party enters a room deep underground, seeing an open chest and two dead Goblins. From the moment they enter until they leave, they have no effective control over their actions and no volition on the course of events. They suddenly feel wounded: they rush over to the chest and put treasure into it, closing the lid. The dead Goblins rise up onto the adventurers’ sword-points, coming to life again. A fight ensues, with each blow struck restoring hit points to both the Goblins and the party, until the party has lost its mysterious wounds and the Goblins appear to be up to full strength. The adventurers then race out of the room and the door closes behind them...”

For sheer creativity, the Nilbog will take some beating.

That completes the list for this time, but don’t forget to send your contributions. After all, we can’t have the White Dwarf editor dominating the column. Space restrictions may sometimes mean that your monster is held over for a few issues – our apologies in advance if this happens – but we will keep a ‘reserve pool’ and in time all worthwhile submissions will be published in these pages. I hope you enjoyed the first batch and can make good use of them.

Don Turnbull

THE WHITE DWARF
The Cimmerian
reviewed by John Norris

A
rchive Miniatures are an American firm producing mainly fantasy figures. Their ranges include creatures and personalities from Mythology, Middle Earth, Dungeons and Dragons and other fantasy worlds. In style the figures are reminiscent of the better known Der Kriegsspielers Fantastiques, though those from Archive are in a rather larger scale, with a man nearer 30mm than 25mm in height. They are attractively designed, and profusely detailed, but they are cast in a soft metal which produces less than crisp detail on the castings. A considerable deterrent to British purchasers will be the prices, which are very high even by the standards of imported American figures.

Monsters for D&D

Undoubtedly the most useful of the Archive ranges are the two covering Mythology and Dungeon Adventures. Both provide numerous monsters, many of which are unobtainable anywhere else. Only a selection can be reviewed here. I have concentrated on the figures that I think will be most useful, and to a lesser extent on those I like. The principal type underrepresented is the very large figures, which tend to be both very expensive and more affected by the lack of crispness in casting.

My favourite figure in the whole selection, is paradoxically, not a monster. It is the beautiful dungeon equipment mule. The poor beast is laden with a huge quantity of finely modelled impediments, including a horned helmet, shields, a cooking pot, a pair of boots, and a spade. Close behind the mule in my ratings come the fine owl-bear and the well detailed harpy.

Flying monsters are generally well represented. The harpy and the giant bat are both attractively modelled in flight. The large griffin, posed for take-off, is by far the finest model of that monster I have ever seen. Then there are three smaller winged figures, a nubile succubus, an imp and a pixie, all of which are good but not outstanding. The beholder is, of course, a levitating rather than flying monster. The figure is well modelled, with a suitably malevolent aspect.

The largest monster I have is the King Kong-style "Gorilla," a very reasonable 50mm giant ape. Only a little shorter is the Ogre Magi, which closely follows the "Japanese Ogre" drawing in Greyhawk. Another odd figure is the bugbear depicted with the silly Hallowe'en pumpkin head shown in Greyhawk. Two more large figures are the Nemean lion and the boar troll, both of which have the appearance of oversize versions of the basic animals. One of the less successful figures is the werebear, which is a large bear with human proportions, and resembles nothing so much as an overgrown teddy bear!

Middle Earth

This range is treated separately because it is specifically designed for the Tolkien mythos, and therefore should be reviewed as such rather than as a collection of odd figures. It provides an attractive selection of personalities for Tolkien's Middle Earth, and a few other figures. A wargamer would need to mix them with some from other ranges to provide the rank and file; it is unfortunate that the Archive figures tend to tower over the equivalent offerings from other manufacturers because of their height, which is not really to 25mm scale but a full 30mm.

The Fellowship set of Nine Walkers includes some very original figures. Though the designer has retained the traditional mediaeval aspect for Gandalf, and indeed for the other wizards in the range, the men, the hobbits and the dwarf are all given a distinctly Renaissance look, which is a refreshing change. The four hobbits are a fine group, full of character, and Aragorn and Boromir are also good. The latter is particularly Renaissance.
in style, and resembles a Cavalier of the English Civil War; rather appropriate, when you think about it. The dwarf is also rather stylish, but the elf is poor; he resembles a pantomime wood sprite. A good feature of the set, especially as it is so expensive, is that it does not have to be bought as a whole. Gandalf, the two men, the four hobbits, and the elf and the dwarf can all be bought in separate packs. The range also includes a separate-mounted Gandalf, and figures of the other two wizards significant in the story, Saruman "the Rainbow Wizard" and Radagast "the Brown Druid". The former is a very imposing figure, in an impertious pose, while the latter is full of character, almost exuding worry; both are very well modelled.

The other figures in the range that I have seen are less impressive. There are two large Orcs, whose bestial faces have pointed snouts, and whose helmets give them a distinctly South American Indian look; they are armed with a bow and with a billhook and a shield respectively. The Citadel Guard is a seemingly attractive design inadequately cast. The Nightwraith and the Grey Wizard (Gandalf, of course) are in particular to anyone using Heritage hobbits as rank and file.

Perhaps it may be possible to cover some of them in a future issue. Meanwhile, I hope I have shown just how useful these figures can be to the fantasy gamer. The monsters are ideal for a DM using figures, and the Middle Earth range is a source of seemingly attractive design inadequately cast. The Nightwraith and the Grey Wizard (Gandalf, of course) are in particular to anyone using Heritage hobbits as rank and file.

Conclusion

A brief review like this one can only scratch the surface. Omitted in their entirety are such delights as the barbarian ducks, a series of mediaeval versions of the famous Howard American Indian look; they are armed with a bow and with a billhook and a shield respectively. The Citadel Guard is a seemingly attractive design inadequately cast. The Nightwraith and the Grey Wizard (Gandalf, of course) are in particular to anyone using Heritage hobbits as rank and file.

Above, the Nightwraith and the Grey Wizard (Gandalf). On the previous page the Bugbear and Dungeon Expedition Donkey and also the Umber Warg is poorly modelled, and the "Old Willow Man" looks like a desktop sculpture of pipe-cleaners!

FIGURES REVIEW

The former now includes many new skeletons and monks specifically for these figures... Rules are now being written to commemorate the birthday of White Dwarf, next issue will be rather special. Besides the beautiful colour cover by John Blanche, there will also be a dungeon room set by Don Turnbull and articles by Gary Gygax (co-author of D&D) and Cy Simbalist (co-author of OSR). Flavour.

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Lair of the Demon Queen
Magic items in D&D
the Friend Factory
Chivalry & Simplicity - starting off
Treasure Chest
Open Box
Kajitis

The second release of TSR’s revised D&D system is now available in the USA, and is soon to be seen in the UK shops. It is the Monster Manual written by Gary Gygax. It is hard bound, contains around 380 monsters of which 200 are illustrated and costs 19.95. Games Workshop will be publishing this volume under licence but with a soft cover so as to keep the price down. It is expected that the Advanced D&D Player’s Handbook and Referee’s Guide will be released in the USA around July/August. There are numerous changes and amendments including a revised magic system with new spells, changes to characters’ hit dice, e.g. fighters will use D10 instead of D8.

... games that have recently arrived in the UK are Imperium by GDW which is an SF game of interstellar warfare including economics and Alpha Omega by Battletile which is an SF ship-to-ship space combat game. Expansion sets 1 and 2 for Cosmic Encounter are now available and include a planet system, star discs and tokens for a fifth player and also contain ten extra aliens... Asgard Miniatures continue to expand their fantasy range with Storm Giants, Centaur Knights, Giant Slugs and more. They have also released a range of science fiction figures which consist mainly of a race of Trimotes but also include Cyborg Fighting Machines, Mandiblex and others. Rules are now being written specifically for these figures... Barry Minet has recently expanded his Thane Toespil and Age of the Barbarian ranges. The former now includes many new skeletons and monks whilst the latter adds new Barbarians and wenches... a new range of SF figures by Archive Miniatures entitled Star Rovers are now available in the UK and the Aphid Infantrymen, Nude Frixis and Fuzzies are up to Neville Stocken’s imaginative high standard. Wargame Publications have produced a new line of fantasy figures entitled Magic Miscellany and Arabesque which consist of a Warlock of the Seven Hells, Eunuch, Eastern Magician on Floor is a shop with probably the largest selection of SF/F games and figures anywhere...
This setup, which is based on Jack Vance's excellent (Hugo-winning) novel *The Dragon Masters*, may be incorporated into your wilderness. It is not, obviously, a place to be encountered by low-level adventurers, but what level the party ought to be dependent on how powerful magic is in your world.

Briefly, the descendants of human survivors of a lost space war on a barren planet have managed to capture some members of the lizard-like race which apparently won, and have bred the lizards into creatures which fight for them — the dragons of the title. (I have reduced the abilities of the dragons slightly while reducing the numbers tenfold.) The lizard race return to the planet looking for slaves, and they have specially bred humans who fight for them. The aliens' spaceship is not included because it would be too powerful. I would not use the pellets and beams in my campaign because highly sophisticated scientific weapons are not allowed, but the characteristics are included for those with different views.

This is a human settlement, alignment as referee desires but accustomed to fighting, in a fairly rocky area with just enough arable land around to support the population of 50 rabble at arms, 10 various specialists (including dragon trainers and breeders), 8 heavy armoured horsemen who ride "spiders" or move on foot, one sixth level fighter chieftain, 80 women, and 160 children and old people. The people live in caves and tunnels in a cliff, somewhat like American Pueblo indians. The dragons live in caves lower down, including breeding areas and outdoor corrals. They become nervous at night and are usually put inside.

The primary treasure is dragon females and, if they aren't killed, the men who know how to handle and breed dragons. There is also a cache of precious metal and stones as the referee thinks appropriate.

In the book there are roughly five male dragons per female. Given the reduction in numbers here, assume one female of each type except termagants, two. Females normally do not fight but are capable of it. Life span of a dragon is about 35 years, maturing after, say, 5 years. The last column of the characteristics chart gives the number of viable eggs per clutch. Females clutch once per year. To determine what young dragons are present, consider what viable eggs were clutched in the past five years, with 20% chance that an egg will be female.

Dragoon eyes (and perhaps tails) slowly regenerate (like a lizard's). They generally are not intelligent. All have soft bellies, AC9; it is difficult to tell from the books, but the bellies seem to be hard to get at whether the dragon is on two feet or four. A spider is a substitute for a horse. Termagants are rather smaller than men, active and fairly intelligent. Blue Horrors are larger, quick, fairly intelligent, furious. Murderers are not intelligent; striiders are tall, longhorned ones heavier and lower to the ground. Fiends are immensely strong and low to the ground, low enough to run underneath Juggers, which are ponderous and huge. The different breeds were developed more or less in the order listed, each breed being the "answer" to the one before.

The referee can, of course, increase the number of dragons while maintaining the same proportions. In the book there were about five communities of this type within 10-20 miles of each other. For more background information I suggest you read the book, available in paperback.

### DRAGONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number appearing</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hit Dice</th>
<th>AC (Armor)</th>
<th>Attacks</th>
<th>Move</th>
<th>Viable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Spider</td>
<td>1+1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Fangs 1 &amp; 2, 2 by weapon</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Termagant</td>
<td>1+1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1 by weapon</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Blue Horror</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>tents 3-9, 2 by weapon</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Striding Murderer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 by weapon</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Longhorned Murderer</td>
<td>3+2</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>spike or lance or 2 by weapon</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fiend</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>tail plus as noted but for 4-18, plus 1 weapon</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HUMANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hit Dice</th>
<th>AC</th>
<th>Attack</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tracker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>by weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Trooper</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>by weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaponer</td>
<td>As normal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>by weapon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longhorned Murderer</td>
<td>As Human wearing AC2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>by weapon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The heat beam is a hand weapon — roll for a hit as against AC9 regardless of target's armour class. At range 6/9/12 inches does 3-18/2-12/1-6 damage. Explosive pellet guns are manned by weaponners. Each pellet equals an 8 dice fireball.
KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE

Little Soldier – £2.95

Knights of the Round Table is a simple fantasy role-playing game. The one-against-one version uses percentile dice plus 10 dice, while the second version is simplified by eliminating the choice of weapon. Each player secretly chooses a card and comparison gives a range of numbers which will cause a stun, knockdown, wound, or death, and each rolls percentile dice for a result. There are several versions: 1) knight vs knight, afoot or horsed, for use in jousts and challenge tournaments; 2) simple rules for melée between groups of knights during tournaments; 3) limited campaign rules for a single long session, each player representing one knight with a referee required; 4) war campaign rules, each player acting as a knight or wizard and able to establish a domain, with simple rules for combat between armies of knights, also with a referee required.

The presentation of the components is excellent both in the booklet and the box. The map, which is not a hex map, represents the nations and their forces. Next any magic cards to be used are revealed. Finally, a referee can take care of several groups at one time and expect to play many turns in one session. The full campaign is closer to a normal fantasy campaign. A hex board is needed because territory must be divided among rival rulers, and wars can be fought using a very simple system. Characters are still most important, not armies. There are rules allowing a knight or wizard to win while the game continues, playing a few turns every week or whatever.

Magic, such as there is, tends to be defensive and seldom on a major scale. This is a relaxing change from the tact-nukes, lasers, and superhypothesis of D&D. Probably the skill level which can be imposed in Knights of the Round Table is not high, but the same is true of many other role-playing games.

Speed and simplicity are sufficient compensation.

LOW PULSIPHER

The Chaosium – £8.45

Surely there can be no one reading this magazine who is in any doubt as to the subject matter of this game. Michael Moorcock’s beloved Albino has been one of the major causes of the resurgence of interest in the thirties pulp genre "Sword & Sorcery" (Tolkien is "fantasy" and so something else again). It was, therefore, just a matter of time before games began appearing which were based on the Elric literature.

TSR gave us Lord of the Rings and now Chaosium, makers of White Bear & Red Moon, have produced a game entitled Elric: A Fantasy hero. Elric is a three, or four player fantasy game which to quote the introduction to the rule book "Does not pretend to be a summary or a synthesis of the Elric sage . . . rather it is a synthesis of Elric’s world". The game comes in a zip-lock bag and consists of: A 17" x 22" map Units of playing pieces 22 battalia sheets 44 magic cards

The presentation of the components is excellent both in appearance (the artwork on the battalia sheets and map especially) and durability. There are three types of unit counters – small (1/4" square) personali!y units. The personality and army units are grouped into 22 nations or groups and referred to as battalia. There are 44 magic cards representing spells etc., which can be used in combat. The cards also have other functions e.g., many of the cards may be used to "muster" a nation to a player’s forces. At the beginning of the game these cards are spread around the board and all acquired by conquest and searching. Players build up their forces by acquiring magic cards then going to the relevant areas and masting that battalia. The cards are divided into three alignments and a personality may not possess cards of more than one alignment concurrently.

Only personalities are normally capable of independent movement. Armies and magic cards accompanying a personality are removed from the map and placed on the personality’s battalia sheet. This helps reduce those damned stacks that always end up on a fold.

The map, which is not a hex map, represents the nations and seas of the young kingdoms. The nations are subdivided into provinces as is magic card placement.

The combat system is slightly unusual, the attacker and defender first total the CVs (combat values) of their respective forces. Next any magic cards to be used are revealed. Finally each player rolls a die and adds the result to his total CVs. The difference is cross referenced on the CRT and the result applied.

Included are rules for rolling encounters (a form of wandering monsters), terrain, and limited monster characteristics. The limited campaign version is based on the knight literature from the version one competition. Players will usually travel separately or in small groups rather than all together as in D&D. However, adventures and combats are based on each player’s fantasy hero.

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Elric is a credit to its designer, publisher and original begetter. The lack of hexes on the map and the movement and replacement rules are very reminiscent of Russian Civil War — no bad thing. The original features: the magic cards, the battalia, the cosmic balance, etc., make this a fantasy game apart.

Each of the two given scenarios complements the other admirably. In one, the players take nations and the victory is in controlling the Elric piece and (Im)province. In the other scenario one player is Elric, the other is Thulid Kaarna, the wizard. Victory is by eliminating the other personality. The first scenario shows again Elric's debt to Russian Civil War, and as in RCW a player may use all political allegiances to further his ends, so in Elric he may use all alignments.

There are many more unusual features about Elric such as End of the World, Storbminder, etc., which are not diversity for its own sake (I have always felt after Brede, Red Moon suffered from this) but are rather interlocking parts which transform this game into a cohesive whole.

The DUNGEON DECOR Struc-

tures are all L-shaped. They are Facing wall

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1. Fpport (Tarantis) and is mainly concerned with descriptions
2. Tegel Manor contains booklet L; the Wilderlands package contains booklets N and O. We seem to have lost booklets K and M en route, assuming they are published in letter order. Apparently these were issued with two other packages which haven't yet reached the UK. All this is getting rather confusing and it will be frustrating to many to have access to some of the JG material but not the rest.

Most of the booklet N is taken up with tables and other guidelines covering such topics as Ruins, Caves and Lairs, Searching, Prospecting, Hydrographic Terrain and more (there is some duplication with the information in the Campaign Hexagon System booklet). The villages of Barbarian Atlantis (map e in this review) and of glow-Worm Steeples (on map c in this review) are dealt with in some detail, as are the islands on both maps.

Similarly booklet O is mainly concerned with descriptions of villages, islands etc. on map f (Tarantis) and map e (Valon). It also includes a description of the territory of Huberic of Hagip's domains. All this is very useful information, but I have no material so consistently high in quality and informativeness as the JG material, and I would still maintain this. I can recommend this review as highly as I did the City State and Thunderhold packages.

However I for one am starting to get a touch of mental indigestion — of ‘vision injection’ from the JG material. Not because of the material itself — that is very valuable. What worries me is the rather disorganised and incoherent way in which the material is presented. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is that we are on the wrong side of the Atlantic to get maximum benefit and to recognise the logical pattern underlying the publication (sharply assuming there is one).

Let that not be a reason for failing to buy the material, though. It is good, and well worth the money, particularly if you are a ‘fantasy campaign’ fan.

DUNGEON DECOR THE ENDLESS DUNGEON

Falchion Products — £1.80

Wee Warriors — £3.25

These two products are similar in function so a comparative review is appropriate. Both are ‘kits’ from which a DM can build up free-standing (sometimes) lengths of dungeon wall, with doors and other openings.

The DUNGEON DECOR structures are all L-shaped. They are formed from flat card sheets by cutting out sections and pasting, and are self-adhesive plastic, such as shelf-covering.

The booklet also contains other guidelines generally relevant to this sort of campaign, including Keen Sightings, Hydrographic Terrain (rivers, streams etc.), Movement Obstacles, Prospecting (for ore, precious minerals etc.), Flora Types, Vegetation, Fauna Classifications — and many more.

D&D PLAYING AIDS

JUDGES Guild

Campaign Hexagon System (£1.85) is a booklet of which the main portion is devoted to blank campaign hex grids — over 60 of them. A rectangular hexagonal tessellation of about 1000 small hexes (each representing 22.2 acres, or 0.2 miles across flats) appears on each page; on this grid is superimposed a large hex representing 5 miles across flats, to have 625 small hexes encompassed by the large one. This is a useful booklet of records for those involved in a fantasy ‘wilderness’ campaign game (though since the booklet is likely to get extended use I suggest the covers should be stiffened by clear self-adhesive plastic, such as shelf-covering).

The booklet also contains other guidelines generally relevant to this sort of campaign, including Keen Sightings, Hydrographic Terrain (rivers, streams etc.), Movement Obstacles, Prospecting (for ore, precious minerals etc.), Flora Types, Vegetation, Fauna Classifications — and many more.

Though I am not personally involved in ‘outdoor’ fantasy gaming at the moment, I should have thought this to be a most valuable source of reference data for player and game master alike.

Wildersheds of High Fantasy (£8.25) is another play-aid package similar in some respects to the City State and Tegel Manor packages reviewed in White Dwarf.

First, there are two sets of five maps each; one set is for the referee, who gets all the detail of the mapped area, the other for the players who only get limited information. Each set contains (1) the area immediately around the City State, (b) Barbarian Atlantis — the area to the south of the City State map, (c) Valley of the Ancients — the area around the Winilakdar Sea, (d) Tarantis — the area to the east of the City State, and (e) Valin — the area north of the City State. To locate these areas, the best source of enlightenment is the map at the beginning of the booklet Guide To The City State published with the City State package.

The other ‘half’ of the package consists of booklets N and O. It's not easy to keep track of these guidelines booklets, but so far I think the position is that the City State package contains the City State booklet plus booklets I and J, the.
The ENDLESS DUNGEON structures are all U-shaped. Again these are formed by cutting and creasing flat card sheets. There are 15 sheets in the pack, each sheet carrying two 'long' sections and one 'medium' section, together with two entrances. The scale is elusive! The wall sections containing the entrances are 3.1cm (just under 1") wide, and presumably this represents 10' giving a scale of 1:96 (and this makes the door height about 7'8".) In turn this means the whole pack contains just over 1700' scale length plus 30 entrances. The walls are colour-printed in a grass-green shade, but there are no decorations and the entrances are simply black holes. Also included in the pack are six 1" hex sheets (for dungeon floors, printed in black 'stone') and a 'character roll' quick-reference sheet on which the DM notes the AC, hit probability etc. of each character in his current adventure.

Each pack has its points, but where the Endless Dungeon pack is featureless and dull, the Decor pack is attractive: the Endless Dungeon walls are more stable and have 'thickness', but how many times are both sides of a wall in play simultaneously?; the Endless Dungeon scale is weird and defies all efforts at systematic regulation whereas the Decor scale is obvious and immediately workable: the Decor walls are in varying lengths and are flexible in use — after all, the intent is not to build a permanent layout.

On a 'cost per unit wall length' criterion alone, the Endless Dungeon pack wins out. But in all other respects the Decor pack is preferable — why pay more for hundreds of yards of wall which are unlikely to be used, particularly when their appearance is so uninspiring? The Decor pack has been given more thought, care and attention but the Endless Dungeon pack gives the impression of having been thrown together. If you want this type of material at all and don't want to spend time making it yourself, Dungeon Decor is not a bad pack to get. However I think you may find either pack more of a nuisance than a help. I have seen two reasonably good methods of regulating melee; as usual, perhaps the simplest solution is the best, and the one I prefer is to use short pieces of wooden dowel, pre-cut to various scale lengths, which can be put together quickly and which are small enough to allow players to get their hands onto character figures without knocking the whole room over. The Decor walls are particularly prone to toppling at the wrong time. On the whole, then, I think you can afford to give both packs a miss.

Don Turnbull

LABYRINTHINE

Falchion Products — £3.25

To quote from the blurb: — "This game kit contains a geomorphic representation of an Evil Wizard's stronghold ... A holding force composed of a variety of evil creatures face a mixed group of lawful adventurers seeking to rescue a maiden ..." Recognise it? Yes, it is a game remarkably similar to CITADEL, reviewed in White Dwarf 3. The Presentation is inferior to that of Citadel: the rules are less detailed and less well presented than those of Citadel: the game components are qualitatively inferior to those of Citadel: the game is less interesting in play than is Citadel.

As if this wasn't enough, this game costs nearly a quid more than Citadel. What do you conclude? Yes — so do I.

Don Turnbull

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Seven Hells — 50p

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E2 Elder Race Standard Bearer
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E4 Elder Race with Polearm
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Please mention WHITE DWARF when replying to advertisements
Dear WD,

Having been recently introduced to D&D, and getting to the stage where I'm 'getting the hang of it', I would like to comment on Dan Turner's 'Monstrous' system.

I'm in full agreement with Paul Jaquey's letter 'White Dwarf No. 3, on page 11, who would greatly appreciate an explanatory article (do I hear murmurs of support from my innumerate brothers?)? My own understanding of Dan's system is as follows: the 8 value of Don's Dwart entity is around 1000; noting the train/destroying properties of each card. I'd write more only my brain has turned to jelly. Dan........... help!

Cheers,
Dave Coleman, London

Dear WD,

Please, for Heaven's sake, get rid of Kalgar and Quiggy. Have the imperial guard send a dozen inquisitors or something after him. Are you seriously going to waste a whole page on a cartoon thing? A cartoon strip? My dear sir, if I want to look at silly pictures of people with balloons coming out of their mouths I shall waste my thimble on a comic book. In White Dwarf I expect to find material on science-fiction and fantasy games; trust is why I buy it. It's bad enough (but presumably necessary) to lose space to advertisements, but really, childish rubbish is the prerogative of the Dragon; I expect better things of you. I am highly dubious as to whether there is any value in Mr. Norris's figure review, finding, myself, that straightforward description of whether so-and-so's dwarfs have pointy hats or not is actually boring soul of no practical function other than duplicating manufacturer's lithographs, I would seriously deplore the worth of printing 'reviews' of his figures that cost 12p each, and most people will see them as a terrible waste. Again, surely you must have better stuff in your files than this? But you don't; you print it anyway. Even so-and-so's dwarfs. That sort of twaddle is best left to Marvel comics and the like, whose business is it.

The favours of 'White Dwarf' is the presentation of game-related material the like those excellent contributions of Myers, Pulpshaker, Turnbull, etc. where nice comic strips and not minatures appear.

Yours faithfully,
Roger Mason, Edinburgh.

Dear WD,

I notice that most letters in White Dwarf concern themselves with the prase or otherwise of the various articles. I would just like to add a few words in praise of your artists who really do an excellent job. Some of the front and back covers have been really amazing and the new comic strip Kalgar is a wonderful addition to the pages in my opinion.

Tell your artists to keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,
John Robinson, Lincoln

The two letters above are an example of one of the problems facing the BSFA...
The role-playing game market is not saturated yet, though it is not far off. Unfortunately, an unrealistic expectation.

The bandwagon has started to roll. First D&D and En Garde, then EPT, T&T, B&B, Metamorphosis Alpha, C&S and no doubt other letter-pairs being hurried to completion before the year is out. The imagination of the referee and players is a limited one, and the market can only go on for so long before the imagination of the manufacturer and buyer begins to be small - not a good combination of circumstances for manufacturers and buyers alike. To those who argue in this way, games manufacturers should be dedicated, purposeful people who perceive the needs of the hobby in transcending their own need to survive, who resolutely ignore the bandwagon in the interests of the art.

Unfortunately, an unrealistic expectation.

But enough of questions and doubts - let's see what lies underneath the blankets. Physically, the game consists of three booklets attractively presented in black covers with red lettering, the booklets boxed in the original D&D style. The paper quality is good, as is the quality of printing and layout - no half-printed lines, no misprints I have found, except use of varied type-faces, clear tabulations and comfortable print size. Within these booklets are rules, charts and guidelines which provide a framework - the bare essentials for play. How adequately or otherwise the framework is only can be determined by lengthy practice and will hinge to a great extent on the imaginativeness of the referee and players.

Characters and Combat

Characters are harder to get as a draftee). To acquire skills, improve his chances of advancement, learn new characteristics (strength, dexterity, endurance, intelligence, education, social standing), gain experience in handling weapons and armor, to advance personal qualities (leadership, administrative skill). Some of these qualities can be acquired only through the character's experiences, others are inherent characteristics.

One way to solve the problem is to have a character ready to begin adventure with, and to advance personal qualities (leadership, administrative skill) through various means. Some of these qualities can be acquired only through the character's experiences, others are inherent characteristics.

The referee can also introduce new character classes, new artifacts and new approaches. En Garde appears to have been designed with an eye to the shelves to catch dutes. Does anyone actually play T&T? Does rabbit role-play in B&B command any interest? Has MA any support? Is the reality of C&S a big enough factor to draw people away from D&D? My guess is that, of the fans of the game, the majority of all those products have been snapped up not for their own merits but as sources of new D&D ideas, discarded when exhausted. They have, in effect, been D&D supplements, and while TSR cannot be expected to be pleased by others cashing in on the D&D idea, imitation is a sincere form of flattery. TSR should not be worried - my belief is that D&D has been strengthened rather than under mined by what set out to be competition.

I have doubts, therefore, about the ultimate destiny of Traveller, and these doubts arise before even opening the box. Like MA, its scope is so vast that to play it thoroughly must approach a lifetime's experience. The referee's task is crucial here, for in both games it is virtually Amnesial. In MA he must populate a gigantic spaceship of seventeen 'decks' the smallest of which is about 460 square miles in area. Even this is simple compared with Traveller, in which the referee must populate a universe! Granted, the referee does not need to complete the entire ship or universe before play can begin, but if the players are to have anything like a reasonable freedom of action and choice the Traveller referee must do a good deal more preparation than the D&D dungeonmaster, who can get by initially by creating two or three 'levels'. If MA has failed to make its mark with a vast, though limited, canvas, can Traveller, with a lifetime's canvas, ever achieve more?

But enough of questions and doubts - let's see what lies underneath the blankets. Physically, the game consists of three booklets attractively presented in black covers with red lettering, the booklets boxed in the original D&D style. The paper quality is good, as is the quality of printing and layout - no half-printed lines, no misprints I have found, except use of varied type-faces, clear tabulations and comfortable print size. Within these booklets are rules, charts and guidelines which provide a framework - the bare essentials for play. How adequately or otherwise the framework is only can be determined by lengthy practice and will hinge to a great extent on the imaginativeness of the referee and players.

Characters and Combat

Characters are harder to get as a draftee). To acquire skills, improve his chances of advancement, learn new characteristics (strength, dexterity, endurance, intelligence, education, social standing), gain experience in handling weapons and armor, to advance personal qualities (leadership, administrative skill)
he can remain in the Service for a maximum of seven terms of four years each, though re-enlistment after each term is not automatic, nor is it easier if the previous term was a successful one (say marked by promotion) which is surprising and perhaps a minor error of judgement. Generally speaking, the longer the length of service the more skills etc. are acquired and the greater is the eventual mustering-out cash benefit and annual retirement pay; however as a character ages some of his characteristics may reduce ("detrimental ageing effects"). Additionally, there is a risk, taken each term, that a character will be killed by an injury sustained while on duty. There is a chance that a player who develops an excellent 42-year-old character, with bags of useful skills, advanced education and a healthy potential bank account will see him killed in his seventh term of service. In which case there is no alternative but to start afresh with a new career (and there are no Rajas del Tavolap in Traveller) — yet, in contrast to D&D, the player will not yet have paid for the ship.

The business of character generation is very thorough and I found it interesting to create personalities simply by following the procedures and rules. I was intrigued by the branch of the services called 'Other' — since all the more respectable branches are covered elsewhere I deduce that this branch contains the cooks and latrine orderlies. The tables have been carefully contrived and the results are quite credible — altogether I found this section quite compulsive and a worthy beginning to the project.

The remainder of the first booklet deals with combat — rules governing the resolution of personal encounters by force which characters are certain to meet as they explore the worlds of the Traveller universe. Basically this is familiar ground for the D&D player or the 'wargames miniatures' enthusiast. However the skills developed by the character in the previous section play their part, as well as his strength, dexterity etc. and the result is a good continuity between the sections. The variety of weapons is of course very wide — from bottles (which start life as clubs but after their first hit become crude daggers) through automatic rifles and SMGs to laser carbines and laser rifles. Similarly, personal protection varies from Jack (a natural or synthetic leather jacket) to Battle Dress (the powered armour with all sorts of electronic gear which Robert Heinlein specified in Starship Troopers).

Again, this is an elaborate, coherent and credible system and in my view the first booklet passes with full marks. Starships The second booklet deals with travelling, trade and 'all there is to know about starships' including economics, construction and combat. There are also short sections on drugs (availability, properties and legality) and on the means whereby a character can get down to business. So far we know how to develop the man, and crews; then how to fight with them. The arithmetic in this section is rather a dull means of making a living, but it is good steady work and the profits can be quite reasonable. The rules cover the purchase, shipment and resale of 36 different cargoes in an uncomplicated fashion.

The largest part of the booklet is concerned with starships — first how to buy them and operate them, their design and construction, their computer and its programmes, their weaponry and crew, then how to fight with them. The arithmetic in this and the travelling section is rather more complicated than before, particularly in the 'planetary templates' section where characters are certain to meet as they explore the worlds of the Traveller universe. Basically this is familiar ground for the D&D player or the 'wargames miniatures' enthusiast. Here there is a wealth of detail. If a character ever gets rich enough he can even order his own personalised starship, tailoring the hull design, power plant, drives etc. at will. However the cheapest standard design costs a basic 32% million credits; since maximum annual retirement pay from the services is 10 thousand credits, it's safe bet that not many youngsters will be seen riding their own personalised spacecraft.

The combat system is probably the least novel since it uses a pretty penny, but it is good steady work and the profits can be quite reasonable. The rules cover the purchase, shipment and resale of 36 different cargoes in an uncomplicated fashion. The largest part of the booklet is concerned with starships — first how to buy them and operate them, their design and construction, their computer and its programmes, their weaponry and crew, then how to fight with them. The arithmetic in this and the travelling section is rather more complicated than before, particularly in the 'planetary templates' section where characters are certain to meet as they explore the worlds of the Traveller universe. Basically this is familiar ground for the D&D player or the 'wargames miniatures' enthusiast. However, there is a complication I haven't met before — the ship's computer which controls all a ship's activity and is especially used to enhance weapon fire and defensive activity. The part it plays is so significant that there is a special 'computer reprogramming' phase in which player turn and there are 36 programmes available. This adds a good deal of interest and a fair amount of complexity to starship movement and combat, but on the whole I think gamblers will welcome the increase in complexity as a small price to pay for added verisimilitude.

The contents of booklet 2 are, on the whole, harder to grasp than those of its predecessor. There is a lot to learn, of course, but the text has the virtues of great clarity and readability (and the indexing will help to track down dimly-remembered references). Its compilation has been carefully and methodically executed: it is a very good example of rule book layout. It is probably, also, the most useful booklet; those who don't want to play Traveller but who do enjoy starship combat actions in the Traveller universe will be able to extract most of the sections and use them to good use.

Worlds and Adventures At last, as I thought when I opened the third booklet, we can really get down to business. So far we know how to develop the man, how he fights, how he gets from world to world and how his ship is built, it is made to move and can fight to protect him. We have a partial view of the intergalactic template's section where the rules for this, that and the other piece. Now let's get playing.

And indeed it is; the text that has been laid out this third booklet opens with the modest reminder to the referee that it is his responsibility to map the universe, . . . First off there is another 42-page section on space travel and navigation rules. Nothing tricky here though a lot of detail including starport typology, starship typology, interstellar navigation, types of people, types of government, ships etc. All is there for the referee to use.
scouts have a private cache of refined fuel.

Size: 8000 miles diameter. About earth size.

Atmosphere: Trace. Virtually a vacuum.

Hydrographic percentage: 30%. Quite a lot of water, consider-
ing the lack of atmosphere.

Population: 10 million.

Government type: Civil Service Bureaucracy. We should know what that means.

Law Level: 11. Cynical — I'm off the chart here. The chart runs from 0-9 and is 206£: automatic modifier of -7 and + the population increment which in my case is 7. I rolled 11, which remains 11 when modified, but the chart stops at 9. Level 9 means very strict prohibition on firearms, so 11 must mean no offensive weapons at all under pain of death; no pea-shooters.

Tech Index: 5. They have developed gunpowder (they have SMGs) but don't know how to make chain armour; they have simple computers and radio, but no television, and despite the fact that there is quite a lot of water about they haven't invented the submarine. They have fixed-wing aircraft but no nuclear fission.

Altogether this is a pretty improbable world. Interesting to know, for instance, how those fixed-wing aircraft fly in what is virtually a vacuum, and what do the bureaucrats breathe?

However I do not criticise the rules here, for it is the referee who, having used the table as guidelines, resolves any apparent contradictions before presenting the world to the players. And even on earth, societies have been known to develop in most improbable ways. The one failing seems to be that the dice can produce a result which is not listed on at least one chart; this is a careless flaw (or am I misreading the instructions?).

Passing over the section on Equipment which is pretty straightforward and contains no surprises, the next section is on Encounters and it is here that the "monsters" make their first appearance. Those who are looking to Traveller for new D&D monsters will be disappointed here, for animals are treated with very broad strokes of the brush, the details being left to the referee. What there is in this section is probably enough for an inventive referee to work on, but I get the impression that, having completed most of the work, the designers had to leave this section rather flimsy, either because of weariness or a rapidly-approaching production deadline. This may be unjust-
ifiable and harsh, but the impression is there all the same, and this is not the only section of the third booklet which produces that impression.

The final section is about Psionics which always seems to crop up somewhere (though even since TSR's unfortunate Eldritch Wizardry psionic rules, I have developed blinkers). This is quite a detailed section (which, on my earlier thesis, I rather hoped for a fourth); if so, its absence is deeply regretted; but if not I wonder whether the designers are expecting too much of the referee. What there is in this section is probably enough for a careless flaw (or am I misreading the instructions?).

The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating. 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The presentation is exemplary, the detail impressive, the treatment exacting and the inventiveness stimulating.
KALGAR

Help me! What does your grandmother have that these bandits want so badly?

How many are there?

Right...now

That is inappropriate for him.

Just beyond the mountains lies...

THANKS, LADY.

Goddess, may these bandits be found.

I'll kill you all.

UHH! YAAAAH!
The Asbury System

Part II
by Brian Asbury

In the first of these articles on D&D experience, I dealt with awarding points for killing monsters. This time, it’s the turn of points to be awarded for casting spells. I’m aware that not everybody gives points for successful magic-use, but I do, and this particular bit of the Asbury System involves using the following tables:

### TABLE 1 – MAGIC-USERS

<table>
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<th>Spell Level</th>
<th>Mu Level</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<td>700*</td>
<td>800*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>967</td>
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<td>15-17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>785</td>
<td>895</td>
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<td>18-20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>885</td>
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### TABLE 2 – CLERICS

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<th>Spell Level</th>
<th>Cl Level</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200*</td>
<td>300*</td>
<td>400*</td>
<td>500*</td>
<td>600*</td>
<td>700*</td>
<td>800*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>200*</td>
<td>300*</td>
<td>400*</td>
<td>500*</td>
<td>600*</td>
<td>700*</td>
<td>800*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>300*</td>
<td>400*</td>
<td>500*</td>
<td>600*</td>
<td>700*</td>
<td>800*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>300*</td>
<td>400*</td>
<td>500*</td>
<td>600*</td>
<td>700*</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>300*</td>
<td>400*</td>
<td>500*</td>
<td>600*</td>
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<td>137</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>727</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<td>225</td>
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<td>555</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>618</td>
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### TABLE 3 – ILLUSIONISTS/DRUIDS/HEALERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spell Level</th>
<th>Dr Level</th>
<th>He Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20+</td>
<td>0.0125</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An asterisk against the number indicated by the table means that this level of spell can by used by a caster of the level opposite it only if it is being read from a scroll or book. If this system is being used, no experience should be awarded for finding scrolls; the experience is awarded when the scroll is read.

### How to Use The Tables

There are three ways in which these tables may be used:

1. The nice, easy, straightforward way, is to simply take the numbers generated by the tables to be the number of points awarded for casting a spell of that level, successfully. If the spell is not successful e.g. its victim makes his/her/its saving-throw, or the detect spell detects nothing, or the DM operates a Klutz system which makes the spell fail or backfire), then no points are awarded for the spell.
2. A second, alternative, slightly more complicated method, is as follows:
Hit Location in Melee

by Martin Easterbrook

Under these rules the location of a hit is dependent on 'how well' the blow was struck, i.e., how easily did it penetrate the defender's armour class.

Die Roll (above value to hit, i.e. above 17 for 1st level vs AC2)

Effect

- Body hit, cumulative damage only
- Hit to arms (may not sever or crush)
- Hit to head, defender knocked down *
- Hit to head, defender beheaded if sufficient head damage has accumulated above +10
- Hit to head, defender knocked down **
- Hit to arms (may sever or crush as for legs)
- Hit to lower body or legs (may not sever or crush)
- Hit to lower body or legs (may not sever or crush)
- Hit to head, defender blinded if sufficient head damage has accumulated above +10
- Hit to head, defender beheaded if sufficient head damage has accumulated above +10

* Defender knocked down — chances of rising again determined by throwing a D6 at the end of each subsequent melee round. To rise — (Unwounded: 4, 5, 6; Wounded (over 1/4 hit points): 6) * Defeated Illusionist casts a Paralyzation spell (3rd level) at five harpies, affecting four of them. Harpies have 3 hit dice each, so:

Points awarded = (133 x 10) x (5 x 7) = 78, rounded off to 80.

** Named target — an attacker may 'aim' at a specific target. If he fails to make a high enough throw (e.g. +3 to hit the legs) then he misses completely. If he makes or exceeds the required throw then he has hit the named area (add 1 to required throw if he names a particular arm or leg).

** Named target — an attacker may 'aim' at a specific target. If he fails to make a high enough throw (e.g. +3 to hit the legs) then he misses completely. If he makes or exceeds the required throw then he has hit the named area (add 1 to required throw if he names a particular arm or leg).

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Wargames Wanted London
The West London Legion Wargames Group needs members for D&D, including DMs, Ancients, Napoleonics etc. Meetings held every 1st and 3rd Sunday starting 3.00pm at Northfields Community Centre, Alnwick Avenue, Ealing, London W5.

Wargames Carlisle
Trinity Wargaming Society invites all grades of wargamers to join them at Carlisle Sports Centre, Strand Road, Carlisle. Meetings held every Friday from 6.00pm to 9.00pm. Many wargames played including D&D campaign. Contact Nigel Proudfoot, 22 Halla Way, Carlisle for further information.

Wanted
The Dragon Nos. 1, 2, 3 and Dungeon Nos. 1 to buy or borrow. Postage will be paid on all correspondence etc. Please write to Richard Evans, 19 Cotton Street, weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

D&D Swansea
Would anyone interested in forming a club for D&D and other similar games in the Swansea area please contact Gareth Perry, 39 Th Orchard, Newson, Swansea.

Postal Opponents
Unsolicited fantasy gamer/board gamer seeks postal opponents for D&D, Kingmaker, Steeple Troopers, Richhothers War and After the Holocaust. Write to Mike Jervis, 19 Portside Drive, Risika, Nottingham.

 Origins 78
The fourth annual national wargaming convention will be held on 14th 15th and 16th July 1978 at the University of Michigan, North Campus, Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA.

Wanted
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D&D Glasgow
Will any SF/F gamemasters interested in forming a club in the Glasgow area please contact James Rae, 12 Hawthorn Hill, Hamilton (Tel: 0369a 22709 evenings).

Wargames St. Austel
Would anybody interested in playing D&D, Kingmaker, Diplomacy in the St. Austell area please contact Paul Vase, 43 Trevaniron Road, St. Austell, Cornwall (Tel: 0726 6199a).

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The Augusta Games Club meets twice monthly on each second and fourth Sunday from 3.00 pm to Midnight. Meetings held at Pizza Express (directions), 10 Dean Street, London W1. Phone 01-340 3577 for details.

D&D Grimby
Andrew Beasley would like to hear from any D&D player, DM or interested parties in the Grimby area. Write to him c/o 81 Wimondale Ave, Fairfield, Grimby, South Humberside.

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SL12 Alpha Ranger with laser gun
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SL15 Regular Ranger with sword and shield (NEW)

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DM2 Mechanical Robot — oily can
DM3 The Brown Wizard—30p
DM4 Princess Light — young heroine
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DM6 Apenine Warrior with lasergun
DM7 Apenine Warrior with lasergun
DM8 Apenine Warrior with lasergun
DM9 Star warrior with hand phaser
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DM3 Dead with type (Black)
DM4 The Lord (White)

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SL3 Star Lord with sword and shield (NEW)
SL4 Star Lord with sword and shield (NEW)
SL5 Star Lord with sword and shield (NEW)
SL6 Star Lord with sword and shield (NEW)
SL7 Star Lord with sword and shield (NEW)
SL8 Star Lord with sword and shield (NEW)

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