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At a time when the Elves were young, certain of the High Elves became disenchanted with their lot. They rebelled against the Old Gods and, in their pride, were seduced into the worship of the sinister Gods of Chaos. In doing so they lost all of the charm and wisdom natural to their kind; becoming bitter and twisted so that they were called the ‘Dark Ones’. Driven from the Elven lands they took refuge amongst dark forests and caves until, many years later, they established a small independent Kingdom.

Dark Elves have almost uncontrollable hatred for all other living creatures, especially other Elves. They are jealous of men, despise Goblins and Orcs and regard Dwarfs as repulsive. They are greatly involved with magic, especially Necromantic and evil magic.

Amongst the deep caves, away from sunlight, the Elves found the huge mutant Lizardmen, possibly the ancient primal reptile from which all intelligent Lizardmen evolved. These they called the ‘Cold Ones’. The Elves discovered that although very stupid, and almost blind, the Cold Ones could be controlled and ridden. In the dark tunnels and midnight forests the Cold Ones could move faster, using their uncanny sense of smell to root out hiding creatures.

SPECIAL RULES

1. All Dark Elves are expert Woodsmen and Miners, and they have an extraordinary sense of direction and perspective in the dark. Accordingly they move full distance in woods, at night, and amongst tunnels or inside buildings.

2. Dark Elves HATE other Elves.

3. Cold Ones have very tough skins which act like Mail Armour at no extra cost. This gives them a saving throw of 6 on a D6.

4. The Cold One is subject to STUPIDITY - but the rider may over-ride this on the D6 score of 4, 5, 6. Cold Ones are over 10’ tall and cause FEAR in Man sized, or smaller, enemy within 15’. Cold Ones will not attack other Lizardmen.

5. Cold Ones have very tough skins which act like Mail Armour at no extra cost. This gives them a Saving Throw of 6 on a D6.

6. Using their acute sense of smell Cold Ones can detect the scent of any creature within 6’, even if completely hidden. They can detect the scent of creatures over 6’ and up to 18’ away on the D6 dice roll of 4, 5, 6.

DARK ELF CHARACTERS - HEROES AND NECROMANCERS

Each Dark Elf Regiment will have a Regimental leader. Unless he is a Dark Elf Champion his ‘profile’ will be normal for his type. Generate the Leadership Factor for each Regiment by throwing D6+1.

Each Dark Elf Regiment may have a Regimental Champion, who may also be the Leader if you wish. Regimental Champions have the same profile as Minor Heroes.

Each Dark Elf Battalion will have 1 Dark Elf Hero to lead it. He may attach himself to a Regiment if he wishes and be their leader, or he may act as an independent character. Points cost includes a sword. There are three kinds of hero available, with the characteristics and costs given below. The player may decide which kind of hero he wants at the points cost indicated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Minor Hero Points</th>
<th>Hero Points</th>
<th>Mighty Hero Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weapon</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toughness</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A Dark Elf Battalion may include 1 Dark Elf Necromancer and 1 Witch Elf Necromancer at the indicated Points cost. Necromancers have the following profile depending upon Level. Points cost includes a sword and Personal Talisman, which is often a sacrificial knife or dark jewel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Acolyte</th>
<th>Adept</th>
<th>Mage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weapon Skill</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bow Skill</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toughness</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounds</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacks</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points Value</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Necromancer acts exactly like a normal Wizard - except that he can also make use of Necromancy spells and act as a 'controller' of friendly Undead.

Generate the number of non-Necromancy spells available:
- 1D3 Spells at each Level lower than Mastery
- 1D2 Spells at the Mastery Level

Generate the number of Necromancy spells available:
- 1D2 Spells at each Level lower than Mastery
- 102-1 Spells at the Mastery Level

Choose the spells you wish to use. You automatically have any necessary Talismans to cast each spell 103 times.

The material above as been excerpted from the forthcoming WARHAMMER supplement FORCES OF FANTASY.

Please send S.A.E for free, full lists of our NEW DARK ELF RANGE.

---

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- 1 Dark Elf Necromancer

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- 1 Dark Elf Here
- 1 Witch Elf sorceress

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QTY.</th>
<th>ARMY</th>
<th>PRICE EACH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DARK ELVES OF THE EVIL</td>
<td>£25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FORESTS OF DREGGDOGRE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COLD ONES FROM THE DANK Caverns of GrueLOkK</td>
<td>£25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THE WITCH COVEN OF BLOOD HOLLOW</td>
<td>£25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All three of the above</td>
<td>£70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Small Ads
Clubs, Help! and Classifieds plus Gobbledygook
37
As the majority of Traveller players are well-equipped, both in equipment and experience (of play) to deal with the normal challenges of unexplored space and the vagaries of frontier systems, what better to challenge them than the vagaries of a really well established system? So the players have every conceivable kind of gun under the sun(s), and a mercenary battalion aboard their 20,000 ton cruiser, but can they deal with advanced red tape? What happens if the players encounter a system that uses the archaic system of forms, that actually have to be filled out, with pens or the equivalent? They get frustrated and angry, and have an interesting time. They may not actually ever get through the red tape, resorting to violence and mayhem, with the appropriate, short-lived adventure resulting. In any event, they will be role-playing.

To further enhance the affect of this red tape sub-scenario, the referee ought to take on the role of the official. The players are currently dealing with, choosing his or her own sub-scenario to represent each new official. Officials should not misdirect and confuse and be generally useless, but always polite. Should the players ever ask exactly why the system uses forms, there are several answers. The first is to hand form a89-78B-33C Request For Historical Documents and the others don't matter. For general interest, red tape could exist for religious reasons, the usage of forms being part of the doctrine, or simply because of a desire on the part of a bureaucratically minded people who loseth computers. Perhaps, while the system has a good port and a fine economy, it is yet to achieve high tech levels or has a massive government employment scheme.

The following forms are designed for the players' first encounter with a red tape system - at the Immigration/Customs point at a starport. First of all, if the players have no archaic writing implements on their equipment lists, they will have to borrow some. This necessitates the completion of Form A88-(909).

The referee playing the part of the official checking the form, should pretend to know what it is about, even if he doesn't. After two or three good tries per player, give them pens anyway, regardless. How do they fill out the first form if they haven't got a pen? That is their problem. As long as it is legible and complies with the instructions they can fill it in with anything they have available, or can make. The next step is the actual entry request - see Form A22-FF7-DE8.

Once again the players don't have to get the forms right. After all, would the referee know? They just have to fill them out three or four times, being rejected initially for sloppy writing, non-regulation ticks etc.

After entry into the planet proper, the players will be disturbed to find that their credits are not taken in the system. After all, their credits are stored on the molecular patterns of credit cards, and the system uses (of course) paper money.

No problem - just change some. However, the drawback to this is that the players must first get a printout from their credit company of the amount they wish to change. The only place to get a printout is the starport, which means leaving the planetary territory, filling out exit forms, getting the printout and re-entering, once again completing entry forms - maybe only twice this time. Then its the exchange forms...

Having successfully completed their exit form and the clever players having been warned to take note of their expenditures for later exit forms, it is a relatively simple matter to get a printout, regain entry and visit the Exchange - see Form A78-ES643.

The Instructions: Instruction 567-234 Name. As recorded in home system or Imperial archives in basic, not local, indigenous or alien languages. Complete name should be given, as it would be read from birth record, left to right from the point of view of the person reading, viewing or studying the name in question. If possessed of more than one name, or a name of several dis-
degrees, that is to say, crosses are composed of two lines which cross, each quadrant of which contains 90 degrees of a circle that could be inscribed around the four points of the cross in question. Instruction 76A. Every place of business or registered merchant, vendor, seller, buyer or private citizen has a place code. This code is designed for coding purposes to code for taxation codes. When anyone, thing, construct or sentiment of any sort exchanges money for goods, services, information, pleasure or absolutely anything, the recipient's place code must be recorded for later use in form 455-990 AEX. Instruction 688-989 UPP. This must be according to the most recent assessment, according to the universal measurement system. In accordance with the Accord of the Accordance, a code is to be used in accordance with a hexagonal system of character coding commencing from, but excluding the numeral nine, 9. Where the first letter of the basic alphabet A represents 9 plus 1, nine plus one or ten, and further letters represent equally ascending numbers to a maximum of F, & or fifteen, 15. Instruction 247-DDE Relative Age. To be measured in Standard Imperial Calendar years according to the standard Imperial Calendar, not personally subjective physiological or experienced years. Persons whose age exceeds or is 180 standard Imperial Calendar years are assumed to be defunct, deceased or inoperative. If proof is offered to the contrary it is to be reduced to a state where such proof was found to be false, untrue, fabricated and not properly examined in the first place. Further proof is to be prevented from appearing under the Legal Death Age Regulations of the Euthanasia Involuntary Passage Act.

Referee's Guide to the Instructions
Name - just write it out exactly as it runs, with no spaces. Eg samuelthomasbeckel. Capital don't matter, so it could be SAMUELTHOMASBECKET. If the player is a knighth or baron or whatever, simply give the title first - SirSamuelUethomasbeckel.

Form A78-£5543 Currency Requisition
1. Amount of Imperial (or Terran) Credit.
2. Why do you need this exact amount? State in words exactly of no more than five letters per individual word, without punctuation or spacing your expected expenditure and where you expect to expend this expenditure. Words do not necessarily have to form a sentence, paragraph, clause or coherent group.
3. On what card is your credit stored?

Form 455-990-AEX
Instruction 677-ABE Standard Ticks. Only one box per question to be ticked.

Important note. If OneSub1 is answered in the affirmative (Yes) then the persons, persons or things composing form Prison Selection.

2.1 plan to return in;
TwoSub1. As soon as humanly possible.
TwoSub2. Next Month.
TwoSub3. Within a year (Standard).

3. I spent _______ soleros (system currency) at the following places, at Amount

Place Code

Company

Date

Form A78-£5543 Currency Requisition
1. Amount of Imperial (or Terran) Credit.

2. Why do you need this exact amount? State in words exactly of no more than five letters per individual word, without punctuation or spacing your expected expenditure and where you expect to expend this expenditure. Words do not necessarily have to form a sentence, paragraph, clause or coherent group.

3. On what card is your credit stored?

In accordance with Instruction 677-ABE Standard Ticks.

ThreeOneSubOne. Starclaycard.
ThreeOneSubTwo. Stellarmen Express.
ThreeOneSubThree. Traveller's.
ThreeOneSubFour. ImpBankcard.
ThreeOneSubFive. Lanthanum CreditCorp.
ThreeOneSubSix. Other Name.

Amount of Currency Received
I, the underhandedprinted, photographed, signed and retaiprinted have most definitely, certainly and irrevocably received the sum of real, official, non-fake physical soleros being the exchange value of the actual sum of theoretical credit of

Referee's Guide to the Instructions
Name - just write it out exactly as it runs, with no spaces. Eg samuelthomasbeckel. Capitals don't matter, so it could be SAMUELTHOMASBECKET. If the player is a knighth or baron or whatever, simply give the title first - SirSamuelUethomasbeckel.

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3. On what card is your credit stored?
This new product by Games Workshop's Steve Jackson, follows hard on the footsteps of the Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks, using the same combat system and characteristics for a more adult scenario. The two-volume boxed set consists of The Sorcery Spell Book and the first volume of a four-part adventure, The Shamutanti Hills (page numbers not marked, 18-page introduction plus 456 numbered sections).

An unusual feature of the game is its use of magic. Most previous adventures, including the FFG series, instruct players to choose spells from a list and note them on a character record sheet. In Sorcery readers must memorise spell names and effects, then close the spell book until the character is killed or has chosen all the spells he needs for the scenario. All spell names are of three letters, examples being SUS (Detect Traps), NAP (Sleep Spell), ZAP (Lightning Bolt), and ZIP (Teleport). A lot of the spell names sound alike, and many have little relationship to their effects. Many require material components which aren't available at the start of the game.

At various points in the text the adventurer is told to either fight something or use a spell, choosing one from a list of five. There's usually at least one spell that isn't actually in the spell book, and two or three with no worthwhile effect. This means that the use of the spell book as a role-playing aid as well as its attention to detail and spirit of the Tolkein world.

The actual adventure is a fairly basic quest to recover the Crown of Kings, a magical artifact which will stop wars, bestow supernormal powers of leadership and judgement on its owner, and stop the adventurers country being invaded by neighbours. Since there's no hope of recovering it until volume 4 is reached, volumes 1, 2, and 3 are a trek to the castle where it is held, featuring a variety of encounters with the forces of good and evil. Most of this volume seems to be aimed at adults with little or no experience of FRP games its derivative nature isn't unimportant. The combat system is reasonably clean, being originally designed for easy use by 8-12 year olds. I suspect that a lot of the paragraphs begin with messages like 'Deduct 5 Stamina Points'. There is no such spell as this... or 'Deduct 1 Stamina Point'.

You cast the spell but nothing happens...'. Forgetting material components has a similar effect. It's possible to play a simplified game without magic, taking extra skill instead of spells.

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The 'Dark Religion' which operates under cover in the City is also considered; some interesting spells like tongue rot and elephantiasis are available to the more discerning devotees of this cult. The castles, villages, animals and magic all have information tables and descriptions in this 52-page summary of the area; again a detachable map of the general locality and a more detailed one of Umbar itself is available.

Ardor, again at 52-pages offers information of this lesser known locality, covering nine minor kingdoms in the area known generally as Múmakin, a jungle land in the far south of the continent. Five major races are in evidence of differing importance. The format is the same as the previous volumes, and as well as the major characteristics, mentioning Sauron's influence in the land, the nature of society and suggested scenarios for the players.

Southern and Northern Mirkwood can really be considered together. Whilst SM centres on Dol Guldur and the presence of Sauron of Mordor, NM is principally concerned with the Elven Kings Halls and the strong Elven society that has grown up there over a long period. Both need the same attention; it's a different kind of passage way look interesting though. The Witchking of Angmar's abilities pale into insignificance when you read Sauron's in SM; a 240th level spell caster (tongue rot) is more hazardous; some interesting spells like in the margin will make you ready. The Witching of Angmar's abilities pale into insignificance when you read Sauron's in SM; a 240th level spell caster (tongue rot) is more hazardous; some interesting spells like in the margin will make you ready.

Tarsus is the adventure module to go with Starter Traveller, though it can be used with any Traveller rules. It contains a world map of Tarsus, a subsector map of District 268 in the Spinward Marches, a detailed map of the Tanglewald (a forested region on Tarsus), cards for 12 pre-generated characters, a world and scenario booklet, and 5 scenario sheets. The philosophy behind this is that one world, fully detailed, has more potential for adventure than a roughly-sketched subsector. The five sheets detail, effectively, two scenarios; in the first, the central character and friends return home to Tarsus after the Fifth Frontier War to find the home ranch sabotaged and its owner (the central character's father) missing; sheet 1 covers their arrival, sheet 2 covers finding the missing father, sheet 3 the band to track down the saboteurs and wreak vengeance. GMs beware; you may need to prepare some maps for sheets 2 and 3. In the second scenario (sheet 4) the band penetrates the Tanglewald in search of the local equivalent of Bigfoot. Sheet 5 lists ideas for further adventures.

Tarsus itself is presented in stunning detail. Astronomy, geography, history, climate, technology, society; it's all here. This is a world as detailed and rounded as those used in fantasy games, and is a superb piece of work. However, there are faults; one of the main points about Tarsus is its strange weather - this is not explained in any detail, and the Weather Tables are incomplete. There are no NPC's, and the referees will surely need a dozen or so worked out. Further, the very detailed of the pack means that it is difficult to run without preparation, both for the GM and the players. The scenario should be prepared for a couple of weeks in advance; one player has a native character, who should be given a copy of the general information, and the GM must be prepared to become thoroughly familiar with the GM's world on a level not previously required for Traveller.

Most Traveller bands seem to drift from world to world quickly, seeing only the adventures and the pubs, because most have a ship. Tarsus is a world for a shipless group to explore and adventure on for entire game-years at a time, since by the end of the adventure they are likely to have control of a ranch and be potential candidates for the planetary government. It could become the player's base of operation for the campaign.

Tarsus is an excellent adventure for the beginning band - either of new players or of new characters - but considering the time it took me to sort it out, it may be too complex for new GMs. I refrain from giving it an overall 10 because of the lack of adequate cross-referencing and weather tables, and the inconsistent hex numbering on the subsector map. Each scenario sheet should last about one gaming session, with the exception of the fifth, which can be expanded practically to another 6 to 8 sessions.

Presentation: 9 Enjoyment: 10 Playability: 7 Complexity: 8 Skill: 6 Overall: 9

Jonathan Sutherland

Andy Slack

TARSUS

Game Designers' Workshop

£8.95
CRITICAL MASS

Fifty issues of White Dwarf... good grief. Things have changed since I first contributed, to issue I in 1977, when the text wasn't printed but laboriously impressed in cuneiform on tablets of damp clay, when the latest role-playing game was noughts and crosses, when the editors hired butchers when young and unblemished bodies in Soho to raise the cost of postage, when Marcus Rowland was a crazed gleam in some mad scientist's eye, when self-censoring was more worse than it are now! Ah, nostalgia.

The golden years have returned in Brian Aldiss's Helliconia Summer [Cape 398pp £8.50], successor to the award-winning Helliconia Spring and a fine book in its own right. The background of this trilogy — book 3 yet to come — is a merciless translation into celestial mechanics of the historical cycles in Shelley's poem:

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return.
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn...

This turns to nightmare when Shelley sees the Golden Ages give way to iron and leaden ones; in Aldiss's trilogy we know the world Helliconia is trapped in the cycle of the 'Great Year' as its feeble sun Batalix moves to or from the much hotter Freyri, in a 2592-year ellipse where midwinter lasts five centuries and midsummer sets the equator on fire.

We've had the marvellous Helliconia Spring, a book with flaws but far greater virtues. Now midsummer approaches, city-founders from book 1 are disputed midwinter buyers, beleaguered by the phagor's (among SF's best aliens) rule who the winter are partly subdued and enslaved, traders grow rich dealing in ice, and there are glimpses of a scientific Renaissance.

The story is a good and wide-ranging complexity which should be a lesson to science fiction writers who think that they are too clever: the story is a good and wide-ranging complexity which should be a lesson to science fiction writers who think that they are too clever: it is marketed as a trifle; better perhaps be a lesson to planners of game campaigns.

Fine writing, unforgettable images: and hanging over it all, the doomy awareness of Helliconia-watchers in the orbiting Earth Station Avernus, who know and remind us that all this differs only in detail from the summer of the last Great Year. The stench of burning volcanoes and brushfires and only 83 local yearsto the world Pandora where mutant Islanders aren't allowed to learn to read, 'Naturally, thenext four books disregarded by my ever-unreliable filing system are also not strict SF or fantasy. It's a plot of those publishers, I tell you, to ruin my credibility as an SF reviewer by inflicting this stuff on me, to — (Quick, Watson, the needied! —Ed)

First: When Volha Wakes by Joy Chant [Unicorn 168pp £2.95] is marketed as fantasy but is in fact a magic-free tale which could have been set as well in our own world's past as in Joy Chant's. It competently reworks the familiar (usually satirical, but not here) inversion whereby women wear trousers and powder men practise coquetry and aren't allowed to learn to read. 'Naturally, hisuntought mind could have neither the breadth nor the firmness of a woman's. A member of the supposedly second-class sex wants to be a musician, shock horror; a way is found but means grief for a partner who can't abandon job responsibilities. Arrange the sexes as you will, it stays a relatively mundane story. Caused me no pain.

Zomba Books are producing multinovel omnibuses, often by SF writers straying into the crime genre. The Frederic Brown collectionhorror Box 569pp £8.95 hc £5.95 pb] comprises Night of the Jabberwock, The Screaming Mimi, Knock 3-1-2 and The Fabulous Clipjoint. Brown was a master of the short SF shocker; these late-40's novels show he was even better at thrillers, which some fans tend not to read on principle. Good value — and for lovers of Lewis Carroll, the first novel is crammed with Carrollian esoterica, including a distinct suggestion that the Jabberwock itself is absurd and up to no good.

The search for Nikola Tesla by David Peat [Ashgrove Press, 143pp £3.95] is offset nonfiction whose facts and speculations could fuel a Traveller or Call of Cthulhu campaign — bizarre alternative technology, electronics plus Arcane Forces. Tesla pioneered AC power transmission, invented the AC induction motor, and could have shared a 1912 Nobel with Edison but refused (a fact he couldn't find in his own biography). Like Peat, he's been weirdly credited with a perfect broadcast-power system, his unsuccessful ambition, and lots more things like lasers and energy beams. Peat approaches his Tesla researchers autobiographically and can be insufferable: 'This task was the culmination of my own scientific ventures. I felt that I was ideally suited to meet such an adversary as Nikola Tesla. ' Sifting through the maze of Tesla's later loony patents and the modern cultists who value them, Peat charts a fascinating voyage through the self-deceptions and genuine achievements of a tragic man and others. I could have used less information about Peat ('The following morning was one of those when I took my time getting dressed') and more about Tesla, but it's a genuinely interesting read.

The Hamlyn Book of Horror and SF Movie Lists by Roy Pickard [Hamlyn 232pp £1.95] is another mass of pleasant trivia, better partners to the films mentioned in WD48 but less my cup of tea (I'm no movie fan). Good if you want to know about scenes cut from famous films, or 40 movie versions of Dracula, or King Kong's inside leg measurement: not exhaustive, but wide-ranging stuff.

Back to real SF: The Lazarus Effect by Frank Herbert and Bill Ransom [Gollancz 381pp £9.95] is a sequel to the authors' faithful and delightful Jehovah's Neonatation and it is a belated sequel to Herbert's minor Destination: Void [1966]. It's enjoyable Good Average SF, neither unputdownable nor unpickable, featuring political and biological machinations on the water-world Pandora where mutant Islanders in their floating cities (revoltingly smelly organic technology) are in semi-conflict with clean-limbed Meren from hygienic undersea domes. Each side is split into multiple factions; there's lots of manoeuvring and struggle, including the gory scuttling of a city. A vast, egregious deus ex machina emerges gradually from the plot. The plot. Not top-class Herbert — dunno about Ransom — but far better than its predecessor.

If you're sick of horror/fantasy anthologies full of the same old stories, I recommend Alberto Manguel's Black Water [Picador 967pp £4.95], a fat collection of 72 pieces from writers variously known for horror, fantasy, mainstream, mainstream, little-known, and appearing in English translation for the first time. Refreshingly different: despite a few duds you can't complain at only 50p a page.

This seems to be my twelfth Critical Mass column. Er... Happy Birthday!
Fiend Factory is a regular department edited by Albie Fiore. This issue, a White Dwarf fiftieth anniversary special — stats in RuneQuest and AD&D for our leading personalities. Readers may be interested to know that a Citadel boxed set of these figures is available, to accompany this article.

White Dwarf Personalities

by Phil Masters and Steve Gilham

THE WHITE DWARF (AD&D)
Str: 18/20 (20-21); Int: 17; Wis: 14; Dex: 17; Con: 16 (16/17 to Dwarves). Dwarf fighter/cleric/thief, levels 9/5/8; Age: 285; AC-3; 57HP; Alignment: Chaotic good.
Spells: Curse, commandx2, cure light wound, detect magic, read magic, hold person, conceal alignment, speak with animals.
Equipment: +2 Chainmail; +2 Small Shield; +3 Battle Axe; Dagger of Return; short sword, Ring of True Casting; Philter of Persuasiveness somewhere on his person; why his supply never runs out is a complete mystery. Dagger of Return: Anything desired of it by the wearer, provided the skill roll is used to determine the die used. Ability, to recover quickly from damage. The latter has proved more than a little useful, to the aforementioned cold-hearted dwarves. Spells: detect gold, detect gems, detect souls, aura shield, bladesharp 4, protection 4. Spells: Detect: 50%, Armouring 50%, Spot Traps 60%, Discarn Trap 60%, Cast Dice 90%, Wargame Tactics 75%, Game Design 90%, Make 6pt Acid, Speak with Animals 95%.
Skills: Evaluate Treasure 70%, Armouring 50%, Spot Traps 60%, Discarn Trap 60%, Cast Dice 90%, Wargame Tactics 75%, Game Design 90%, Make 6pt Acid, Speak with Animals 95%.
Equipment: Scruffy leathers, one weapon — either dagger, short sword, club or spiked club (as morning star). Cash: 3gp. An unremarkable denizen of some much-used underground area or another. Gobledigook can usually be found in the company of others of his kind, although he has been known to consort with a potent sorcerer named Wizlevard. For all his power, the latter seems to have miscast a find familiar spell on one occasion, as Gobledigook (himself no sorcerer) has somehow obtained a companion creature (see below). This being provides Gobledigook with only one personal advantage, and that when it is within 12" of him only (and not always then), the ability to cast ironic and despairing looks.

THE WHITE DWARF (RO)
STR: 21 (01-04) 6/6
CON: 16 Left leg (05-08) 6/6
SIZ: 9 Right leg (09-11) 6/6
INT: 15 Head (12) 6/7
POW: 15 Right arm (13-15) 2/5
DEX: 12 Left arm (16-18) 2/5
CHA: 13 Head (19-20) 4/6
Move: 6
Hit Points: 16
Defence: 15%
Spells: detect gold, detect gems, detect souls, aura shield, bladesharp 4, protection 4, delayed ignite 3; one use Runemagic — summon small gnome (STR: 13; INT: 12; POW: 20, 33HP).
Skills: Evaluate Treasure 50%, Armouring 50%, Spot Traps 60%, Discarn Trap 60%, Cast Dice 90%, Wargame Tactics 75%, Game Design 90%, Make 6pt Acid, Speak with Animals 95%.
Items: Axe contains a repair matrix. Carries a set of dice that are a Matrix for a fixed dice spell. At a cost of 1 POW, each die will roll the exact number desired on one roll.
Example: The White Dwarf wants to roll less than 30 on his percentage dice. He could use his Cast Dice skill with 90% confidence, but instead he decides to use his magic dice. He uses 2 points of POW, and guarantees a 25.
Great Axe: (206+2+1d4) SR7, 85%, Parry 60%, Points 15, SR8, 55%, Parry 40%, Points 20.
Crossbow: (204+2) SR1/2, 50%.
Small Shield: Parry 45%, Points 8.
The delayed ignite is a Mostali special spell; each point delays ignition by 5 seconds. Otherwise, as ignite.
The Cast Dice skill is used when the White Dwarf plays games. The result of the skill roll is used to determine the die roll result; a success with the spell means that the desired roll was achieved, a critical means a very good roll, a fumble means a disastrous roll, and so on. If he were a gambling type, the Dwarf could use the skill to clean up very quickly.
History: The White Dwarf hails from the Mostali nation of Greatway, to the north of Dragon Pass. He follows the heretical belief, common in Greatway, of Individualism, which states that each dwarf has individual worth, and a maker is in his or her own right, rather than being a cog in the World Machine. The White Dwarf’s own individualism has shown itself in the design of games of fantasy.

His role-playing game, Dolecheques & Demos, set in a make-believe industrial society, has gained an underground following among the individualist dwarves of Greatway, and he is wont to boast of this success to all who will listen.

G gobledigook (PA)
Normal MM goblin; Age: 15; AC6 (scruffy leathers, thick skins and hard head); HP: Alignment: Lawful Evil (when pushed); Attacks as 1-1 dice monster.
Str: 11; Int: 9; Wis: 6; Con: 15; Dex: 11; Cha: 4 (10 to goblins).
Equipment: Scruffy leathers, one weapon — either dagger, short sword, club or spiked club (as morning star). Cash: 3gp. An unremarkable denizen of some much-used underground area or another. Gobledigook can usually be found in the company of others of his kind, although he has been known to consort with a potent sorcerer named Wizlevard. For all his power, the latter seems to have miscast a find familiar spell on one occasion, as Gobledigook (himself no sorcerer) has somehow obtained a companion creature (see below). This being provides Gobledigook with only one personal advantage, and that when it is within 12" of him only (and not always then), the ability to cast ironic and despairing looks.

G gobledigook (RO)
STR: 12 Right leg (01-04) 2/5
CON: 14 Left leg (05-08) 4/6
SIZ: 7 Abdomen (09-11) 4/6
INT: 7 Chest (12) 4/6
POW: 14 Right arm (13-15) 2/4
DEX: 10 Left arm (16-18) 2/4
CHA: 10 Head (19-20) 8/5
Move: 8
Hit Points: 13
Armour: 2pt skin, 2pt furs on torso, as leather hauberck, 6pt skull.
Spells: Ironhand 2 (for headbutt).
Skills: Hide 45%, Move Quietly 35%, Ironic Looks 35%, Hobbit Cuisine 60%.
Godgift: 1 Point per round regeneration.
Heavy Mace: (1d8+2) 65%, Parry 45%, Points 20 (used 2-handed).
Headbutt: (1d6+2) 95%.
Gobledigook is a goblin [see WD47] whom the gods gifted at birth with an exceptionally robust skull and the ability to recover quickly from damage. The latter has proved more than a little useful, as the gods have done this unfortunate being few favours since. Gobledigook may be said to have a little more inclination to Chaos than most of his kind, but he is not in any sense vicious; all he wants from life is a good lunch (or three) and a little peace and quiet.
GOBBLEDIGOOK'S FAMILIAR (AD&D)  
Attacks as 1-dice monster, AC6; HP4; Alignment: Ironic Neutral; Move: 7". This small, furry, two-legged being, believed to be the result of a fumbled find spell, associates with Gobbledigook for no apparent reason, although the latter certainly does not mistrust or dislike it. Its small size and dark colour give it the stealth/hiding abilities of a 5th level thief, and it has the ability to cast ironic and despairing looks at will. If pressed, it could probably bite for 1-2 points of damage.

GOBBLEDIGOOK'S FAMILIAR (RO)  
STR: 1 Body (01-20) 1/10  
CON: 12  
INT: 8  
POW: 16  
DEX: 20  
CHA: 5  
Move: 16  
Hit Points: 10  
Armour: 1 pt fur.  
No viable attacks.  
Skills: Hide 85%, Move Quietly 90%, Danger Sense 90%, Ironic Looks 75%. (Danger Sense works like the Sense Chaos skill. On an impaling roll, the skill acts as detect danger, revealing the position of the threat.)

This associate of Gobbledigook's (not a bound spirit or anything so remarkable) seems to be a member of some unknown (and unspectacular) subterranean species. It is a carnivore - or at least a scavenger - but not dangerous. Low Cha reflects lack of impressiveness - he may be cute but he's no leader of men.

IAN LIVINGSTONE (AD&D)  
Authors' Note: We were quite prepared to present background notes and details on the character below, and our decision not to do so had nothing to do with the threat of legal action.

However, we believe that Mr Livingstone has a family somewhere, and in any case, we decided that we enjoyed living, preferably with a few royalty cheques of our own. We believe, therefore, that the statistics can be left to speak for themselves.

Level: 2 Human (?) Editor (a rare sub-class of thief); AC8 (due to thick skin).  
HP: lots; Alignment: Barwards.  
Str: 8; Int: 6 (but very cunning); Wis: 6; Dex: 20 (with autographing pen);  
Con: 13; Cha: n/a.

Equipment: Baseball bat (used as club), cap, typewriter. Cash: None (if it's his round), but lots of royalty cheques.

IAN LIVINGSTONE (RO)  
STR: 8 Right leg (01-04) 0/5  
CON: 13 Left leg (05-06) 0/5  
INT: 9 Abdomen (05-11) 0/5  
POW: 5 Right arm (13-15) 0/4  
DEX: 5 Left arm (16-18) 0/4  
CHA: n/a Head (19-20) 7/5  
Move: 5 (20 towards bar, Puffin Books, etc).  
Hit Points: 13  
Defence: 60% (due to innate evasiveness).  
Armour: 8pt skull, 1pt baseball cap.  
Spells: fix dice (see under the White Dwarf).  
Skills: Drink Liquour 20% (see under Thrud the Barbarian), Read/Write Gibberish 85%, Game Design 15%, Cast Dice 10% (see under the White Dwarf).  
Chaotic Feature: Total immunity to criticism, especially if constructive.  
Cash: Never admits to carrying any.  
Claims that his editorial staff would randomize him, but they'd more likely pay you to keep him.  
Baseball Bat: (1d8) 55%, Parry 75%. Poison Pen: 50%, splashes victim with Potency 5 Acid.

THURD THE BARBARIAN (RO)  
STR: 20 Right leg (01-04) 10/7  
CON: 18 Left leg (05-08) 10/7  
INT: 3 Chest (12) 10/8  
POW: 16 Right arm (13-15) 10/6  
DEX: 14 Left arm (16-18) 10/6  
CHA: 19 Head (19-20) 10/7  
Move: 16  
Armour: Thrud's loincloth provides a permanent shield 5. (Yes, we do know that this is impossible, but how do you think all these barbarian heroes survive when they refuse to wear armour?)  
Note: Head hit location is treated as a limb for damage purposes; it is not considered a vital hit location.

Spells: None.  
Skills: Drink Liquour 120% (see below), Move Quietly 95%, Hide in Shadow 90%, Sense Observation 95% (see below).  
Drink Liquour allows imbibing without intoxication; the roll must be made after every drink after the second. A critical roll allows the next drink to be taken without any Drink Liquour roll being required. Sense Observation skill allows the possessor to know when he or she is under observation; an impaling roll tells which direction the watcher is in.  
Great Axe (1-handed): (2d6+2+2d6) 150%, Parry 110%.  
Great Sword: (2d6+2d6) 160%, Parry 115%.  
Bite: (1d3+2d6) 250%.

Thrud is indubitably a barbarian from some distant wasteland (probably made such by himself); more than that is a matter for conjecture. Some have conjectured that he displays Chaos features, but even the most single-minded Storm Bull Rune Priests prefer to think that Chaos has more taste than that. It is known that Thrud has been on Heroquest, and thereby obtained the gift of Trollish Digestion, which means that he can eat anything without coming to harm.

Griselda and Wolfhead  
These two are, of course, more fully dealt with in the RuneQuest scenario pack The Big Rubble, and we have attempted to convert their characteristics from RuneQuest to AD&D as faithfully as possible. As powerful RuneQuest warrior-types tend to have use of a fair amount of magic, whereas high level AD&D non-magic-users tend to carry far more magical equipment than their
Much worse. If we told you the nicest
thing Agaroth has done in the last year,
doesn’t wash his hands afterwards!
Urrghh!! Just thinking about it makes us
scared to the point of vomiting.

**AGAROTH THE UNWASHED**

**Alignment:** Neutral (slight Evil tendency);
**Class:** 9th level thief; **Age:** 34;
**AC:** 3, **Move:** 8,
**Armour:** +2 Scale Armour,
**Hit Points:** 38;
**POW:** 10, **INT:** 4,
**DEX:** 11, **CHA:** 6.
**Equipment:** Thieves’Bow,
Cardigans, Sling, **Poison:**
Dust of Death.

**AGAROTH THE UNWASHED (RO)**

**Alignment:** Lawful evil;
**Class:** 9th level human fighter;
**Age:** 35; **AC:** 4;
**HP:** 70; **Ability Scores:**
**STR:** 18 Left arm (13-15) 315
**CON:** 16 Left leg (05-08) 517
**SIZ:** 13 Abdomen (09-11) 56
**INT:** 4 Chest (12) 57
**DEX:** 11 Left arm (16-18) 35
**CHA:** 6 Head (19-20) 3

**Equipment:** Footman’s Flail,
Footman’s Flail, **Spells:**
Healing, bladesharp.

**Medium Shield:** Parry 35%.
**Defence:** 20%.

**Armour:** Scale Armour with leather
sleeves and composite helm.

**Skills:** Healing, bladesharp 2,
counter-magic, befuddle, silent.

**AGAROTH THE UNWASHED**

**Alignment:** Neutral evil;
**Class:** 10th level half-orc fighter;
**Age:** 37; **AC:** 6;
**HP:** 90; **Ability Scores:**
**STR:** 18 (16-18) 315
**CON:** 16 Left leg (05-08) 517
**SIZ:** 13 Abdomen (09-11) 56
**INT:** 4 Chest (12) 57
**DEX:** 11 Left arm (16-18) 35
**CHA:** 6 Head (19-20) 3

**Equipment:** Footman’s Flail,
**Armour:** +2 Scale Armour.
**Spells:** Healing, bladesharp.

**Skills:** Parry 35%.
**Defence:** 20%.

**Armour:** Scale Armour with leather
sleeves and composite helm.

**Skills:** Healing, bladesharp 2,
counter-magic, befuddle, silent.
Divinations and the Divine

Another Look at Clerics in AD&D
by Jim Bambra

So they are seen to be a strange and bewildering breed, meeker than lambs, fiercer than lions. I do not know whether to call them monks or knights though, because both names are correct. One lacks a monk's gentleness the other a knight's pugnacity. — De Laude Novae Militae, Bernard of Clairvaux, 1128.

No party can survive long in an AD&D game that does not contain at least one cleric. Parties without a cleric tend to stagger around wounded or fall prey to life-hungry undead. But as a class clerics are not that popular, usually overlooked in favour of the more aggressive fighter, the arcane binder of magic or the skulking thief. In games where the party moves from one monster to the next a pattern of hack, slay, cure emerges, where the cleric plays the role of medic to the fighters occasionally presenting an unholy symbol to the undead. Dull stuff compared to the thrill of fighting, casting a speer or web spell or backstabbing an unsuspecting opponent. Yet this is only one approach, which curtails vast areas of the game. Far more depth and enjoyment can be had when players inject life into their characters, playing them as characters and not as themselves. For the fighter it is a fairly easy matter to be brave, magic users and illusionists can be thoughtful and mysterious while the thief can be sneaky. The cleric poses a problem to many players who have difficulty in determining how a cleric should act, yet the cleric when played properly is possibly the most interesting class to play.

From the beginning when they commence adventuring are considered to have completed some form of apprenticeship in their profession. A magic user or illusionist will have had a lengthy period of study in which the rudiments of magic will have been learnt. The thief will either have trained at a guild or picked up tricks from other thieves on the streets. Fighters will have been instructed in the use of weapons and armour. This apprenticeship prepares the characters for adventuring. The cleric receives a different form of apprenticeship. Entry into a temple or similar religious institution is essential. Here the young cleric is initiated into the temple's religion, taught the teachings of the deity and is instructed in the correct prayers and ceremonies for worship. Having become one of the faithful the cleric is made an acolyte and is able to pray for and receive first level spells.

The acolyte (1st level) upon leaving the temple is not only a priest seeking to gain wealth and power for the cause, he or she is also a warrior willing to fight and if necessary die to achieve his or her ends. The clerical class is based partly on the medieval religious orders of knighthood. The three major orders were the Knights Templars, the Knights Hospitallers and the Teutonic Knights. The Templars were formed in 1119AD as a specifically military order to protect pilgrims on the road to Jerusalem. They were a religious community under vows for forsake worldly chivalry, to live in chastity, obedience and poverty. The Templars model was later adapted by the Hospitallers and the Teutonic, both of whom had previously been concerned with healing the sick. The heroism and fanaticism of these warrior clerics is well documented. They were dedicated to their faith and rarely gave quarter to their opponents and accordingly received little themselves.

In AD&D this is reflected in the cleric's ability to wear any armour and in their fighting prowess. At first level they fight as well as a first level fighter and better than common men-at-arms. Their hit points, though not as high as fighters, are still good. The restriction on the use of magic is a disadvantage when fighting large opponents. Against small or medium ones a mage does the same average damage as a long sword - 4.5 hit points. The cleric is not a meek and mild priest but a skilled warrior with spell abilities capable of holding his or her own in a melee.

The Wandering Cleric

If clerics who leave the temple to enter the world as adventurers travel far the area where their deity is worshipped may be left behind and they will find an area where their religion is not recognised. Here, the cleric will not be so respected. Indeed, the cleric may just be another representative of one of many religions all trying to gain converts. How many deities there are is to be determined by individual DMs, either from Deities and Demigods, magazines, or created specifically for a campaign. It is important that each alignment is represented and that spheres of influence exist for Thor, God of Thunder or Loki, God of Mischief, Strife and Fire.

In AD&D religions are not often antagonistic unless they are of opposed alignments. Clerics should be willing to
work with clerics of other religions unless their views class greatly. Good clerics are unlikely to work with evil ones because there is no reason why good clerics of different alignments cannot work together for their own ends.

Wisdom
In any party clerics will tend to be the wisest members. In game terms a cleric's wisdom takes the form of extra spells, in recognition of their ability to use them wisely. High wisdom also gives increased chances of withstanding magical attacks which affect the mind. Against charms, illusions, holds, etc., a wisdom of 15 gives bonuses on saving throws.

Wisdom is also the possession of experience and knowledge coupled with the ability to use them critically or practically. It includes judgement, enlightenment, will power, wile and intuitiveness. Cleric characters should strive to portray these characteristics in play. An obvious way to do so is to follow the advice in the Players Handbook (PHB) on successful adventures.

Divinations
Divinations are useful as they provide information about the unknown. The more knowledge a party possesses the more able it is to succeed.

Grouping a party around similar beliefs helps create co-operation and trust; a group of good characters are more likely to work well together if they know that everyone is good, than if they suspect evils or neutrals amongst them. This is not to say that neutrals cannot mix with goods but that the risk is lessened if the neutrals are known. Clerics of 3rd level or higher can see what they observe, whereas characters of 1st level cannot see evil.

A Cleric's intrinsically{'s'} beliefs should be secret if they are preaching the beliefs of their religion so the cleric should acquaint his or herself with the beliefs of their religion so the cleric can know their religion, a warrior fighting for his or her own ends.

A Growing Religion
For the cleric determined to increase the power of his or her religion the obvious course is to gather acolytes around him or herself, the sooner the better. As the rules stand this poses a problem. In order for the cleric to gather acolytes he or she needs to advertise for henchmen around a town or city just as any other characters do. But what good reason is there for ill equipped acolytes to be wandering away from the temple. Most acolytes that leave (apart from player characters) will be sent out with an express purpose in mind. What would be more realistic is for the cleric to return to the home temple after proving himself or herself successful and request of the High Priestess or Priest that he or she be allowed to oversee the development of some young acolytes. Money payments to the temple can be made commensurate with the costs of finding and hiring henchmen. A restriction can be put on the number of acolytes available as these will not be unlimited. Remember, although the first level, acolytes have already undergone a period of training and initiation into the religion, a process that takes years.

The cleric calling personally at the temple for acolytes should be subject to reaction throws, clerics with low charisma may well be ignored or where to go when they come calling. This system provides a more logical placement of potential clerical henchmen without altering the balance of the game. It does not mean that wandering acolytes will not exist, only they will be in a minority.

Choosing the Path
This article is not intended as an inflexible guide for clerics. Just how far these suggestions are taken will depend on the deity being worshipped and the goddesses which comprise a pantheon. The cleric should know what their deity stands for and define for themselves how they believe it.}

More to be played to full potential the cleric should be able to do this in a safe and satisfactory manner. The cleric of his or her deity stands for and define for themselves how they believe it. The deity being worshipped and the goddesses which comprise a pantheon. The cleric should know what their deity stands for and define for themselves how they believe it.
The WATCHERS of WALBERSWICK

A Call of Cthulhu Adventure for Inexperienced to Intermediate Investigators, set in England, 1934
by Jon Sutherland

Investigators' Information

The players are all associates of the Bedford Archaeological Research Society (henceforth BARS). The Society has been in existence for some five years and has had signal successes on the Ivory Coast, Mexico and Turkey. The investigators are hoping to become full members and obtain places on the Society's biggest expedition to date; an extended visit to Peru. The players are asked to attend a briefing in the Society lounge by J A D'Arcy BA (Hons).

The Briefing. Professor Oliver Wayland (attached to the Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, London University), a BARS member, was recently looking for a comfortable cottage to slip away to. Whilst staying at the Coach and Horses, Walberswick, he visited a much forgotten local museum in the village. Amongst the impedimentia of the farming community, a small, but impressive collection of rocks and fossils caught his attention. He was particularly intrigued by a bone, which appeared to be from some creature's leg. Baffled and annoyed, he could not readily identify the bone. Staying only over the weekend at the village he had no time to enquire as to the supposed nature of the bone. The curator was something of an abrasive old lady who could not or would not assist the professor in his search. D'Arcy believes it is probably nothing special and in his opinion should not take more than a couple of days to sort out. He gives the group train timetables, and says that rooms have been booked in the Coach and Horses. He reminds the group that they are being judged for their merits in this and that a speedy conclusion will bode well when the selection panel meets to decide the Peruvian trip.

Keepers' Information

The bone itself is the foreleg of a Deep One, found by Reginald Kreigh, now quite mad after two encounters with the aforementioned beasts. Successful detective work will lead the investigators to the discovery of a lair of Deep Ones in the process of abandonment. The death and subsequent property disposal of the owner of Great Dingle Farm, in fact a Deep One, after the creature had been carried away by them for breeding purposes, caused awkward problems for the settlement. Simon Franklin (deceased) had owned land near Walberswick and had left it untouched in order to prevent any building near the Old Town Marshes. Through this route the Deep Ones and their offspring were able to emerge. Some thirty years ago, the Deep Ones home had suffered an unfortunate accident when a fishing trawler ran aground on the sand bank of the coast and ruptured the roof of their caves. The underground system was all but submerged in water. Whilst repairing, some friends stumbled upon a boot that the creature had used to fight off a Deep One, and finally the bone appeared in the museum, forgotten and now unimportant.

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An attempt was made to silence Reggie's ravings, but a harmless nut is not really a threat. Then the Franklin's heirs purchased the property purchased by the County Council, threatening the safety of the group. Hence the decision to abandon.

General Information

Population of Walberswick: 150 approx. All buildings are of typical period design; mostly simple structures, of between 10-80 years old.

1. Stonehouse Museum. Large three story building with courtyard to rear and east. The yard is littered with old rusty ploughs and suchlike, nothing of any note. The museum is locked and always locked. By ringing at the bell, Miss Caroline Eccles, the curator, will brusquely ask the player's business. She will let them in and disappear into her private rooms telling them to knock when finished. She will say she is too busy to help. A tedious look at the exhibits will lead the players to the second floor where they will find the Fossils and Rocks section, and the bone box sits with several items of no interest. A card says it was presented to the Museum by Colonel C H G Swann, dated 9th December 1922. Miss Eccles will allow a closer inspection of the bone if pressed and a successful Palaeontology roll will indicate that this is indeed from no known species. Another successful roll will reveal that the creature was about 5½ feet tall. Closer examination requiring a sample and ½ man day tests with microscope and chemistry skills will conclude that the creature died approximately 40 years ago. If the book department is viewed then a library use roll is required to find the local Gazette. Dated June 1892. TRAWLER RUNS AGROUND ON FRERES BANK. Small fishing vessel stuck on sand bank. Harry Cripps the captain sustained a broken leg. Three ships from Southwold needed to tow her to safety of the River Blyth. One of the crew who was on watch at the time states that his afternoon tea was caught by a large fish heading away from land.

2. Southwold Gazette. Dated July 2nd, 1892. FISHING TRIPPERS ATTACKED BY UNKNOWN ASSAILANTS. The Saucy Lass a Walberswick registered 18 footer owned by Lows Boat Yard, and chartered by 4 Southwold clients was allegedly attacked by reptiles of Freres Bank yesterday. The crew claimed to have had a terrifying encounter with these creatures again 2 days before and was so frightened that he has not spoken to a living soul. I believe the poor man to be quite mad and have encouraged him to seek medical as well as spiritual assistance.

3. Coach and Horses Public House. The proprietor, Mr Mcbrair, is friendly enough. The investigator's have comfortable rooms on the 2nd floor which are sparsely furnished but adequate. They can obtain cooked meals and out of hours drink readily. The staff consists of his wife Margaret, a part time bar man and two local women who act as cook and chamber maid.
4. P C Bertram’s House/Police Station. A typical bicycle-riding village bobby. Known locally as ‘Tubby’, this portly soul is painfully straightforward and honest. He does everything by the book. A successful Fast Talk roll will convince him to let you have a look at his files and arrest records.

1. R Kreigh – drunk and disorderly July 8th 1892, August 1894, February 1897.
2. Person missing, 3 residents of Southwold (Southwold police have details). Dated July 5th 1892.
3. Southwold Times and Shop. Mr Farrell is editor and owner and will be only too pleased to allow you to look at the back issues of his paper (formerly The Southwold Gazette). See Stonehouse Museum library information for details after a successful Library roll.

6. Doctor Winstanley’s House and Surgery. The Doctor inherited the practice from his father, the late R Winstanley. They were very similar in aspect and appearance. If talked to, the following may be divulged:

Colonel Swann. Death certificate, died natural causes 9th December 1922. The doctor will add that Swann was the owner of Great Dingle Farm and several notable houses and sites in the area.

After his death, having no children, the estate was run by executors for four years until a gentleman named Simon Franklin successfully produced documents to support his claim as a long lost son. The mother had disappeared some thirty years ago after having been spurned by the Colonel.

R Kreigh. Numerous entries for minor ailments. Also contained are details of Kreigh’s committal papers to the Bulchamp Asylum. Dated July 10th 1892. Released August 1894. His paranoia had improved to such an extent that the authorities decided he would be better more than a nuisance when released. He has been philanthropically seen to by both the father and son of this practice.

7. Lows Fishing Tackle and Boat Hire. Peter Low owns the boatyard situated in the small inlet off the River Blyth. His operation is a ramshackle affair but obviously successful; it is very popular with local anglers. The investigators may hire a vessel from this establishment. A successful bribe and Fast Talk will induce him to show you his records, when the company was run by his father.

The Saucy Lass. Booked out to four Southwold men, one of which was R Kreigh. The vessel went missing, indeed no trace has ever been found, nor of the people onboard except R Kreigh.
8. Matthew Steddon House. Matthew Steddon is Reggie's nephew. He thinks his uncle is raving mad, but looks after him as best he can. Matt is unemployed and he will be at home most of the time making nets to sell to Lows. He will tell the investigators to leave his uncle alone. A Fast Talk and assurance that no harm is meant to Reggie will induce him to tell the players where Reggie lives. He prefers not to believe Reggie's story.

9. Mrs Keble's. In the midst of boring trivial gossip Mrs Keble will tell the following:

1. Reginald Kreigh (Reggie) lives in Walberswick. 2. Colonel Swann's son acquired several acres of land near the village, all of which has been compulsorily purchased by the County Council since. 3. Reggio and his friend from Southwold asked me a lot of questions until they read this paper saying I was mad. They packed me off to the Bulchamp asylum. I got out in 94. I still watch for them, you know, and sometimes I see a light out near the bank, but I'm not sure. Anyway no-one believes me.'

Keepers' Guide

Reggie should be hard to find, at first. There should be a 25% chance that any inhabitants will refer to Reggie. The Deep One's caverns are in the process of being abandoned, since the impending building of houses on the Franklin land. The population has not grown amongst the Deep Ones to any extent. At any time there may be 2-10 creatures in the caverns. Dagon (the God of the Deep Ones) has decreed that they withdraw from the area; they have been tardy and for each day, after the first two there is a 15% chance they may be deserted for good, rising to a 60% chance after 10 days. If they have spent any time down the Dunwich River, their weapons and gear will be left behind them in the caverns relatively dry. The remains of the rest of the ship can be found as timber supports holding up the cave roof in the rickety places.

If the investigators go into the caverns with a view to destroying or defiling the caverns, the Deep Ones will fight back—otherwise the Deep Ones will just try to escape, as they feel outnumbered.

Concluding the Scenario

The investigators should succeed if they can obtain positive proof of the nature of the being. This could mean the capture, dead or alive, of a Deep One, or perhaps a photograph. If the investigators go too far up a blind alley then a direct mention that R Kreigh and Reggie are one and the same will help. It should be noted that the village is close knit and protective, even extending its hand to the outcasts filthy Deep Ones whenever they are roused. If the investigators try to get to Dingle Hill and then into the marshes where he will lose Reggie are one and the same will help. It should be noted that the village is close knit and protective, even extending its hand to the outcast Reggie if he is roughly treated in any way.

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RuneQuest is a regular column for RuneQuest, edited by Oliver Dickinson. This issue, machines in RuneQuest.

**RUNEQUEST HARDWARE**

by Dean Aston

The Mostali are the major machine-users in Glorantha, and display considerable hostility to members of any other race (normally the human) who become too scientific or technologically inventive [See Different Worlds 24], but they are unlikely to object to simple devices such as those suggested by Dean.

The Hollow Panel Detector. A 30 x 20 x 10cm wooden box, with a very basic clockwork system producing a steady clicking sound. The box is held firmly against a wall - or a floor-panel; if the panel on which the instrument is placed is hollow, the pitch of the clicking will change. Its use is limited to wood, metal, or stone less than 7½cm (3") thick, and is intended to supplement Spot Hidden or Spot Trap against such panels only. GM's should decide on the exact advantages and limitations; as a rough guide: These machines are made with half Lock-Making skill. Someone skilled in their use gains +50% to Spot Hidden, someone who has only general knowledge of them gains +20%. Their cost is 400L, their ENC 2 (Possibly slightly high, but they are quite bulky. I would expect Lanbril cultists to have access to this device, [see Pavis: Common Knowledge pg 33-4] - OD).

The Potion Tester. A collection of specially treated substances used to determine potion-types. It consists of a wooden container holding 12 'weights' on a string, 4 of which are bronze, 4 skin and blood, and 4 plant and animal mixtures, all treated. Each weight is usable once only, and they are too small to be cut in half by inventive adventurers! After 2 months they are 20% likely to give incorrect results due to spoiling, the likelihood increasing by 20% more for every further 2 months unused. PC's must either be able to read the instructions, or get someone to read them. The bronze weights give off bubbles and a hissing sound when placed in acid of potency 6 or more, 95% of the time; they work in acid of potency 3,70%, in potency 4,45%, and in potency 3,20% of the time. No indication of the potency is given, and they do not work at all in acid of potency 1-2 or any other liquid.

The skin and blood weights go black 95% of the time when placed in Blade Venom of potency 6 or more, and work on lesser potencies to the same degree as the bronze weights. The plant and mineral weights react with Manticores, Wyverns, or Spider poison by dissolving; again, this works 95% of the time (potency 4 - 60%, potency 3 - 30%), and grey in mineral poison on the same pattern. The taster costs 200L and is 1 ENC.

The Ear Trumpet. Used to aid the Listen skill; it is merely a wide cone whose narrow end is placed in the ear. The usual sort is bent and 30cm long, with a 20cm opening, and adds 20% to the Listen skill. (I would not have thought so much, at least in the open air, but I've never used one - OD). Its cost is 15-20L and ENC ½.

Thieves' Fingers. These are thin metal or wooden flats about 15cm long; one is tied to the fore and middle fingers, and one to the thumb. They increase the chance of a successful Pickpocketing and lessen danger from booby-trapped pockets. The increase in Pickpocketing skill is about 15%, but the user must at some time have paid for a 5% increase in the skill while using the device; once this familiarity with it has been established, it need never be renewed. The cost is 10L, plus the cost of this training, and the ENC of the two objects is ¼.

Excitedly, Wulfric Stormrider pulled back, removing the Ear Trumpet from the door. 'Definitely sounds like the vile chattering of Chaos to me, lads. Right, let's get in there and SMASH!'

Magic Talisman. This is a small but thick talisman of metal with a gold-coloured engraving and a very prominent button on the front, with a red cloth heart stuck on the back. When the button is pressed, whether the incantation on the front is read or not, a powerful spring sends a dart out of a hole in the back (covered by the cloth heart). Anyone wearing the talisman will take 1d6 damage if the machine works; roll d100 against the Lock-making skill of the person who made it. Alternatively, if someone knows about its properties, they can use it as a last defence, after rolling to see whether it works, tests the Crossbow ability of the person using it, and if both succeed roll damage at 1/4 (not 1d6). The range is 10m, the cost about 250L and the ENC ½; the inscription on the front reads, 'Press and shout to the spirit, Lightning strike my enemies'.

The Nunchaka. (The nunchaka is a weapon rather than a device, but only one familiar with the object will recognize it as such. Anyway, this seems an appropriate place to present Andrew Brice's adaption of it to RQ - OD). If the nunchaka is Crush hit that is parried, it curls around the defending weapon and scores a normal damage hit, but does not become entangled. It cannot do this to shields. If an opponent attacks with a fist or dagger, or something of similar size (eg a broken bottle), and is parried, an entangle may be attempted, which will succeed on a roll of attack percentage. The wrist is caught and 1d6 - 2 + any damage bonus is instantly inflicted on the arm, and repeated each round thereafter. Plate will prevent this damage 50% of the time (no more because plate does not cover much of the wrist), all other armour is ineffective. If a kick is similarly caught the damage is inflicted on the leg and the attacker automatically falls. If an attacker uses a hafted weapon and is parried, an entangle may be attempted on the weapon; if it is successful the nunchaka-user may immediately execute a kick. (These entangle attacks may only be attempted if the user has an attack remaining). On the next round the nunchaka-user may do one of the following: 1. Try to pull the attacker's weapon from his/her hand, on a successful STR v STR roll. 2. Make another kick attack. 3. Release the weapon and make a nunchaka attack. The attacker cannot use the freed weapon this round, but may do one of the following: try to free the weapon (requiring STR v STR); make a kick attack; release the weapon and draw another; use a weapon held in the free hand.

Because of its high speed a hand-block to the nunchaka means that damage is inflicted on the arm of the blocker, but it does not damage a blocking weapon. As a weapon the nunchaka should not be very common, even in an Oriental milieu. Masters of its use should be even more rare, and training might only be available from Oriental-style cults or monasteries.
Last issue took the players to the gates of the City of Tirandor. Now Part 2 of this AD&D scenario continues exactly where Part 1 left off. This adventure can only be played after Part 1, in WD49.

The Key of TIRANDOR

Part 2: Inside the Lost City by Mike Polling

OUTSIDE THE CITY

Standing in front of the gates are the Guardians of the City, established here while Tirandor was still a great power, to prevent anyone from entering who does not know the correct way. Only Bitranthaa is left who still knows the correct way. There is no other way in except through this gate.

The Guardians are totally and utterly impervious to all magic of any kind whatsoever, even to Bitranthaa’s illusions. He, of course, is not bothered by them; he never leaves Tirandor, and even if he did he would know the correct way to re-enter – in fact they perform a pretty useful service for him – always assuming that anyone could ever get this far.

GUARDIANS OF THE CITY

Armour Class: 2
Move: 12
Hit Dice: 9
Attack: 1 for 1-12 +5
Magic Resistance: 100%
Intelligence: Average

Guardians are 9’ tall and wear black armour. Their faces are hidden in the shadows of their great helms. They wield two-handed broadswords in one hand, a large shield in the other. Although impervious to all magical attack, this does not mean that players cannot use whatever magical defences against physical attack they may possess. The Guardians can see invisible beings. They always wait to be attacked, or at least for someone to attempt to open the gates – which in itself constitutes an attack in their eyes. They never sleep. They do not speak and will not kill unless by accident – ie although not trying to kill they won’t soften their attack or their blows in combat. If they put someone down, they will allow his companions to take him away. They fight one-to-one: two of them will never attack a single enemy. To one side of the Guardians, but behind them, lies a pile of treasure which has been taken from those who have tried to get through before and have died in the attempt. A picturesque little pile of human bones is scattered around on the ground before the Gate. Treasure: 28000gps; 462506ps; 18 pieces of jewellry, values (in gps): 1200; 2110; 3260; 50; 280; 30; 7700; 1320; 50; 30; 4000; 5280; 130; 90; 420; 50; 8300. Complete set of +2 Armour, +5 Battleaxe, Scarab of Death.

INSIDE THE CITY

After the party has killed the Guardians, at a touch of the (still incomplete) Key the doors will open silently and remain forever open. Revealed to their wondering eyes is a majestic and beautiful city, with gleaming towers that seem to touch the sky. It is entirely white, pure white. Its numerous inhabitants are wandering about their daily business almost noiselessly, and do not seem in the least interested in the party. They are all remarkably beautiful people. There are shops and taverns, and the party may do as they wish – provision themselves, have a drink in a tavern, etc. The inhabitants will serve them, speak pleasantly to them; nowhere are there any signs of violence or disorder. Everything is peaceful, it seems a 'haven of tranquillity'. The inhabitants will talk about anything the players care to talk to them about – but any attempt to question them on history or on the subject of their quest will result in vague, imprecise answers that get them nowhere. The general attitude conveyed by these people is that nothing much matters, certainly not those subjects in which the party is most interested. In fact, they are all illusions, souls that Bitranthaa has trapped in the same way as he did those of the Anak. Any food or refreshment the party takes is absorbed, they are in the city, and so are caught up in the illusion. There is no such thing as money here; everyone takes whatever he wants, and no-one minds. The people are peaceful, and they don’t question anything. They believe that they are ruled by the Prince, although they’ve never seen him, and they know he lives in the Palace, although they don’t know where it is. Any character who flies up into the air will only see the city all around him, everywhere nearly the same. No sign of the Palace – and no signs of the Walls or the Gates, which the players will not be able to find again if they wander away from them. If asked questions they can’t answer, the inhabitants will be mildly interested in the problem, but not really concerned. They may be attacked and killed without offering any resistance; if wounded, they will still remain quietly friendly with their attackers. When killed, gratitude and relief can be seen on their faces. At some point, a messenger with flowing grey hair and white robes will come to find them. He tells them that the Prince of Tirandor has heard of their entry into the city and would wish to speak with them. They can of course refuse to go, and the messenger will not press them. Periodically he will return and repeat the invitation.
Eventually, of course, they will accept—there's nothing else for them to do. The Prince lives in a huge mansion named Palace of Unearthly Beauty—the sort of beauty one only ever dreams of. There is a lavishly arranged and courteous ceremony by the Prince himself, who shows them to some rooms and orders some sort of a wake to be put on.

The Prince is Bitranthaa's idealized projection of himself in this fantasy world, and that is what it is. The whole of Tirandor, as the players see it, is illusion—caught up by Bitranthaa's skillfully powerdreaming mind. It is the only way he has been able to fulfill his (originally sane) wish to recreate Tirandor, and the Prince is his dream-image of himself.

The Prince

28th Level MU/17th Level Fighter
AC4, HP195, Alignment: Neutral Evil
Str 18(00); Int 18; Wis 10; Con 18; Dex 18; Cha 18.

Spells: He can produce any spell-effect he wants in Tirandor, because all are illusions created at his whim.

Bitranthaa will make no reference to illusions or dreams—if questioned on this point he will reply as if it is all real (which in a sense, it is). He will point out everything that has happened to them since they entered the swamps—the exception with Arovandiel was made during the Anakatemple (Part 1). He is unaware of his lack of knowledge. He will impart its importance as possible about anything.

The Prince could obviously kill them all, but he is mad and will toy with them for minutes on end, causing walls to warp into grasping hands, the air to swim in hypnotic patterns, etc, if they attack him at once. He will then stop, or surrender, if he feels his control is threatened. He will ask them what is going on, but if no answer is forthcoming, he will say, "Thou art my prisoner, and I will take care of thee.

7. An empty room, from which can be heard the sound of a voice laughing non-stop.

8. A huge, dimly lit room containing hundreds of beautiful, scantily-clad women, all sleeping.

9. A room swirling with freezing mists. As they part briefly, two figures can be seen half-frozen into a block of ice. One of the figures has his teeth buried in the other's neck and is gnawing away. The second figure is also alive. Finally they round a corner to find themselves faced with a huge fractured mirror, which reflects a horribly distorted and fragmented picture of themselves.

None of the doors can be opened by any means whatsoever. As the players wander down the corridors, they can hear the constant babble of many voices, at different pitches and intensities, making no sense whatsoever. (If the players later ask the question "What is all this?", he will simply flitily deny any knowledge of the rooms.) With each scene, the players should be given the feeling that somehow, deep down, they recognize what they are seeing. The overall effect is that of fact fragments of the mad Bitranthaa's shattered psyche.

After wandering for an indeterminate period, the players turn a corner and find themselves back at their rooms. They will not be able to find where they were; they will be able to locate only the walls they are facing, and they will find that the walls they were facing have just come from. In effect, what has happened is that Bitranthaa has just remembered them. Outside the rooms, a messenger is waiting to take them into dinner.

During the meal, they are entertained by a series of remarkable illusions: the area enclosed by the tables becomes a green field, and flowers of unparalleled beauty, of unknown species, burst into life. The sky is a rich blue, and many snow-white clouds drift slowly across it. The table is filled with foods that are refreshingly spring-up—they can even see a blue sky with white clouds and feel the warmth of the sun and the cool breeze of the wind. The food tastes absolutely deliciously.

A vine grows up out of the ground. A castle appears in the distance, etc. When the players pass from one illusion to another, they are able to move through it with the ease, sweating, biting his lip, frowning, looking bewildered. All once the hunt fades away, and we can see the castle again. Everything is unnaturally still, claustrophobic. The gates of the castle swing slowly shut, and the figure on horseback issues forth. He moves closer and closer, and everything becomes darker and darker. The Prince by now looks really worried. No-one can move.

When the rider gets close enough, he is a huge warrior, on a huge horse, armed entirely in black, as is his horse, the Prince jumps up with a start. A door appears next to him, and he rushes through; as soon as he is through, the door vanishes again. Nothing else has happened, as has the room and the palace they were in, instead they are in a countryside watching the rider approach.

The illusions are created by the Prince Bitranthaa and were destined to kill the party in an entertaining fashion. The trouble is that Bitranthaa, although to a great measure in control of the illusions he creates is still not in complete control. No-one can control the Prince, and it is as Bitranthaa is finding to his cost, for there are always impulses hidden somewhere that the Prince is aware of, let alone able to control. Bitranthaa's dream of power has tilted him towards insanity. Originally it was a fine and noble dream: he wished to have complete power because he felt that he would be able to rule the world wisely and benevolently. He did not want it for himself, but for what it could bring mankind. Such power and rule was ethically correct for one man. He became unable to distinguish means from ends, last sight of his original purpose, until power became its own end. He was unable to find a reason for this, no motive, no cause, no reason for anything, and finally in despair abandoned reason altogether. He has already reached the stage of being unable to distinguish truth and illusion, reality and dream. Parallel with this is a grotesque deterioration of his illusions, his dreams; different feelings are splitting away from each other and from him, are assuming different and independent beings, almost personalities—except that genuine personality.
The Key of Tirandor

is composed of all the disparate fragments united. He is literally 'falling apart'.

The dream originally involved the controlled use of destructive impulses; the control rapidly gave way; finally it became combined with a deep-seated self-destructive urge. What is left of his rational mind—his 'soul'—longs for death; his instinctive self loathes it and runs from it. The Black Rider is the combination of the destructive and self-destructive urges—and although it is not of course the whole lot, merely one manifestation. These can only finally die with Bitranthas. So, the Black Rider, embodying as it does these urges, is out to get anything and everything. The players, incidentally, are now inside Bitranthas's subconscious mind.

The Black Rider

Armour Class: -1
Movement: 12*
Hit Dice: 86 points (15th level fighter)
Attack: 1 for 3-4 - 4
Magic Resistance: 50%
Intelligence: Very
Alignment: Chaotic evil

The 12ft tall Black Rider can see invisible beings—in fact he is aware of their presence even if they are behind him. His weapon is a battleaxe which he wields in one hand while carrying a massive shield in the other. His horse is an appropriate size; it can't be wounded or damaged by anything. The Black Rider can be wounded; but although he takes damage, it never looks as if he's hurt until he finally dies.

When defeated, he and his horse will simply vanish. Lying on the ground at the spot where the Black Rider disappeared is a small metal cylinder, pointed at one end; the other end fits neatly into the rest of the Key. It is the final piece: the Key of Tirandor is now complete.

The Fortress of Dreams

There is only one direction, now: towards the castle. As they move on, the landscape around them slowly shifts and changes. Now they are in a region of darkness and chaos, a dismal forest valley near a dark and gloomy lake. The castle lies before them. When they are quite close, they can see a pair of huge and intricate gates, behind which is a huge tree, reaching up so far that they cannot see its top. The gates will not open unless the bearer of the Key approaches them; then they will swing open quite easily. Through the gates is a courtyard, where there are vast numbers of people, all deformed in some way, some lacking limbs, some lacking heads, twisted and writhing, and all in great distress, moaning and groaning, but soundlessly. All that can be heard is a sound as of rustling leaves. To one side of these bodies is a huge loom, abandoned, decayed.

The door to the castle is open. Everything is old and decayed, abandoned, but was once obviously of very great beauty. After much wandering through dark and deserted corridors they finally come to a large room which is all well, with lurid red flames from smoking braziers. All round, on the walls, are grotesque and distorted pictures of lashing, grinning creatures, all basically human and yet quite obviously not. In the centre of the room is a crystal with a sleeping form inside it—an old, grey-haired man. Standing in front of the Prince who gave them dinner.

He laughs somewhat insanely; and congratulates them for having got so far. He explains that now, unfortunately, he is going to capture their souls, and subject them to an infinity of torment. He points out that the figures they saw in the courtyard are spirits he has previously enslaved. He explains that the sleeping figure in the crystal coffin is Bitranthas, that he is extending his domain into the real world and will soon subjugate it. He further tells them that he is the 'Guardian of Bitranthas's sleep'.

Nothing the players do will have any real effect upon the Prince. He will hurl illusions at the players, and here your own imagination should come into play. He can warp the scenery, the surroundings, to be anything at all; but at all times, he remains in front of the crystal coffin. The illusions he throws at the players are easily dispelled; a wave of the hand will cause them to melt away. Sword-blows will feel as if they are cutting through empty air, and will dissolve several illusory beings at once; but they come on in vast and overwhelming waves. Each time a player is touched, he loses a point of Constitution; if anyone gets down to 0, he's permanently destroyed, and his spirit joins those in the courtyard. It is at this point that Kastarys should remember the rune he traced in the Anak temple (last issue). If he doesn't remember it, a timely reminder—just at the last moment— would not be out of place. Bear in mind that the last moment need not be Kastarys's; he should really 'remember' the rune before anyone is entirely destroyed.

When Kastarys traces this rune—on a solid surface, in the air— his finger leaves a trace of fiery green behind it. The Rune expands, tearing an ever-widening rent in the fabric of the dream, letting reality appear through it, until the dream they are in dissolves completely. As it does so, the Prince falls back with a horrible cry as he, too, is torn asunder by the Rune.

The characters find themselves standing in the ruins of Tirandor, and the Prince takes hold. This has a sign of the walls or the people—just piles of rubble with occasional chunks of cracking masonry. A wind whips at their clothes and hair, raising clouds of dust. Nothing else remains of the city in front of them. At the same distance as it was in the dream, is the crystal coffin. But now it is huge—20' long and 10' broad. And it has been smashed open by some huge force and is quite empty. About a 200 yards away is a monstrous figure, its back to them. This is the Overlord.

The Overlord is Bitranthas as he is now, his physical degeneration matching that of his mental and moral faculties. He is completely insane—to the extent that he behaves now like a mindless, enraged beast. 30ft tall, its abdome and legs appear to be made of solid metal; its left hand is apparently made of the same metal, and terminates in three silver claws in the place of fingers. Its left arm and chest are covered in revolting greyish-black fur. It has pointed ears and slitted black-rimmed eyes with no pupils; its greasy, revolting hair ends in a barbarian pigtail. The effect is at once disgusting and terrifying; it acts as a fear spell (opponents save at +3—one save required). He can be hit only by +1 weapons or better. He can see invisible beings; his hands hit like magic weapons (+4) and he can throw rocks and debris 10' for 3-30 points of damage. He contains within him immense magical power—particularly now that the dream has been smashed, and he no longer needs to use most of his magic sustaining it. Owing to his madness, however, he is not capable of actually performing the procedures required to cast a spell. Instead, he releases this magical potential in the form of bolts of pure energy which leap from his hands. In effect, treat these as lightning bolts; he can cast these any time he likes, as a 12th Level MU.

This being spends some time wandering round blasting the...
Ahead of them they see what Yrgael, the dragon, stares through, after which the Key has felt a moment like unblinkingly ahead of the party. The one with the Key must place it in the stream. The firestorm will destroy the players one by one and running through, the first has already vanished. If the player tries to tell any of them anything else, the spell will prevent anyone from understanding. Yrgael finds himself standing directly in front of a gate which has itself come through— which has itself come through— which has itself come through. If this is done correctly, a great wind will come, and lightning will shoot down from the skies, appearing to set everything on fire. It will be like a holocaust and last but a moment; no-one will be harmed. When the firestorm clears, Yrgael will rise up on his wings.

In order to free him, the spell on the amulet from Tirandor must be recited, with the appropriate words filled in. If this is done correctly, a great wind will come, and lightning will shoot down from the skies, appearing to set everything on fire. It will be like a holocaust and last but a moment; no-one will be harmed. When the firestorm clears, Yrgael will rise up on his wings.

If they look closely enough, they will see that Yrgael’s feet are buried in earth, and that his tail disappears into the water of the stream. The firestorm will destroy the stream.

During the holocaust, the one who has pronounced the spell (or the one who solved the problem if it is not the same person) will feel a mental bond with Yrgael, which he senses will never dissolve. What this means is that very occasionally Yrgael will provide useful information telepathically. If he is attacked, he will not bear a grudge, for he knows how stupid human beings are.

### Yrgael

**Armour Class:** 5

**Hit Dice:** (from 20 dice) 3 for 10/1-3/36

**Magic Resistance:** 95%

**Intelligence:** Far higher than mere human

**Genius Neutral**

In his present condition—protecting himself magically, and protected by immensely powerful spells Bitranthaa wove eons ago, and further protected by the power he is guarding, nothing whatsoever can injure him or affect him in any way. He was captured by Bitranthaa long ages ago, and set here to kill anyone who came near the power. However, Yrgael has decided himself from this power to the extent that he no longer has to kill anyone, and so he waits here for the day when someone will come and free him.

In order to free him, the spell on the amulet from Tirandor must be recited, with the appropriate words filled in. If this is done correctly, a great wind will come, and lightning will shoot down from the skies, appearing to set everything on fire. It will be like a holocaust and last but a moment; no-one will be harmed. When the firestorm clears, Yrgael will rise up on his wings. 

If they look closely enough, they will see that Yrgael’s feet are buried in earth, and that his tail disappears into the water of the stream. The firestorm will destroy the stream.

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**Vesa**

**Armour Class:** 4

**Hit Dice:** (from 20 dice) 5 for 180/HP

**Magic Resistance:** 90%

**Intelligence:** Far higher than mere human

**Genius Neutral**

Vesa has been a close companion of Bitranthaa for ages. He is an ancient being of immense power rather like some traditional Chinese mythological dragons. He will not attack them, and he cannot be killed. If he is attacked, he will not bear a grudge, for he knows how stupid human beings are.

Vesa has been a close companion of Bitranthaa for ages. He is an ancient being of immense power rather like some traditional Chinese mythological dragons. He will not attack them, and he cannot be killed. If he is attacked, he will not bear a grudge, for he knows how stupid human beings are.

**Sark**

**Armour Class:** 4

**Hit Dice:** (from 20 dice) 6 for 150/H有条件

**Magic Resistance:** 95%

**Intelligence:** Far higher than mere human

**Genius Neutral**

Sark has been a close companion of Bitranthaa for ages. He is an ancient being of immense power rather like some traditional Chinese mythological dragons. He will not attack them, and he cannot be killed. If he is attacked, he will not bear a grudge, for he knows how stupid human beings are.

Sark has been a close companion of Bitranthaa for ages. He is an ancient being of immense power rather like some traditional Chinese mythological dragons. He will not attack them, and he cannot be killed. If he is attacked, he will not bear a grudge, for he knows how stupid human beings are.

The Real Challenge comes from the unknown, from the fact that Bitranthaa bound him there through a mental bond lasting for great power he must reject all the ways. But the original spell retained its power, and that was the ways would never be revealed until the dragon was released.

Any explanation that the players want about anything that has happened so far will be provided by Yrgael—but he won’t tell them of anything else, because he can lie about what lies before them.

The player who has the link with Yrgael finds himself standing directly in front of a gate which has just blackness beyond. He must step through this gate. The others can be seen standing below him, where the dragon was, looking up at him. Whether or not he waits for them, only one can step through at a time; and by the time the second has stepped through, the first has already completed the whole thing. From now on, everything is done individually; the DM taking aside the player by one and running them through the path to the power of Tirandor.

### The Eight Paths of Life and the Way of Death

Once through the Gate, the player finds himself in a large circular room with no roof; above his head he can see the stars. Surrounding him are eight gateways— one for each of the eight gates are not given— because they must be adapted to the individual character. In each case, the character should be given a reasonable fight— it shouldn’t be too tough. The real challenge comes from those who choose the Ninth Gate. Clockwise starting from the east:

1. **The Path of Wealth.** The player looking at the beautiful and intricate carvings around this gate feels the immense attraction of money, can see all the power and all the luxury that money can bring. Passing through this Gate the player finds himself in a huge palace of blue marble with limitless wealth. Facing him over the treasure is a golden giant, who must be killed. This Giant will also tell the players that others that will be found behind the other gate, must be worked out to match the player.

2. **The Path of Love.** The player looking at the pictures and carvings round the gate feels the power of love, the attraction of the opposite sex, all ready to obey; maximum, and has a 98% chance of being surrounded by hundreds of the most attractive members of the opposite sex, all ready to obey the player. If the player chooses this path, he will pass through the door and enter his own room in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

3. **The Path of Ease.** Player looking at the carvings and paintings feels attraction of life and peace, undisturbed by anything. Has money, can see all the power and all the luxury that money can bring. Passing through this Gate the player finds himself with a hermaphrodite to fight. If victorious, he passes through the door at the end of the room and emerges into his own rooms in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

4. **The Path of Might.** The player looking at the pictures and carvings round the gate feels the immense attraction of power, can see all the power and all the luxury that money can bring. Passing through this Gate the player finds himself bound with a hermaphrodite to fight. If victorious, he passes through the door at the end of the room and emerges into his own rooms in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

5. **The Path of Greatness.** Player looking at the carvings and paintings feels attraction of the opposite sex, all ready to obey; maximum, and has a 98% chance of being surrounded by hundreds of the most attractive members of the opposite sex, all ready to obey the player. If the player chooses this path, he will pass through the door and enter his own room in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

6. **The Path of Wisdom.** Player looking at the carvings and paintings feels attraction of the opposite sex, all ready to obey; maximum, and has a 98% chance of being surrounded by hundreds of the most attractive members of the opposite sex, all ready to obey the player. If the player chooses this path, he will pass through the door and enter his own room in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

7. **The Path of Fortune.** Player looking at the carvings and paintings feels attraction of the opposite sex, all ready to obey; maximum, and has a 98% chance of being surrounded by hundreds of the most attractive members of the opposite sex, all ready to obey the player. If the player chooses this path, he will pass through the door and enter his own room in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

8. **The Path of Power.** Player looking at the carvings and paintings feels attraction of the opposite sex, all ready to obey; maximum, and has a 98% chance of being surrounded by hundreds of the most attractive members of the opposite sex, all ready to obey the player. If the player chooses this path, he will pass through the door and enter his own room in Brunitt. The player’s Charisma is increased to the maximum, and has a 98% chance of charming (not in the magical sense), 90% chance of seduction. Character is raised 1 level.

In the event of the player choosing any one of these paths, the players will find themselves in a huge palace of blue marble with limitless wealth. Facing him over the treasure is a golden giant, who must be killed. This Giant will also tell the players that others that will be found behind the other gate, must be worked out to match the player.
5. **The Path of Song.** Player looking at pictures and carvings feels the beauty of nature, life and art, can feel great inspiration welling up inside, can hear most beautiful music, etc. Passing through the Gate, the player is confronted with a most beautiful sculpture (like Michaelangelo's "David" for example). This comes to life and stands in his way, and he must destroy it, smash it to rubble. Beyond the statue is a table with a flute on it. Dexterity is increased to maximum; Intelligence and Wisdom are both reduced 1 point each. The character can make beautiful music and is a pretty good artist in all forms: he can compose, sing, paint... On any instrument whatsoever he can soothe all natural creatures that he meets (at least the speed at which they regain lost hit points). This affects everyone within hearing; obviously, it must be done at peaceful moments, not during combat. It can also raise the failing courage and morale of people about to engage in a battle. Ability to charm all natural beast (non-intelligent) and to give them simple instructions; ability to speak with them and understand them. The flute can cure serious wounds and diseases 3 times a day. Character raised 1 level.

6. **Political Power.** Player looking at pictures and carvings feels the pull of being able to wield the words of being able to control the fate of a nation, etc.

Even though this Gate the player is faced with an ancient and white-robed man who is a magician and an incidentally good fighter. Oratorical abilities conferred: 80% chance of persuading a crowd or mob or gathering to do as he suggests. Does not work on individuals. Player passing through door at end finds himself in rich town-house in Brontir; he is a leading politician, and to a great degree in control of the state. Raised 1 experience level.

7. **The Way of Glory.** Player looking at pictures and carvings feels the pull of fame. It is his household name, of having his name live on through prosperity, of being a synonym for great heroic valour or evil, his deeds sung in innumerable epics and songs, etc.

He must fight his way through ranks of warriors (not very strong but cumulatively powerful) and a monster before he can reach and rescue the fair damsel in distress. If he succeeds, then he must pass through a door, mount on a horse; and ride into the city ahead of him with the maiden to great popular acclaim; he is feasted by King Ridon of Kelger, whose daughter it is that he has saved, and given a title and the gift of an estate worth 500,000 gp. Great fame becomes his; and anything that he does in the future will become well known and pass into myth. This also means that enemies will on the whole be scared of him and that people will be likely to help him as far as they can. Raised 1 experience level.

8. **The Way of Victory in Battle.** Player looking at pictures and carvings feels the power of victory, sees himself at the head of great armies sweeping all before him, the intoxication of blood and battle and fear and victory. Faced with a mighty warrior to fight and defeat (magician in the case of magicians). If successful, player passes through huge double doors which swing open, mounts on a horse and finds himself at the head of a great army returning victorious from war. He is the chief general of the Malnam army; he has palatial abode in the heart of the city, and a fortune of 400,000 gp; he is a strong figure in local politics. Leadership qualities: lower-level characters are likely to be impressed and to execute his orders — 1st-5th level characters are likely to 90% likely to follow him. The character is also raised by 1 level.

9. **The Dark Way of Death.** In order to take this way, the player must absolutely reject all the other paths and demand this path (although not actually kill himself). If he does so, then the other eight paths will disappear.

Facing him is a road lined by vast grey columns, stretching away into the distance. Very faint light, just enough to see the way. It is a long road, apparently taking hours to walk, and no progress seems to be made. Looking back there is no entrance, just the columns stretching away out of sight. Feeling of emptiness and desolation. Nothing living or moving.

A yawning gate stands at the end, with just black nothingness beyond. Faintly, very small and distant, a few stars can be seen, not of this world; none can be seen on either side of the gate. They do not shimmer but are hard and steady.

Stepping through the gate, the player finds himself in a wide, wide valley, with mountains dim in the distance on either side, far the light is very dim, just the light of the hard distant stars. Gradually the eyes become accustomed to the gloom until the player can see reasonably well; it is slightly undulating plain, with nothing growing or living, no sound at all. Underfoot is loose rubble, grey and dusty. Each football sounds loud, but the sound cuts dead and flat: there is no echo at all. Ahead, faintly, stretches a path (which must not be left; if it is, he will never find his way out). It is not easy to move; the player is overborne with weariness and each step is difficult to make. He would like to lie down and sleep, but he must not. He must disencumber himself of all his equipment if he is to proceed. All his characteristics are reduced by 2.

Ages seem to pass. Finally the player can make out a mountain range, and then immediately he notices a dark tower just close to it. The character would have expected the situation that his civilisation is falling apart; and an increasing sense of loneliness. Growing sense of dread as he approaches the Tower. Going up to the door, he can see a horn hanging by it. The door will not open; the horn must be blown. The sound cracks the silence. The door swings open; the player's hand closes round his sword-hilt.

Magic will not work here, it must be physical combat. His image emerges from the door, dressed in the same way and carrying an identical sword. All factors are back to normal although the player does not feel this. He must, in fact, "Kill himself." If successful, the sword crumbles to dust and he continues along the path. Along the path he encounters numerous temptations of the flesh similar to those presented by the eight other gates, this time not in the form of strange carvings, but apparently genuine, and all just slightly off the path. If he succeeds then he reaches Brontir. GreatVV.ingenuity of the player. All factors, including hit points, are down to the minimum. A tall, conical mound on one side, but off the path, and offers him food and drink, which seem genuine but is a trap. His only plan to do is to step off the path to get them. Finally the cowled figure offers him a resting-place by the side of the road and says he will give him everything he desires if he will step off the road and follow him. Needless to say, if the offer is accepted, the player will never leave this land.

If all this is rejected, the cowled figure vanishes and a gate appears at the end of the path and the player must drag himself to it. Two great doors stand in a clearing in some woods; the path goes through the middle of a stream. He no longer feels tired or hungry, he is more to this beyond anything human. Great crystal cliffs cleave the sky. In the uppermost part of these cliffs are stones, gleaming brightly; but the player must not pick them up — they are off the road. The trunks of the huge trees are blue and indigo. Like burnished silver the thickest leaves quiver on every branch and are glistening; the ground is in fact precious pearls. He feels refreshed and peaceful. Birds of flaming hues fly freely through them; their song is indescribably beautiful. The river-banks seem made of fine gold thread; the stream itself is of bright beryl; the water makes a delicious sound. At the bottom are bright stones and a cap of living light, a beam of light through glass, or like the streaming stars that shine in the sky on a winter's night.

Every time the player uncovers a living emerald, a sapphire or other noble gem, so that all the pool glimmers in a thousand lights.

The player must walk through the water, in which he will be completely submerged. Emerging on the shore, he passes through another Gate and finds himself in his room in Brontir. If a wizard he has a cloak and a staff; if a warrior, he has a suit of armour, a bow with arrows, and a two-handed sword. The player's characteristics are altered: his Strength is raised to 30, his dexterity increases to 16(00); his Charisma increases to 17 or by +2, whichever is higher; all other characteristics are raised to 16 or by +2, whichever is higher. He rises 3 experience levels.

The items function only for the player himself. The cloak functions as a Robe of Eyes and as +2 plate armour (which does not include a shield) = +5. The staff can be used as a Staff of Wizardry twelve times a day and as a Staff of Striking without limitation. The sword is +5 to hit, +2 to damage. Both staff and sword enable the user to fly or create light at will. The bow is a +2 Magic Bow, and all arrows shot from it are +I to damage.
THRUD THE BARBARIAN

A damsel in distress, by Alaknur! I'll have to rescue her, I suppose...

With panther-like grace, Thrud enters the castle.

BY THE SACRED JOCKSTRAP OF ROBERT E. HOWARD! You'll pay for that, Hellspawn!!

Shriek!

My master! Two swords, always leads his men in defense of his castle...

Closely followed by my five brothers, my fiancé, Uncle Hagar and Uncle Horace, ten of my cousins...

Why do you keep saying "oops", barbarian? What have you done?

Er... I think I better be gone, I'll see myself out.
Have Computer, Will Travel

Computer Vehicle Design by Marcus L Rowland

Want to use the micro to help in designing vehicle systems? It can be more trouble than it's worth, but these routines are useful in keeping track of designs and in checking them for realism, using standard BASIC from a TRS80.

Vehicle design in Traveller, Striker, and Car Wars seems a good area for computerisation, but it tends to offer too many options to make it worthwhile. Personally, I enjoy building these vehicles and prefer not to give a machine all the fun. However, I usually keep track of totals by some sort of cumulative recording program. Program 1 is a simple adding machine program that can be added to or modified to suit various needs. It's worth extra space and REM lines are included to make things clearer and more readable.

I've used the program to design, for example, the Taurus Ill, an unarmed Striker vehicle. After I'd finished the design I noticed that the presence of a Grass unit and wheels in a single vehicle simplified a variable power/weight ratio. I wrote Program 2 to check the effects of this capability on ground performance. In practice this would never be attained, since as the car gained speed and lost weight the wheels would lose traction, and air friction would increase. Using flaps or aerodynamic construction to force it down seems reasonable - the car would lower speed. The program also ignores power losses in running. This program uses subroutines to reduce the number of lines.

While writing this article I heard that a gravity-aided ground vehicle design sequence program had appeared in an issue of the Traveller Journal. I was surprised to find that the Taurus has a maximum ground speed of over 4000kph! In practice this would never be attained, since as the car gained speed and lost weight the wheels would lose traction, and air friction would increase. Using flaps or aerodynamic construction to force it down would not help, since this effectively increases the weight and lowers speed. The program also ignores power losses in running. This program uses subroutines to reduce the number of lines. Extra space and REM lines are included to make things clearer - they can be omitted to save typing. It contains no unusual commands except DEFINT and DEFDBL, specifying variables as single- or double-precision numbers. The program sends the program to one of a number of alternatives as shown.

Program 1: Striker Vehicle Components Record

10 * STRIKER VEHICLE COMPONENTS RECORD
20 * STRIKER VEHICLE WEIGHT & COST RECORD
30 * STRIKER VEHICLE COMPONENTS
40 CLS: CLEAR 5000: MASS = ; VOL = ; CST = ; DEDFBL
50 DIM AS(60): MS(60): CS(60): X: ; SPC = 
60 *Program keeps track of up to 60 items. AS = Item Name
70 INPUT "ENTER USEFUL VEHICLE VOLUME (CUBIC METRES):" VOL
80 CLS: FOR K = 1 TO 100: PRINT "LAST ITEM OR PROGRAM OVERFLOWS"
90 GOSUB 2000: GOSUB 3000: GOSUB 4050
100 X = X + 1: N = X + 1: GOTO 80
110 120 * Utilising the Data
210 CLS: GOSUB 2000: PRINT "FINAL DATA - CHOOSE AN OPTION:" 220 PRINT 1: LIST TO PRINTER": PRINT 2: REVIEW LIST": PRINT 3: MODIFY LIST": PRINT 4: "PRINT 5: END"
Dear WD,

Since I understand that there won't be room for the specifications of the Taurus III vehicle in my Striker computer program in this issue's Microview, here are some brief statistics to clarify things. The Taurus III is a recreational vehicle with a ground, grav, and underwater capability. Loaded weight is 14.66 tons; Power Plant 2 megawatt fusion, giving a road speed of 225kph; waterspeed 22.5kph. The grav unit gives 18 tons thrust and a max speed of 240kph. It is built at TL10 and costs Cr261,000. This type of vehicle is called a Tri-mobile, a word coined by Robert A Heinlein. Sorry to see the Travellers is so unpopular according to the Return of the Editor (WD49) - I'm quite enjoying it. It reminds me of most of the maniacs I play with!

Yours, Marcus L Rowland, London.

Dear WD,

Recently, White Dwarf published a small ad in which I stated that I wanted to hear from gamers in Eire, Wales, Scotland and the Isle of Man. Various persons wrote to me saying that I was a bigot, for I did not include England. I extend my sincere apologies; I did not intend to alienate anyone. I did want to correspond with persons living in a place that still made use of Celtic languages, in which I am extremely interested. However, I would welcome letters from all players of any nationality, who play FRP games. Again, my apologies to those may have offended. Yours sincerely, Troy Saggiolo, Colorado, USA.

Dear WD,

I think I had better start off with the usual grovel so as to get my letter printed. I think White Dwarf has greatly improved over the last few issues, especially with the RuneQuest articles on demons and goblins. However, in issue 48, you published the goblin cult of Crom Cruach and I was rather surprised to see that the Runespell summon horror would cost a massive 8 points in permanent power to cast. I thought this a little excessive and after a bit of thought using my puny mortal brain (no comment on that) I could think of only two reasons for such a high cost. These are:

1) that Crom Cruach, being a rather minor deity, finds it rather more difficult to summon up the power necessary to create a manifestation of itself and therefore will only be willing to do so at a higher price to the priest. However, as Crom Cruach has available all standard Runespells I find this rather hard to believe.

2) the Horror is being summoned from another plane and would therefore again be more costly.

Would some kind person out there in the big wide world please put me out of my misery (preferably before somebody sends a band of marauding goblins to my door for doubting their priests). May your Divine Intervention never fail.

Yours, Gerard Crowe, Middx.

Most spells in RuneQuest are wrought by the command of a god at the behast of a worshipper but the spell summon horror is wrought through Crom Cruach at the command of a priest. Or in short, whilst the spell owes its efficacy to a divine source its implementation is, to a certain degree, against the will of the god and used successfully only because of various ceremonial practices and the correct intonation of key words of power by the officiating priest. It is for this reason that the spell is so costly in terms of power and stamina but too effective in result - I Bailey.

Dear WD,

I was amused at Dave Morris' letter complaining about naked monsters exposed on the cover of your illustrious publication (WD48), it prompted me to do a quick survey of the 36 copies of WD I had to hand. The results show 8 undressed monsters and 10 naked human-types so there is really very little to complain about!

The display of flesh, be it monster or human, is all part of the fantasy style of thinking that the game is trying to give. The only example I could find was WD27 and that spray-on space suit seems to fit the concept rather well.

As Oliver Dickinson points out senseless nakedness afflicts both sexes, but it is not the depicting of yet another naked woman on a magazine cover that is the problem but the whole way in which the female role is represented.

Out of 36 covers only 7 showed females at all. In three pictures they seemed to be doing nothing in particular, in two the woman was about to become the victim of some monster, in one she was being protected by a man, only in one picture (WD48) is a woman shown in a powerful aspect. Maybe this is the way you role-play but it goes against the equalities built into most games systems, a factor that should attract female players. If male players are attracted by the images of heroines, be they bare-chested barbarians or powerful mages, is it any wonder that there is a shortage of female players who may find it hard to relate to the stereotypes presented.

How about some covers showing what really happens in play, mixed groups working together equally, or would that be too damaging to your male pride?

Yours, Christine Ogden, W Yorks.

Dear WD,

The Return of the Editor shows the futility of relying completely on return-by-post surveys. The results serve only to demonstrate that WD readers are also apparently only as up-to-date as the information leaked to them in the scanty News pages. Unaware? Yes - the fanzine results show two dead magazines (The Beholder has been out of production for 2 years!) and the discrepancy in both magazine sections leads to two weird conclusions: More people buy a magazine than bother to read it (or vice versa). The love of films and books with which have superficial gloss to cover the non-existant plot and development of a fantasy situation worries me. Surely role-playing should involve some concentration on developing a consistent world and characters with depth rather than the cardboard heroes the media presents us with. I hope that WD will continue to feature articles which stimulate some intellectual thought, and not degenerate into the computer game/cartoon/scenario magazine that its survey seems to indicate.

Yours, David Stone, London.

Dear WD,

I have wanted to write and say that White Dwarf is the best around for sometime. When I get my magazine I like to look at the letters department and I am usually disappointed. Most of your letters are complaints over one thing or another. Whether from cover art to a one-word mistake in an article. I live in the United States and I prefer White Dwarf because it has many more things that can actually be used in the game. Treasure Chest is a great department! I just thought I would let you know that you do have fans who do not look for useless simple mistakes!

Yours, Michael Cook, USA.
Lew's Views is a regular department for the beginning player and for general FRP discussion, by Lew Pulsipher. This issue, experience levels.

**Going Up**

**Increasing Experience Levels in AD&D**

How long should it take a player character to rise a level? This question comes into conversation among referees sooner or later, and as with many difficult questions the answer usually amounts to 'that depends'. A better way to put it would be thus: characters should rise as slowly as possible without discouraging players so much that they lose interest in the campaign. Why? First, AD&D beginners break down as a game when characters reach around twelfth level. You can't have role-playing games, for at that point the referee must begin wholesale fudging - even if he doesn't realize he's doing it - in order to preserve the lives of the player characters. There are too many options, and too many advantages to the enemy (who are usually on their home ground), for player characters to survive a purely competitive situation. Second, once a player's character reaches a high level he often becomes discontented with lower-level play; in effect, he no longer enjoys a large part of campaigning. The object of the game is to have interesting, memorable adventures, not necessarily to become superhuman. It is easier for the referee to devise interesting situations when the player characters are neither virtually invulnerable nor walking arsenals/wrecking machines.

I have heard of campaigns in which players rarely reach second level, although more than 100 adventures have been played. On the other hand, there are campaigns which allow a character to progress to sixteenth level in a few sessions. I think it's safe to say that the first is too slow for almost anyone, and the second is far, far too fast.

(In the first, by the way, not only is experience hard to come by, player characters die frequently, often at the hands of other player characters. Cleverly killing one another, rather than rising in levels, satisfies the players!) By the way, what do I mean by number of 'adventures'? 'Session' might be a better word than adventure, since some adventures can last through weeks of real-time before the objective is accomplished or the party returns to its base. For low-level characters one adventure usually takes just one session of a few hours, while high-level characters often take several sessions of 6-8 hours for an average adventure. For the sake of tradition, let's take 'adventures' as equivalent to sessions. Some referees say that it should take

![Image of a character]

just as many adventures to rise from first to second level as from ninth to tenth. Others believe more adventures are needed to rise one high level than one low one. Some like strict progressions, while others go for whatever sounds right. For example, one view is that as many adventures as the number of the level being attained should be required, that is, two to reach second level, three more to reach third, and so on. A typical constant figure is five adventures per level. There is always the caveat, 'give or take a few', to add to these figures: no one expects to impose exactly the number stated at each level on the players. Some who prefer more flexibility may suggest 50 or 100 adventures to reach a given level (say ninth) or to reach an experience point total (say 10,000). Within that broad guideline, the individual referee can decide how fast players should go through the lower levels.

I have played in very slow campaigns and slow-to-middling ones. 10 adventures to rise from first to second level is rather too slow even for the most restrained players, because first level characters are so vulnerable in AD&D. I have many characters who, at third or fourth level, have been on 20-25 adventures, and it seems like it's been forever. Yet one has a suspicion, with a character at seventh level after 25 adventures, that things have been too easy. (One should say that, generally, the longer it takes to rise levels, the less often someone will permanently die; otherwise no one would live long enough to rise very far.

On the other hand, however dangerous it is, if characters rise very fast while they live then sooner or later some will become strong enough, and lucky enough, to survive at double-figure level.

After fooling around for a while with various mathematical series which might have pleased the strict progression school, I finally abandoned this approach in favour of what sounded right. I suggest the following as a starting point:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lvl</th>
<th>Adv</th>
<th>Exp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weak characters, such as thieves, should reach high levels sooner than strong classes such as magic-users and paladins, but this is sometimes difficult to accomplish because of the experience point progressions given in the game.
Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE for short) are not exactly the most famous game producers in the hobby. They have, nonetheless, by the release of one game alone, leaped forward to the forefront of fantasy boardgaming, and have done so with a game which I would have thought was that very rare amalgam of design competence and saleable topic. The game is Fellowship of the Ring. Its subject is the first book of the Lord of the Rings and it stands high above the verdant rot of the SPI game on the same subject which you may recognize got it in the neck in a recent column played in this august organ. Before going into the game let me state my reasons for my recommendation. Firstly, the game is very attractive with an excellent mapboard and cards; it is, secondly, one that gets your gaming instincts going to think of an effective strategy; it is, thirdly, a game that contains sufficient chaff to defeat any perfect plan and thus forces the gamer to react; fourthly it is close to the book as to fact and very close as to spirit. It is priced at just over £20, worth every penny, and available from our sponsors Games Workshop Ltd (can I have my commission now?)

The mapboard is important for several reasons. Firstly the appearance can result in a lack, or vice-versa, of atmosphere. In this case I am glad to report that the mapboard has the same topographical quality of the one I first read about in the early Sixties in The Hobbit. It is also admirably well-coloured and being a jigsaw map is not only more durable but a damn sight easier to play on. The map also shows the quality of the game allowing considerable range to both players by not cutting down the routes available to one or two. You can ride north of the Misty Mountains, voyage down to Dol Amroth testing the perils of Krakens, the corsair fleet of Umbar or storms; if this does not appeal why not slip past Isengard toward the Gap of Rohan, or you could always seek to force the Misty Mountains and voyagedown the Anduin. Given the nature of the game with its hidden units you will find you use much more of the board because the players must maintain or lose the initiative, must have a good quarterback, send at least three wide receivers into the Evil Player's secondary to confuse him. But enough of this jock talk.

The major problems of the subject is how to confuse the Enemy. It is a problem which I am perhaps least able to answer because I always seem to play the Evil Guys and show little aptitude for the game's balance, but until I can do character cards you can see on your opponents display, nor whether these cards are dummies or real characters. The FP (Fellowship Player) is plentifully supplied with groups with no content, or

One Ring to Rule Them All

region but the range includes everything in the books. In Havens the only kind of combat that can occur is assassination and then only on very high (and modified) dice rolls. Even if the Fellowship Player, can engage the FP he may still escape if its a small enough group, or may disengage (in which case you can influence his retreat somewhat), or may (even more deviously) choose not to flip over his character cards to show the real character, but instead use their anonymous racial features. You may fight a dunedain who escapes which could be Steeder (but just as easily as a Gondorian). The Achilles Heel of this is two-fold. You can run but you cannot retreat if you disengage and to sneaking hobbits this will result in no forward movement, further; if Nazgul are present the Ringbearer must be revealed (not engaged but revealed). Once the Nazgul have him spotted the FP is going to have to pull together his forces with a great deal of skill to break the vital chain of information that will build up.

Tough break for the Fellowship Player? Well yes, but as the Evil Player you do get an awful lot of targets to attack and not many Nazgul. It is also very difficult to get Nazgul across rivers, and if the FP can break a river-line and then close it up he can force the Nazgul to ride a very long way. In one game the Witch-King had become Ringbearer and five Nazguls boys blocked all the river crossings. I had to move north of Rivendell and despatch a fell creature (airmobile support) to get him back to Mordor and victory. After this game the Nazgul may remember got it in the neck in a second group, of course he might second-guess you as well.

I hope I have given you some idea of the excitement of the game. The best minds of approach is a Tough break for the Fellowship Player? Well yes, but as the Evil Player you do get an awful lot of targets to attack and not many Nazgul. It is also very difficult to get Nazgul across rivers, and if the FP can break a river-line and then close it up he can force the Nazgul to ride a very long way. In one game the Witch-King had become Ringbearer and five Nazguls boys blocked all the river crossings. I had to move north of Rivendell and despatch a fell creature (airmobile support) to get him back to Mordor and victory. After this game the Nazgul may remember got it in the neck in a second group, of course he might second-guess you as well.

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Treasure Chest is a regular department for D&D. This issue, something for all you potential assassins out there.

An Assassins Special
by M J Stock

If he’s not a thief or a fighter, then he must be... oh, no!

The assassin sometimes seems to get short-changed as a character in AD&D—players tend to regard him as a second-rate thief or Paladin-fodder. The items described here are some attempts to make assassins more interesting for players and DMs alike. Note that the garrotte is cheap and easy to make, but must be selected as a weapon proficiency, and the two-stage poisons will be expensive and/or rare. The Killing Cup and the Dagger of Slaying will, of course, be extremely rare indeed.

THE GARROTTE
An ideal assassin’s weapon, also useful in combat. It consists of a length of strong thin cord or wire with short (3”) wooden handles at each end. It is used only in attacks from behind with the normal +4 backstab bonus but no additions for strength. If a successful ‘hit’ is scored, there is a 25% chance equal to that for assassination [DMG p75] for an outright kill; otherwise it does 1-3 points of damage. The garrotte can only be used on humanoid creatures up to 7” tall (unless the assassin is standing above ground level).

THE TWO-STAGE POISON
Two innocuous liquids which, when mixed, produce a lethal poison. The first part may be put in the victim’s food etc, and will remain in the body for a period determined by the DM (typically 2-8 days). The second part may then be administered at leisure, or used as a threat to coerce/blackmail the victim. The key advantage of this type of poison is that neither component is affected by slow poison or neutralise poison spells until they are mixed.

THE KILLING CUP
Also known as Surma’s Chalice, this is a finely carved and decorated goblet, supposedly made of wood stolen from the Great Tree of Finnish legend. Using suitable enchantments, the natural resins of the wood have been turned into poisons which slowly dissolve into any wine, ale, water, etc which is poured into the cup. Each time the goblet is drained, the drinker must make a saving throw against poison. Failure results in death, otherwise there is no effect. The save is at +4 for the first time, +3 for the second, and so on, ie after the sixth use, the throw is at -1. This reflects the gradual build-up of poison in the bloodstream. Once sufficient resins have been leached from the wood to kill the victim, the Chalice is no longer effective and quickly rots away.

The Killing Cup is worth 400 experience points, and 150gp if sold. Other than the saving throw and results of a successful save, it operates as a type D ingested poison [DMG p20]. Detect magic will reveal a faint aura due to the wood’s origins; neutralise poison will negate all subsequent effects, but purify food and drink affects one filling only.

DAGGER OF SLAYING
This ordinary-looking dagger will usually be found embedded in a corpse, and may only be removed by an assassin. Furthermore, all creatures of good alignment take 3-12 points of damage if they touch it. Evil creatures other than assassins find they cannot get a proper grip on the handle, which slips out of their grasp. Any assassin taking the Dagger will remove it easily; close inspection will discover strange runes faintly inscribed on the blade, and detect magic will reveal a faint aura. The Dagger of Slaying behaves as a normal +1 dagger until the following procedure is carried out: The assassin must attach to the hilt of the Dagger a hair, piece of clothing or jewellery or some other personal item from the intended victim, obtained by the assassin himself (the touch of another creature will confuse the personal aura), and say the victim’s name aloud while holding the Dagger. The runes will then glow brightly, and if the Dagger is subsequently thrown at the named victim and hits, it will kill them outright, no save allowed: magic resistance applies but then a ‘to hit’ roll at -4 is allowed for the assassin. There is no time limit between activating the runes and performing the assassination, and the Dagger will still act as a +1 weapon during this period.

Once it has hit its target, the runes continue to glow for 2-24 turns, and during this time the blade may not be removed from the body by any creature, including assassins. When the runes have faded, the original restrictions apply once more. All of these blades are aligned towards evil: 60% are Neutral, 25% are Lawful and 15% Chaotic. Lawful Evil blades cannot be used by Chaotic Evil assassins, and vice versa. Further, a Chaotic blade has a 5% chance of turning and slaying the assassin when activated and thrown. Neutral Evil blades are usable by any assassin, and Neutral Evil assassins may employ all of these weapons. Experience point value of a Dagger is 250, and they can fetch 2000gps if sold.
OK! World, you can stop holding your breath now! Games Workshop's new series of blockbustin' adventure settings announced last month won't be called Dungeon Builder after all. The new series title is Dungeon Planner and the very first one, Caverns of the Dead, complete with 25mm scale four-coloured play-sheet of the whole adventure location, will hit your shop shelves next month.

The whole name change shenanigan was for two reasons. The first was to tie in with Dungeon Floor Plans as the play sheet is based on the same system; and the second was to avoid confusion with a product already entitled Dungeon Builder. Good'nuff? Dungeon Builder, made by Prince August, is a do-it-yourself system of diorama settings. The reasons aren't yet clear, but maybe they failed to make their saving roll.

The summer should see a blitz of comic book role-playing games. As announced in last month's Supernore, TSR are producing the Dungeon Tile System. These are precast units of dungeon floor, stairs, etc for building dioramas. With all this pizzazz on dungeons, its not surprising to find Games Workshop are working on a new set of Dungeon Floor Plans. No, it won't be called Dungeon Floor Plans 4. Nor even DPF 3D! The set due out later this year will be Mines and Caverns. More another time, but 'til then, lick your lips, dungeoners!

Games Workshop are also working on BattleBikes. This is the first extension kit for Battlecars and introduces armoured motorcycles with rules for playing bike vs bike. Bike gangs vs cars, BattleBikes is scheduled for release during April.

The summer should see a blite of comic book role-playing games. As announced last month's Supernore, TSR are producing a role-player based on Mighty Marvel's Web of Spiderman. In fact, that one's my bag. It's unlikely that a webhead can spin a web while Games Workshop are going great guns on Golden Heroes. Warhammer is still wowin' them in the worlds of chaos and Citadel have backed out foot-sweet with the dynamic Forces of Fantasy released this month. This three rulebook set comes in a full colour box and covers fantasy armies for the forces of good and evil along with new magic, monsters and a mighty mass of marvellous material.

Congrats to 'Dancin' Don Turnbull on his new appointment as head of TSR Worldwide, dealing with TSR business in Europe and the Far East. Congratulations are also due to Jumpin' Jim Olsen, who has joined this scepred isle as head-man and initiator of Games Workshop US. John is now firmly entrenched in Gaithersburg, Maryland doing his bit for the export trade.

ITEM! A new magazine is scheduled to hit the streets in March or April. Published by Penguin, Warlock will deal with the Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks by the funboy two, Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone. The first issue will contain part one of a new Warlock of Firetop Mountain module, and The Fungi from Yuggoth, a Call of Cthulhu adventure from issue to issue plus other goodies. January saw the first issue. It costs $1 from Ken St André, 3421 E. Yele Phoenix, AZ 85008. The cost is probably more for those outside the US.

ITEM! For something completely different, TSR could try a New Zealand zine, The Escargot Herald. This is more of a T&T supplement than a zine. It will build up to detail a T&T city/region fully detailed with population, flora, fauna, new rules, spells etc. For further information contact Neil Dicker, 98 Titiraupeaanga Street, Taupo, New Zealand.

ITEM! Much nearer home is the Games Day Adventure Tour. Best friends are Dave Hill, 3421 E. Yele Phoenix, AZ 85008. The current DT is a mega-combined issue team-up with another well-known zine Quasits & Quasars. Usually, Q&Q is heavily geared to producing all kinds of RPG scenarios. A solo scenario, generally of a very reasonable quality, is guaranteed in every issue. Unlike DL, Q&Q devotes little space to discussion, so if you are looking for a new RPG, be sure. It costs 80p from Dave Hulks, 54 Simmons Drive, Marshalswick, St Albans, Herts.

ITEM! A third direct team-up is with The Acolyte, edited by Pete Tamlyn. This zine is orientated to discussion with an active letters column covering everything from the correct method to peel a grape (ask Moe West!) to how to summon six major demons and sing operetta at the same time. Exaggeration? Well, yes, but The Acolyte is very varied with its topics of discussion. It also operates some postal games such as Diplomacy, Sniff's Revenge and Nuclear War and is really a zine on the fringe of two hobbies. Anyway, this interesting read is available for 45p from Pete Tamlyn, 23 Poplar Road, The Coppice, Aylesbury, Bucks.

ITEM! An old faithful worth a mention is Sewars. This is edited by Chris Baylis and produces essentially ready-to-use material for gaming plus, somewhat over-enthusiastic reviews of practically every product going. It suffers from bad production and bad taste, though taste is subjective. In comparison to the newer zines, Sewars can sometimes appear dated. It is available for 60p from Chris Baylis, 12 Th Frith, Basildon, Essex.

ITEM! Next issue's article on how a new zine can be of outstanding quality with regards to production and articles. It already promises to be a long and interesting read. Hopefully, there will be a few new zines appearing from time to time. Perhaps, one day, a few outstanding ones will drop into your hands. Meanwhile, your editor will continue to try to keep your interest, and hopefully sell up a few copies. Good'nuff?
Hayes evades the pig police force while searching for Aftab the Greek, whose far-reaching tentacles of power are more far-reaching than Hayes realises... (wow).

A prisoner of the beautiful but deadly bounty huntresses, Hayes is taken before gangster and lone-shark Aftab the Greek (golly gee).

Meanwhile... somewhere in the universe... (gosh).

Hayes is thrown into the arena... to face a terrible foe... (Gulpsville).
**SMALL ADS**

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