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After nearly a decade of domination of the role-playing games market by American companies, it is good to see British companies publishing their own systems at last. *Games Workshop* are hoping to release both Dr Who and *Judge Dredd* RPGs later in the year and *Citadel* will be further developing Warhammer. Following the success of *Puffin's Fighting Fantasy* Gamebooks, other book companies are busy releasing solo gamebooks. More companies are following *Citadel's* lead in fantasy figures and new magazines are appearing.

Let's hope that this is a sign of things to come and more companies will emerge to make a thriving British RPG industry.
NIGHT'S DARK AGENTS

Ninja and Ninjutsu in Role-Playing Games by Chris Elliott and Richard Edwards

He whose sable arms, Black as his purpose, did the night resemble.

Hamlet ii

For the most part, introducing elements of Japanese society into RPGs doesn’t present too many problems. It is fairly easy to get information from libraries on the samurai, and provided appropriate allowances are made for the effects of the Japanese social system, players and referees can draw on European feudal models for commoners, the priesthood, magicians and thieves without going too badly astray. The ninja, however, are different. They have no real counterpart in European history, and despite their continuing popularity as subjects for books, films and television series, reliable information about them is hard to come by. This is not really surprising; all feudal Japanese institutions were obsessively secret, and the nature of ninjutsu means it would be doubly so. This series of articles is designed to explain who the ninja were, how they operated, and how they can be incorporated into role-playing games.

The Art of Stealth

Some estimates put the beginnings of ninjutsu as early as 500BC, and they are recorded as having been hired as spies by Prince Regent Shokou Taishi in the 6th century AD. Their last major use was in 1637, during the Shimabara Rebellion against Christian rebels on Ashikaga, but there is good reason to believe that ninja were active in government service during the Taisho era, 1912-1926, and even in the Showa era, which began in 1926 and is still continues today. Ninjutsu is therefore probably as old as Japanese history, but it has not remained unchanged, and this helps to explain the conflicting accounts of its origins. Like most Japanese traditions, ninjutsu seems to have come from Chinese influence on a native tradition, with the resulting products being melded together. Prince Shokou Taishi, not actually a ninja, he was also a keen supporter of Buddhism, which, as the resulting product, is probably the most significant influence on the development of ninjutsu. The Chinese classic Sun Tzu - The Art of War - eagerly taken up by Japanese generals, had a section on espionage which is likely to have influenced the existing Japanese tradition. (The character, Kenpu, who is said to have been a ninja of the 16th and 17th centuries, is read as shinobi jutsu, from shinobi 'to steal in', and jutsu 'art or technique'; hence, 'the art of stealth'.) During the bloody Gempei Wars between the Taira and Minamoto, the Taira are said to have relied heavily on ninjutsu. Minamoto Yoshitsune, who finally defeated the Taira, is known to have studied the Sun Tzu, and allegedly had access to training in ninjutsu. Early ninjin schools of Japan's Kendo are said to have relied heavily on ninjutsu. Minamoto Yoshitsune, who finally defeated the Taira, is known to have studied the Sun Tzu, and allegedly had access to training in ninjutsu. Early ninjin schools of Japan's Kendo are said to have relied heavily on ninjutsu. Minamoto Yoshitsune, who finally defeated the Taira, is known to have studied the Sun Tzu, and allegedly had access to training in ninjutsu. Early ninjin schools of Japan's Kendo are said to have relied heavily on ninjutsu. Minamoto Yoshitsune, who finally defeated the Taira, is known to have studied the Sun Tzu, and allegedly had access to training in ninjutsu. Early ninjin schools of Japan's Kendo are said to have relied heavily on ninjutsu. Minamoto Yoshitsune, who finally defeated the Taira, is known to have studied the Sun Tzu, and allegedly had access to training in ninjutsu. Early ninjin schools of Japan's Kendo are said to have relied heavily on ninjutsu. Minamoto Yoshitsune, who finally defeated the Taira, is known to have studied the Sun Tzu, and allegedly had access to training in ninjutsu.

The School of the True Word, practised Mikkyo, or secret doctrines involving mystical practices. In theory, these brought enlightenment which would allow students to become the protectors of the Buddha Universe. In practice, they were a form of magic through incantations and spells. But the best known are the kujii, the 'nine signs'. (These appear in Bushido as the kujit, but were more than magical symbols. They were positions which form the signs are shown in the book of the BBC series. The Way of the Warrior, together with an explanation of how they were used.) Although Zen Buddhism and Mikkyo practices are both taught at the same institute, they were not introduced until nearly four hundred years after Shingon Buddhism, and many higher ranking samurai practised esoteric Buddhism. The ninja also absorbed these teachings, and it is their Mikkyo practices which helped to give them a reputation for sorcerous powers. Along with the secret teachings of Chinese Buddhism, they absorbed Mikkyo practices teaching the martial arts, and added to their Mikkyo practices. Of these were to influence the survivors of defeated clans who fled to the mountainous provinces of southern central Honshu in the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries. Such refugees became the Mikkyo samurai, living like farmers, or lost samurai status altogether, but in the course of fighting for survival against superior forces, they became the nuclei of the ninja clans. This fight had the effect of making them close allies of the warrior monks, especially the Yamashita, who made frequent use of them in their power struggle with the samurai.

On the principle of 'once bitten, twice shy', the ninja never abandoned the secrecy that had enabled them to survive and had given ninjutsu its emphasis on subtle manipulation rather than direct force, but in time they came to wield considerable power. There were over 25 major centres of ninja activity in Iga and Koga provinces in Kamakura times, and at one time they were equal in strength to the samurai. During the civil war which raged for over 80 years until leyasu unified Japan, they flourished. Despite the alleged abhorrence with which the samurai regarded the ninja, the relationship between them was turbulent. Of course, the shoguns who smashed the power of the Buddhist warrior monks, is also recorded as sending 46,000 troops against the ninja of Momoichi Sanadu, boss of Koga province. Momoichi Sanadu, however, did not prevent him employing his own ninja, led by one Kenpachi, who sent against his enemies, such as Usugy Kenshin. (It helps explain the fear inspired by the ninja when you learn that Kasumari Danjo, the leader of Sanadu's warriors, survived an ambush in which the rest of his colleagues had fallen, and killed the assassin threatening Kenshin, that his employer was still killed by Ukimune Inari, a dwarf ninja who had hidden himself and was not affected by Kenpachi's prayers.) Takeda Shingen, famous from Kurosawa's Kagemusha, made great use of the ninja, and is credited with important advances in their signalling and movement techniques. Most accounts of the ninja at that time is shown by the fact that he also attacked Momoichi Sanadu, sending a ninja called Hajjika no Jubei. With the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate, and the unification of Japan, the role of the ninja changed again. The rising power of the merchant class brought employment from this quarter, and they were also a key part of the system that enabled the Tokugawas to dominate the country for over 250 years. The methods by which the ninja were used are best known now for their seals on woodblock prints, but they were also the shogunate's secret police, and the ninja, particularly the Hattori family of Koga, were notorious as their agents. With the coming of Western influences, the hostile climate to be a way of life for an entire section of the population. Although ninjutsu is still taught to a handful of students, preserved like other links with the past, the true shadow warriors are like the samurai; their modern descendants are very different people, in a different world. Like the samurai, though, the ninja are the stuff of legend, and with the advent of role-playing games seem set for a new lease of life.

The Artists of Stealth

The historical pressures that created and shaped the ninja and ninjutsu produced a remarkable breed of men and women. The ninja was born in a world where secrecy was a way of life, and whose outlook was supremely practical. This not only meant that they acquired a formidable array of specialised techniques and devices, but also that they became adept at adapting to any situation through ingenious uses (or abuses) of items in

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NIGHT'S DARK AGENTS

general use, and the manipulation of their opponents.
Ninjutsu training began early, at about five or six years old, with the development of balance and agility. At about nine, ninjas learned the basics of destructive combat, and later use of the sword and staff. Associated with each clan was a ryu (school or teaching) of ninjutsu, and from about twelve onwards, ninja were taught the techniques and tactics of their ryu. A long run to develop stamina, and spent hours in cramped quarters or hanging from trees to build patience and endurance. Swimming techniques, on and under water, were also important. Later in their training, they were taught techniques of entry and escape, mapping and sketching, the preparation of mixed poisons, and the use of acting and applied psychology. It was

Just as the roles of the ninja can be summarised for convenience as spy, commander and assassin, so the techniques they used. They could be grouped under a number of headings. In other articles in this series, we will look in more detail at incorporating ninjutsu into A&D and RuneQuest, and develop it in Bushido, but for those of you who use another system, the following can serve as a basis from which to work. It is a reasonably comprehensive, but by no means complete summary of the skills and tools of ninjutsu. If you are not familiar with Japanese history and martial arts, the material may look a bit daunting, but whenever possible we have given translations. Two tips may also help; try breaking the words down into syllables, e.g. "Shuriken-ju" (shuriken, 'throwing stars') from the bouncy ball! and remember that 'jutsu' on the end of anything simply means 'art' or 'technique'.

Costume: Unless disguised, a ninja on a mission would wear the traditional shippaihimo, consisting of split-toed shoes, trousers, jacket, gloves and hood. This was black or reddish black, and reversible. The inside was dark blue, green or white. (Japan has a very snowy winter.)

Stealth: The ninja were expert in moving undetected, indoors and outdoors, in any terrain. They took advantage of cover and natural sounds, camouflage themselves, and used a variety of techniques to confuse or distract an opponent's attention of scouts or guards. They had at least ten different techniques of footwork for moving over various surfaces including 'nightingale' floors which were designed to squeak loudly when stepped on. Ninjas also developed special swimming techniques to move silently, and could hide underwater for long periods, breathing through a tube or from an air bag.

Endurance and Agility: Because of their training, ninjas were capable of extraordinary feats. They were alleged to be able to cover 300 miles in three days, and run without resting for up to 500 miles. The techniques of forced march used were called hayagake-jutsu. The technique of suppleness (nawanken- jutsu) has already been referred to, and was essential to being able to move in a not only block in confined spaces and pass through small gaps, but to escape from bindings or chains.

Karate-jutsu, or 'lightning' enabled the ninja to perform amazing feats of climbing, the karate-jutsu of the ninja included: "Karate-jutsu is walking across walls or ceilings by using minute holds or leaping up into the shadow of roof or a corridor to hide and angled against the walls.

Survival and Woodcraft: Their operations often called for the ninja to live off the land, and they were accomplished trackers. The ability to move swiftly and detection across all kinds of terrain made them deadly opponents in warfare.

Martial Arts: Although it's convenient to divide these into armed and unarmed techniques, in practice this was not a rigid division. Commonly, the ancestor of the ninja was a samurai, and the art of combat with a minimum use of weapons. A ninja could fight with or without weapons, but would use whatever technique or mix of techniques were most effective.

Armed Ninja: Ninjas' weaponsness combat system was known as tajutsu and fell into two main techniques.

'Daken-tajutsu', the way of attacking the bones covered striking, kicking and blocking techniques. Ju-tajutsu 'relaxed body method' dealt with grappling and throwing techniques. Two more specific techniques koppojutsu 'bone breaking' or 'strikes' or attacks against the vital nerve centres of the body to paralyse, render unconscious or kill.

Armed: Generally speaking, any ninja were proficient with at least three weapons, and some were expert in as many as twenty. The four systems below were the most commonly used. Sword: The ninjato, or ninja sword, was a slightly shorter weapon than the samurai's katana. Seldom decorated, its guard, the tsuka, was large and square, and the scabbard sword could be used as a step-up. The scabbard itself could contain powder to scatter in an opponent's eyes, be used as a probe, or with a rod and thread, a skyrope or a blowgun. Ninja were expert in ju- jutsu, a technique where the drawing of the sword and the first attack are all part of the same lightning-fast movement.

Sticks and Staves: Two popular weapons of the ninja, they could be readily improvised and formed part of many of the disguises they adopted, as well as being less obviously a weapon than a spear. Common sizes were used; the bamboo (haibo), used to be applied with the shorter staffs to subdue an enemy. As many samurai learned to their cost, when clashing with city patroliemen, a blow from a staff could shatter the finest blade like a twig.

Chains and Cords: Many Japanese weapons were in the form of a chain or cord with which to attack or entangle an opponent. The kusari-gama, a rice sickle with a chain and weight which was used by the samurai, but the similar koyoketsu shogei, which had a bucket of water in it, was a naga for the unique to the ninja. The manriki-gusari, a chain with a weight at both ends, was known as a kusari-fundo when used by ninja. The kawa-naga, a grappling hook on a rope, was a climbing tool, but could also be used as a weapon.

Throwing Blades: Known collectively as shuriken, these can be straight blades, ranging from needles to knives, or multi-pointed throwing stars. Although they could be poisoned, their use was to distract, harass guards and pursuers. Shuriken could also be used in close-range combat.

Gimmicks and Concealed Weapons: These were a trademark of the ninja. The samurai had a secret weapon, a naginata, a large sword in a chain, sword or blinding powder, and be used as a smoke screen generator or blowgun. (Using a technique call fuki- sari-jutsu, ninja could spit poisoned darts.) Known as metsubushi, the blinding darts were said to be made of ash, pepper and sand, and could be thrown in 'eggs' which shattered on impact. Caltrops, or tsubis, were scattered to slow pursuit. A variety of collapsible ladders were used, as were harpoons or 'jutsu'. The following was for 'climbing, and the shinobi kumade 'ninja rake' which telescoped out to form a climbing aid. A variety of bombs, mines, grenades, flash grenades and smoke bombs or powders were made of, ignited from the doko or firepoint concealed in the costume, or triggered by tripwires.

Chemistry and Herbalism: These arts were used to prepare medicines, poisons, and many of the gimmicks mentioned above.

Hypnotism: Very little is known about saminjutsu, the ninja art of hypnotism. Much was probably achieved by sleight of hand and the equivalent of conjurors tricks, but under the conditions people met them, the ninja must have seemed sorcerers, able to work magic. Their use of the kujo-no-in, the mystic hand signs of Mykkyo Buddhism also contributed to this reputation.

Disguise: Although normally thought of as black-clad assassins, the ninja often used to disguise themselves as members of other groups, usually those found travelling the country. The most common were the shichi ho no de (seven ways of going):

1. Yamabushi - Mountain warrior-priest.
2. Sarugaku - Actor or entertainer.
4. Butai - Theater performers.
5. Akindo - Merchant.
7. Shukke - Buddhist monk.

Next month, creating and playing ninja characters; more on ninja skills and equipment and an introduction to ninja tactics.□
BATTLEBIKES
Games Workshop Ltd

There are no surprises in this, the first supplement for Games Workshop’s highly successful, Battlecars. As the name suggests, BATTLEBIKES introduces two-wheeled warriors into the game of deadly driving.

In the box, there are cards and counters for six different bikes and for six pedestrians, more weapon counters of the kind supplied in BATTLECARS (including lots of rockets that the motorcycles can now use) plus the usual reference sheets and damage counters.

The rule book has two scenarios, as well as individual additions to the BATTLECARS rules (the most important being related to pedestrians and movement modifiers incurred through engine and tyre damage). There are also all the rule amendments for riding armoured motorcycles.

Major changes are that bikes have a maximum speed of 10, and can avoid trees, mines and spikes with some clever driving. This improved speed and manoeuvrability gives the bikes an advantage over the cars in movement, able in combat, having less armour and only two wheels to balance on. Two bikes work out as being roughly equal to a car.

This is the basis of the second and best scenario; Smokey Joe’s Cafe. The Scarlet Dukes (2 Battlecars) take on the Black Angels (4 BATTLECARS) who are making trouble in Smokey Joe’s. This game has a nice balance, with the spare bike parked outside the cafe often playing a crucial role.

The first scenario is ‘Raid on Taccoville’, where the townfolk (7 pedestrians) try to stop the Black Angels (3 BATTLECARS) from robbing the bank. This is fun for those who like carnage, but trying to keep track of seven pedestrians can be a frustrating job.

Two wheeled warriors have now hit the road (and they do...often) - the introduction of armoured motorcycles is a welcome addition. The scenarios are the richest feature of this supplement, and I hope there’ll be more printed in the future. If you like BATTLECARS then BATTLEBIKES is a winner, though a few new weapons would have been nice.

Overall: 7

Ian Waddelew

In Open Box, science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks currently in the shops are reviewed by independent authorities. Ratings are on a scale from 1 to 10, in several categories, or as a single overall mark for accessories.

OPEN BOX

TURBOFIRE
Auto Ventures

Auto Ventures is a new company, producing scenario modules for the most popular vehicle combat systems; Car Wars, BATTLECARS, and Highway 2000. This first is a race game, set in Quebec but containing enough information to set up a world racing championship.

CanAm duel racing crosses Grand Prix racing and normal road duelling, with dramatically improved vehicles and tracks. The rules include the information needed to design the cars and run races, plus details of NPCs, the track, the history of CanAm racing, and a slightly dubious historical background which includes Britain as the number one superpower, a Tsarist revival in Russia, and the power disintegration of the United States into separate power blocs.

The rules on vehicle design and handling add new areas to all three systems. For Car Wars there are two new vehicle bodies, plus appropriate power plants, tyres, suspension, and weapons. The handling track is extended to 220MPH. BATTLECARS adds some modified vehicle layouts, an expanded speed track (to 15), expanded drift track, and gunners. I’ve not played Highway 2000 and can’t tell how significant the changes are, but some certainly exist. A section at the end of the book explains how to convert between the three systems, which should be useful for scenarios which aren’t written for all three games.

Race rules are reasonably simple, but involve a lot of calculation. The cars are sorted into starting rank and as the race starts each driver rolls to see if an error has been made, which would result in changes in position during the first five laps, and for the spacing between vehicles at the end of this time. Combat is prohibited until this period has elapsed.

Most attacks are imposed to disable or slow opponents, and there is an ‘unwritten rule’ that any driver who deliberately kills will be attacked by everyone else in the race. Either car in a combat can break off, falling back out of range of the opponent. Once all combatants have resolved the procedure is repeated at five lap intervals until only one car survives, or at least one car has achieved 115 laps. This results in a fairly lengthy race, and can leave players out of combat for several turns.

A section on role-playing covers NPC characters, ranging from Howard Smythe, the British champion, to Wyndy, queen of the duel-racing groups, and gives advice on running the race circuit as part of other games. James Bond and Espionage are mentioned, and the setup seems ideal for Autoduel Champions.

I think it would be possible to simplify some of the game mechanics to speed play and ensure that everyone gets involved in the action, but this would lessen realism. The conversion advice and new vehicle components are useful features of an excellent debut.

Presentation: 8
Playability: 7
Complexity: 8
Skill: 7
Rules: 8
Overall: 8

Marcus L Rowland
HARN  £15.95
CITIES OF HARN  £8.95
ENCYCLOPEDIA HARNICA  £4.95
Columbia Games Inc

Columbia Games have produced a role-
playing games supplement in several
parts which, they claim is the 'ultimate
environmental play aid'. This is the
island of Harn, on the planet of Kethira.
The series of aids outline in some detail
its geography, climate, history, religions
and peoples.

Harn, the master module, comes in
two parts. First is a large, colourfull 22"
by 34" hex-gridded map of Harn which
would look good on any wall, and con-
tains a surprising amount of information
about the island. Second is Harnview, a
32-page handbook which contains an
overview of the island's cultures, relig-
ions and economics together with sec-
tions on generating a Harnic background
for your character, encounters and some
suggested scenarios: none of which are
mandatory but all of which show careful
thought — apparently, the entire series
has been written and re-written nine
times — and could prove useful. Third is
Harndex, a 64-page index which man-
age to cram into those pages a wealth
of information on a wealth of subjects.
There are over a thousand entries and
although there are one or two surprising
omissions — no entry on magic, for
example — there's still plenty for a
game master to chew on.

Cities of Harn details the seven major
cities of the island with some excellent
maps. Each city is shown three ways: a
full colour map, a black and white
players' map and a black and white
master's map, all to the same scale. Additionally there are com-
prehensive keys and each city has at
least one interior diagram of an
important building.

ENCYCLOPEDIA HARNICA is quite a con-
cept, building up in monthly issues a
complete guide to the interesting parts
of Harn.

The first three volumes contain infor-
mation on the dwarven inhabitants of
Harn, Harnic Law, Manorial Economies
(more complex than you would think)
and each volume contains maps of typi-
ical Harnic settlements — a manor, a
dwarven city and so on.

ENCYCLOPEDIA HARNICA is available on
subscription, and feedback is invited
from readers. This last point leads my
suspicious mind to wonder just what is
happening with the content of each vol-
ume of the encyclopedia. Is copy being
prepared for the next edition in only four
weeks? If so, we can expect to see a
delay in quality as time goes on.

On the whole, Harn is a useful aid to
almost any RPG, but there are one or
two points of which you should be aware
before rushing out to buy it. First, role-
playing any kind of character in Harn
other than a human will give you prob-
lems. There just isn’t enough informa-
tion on the other races for satisfactory
role-playing. Secondly, Harn is a magic-
world; magic plays little part in the
inhabitants' daily lives and indeed the
cultures are so constructed as to break
down remarkably quickly if players start
wielding 30th-level magic users in their
vicinity. Third and finally, Harn contains
no NPC statistics at all. Omitted to make
it easier to adapt the game to any RPG
system, they will, however, mean a lot
of work for the game master.

Presentation: 8  Enjoyment: 7
Playability: 6  Content: 7
Overall: 6  Simon Farrell

THE FOREVER WAR
Mayfair Games  £16.95

The Forever War is a 2 to 6 player game
in Mayfair's series of games based on
famous novels — in this case John Halde-
man's award-winning story of 'Starship
Trooper — it's really — well!

The components are of a good sturdy
standard, with a geomorphic and inter-
locking mounted map board, 252 dice cut,
black printed counters representing the
Human troops, their leaders and heavy
weapons, the Turans and their heavy
weapons (Turans have no leaders as
they are clones with a group mind); a
30-page book of rules and scenarios;
and two 6-sided dice.

The rules are quite simple and straight-
forward to learn (there are a few annoy-
ing typos that crop up, but these cause
no game problems). They cover move-
ment, ranged fire, melee, rallying, ter-
rain effects and tech level. Tech level is
probably the most important concept, as
it was in the book. Time dilation in travel-
ing between stars means that when
forces meet they may come from dif-
fert 'ages' and consequently have
more or less advanced weapons. This is
simulated by the player with the higher
tech level being given a column shift on
the combat table for each level differ-
ence when engaging in ranged combat
(not melee).

A player with a lower tech level force
needs to get into melee as soon as pos-
sible. The scenarios allow you to choose
between forces of varying size and tech
level (later tech levels bring on drones,
laser towers and space fighters and eventu-
ally the Stasis field). Combat is extremely bloody especially

mountains provide a small defensive
benefit, whilst Hydrogen ice fields allow
extremely rapid movement at the
expense of almost total vulnerability!

The Stasis field is a whole new game.
Once in it, units are invulnerable to stan-
dard combat. When the defender has
moved all his units inside it (this is
forced by a group morale rule) the map is
set up again, this time with a different
scenario, and represents the inside of the
field. The units are flipped over to their
'stasis field' sides and combat becomes one
of swords, quarterstaffs, archers and
the powerful Turan catapult.

Twelve scenarios and a 'design your
own scenario' package are provided,
but these seem just to give different
force mix to achieve basically the same
objectives for each. Winning con-
sists of occupying a hex chosen by the
defender as the location of his under-
ground base (or preventing this) or wip-
ing out the other side! Not terribly
imaginative although again quite faith-
ful to the book.

FOREVER WAR is an enjoyable, simple
SF ground combat game for those who
want a good battle without over extra
problems to bother with (like logistics
for example). For those who require
more detail Starship Troopers is prob-
ably better value for your money.

Presentation: 8  Enjoyment: 7
Playability: 8  Complexity: 4
Skill: 7  Rules: 7
Overall: 7  Russell Clarke
Critical Mass is a regular book review column written by Dave Langford.

From the Sickbed

Lord Valentine's Castle and Majipoor Chronicles. Like Lyonesse it slips down easily and only disappoints by contrast with certain earlier work. The sinister Metamorphs are spreading ecological nasties to drive us from our native world Majipoor. Lord Valentine is on a ceremonious progress which runs into one appalling discovery after another; his protege Hisunne is being schemed against by jealous lordlings; awesome ‘sea-dragons’ are aiding the Metamorph plot... roasting stuff, eh? Somehow, though, the baddies crumble too easily, as when the whole Metamorph threat turns out to collapse with the (virtually, deus ex machina) liquidation of one person, or when the opposition to Hisunne is so quickly won over by his niceness that not one rude word is said about Valentine’s position. In elevating this good-looking commoner lad to the peerage (nudge, nudge, etc.) it’s still a ratting good read and one very effective plot thread remains—the reluctance of Valentine to make way for fresh blood (Hisunne) and let himself be botched upstairs as Pontifex, a title which for reasons of state means you have to live in a hole in the ground. What will Valentine’s ultimate, cosmic decision be? Readers will remain in any agony of suspense unless they’ve cheated by reading the book’s title. Not many surprises, then; but if you liked the previous two you probably won’t be disappointed.

Lies, Inc by Philip K Dick [Gollancz 1979 £6.95] I rather expected to find disappointing. In a sense it’s Dick’s last SF novel, revised shortly before his death in 1982; much of it, however, appeared in 1964 as that uninspiring book, The Unteleported Man. Despite my misgivings, the greatest chunk of new material (roughly pages 74-173) and some sneaky revisions have flipped the novel inside-out—routine political double-dealing gives way to nightmare ‘parawords’, and the almost unchanged ending corkscrews back into this central delirium. New plot elements include echoes of Dick’s disquieting 1967 short ‘Faith of our Fathers’ in Dangerous Visions, and of that enigmatic Book in Galactic Pot-healer (1968). Maybe it’s my childhood, these fevered days, but I’m not sure that Lies, Inc’s maze of nightmares does in fact make sense in objective plot terms: it’s a marvellously hallucinatory experience, though, far better than the original Unteleported Man. Must re-read this one day.

Another mild surprise was Sydney J van Scovoy’s Darkchild [Penguin 249pp £1.95], which despite a depressingly routine cover and blur is pleasant science-fantasy. On one hand, psionic powers so potential and mysterious that they may as well be called sorcery; on the other, ‘Darkchild’ is a programmed clone being used as an organic surveillance device. His progress towards humanity counterpoints the heroine’s pathetic attempts to get her man, but the happy ending comes an epilogue with—again—that heady scent of coming sequels. Darkchild succeeds through evocative writing and ‘information feed’, that obtrusive trickle of data which, in the best game scenarios, keeps satisfying your curiosity and at the same time stimulating it with fresh questions concerning the way things are. Makes a welcome change from all those Penguin flying fantasy novels, whose names momentarily escape me.

Kurt Vonnegut’s Deadeye Dick [Granada 224pp £1.95] makes it as near-SF by neutron-bombing a US city, but is chiefly a straight tragicomedy of power, responsibility and survival. It is a book you do to each other. The Vonnegut idiom of brief, flip, casual paragraphs lets him sneak through some shrewd blows under the lighthearted camouflage, but though often moving the technique sometimes rings hollow. Vonnegut knows a neutron bomb doesn’t really ‘kill people and leave houses untouched’—the introduction admits as much—but he can’t resist using the facile statement and image in his plot. The elementally really killed people ‘in a microsecond’, too: he’d rather be cool and laid-back than honest, it seems. Read the book. But wary.

Also enjoyed: a three collections of short stories—Lord Cooper’s The Tithonian Factor [6 stories, Gollancz £1.50pp £7.95], R A Lafferty’s Through Elegant Eyes [15 stories, Corroborree Press £38pp, about £15 from importers] and Thieves’ World by Robert Silverpir [8 stories plus oddities, Penzance £221pp £1.95]. The first two are very characteristic of their authors, though not as good as previous collections; the third is a patchy multi-author anthology with the common ‘Sanctuary’ setting, many readers will noow through the tie-in games. It’s adequate.

Who are the best SF authors? Wolfe, Aldiss, Priest, Dick. Who are the worst? Asimov, Heinlein, Brunner, Hubbard, Fantuanche. The most pretentious? Brunner, Watson, De Laney, Ellison, Donaldson. The most sexist? Heinlein, Norman, Copper, Russ (!), Pournelle. The most obnoxious... maybe I’d better stop here. Such were the results of an SF fan poll at the excellent convention Tynecon II, May 1984.
NEW!
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SOLO ROLE-PLAYING ADVENTURE

Time is running out...
You are the last of The Kai, only you can save
Sommerlund from the wrath of the Darklords

THE CONCEPT The Lone Wolf books are full blooded, action packed, solo adventures which you begin by adopting certain characteristics and skills that will aid your survival. Each turn of the page demands a decision and presents a new test for your skills. As the adventure untold from page to page and from book to book, so your skills and experience develop. Items that you find in one adventure can be retained and used in future Lone Wolf books.

Book 1
Flight from the Dark
You are Lone Wolf. In a devastating invasion, the Darklords have destroyed the monastery where you were learning the warrior skills of The Kai Lords. You are the sole survivor of the massacre, the last of your country's warrior elite. Can you reach the capital of Sommerlund and warn the King, or will you perish behind enemy lines?

THE AUTHORS
To regular readers of White Dwarf, the author/illustrator team of Joe Dever and Gary Chalk needs little introduction. Both are contributing editors to the magazine with their popular 'Tabletop Heroes' miniatures review feature. In 1982 Joe Dever won the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons® Championships in Baltimore, USA, and he has appeared on TV, radio and in the national press in connection with fantasy role-playing games. Gary Chalk is the inventor of the acclaimed wargame, 'Cry Havoc', and illustrator of the current bestselling fantasy game, 'Talismans'.

- The books are set in Magnamund, an entire world of fantasy adventure, created and developed by the authors to form the rich background of the Lone Wolf series.
- Each book features the superb line drawings of Gary Chalk and comes complete with full-colour game map and action chart.
- These two titles are the first of four Lone Wolf books to be published during 1984; further titles will follow in 1985.

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Book 2
Fire on the Water
Bitter war rages throughout your land as the evil Darklords lay siege to the capital. The King sends you on a desperate quest to retrieve the only power in Magnamund that can save your people – 'Sommersword' – the sword of the sun.

UNIQUE
As Lone Wolf you will constantly dice with death. But, unlike other fantasy games and books, you need no dice.
A unique Combat Table frees you from the limitations of the six-sided dice without losing the thrill of the unexpected. The Lone Wolf game system is simple yet sophisticated, allowing you to be Lone Wolf wherever and whenever you like!

SPARROW BOOKS AN IMPRINT OF ARROW PUBLICATIONS
The story starts in myth. Thousands of years ago, having created the world, the gods gathered the peoples of the world to them. Belar watched over the Alorns, a fierce and hearty race. Issara was lord of the chaotic and decadent Nyissans. The bull-god Chaldon was worshiped by the lawful, if slow-witted, warrior race called the Arends. Mara took the form of the Marags (later to become extinct): Nedra, the Tolnedrains; handsome Torak, the Angarakrs. The oldest God, Aldur, was God of no one race – he gathered and taught sorcerors from all over the world.

Then dissension and strife came amongst the gods. Seeking absolute dominion, Torak stole the magical Orb of Aldur from his brother Issara, who tried to use it to himself master of the world. When he used the Orb’s power to damage the earth itself, however, a burst of energy burnt him terribly. Since then, although maimed, Torak has always sought to repossess the Orb of Aldur. Since this time the Orb has never been used. In fact, it is simply too powerful an artifact to use in any D&D scenario or campaign. A few of the personalities and creatures of the world are given below.

**TORAK**
- **Armour Class:** -1
- **Movement:** 30”
- **Hit Points:** 145
- **Attacks:** 2/round for 3-36
- **Special Defenses:** +3 or better weapon to hit; surrounded by Ring of Spell-Turning effect.
- **Magic Resistance:** 80%
- **Alignment:** Lawful Evil
- **Fighter:** 15th Level
- **Magic User:** 16th Level

Of the seven gods who created the world, only the evil Torak has chosen to remain physically present within it, while the others guide their followers from the Outer Planes. Torak stole the magical Orb of Aldur from his brother gods, but when he used its powers to damage the fabric of the world it turned against him, searing him with its fire and maiming him horribly. The Orb remains his nemesis – when Torak is near, it responds to his presence, and he will always recoil in fear even though, paradoxically, his greatest desire is to possess it again.

Torak’s power is currently dormant since his defeat by the Warden of Riva, Brand, centuries ago. When he awakes, he will contend again for dominion of the world, and that will be the Day of Judgement.

**ALGROTHS**
- **No Appearing:** 1-8
- **Armour Class:** 8
- **Movement:** 12”
- **Hit Dice:** 2d8
- **Treasure:** None
- **Alignment:** Neutral
- **Intelligence:** Low to Average

These predators dwell in the mountains of Ulgo and occasionally range down in search of human prey. They prefer to attack at dusk or by night, for their highly developed senses of smell and hearing allow them to hunt in near total darkness. In appearance they seem somewhat ape-like, but with goatish heads and bare, scabrous grey skin. Their hands have long talons rather than fingers, and these are coated with a virulent poison. Some believe them to be distantly related to trolls but this remains unsubstantiated.

**MUD-MEN**
- **No Appearing:** 2-6
- **Armour Class:** 6
- **Movement:** 6”
- **Hit Dice:** 3d8+2
- **Treasure:** C
- **Alignment:** Chaotic Evil
- **Intelligence:** Average

When the Serpent Queen of the warped, chaotic evil Nyissans wishes to exercise her wrath against her enemies, she may send a force of mud-men to slay them. Mud-men are unhinging entities composed of clay tangled with vines, and dead twigs. As such they are very difficult to slay. However, if a mud-man is struck for 7 or more points in a single blow, this will strike the sapient snake which resides at the heart of the monster and provides its directive intelligence – the mudman will collapse at once.

**BELGARATH**
- **17th level M/druide; AC8; HP59; Align: Lawful Neutral**

Str: 12; Int: 17; Wis: 17; Dex: 13; Con: 13; Cha: 16;
- **Druidic Spells:** 1st – Animal friendship x2, faerie fire x2, pass without trace, purify water, speak with animals, detect magic. 2nd – Charm person or mammal x2, create water, cure light wounds, heat metal, trip. 3rd – Call lightning, cure disease, hold animal, neutralize poison, pyrotechnics, snare, tree. 4th – Animal summoning I, call woodland beings, cure serious wounds x2, dispel magic, produce fire. 5th – Animal summoning Ix2, commune with nature, control winds, rock to mud. 6th – Animal summoning III, cure critical wounds, transport via plants, weather summoning. 7th – Control weather, creeping doom, reincarnate.

Magic User Spells: 1st – Push, shield, shocking grasp, sleep, friends. 2nd – Forget, invisibility, knock, wizard lock, esp. 3rd – Clairvoyance, feign death, fireball, lightning bolt, suggestion. 4th – Confusion, fear, fumble, monster summoning II, wizard eye. 5th – Bigby’s interposing hand, contact other plane, teleport, passwall, hold monster. 6th – Control weather, disintegrate, legend lore. 7th – Limited wish, mass invisibility, power word stun. 8th – Mass charm, Seren’s spell immunity.

Belgarath is a powerful sorcerer who has lived for thousands of years and who studied as pupil of the god Aldur when the latter still dwelt in this world. Belgarath is able to take the form of a great wolf up to three times a day (in contrast with standard druid shape-changing). It was in wolf form that he led the king of the Alorns and his sons to steal back the Orb of Aldur from Torak’s citadel; the frost of the cold wastes turned his hair grey. Belgarath seems to be a roguish, grizzled, middle-aged man of medium height. He usually passed himself off as an itinerant storyteller called Mister Wolf, but in fact he has many other names. Belgarath prefers to use subtle means to achieve his ends; he will always avoid using magic if he can.

**SCENARIO OUTLINES**
Here are two scenario outlines for using in the ‘Belgariad’, set in the area of the map shown.

**The Restless Spirit**
Many years ago, a climber died on the treacherous northern face of Icepeak Mountain, in the district of the Marags in south-eastern Tolnedra. Many adventurers seek to enter in the land of the now extinct Marags, and it is said that in a cave on Icepeak Mountain one may find the fabled Book of Truth. The climber’s body still hangs from a rock outcropping, perfectly preserved by the
freezing cold, and the characters come across it as they clamber up the moun-
tain in search of the lost cave. Once they have climbed a little further they hear a
terrible, keening shriek. At this moment every one in the party must save vs
spells or fall to their doom on the crags below. Since folklore speaks of the ter-
rible Banshee of Icepeak Mountain, anyone who does some research before set-
ting out might think to use earplugs...

Within the cave the characters may have the usual cavern complex advent-
tures. However, the Serpent Queen also has her eyes on the Book and has sent a
force of mud-men, led by a Nyissan priest to fetch it. They should be encountered
either inside the caves, or outside, waiting for the characters to finish the dirty
work (they hope!).

If the characters actually succeed in locating the cave they will find that the
Book of Truth cannot be brought away from it. Anyone reading the Book will
become permanently and unalterably Neutral in alignment and may emerge
from the cave with a new character class
 so a 7th level MU might choose to
become a 7th level fighter, assuming
characteristics allowed this.

As the party descends the slopes, they
hear the Banshee’s wail far above them.
The wall rises to a crescendo, finally set-
ting off an avalanche which buries the
cave entrance so that none can ever find
the Book of Truth again.

Trouble Brewing
The player characters are hired to escort
Vorskyn, an old cleric, to a village in east-
ern Arendia. It seems that a villager
there was out felling a tree for firewood
when, towards dusk, he espied a white
figure walking towards him through the
forest. In terror, he hurled a stone which
struck the figure on the head. But when
he gathered enough courage to go
closer he found that it was no leprous
undead monster as he had thought, but
a pretty little girl of the Ulgos – a race of
albino's who live in caves and under-
ground tunnels. She was dead.

It is very important to get a cleric to the
village in order to resurrect the little girl.
If this is not done, and the Ulgos plac-
ated, a very ugly incident could arise.
A further complication, if the DM
needs it, may arise from the Brothers of
Banath, a sect within the priesthood of
the god Ul. The Brothers believe that
Ungoland should declare a holy war on
all other peoples, since Ul was the only
god who did not join in making the
world. These dangerous lunatics will
attempt to delay the party and or ter-
iminate them (with maximum prejudice).
By preventing the little girl's resurrec-
tion by these covert means, they hope to
stir up hatred for the Arends among the
Ulgos, thus furthering their twisted
goals. Random encounters, with al-
graths from the mountain of Ungoland
(or encounters with trained/captured
algroths belonging to the brothers) can
give some added 'spice'.

---

A COMPETITION
Take largest third-from-twenty-one's
(The Pale Ones' matter not),
The four you find will join with lines
that cross upon this spot.

This bizarre piece of doggerel has been
sent to us by the crazed priests of the evil
god Torak. We are informed by their
spokesman, one Konsonant by name,
that it contains clues which can lead the
leader to a hidden treasure cache! This
treasure is somewhere in the kingdoms
of the Alorns and Angarak (see map).
The first three Dwarfsters to write and
correctly tell us where the treasure is
buried will win the treasure itself (the
Belgariad books and full colour map).
THE LAST LOG

A Call of Cthulhu Scenario Set on a Distant Planet Far in the Future
by Jon Sutherland, Steve Williams and Tim Hall
GENERAL INTRODUCTION
Although designed for Call of Cthulhu this scenario requires little work to adapt to most popular SRPGs. In our experience the players of Mannox know about the system or the Lovecraft mythos the more rewarding it is for them. Setting the scenario out of the traditional 20s era shows just how flexible Call of Cthulhu can be. This scenario could be used either as a game for novice players, or as a basis of a new series for experienced ones. The Keeper should read the entire scenario thoroughly, before starting. The players are the crew on a Transteck Inc (an interstellar mining company) freighter (the SS Thatcher), ordered to detour to investigate a nearby planet where a Transteck survey team have lost contact for several months. They travel down to the planet’s surface in the ship’s boat, which also carries an ATP (see Technology).

Time Scale (for Keeper and Players)
2224-Discovery of the planet Pozalt 7.
2227-Basic geographical tests carried out on the feasibility of Mannox (an essential ore for ship drive systems) and other deposits suggested.
2230-Interest shown by Transteck Inc and Zark Investments for mining of Pozalt 7.
2237-Rebellion crushed, Zark Investments assets seized and Transteck rewarded with mining concerns (including Mannox).
2240-Mining interests of Pozalt rekindled after deposits of Mannox dwindle from existing mines.
2241-Advanced survey team lands and establishes initial base on Pozalt 7. Planet declared uninhabited although traces of extinct civilisation remains, planet considered viable mining proposition.
2243-12 machine manned sites established. Base one is manned by a small co-ordinating team led by Cpt Spalding.
2245-AFP Agency promising reports a period of 7 months pass without any word from the survey team.
2244-Passing Transteck freighter ordered to detour to send an investigative team to establish reasons for the communications breakdown...

THE PLAYERS
(Crew of the Freighter, SS Thatcher)
Talos Berik
AGE: 46
STR: 13; CON: 16; SIZ: 10; INT: 12; POW: 14; DEX: 15; CHA: 14; EDU: 7; SAN: 40
Hit Points: 13
Skills: First Aid 75%, Listen 60%, Spot Hidden 60%, Detect Traps 75%, Mech Repair 95%, Camouflage 70%, Hide 80%, Move Quietly 85%, Fast Talk 50%, Throw 90%. Weapons: Slug thrower (auto) 2 shots per round, 2d8 damage, 75%, 880ps.
Bowie Knife 50%, 1d8 damage (1 in each box). Profile: Security co-ordinator for Transteck Inc, Talos’ unique abilities as a scout have been exploited to the full by Transteck. Security is always tight when rich rivals compete for new sites. Talos’ experience in the field has meant a constant, if unwinding, supply of security work. During his fifteen years with the company, the ex-marine has become a shrewd judge of character, having met, arrested or totalised villains from every walk of life. Berik has the reputation of being a perfectionist, standing up to anyone who he feels threatens group safety. His clinical approach to the job has gained him immense respect from his colleagues. The trip to Pozalt 7 is to be his last before planned retirement at the end of the year. Physically Talos remains capable but the responsibilities of work have aged him prematurely. Years of solitude en route to missions have resulted in a tense, easily excitable individual brooding and withdrawn. The mission to Pozalt 7 represents the final barrier between the luxury of retirement and adventure is the last thing Talos needs...
Keeper Only Notes. Talos Berik is suffering from acute paranoia. Once the events begin to unfold, suspicions towards certain players will heighten. Throughout, Delia will be of the actual plotline the Keeper should do his best to construct a reasonable mistrust between Talos and the rest of the characters. Talos’ secret should not even be revealed to the player of the character.

Delia Wasp
AGE: 32
STR: 10; CON: 13; SIZ: 11; INT: 17; POW: 11; DEX: 14; CHA: 10; EDU: 19; SAN: 50
Hit Points: 10
Skills: Chemistry 65%; First Aid 85%; Computer/Library Use 60%; Diagnose Disease 75%; Psychology 55%.
Weapons: None.
Profile: Mysterious. In many ways Delia represents the complete opposite of Talos: level headed, somewhat overcautious, preferring to maintain a low profile and unwilling to put herself in any physical danger. Although obviously intimidated by security, Delia is fearless against rash attempts to deal with matters medical. A former medical officer with the Transteck Cryogenic Division she remains ever calm with the impersonality expected from a professional. The overall impression is that of a rather morbid individual less approachable than the good natured Cpt Gritton.
Keeper Only Notes. She is likely to be the first to detect Talos’ basic instability (using her psychology skills). He knows Talos’ reputation and will not let him undermine his authority.

Roger Needham
STR: 11; CON: 12; SIZ: 11; INT: 10; POW: 12; DEX: 13; CHA: 12; EDU: 10; SAN: 55
Hit Points: 12
Skills: Electrical Repair 45%, Mechanical Repair 50%, Operate Heavy Machinery 40%, Pilot Ship’s Boat 95%, Drive ATP 70%, Listen 35%, Spot Hidden 50%.
Weapons: Ships standard rifle, 1 shot per round, 2d6+3, 35%, 10BPs.
Profile: Bored back-up pilot, irritated with the routine of day to day life in space. The one volunteer of the party, he is a lively individual, willing to contribute his ideas even when not asked.
Keeper Only Notes. Needham is the most flexible of the four. His role although not central is crucial, being the only round technician and pilot.

NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS
Security Personnel
Five individuals, use same stats for each.
DEX: 12; SAN: 50
Hit Points: 16
Weapons: Machine pistols, 1d10+2 damage, 45%, 9BPs.
Skills: Move Quietly 40%, Spot Hidden 60%, Listen 55%.
Note: Unbeknownst to control of Talos, they trust him and will be reluctant to follow anyone else’s orders. They should not act particularly independently and rely on clear (and simple) instructions from Talos (via threat mikes). Security operates like high-tensile plastic, body armour that will absorb 1d10-1 damage from any attack.

Ships Crew
Four individuals, use same stats.
DEX: 11; SAN: 40
Hit Points: 12
Weapons: None.
Skills: Ship-handling (general maintenance) 55%.
Note: Under Needham’s command; they are a little more than deckhands virtually useless for any non-ship activities.

Zark Rebels
Four individuals, use same stats.
DEX: 16; SAN: 25
Hit Points: 15
Weapons: Machine pistols, 1d10+2 damage, 50%, 9BPs.
Skills: Move Quietly 55%, Listen 60%, Spot Hidden 50%, Drive APC 40%.
Notes: They have a Zark ATV (see Technology) at their disposal. They will be very unwilling to stand and fight. If attacked they will return fire only for as long as it takes to effect escape. They are semi-uniformed with characteristic Zark Investment insignia. The ATV will be recognised by Talos as standard rebel design.

The Star Vampires
STR: 16; CON: 13; SIZ: 30; INT: 12; POW: 15; DEX: 10
Hit Points: 15
Weapons: Talons, 40%, 1d6+2d6. Bite, 80%, Blood drain.
Note: Reel section on Star Vampires in rulebook for attack details. SAN loss for biting, 1d10. Loss 1 SAN even if successful. This hideous servitor is automatically summoned 1d10 hours after any individual breaks the warding created by
the stone circle. It will attempt to rend all those in the area and will only withdraw when the party has either left or been destroyed. It also possesses the ability to use "shrivelling" spells to its POW limit but prefers to rip-up its victims.

Jem Briggs – The Sniper
STR: 12; CON: 15; SIZ: 14; INT: 7; POW: 9; DEX: 16; CHA: 5; EDU: 6; SAN: 3; Hit Points: 15
Weapons: Ships Rifle (6 shots only) 75%, 1 shot per round 2d6+3 damage, 1d8+3 damage; Skills: Listen 70%, Spot Hidden 70%, Move Quietly 65%, Cthulhu Mythos 25%, Alchemy 25% Notes: Briggs is the last remaining survivor of the first expedition. Constantly on the run from both rebels and tribesmen, he has led the life of a scavenger stealing food from the base whenever he can pluck up the courage to do so. Hidden in the rocks he will open fire on the party if they venture too near the temple. Make sure the players have actually broken the warding around the temple before he fires his rifle, its diameter, and his arrows, with no sign of life. He is long past caring about being rescued. If he is captured alive, at first he is just a gibbering wreck and is unable to make himself understood in any way. After a while and under sedation, Briggs will talk. He quarrels with the ship and in due, however, coherent babbling, describing the summoning of the Vampire at Base 10, a grand and their outrage at the "desecration" of Base 1 and the danger of the Temple (see Keepers' Explanations of the destruction of Spalding's party).

CAMP OVERVIEW (see plan of Base 1) Landing close to the camp, the party's first impression will be that it appears deserted. The campsite is abandoned, with no sign of life. The campsite covers an area below a rocky escarpment flanked to one side by a ships boat and to the other by a ruined structure (see photo). Various chairs, tables and survey equipment lay scattered about. The food tent and laboratory pad are the main features. The whole area is shrouded in an eerie silence. The air is still and the site is tinged by green lichen which seems to be growing on all exposed surfaces. As the sun sets, the site settles, the on-board computer registers a breath-able if somewhat rarified atmosphere with no significant levels of toxicity.

1. Large Tent The contents are seemingly untouched – a few empty food cannisters are scattered about the floor. Cooking equipment is set up to the rear with rough communal seating around a collapsible table. Just inside the tent flaps is a desk and chair from the ships' pod on which is strewn various charts, logs, texts, and the medical aid kit. Information Points: A Food cannisters. They appear to have been opened recently. The contents analysis will show that decomposition is only 3 weeks old. B. Medical Kit. The box is open and the contents are in disorder; those with knowledge of first aid will note that the sedative and painkilling drugs are missing as is the drip feed and stand.

C. The duty rota. This is on the table just inside the entrance and details group activities, shifts and works schedules. The team personnel are:

Hannah Ross – Technical Assistant
Steve Cohen – Technical Assistant
Frank Brand – Security Supervisor
Jem Briggs – Security Officer
Marsh Gascoigne – Pilot and Engineer

Briggs' name has been omitted from the last three day entries, and that brand is noted as sick.

2. Tent Tent flaps are wide open revealing 20 rough living quarters. Clothes, beer cans and personal effets litter the floor of the tent. There are two camp beds, one of which lies the wasted body of Frank Brand. An intravenous drip hangs from his right forearm and dangles down to the ground. A broken plastic bottle and stand lie close to the bed. (SAN check, 1d6 SAN loss if failed).

Information Points: A. The body of Brand is strapped to the bed, both hands and legs are bound to the bed frame. B. The initial cause of death appears to have been blood loss. A closer examination reveals a large gauze along the right side of the torso with considerable lacerations. The bed has few traces of blood. Neither has the ground. C. Chemical analysis will show that the contents of the bottle was a strong sedative (find the medical kit). D. Tags on the clothing show that this tent housed both Brand and Briggs.

3. Tent Part of the rigid steel frame is buckled. Slumped against a support bar is a body with its head resting on its knees (SAN check, 1d6 SAN loss if failed). Contents are two portable beds with personal clothing and effects, there are maps, technical equipment, journals and texts of a military nature.

Information Points: A. The body is Steve Cohen (name tag on his jacket). B. Cohens' jaw bone and shoulder blades are shattered, fractured and displaced. The neck is broken and the clothing is badly torn. C. Some of the vertebrae in the neck are shattered – showing that the body was thrown against the metal support pillar, with considerable force. D. A pool of blood is around the corpse, and the fabric of the tent around the entrance is splattered with blood. E. The tent appears to have been inhabited by the technicians Cohen and Ross.

4. The Ship's Boat The ship is of an identical design to the landing party's. Parked precariously all but 10 yards from the cliff face, an external examination of the ship will reveal that the front right hand landing foot is badly buckled and twisted and dirt partially covers the ship's surface.

Information Points: A: A successful listening roll will detect that faint humming noises emanate from the ship, suggesting that it is still powered. B. The rear cabin door is shut tight and opens only if the emergency release is activated.

C. Once opened, the rear cabin area is exposed revealing a huddled body (SAN check, 1d6 loss if failed). D. Closer examination shows that it is the body of Hannah Ross, one of the team technicians and a pilot. E. Clutched in the left hand of the corpse is a bottle of capsules. The body is unmarked and the cause of death appears to have been a massive overdose of painkilling drugs.

F. To characters with pilot abilities it will be obvious that an abortive launch attempt had been made.

G. Primary ignition switches are on and control systems disarray. Warning lights indicate landing gear malfunction. A primitive radar sweep system has been hastily installed and is operational and registering the presence of both landing party and their ship. The hailing tannoy is on (much to the alarm of the crewman on watch).

I. The armoury locker has been unsuccess- fully forced, upon opening it can be forced easily by two of the party) one rifle niche is empty.

Overview: The ship is fully operational requiring at least two days work with welding equipment to realign the buckled foot.

5. Temple Constructed of rough hewed stone and polished flooring, its low walls have been reduced through the ages. An altar-like structure stands at its centre made of a dense smooth material, cold to the touch. Two tables have been erected on the site, various artifacts lie upon them, some with obvious signs of use. Tools are strewn around.

Information Points: A. A successful spot hidden throw at -20% around the temple will detect a circle of regularly placed black stones. As characters enter the area a breeze (chill) will pick up across the campsite. B. Artifacts scattered on the table consist of a number of utensils, containers and bone carvings. (The players should be discouraged from too deep an analysis of these artifacts – merely being remnants of an ancient and unknown civilisation.) The books on the table are amateurish drawings of both temple and artifacts. There is a black stone polished to a high burnished finish. There are bloodstains on the temple's material. Closer examination will reveal that the runes carved on the black stone are both crude and recent (a few months old).

C. The altar is about chest height from the floor; it is approximately 8' long, with grooves running down its edges some 1/2' deep; a collection channel is cut into one corner. There is little vegetation visible around the site.

D. The whole structure is of a solid and sophisticated construction which has borne well the ravages of time.

6. Ship's Pod Standard Transtec laboratory pod. It is awkwardly balanced upon a rocky outcrop. Despite the pod's legendary sturdiness it's bottom right hand corner has been bumped inward. Only one of its four doors opens and it is only accessible by climbing the rocks and lowering oneself down into the entrance.
8. The piles of equipment are all standard mining survey gear. Drill bits, sampling rods, explosives and detonators, some of which are open.

Stand inactive around the camp; successful electronic analysis will show that the batteries are dead and they are in a considerable state of despair.

Keeper’s Guide to Running the Scenario
The Keeper must always bear in mind that the mission has a series of objectives:

1. Contact Spalding’s Group.
2. Establish contact with the communications breakdown.
3. If necessary pick up survivors.
4. Re-establish communications and secure base and Transect property.

Within the current warlike situation objectives players should be free to draw their own conclusions as to the base’s fate. It should be noted that they should play within the framework given in the player character profiles. Some of the most important elements of the scenario deal with the deterioration of Talos and the worsening working relationship with the rest of the group. Gritton will have to cope with both the mission and the inevitable clash of personalities.

THE EVENTS
The pace of the scenario will gradually build as clues to the disaster emerge. Once the warring circle around the temple is broken (simply by crossing it) the summoning of the Star Vampire will begin. Briggs’ attempt to stop the party from breaking the warding should be flexible and used to speed up the pace if the party have been wasting too much time or are beginning to straggle off the track. Soon after the sniper’s appearance the Zark rebels ATV will be picked up on the radar making straight for the base camp. They will arrive in 3 minutes time. If the radar is not manned then give the party the chance to escape before the ATV bursts onto the scene without stopping. The rebels will make an attempt to warn the party. If fired on, they will simply drive through the camp and disappear into the distance at high speed. The Star Vampire is following closely; the rebels are simply attempting to put someone else between them and it, consequently they will ignore attempts at further communication, and just try to get “the hell out”.

When the Star Vampire arrives at the base, its mode of attack will be to attack anyone visible in the open. If beaten back by any firearms it will cast a shriveling spell on the closest victim. Wise players will assume the fight and try to escape. Note: there are explosives and detonators in the base camp.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SPALDING’S PARTY (Keeper Only)
The initial survey teams had been correct in that an ancient civilization had once inhabited the planet, but they failed to identify evidence that remnants still roamed the planet. The Dan-A-thos cult functionaries are all alien gods and have dedicated their omnicidal existence to the preservation of their sacred shrines, patrolling the planet’s surface and offering sacrifice at the sites. Prior to Spalding’s arrival some survivors of the defeated Zark Investments backed rebels had encamped. Unable to enter an enemy planet’s sphere their numbers have dwindled. Uncertain of Transect response to their presence they decided to avoid contact with Spalding’s group. The events leading up to Base 1’s destruction are much as described for the Transect’s personal log. The reason for Briggs’ disappearance and Brand’s loss of sanity was the witnessing of the tribe’s ritual summoning of its god at Base 10 while they were checking the droid malfunction. Brand, of course, never forgot the sight of old men huddled in the highlands. The tribe, in an attempt to track the two men, followed Brand’s trail past Bases 9 and 6 destroying them as they went, then followed Brand back to Base 1 and at night placed a warding around the temple. Once broken their guardian was summoned to the site of violation, where it tore through the camp. After butchering Brand in his bed, and slaughtering Cohen as he awoke. The others ran for safety. Ross and Gascogne were the first to the pod and Gascogne to the open country never to be seen or heard of again.

Spalding, without weaponry, attempted to seal the pod from the inside by welding the doors closed and escape the beast. None of the two managed to acquire the creature finally broke into the pod and sealed Spalding... Ross was the last to die, locked in the ship with no food, or water. Unable to break into the weapons locker, she constructed a makeshift shard to detect the creature’s presence. Constantly aware of its proximity she could no longer stand the pressure and, after an abortive attempt to take off, committed suicide.

Technology
On board the players’ Ship’s Boat is a small vehicle, an ATV. ATP = All Terrain Platform. Capable of hovering up to 15’ above the ground, the ATV is a purpose-built scout and patrol vehicle for surfacing through terrain and short distance travel. Capable of carrying up to three persons, usually used for ferrying delicate technical equipment, it has no armament, although military variants carry both ground- and air-to-air armament. Targets in the vehicle should be fired at when moving at -20% chance to hit, when stationary at -10%. Its body is to all intents and purposes invulnerable to small arms fire, although the control panel can be easily smashed. ATV = All Terrain Vehicle. Many variants of this vehicle are available – the Zark Investments rebels version is of standard civilian type. Used for many tasks from VIP security to heavy duty haulage. Typical makes: 4 crew, and has a top speed of 70mph.

On board the players’ Ship’s Boat: Standard on board computer; weapons locker with 6 ships rifles (as per Jerm Briggs), medical kit, emergency drugs etc; basic sick bay (sleep pods); emergency provisions for 3 weeks for 6 people; water purifier and 1 vacc suit. The player characters could make a makeshift radar on board their own ship by mining any of the 3 alien artifacts on the planet. The artifacts roll at 30 minute intervals. Pulling out the old radar and transplanting it to their ship, will take 45 minutes but will leave them without radar coverage for that time.

7. Player’s Ship
See the Technology paragraph below.
THE BELGARIAD
By DAVID EDDINGS

IN CORGI PAPERBACK

A MAGNIFICENT FIVE VOLUME EPIC
OF IMMENSE SCOPE SET AGAINST A HISTORY OF
SEVEN THOUSAND YEARS OF THE STRUGGLES OF GODS
AND KINGS AND MEN – OF STRANGE LANDS
AND EVENTS – OF FATE AND A PROPHECY THAT
MUST BE FULFILLED!

"They're good! In fact, they're fabulous. More! More! More!"
ANNE McCAFFREY

Book Four to be published
September 21st 1984

25th MAY
RuneRites is a regular column devoted to RuneQuest, edited by Dave Morris.

Mortal Combat

Rules alterations, additions and clarifications

I have received quite a number of suggestions of ways to improve the combat rules. Everyone has their own view of the proper balance between realism and speed-of-play, so the suggestions here are offered for individual referees to modify or disregard as they please.

Fatigue

Stamina has a very significant effect on any real-life fight that goes on for more than a few minutes. Not wishing to use the term "fatigue points" (they require too much book-keeping as well as allowing a realistic approach to combat predicaments), I have opted for a percentage chance of fatiguing or defatiguing (jargon for "recovering") at the end of each round. After the first ten MR, every character is liable to fatigue. Any character who attacks in melee and/or runs during a round and fails a d100 to see if he fatigues. Any character who made no melee attack and moved no more than 2m gets a defatiguing roll.

State  | Effects (cumulative)
-------|---------------------
Normal | 10% ↑ 10% Increase
Flagging| 5% Attack
Winded | 5% Attack, Parry
Puffed Out| 5% Attack
Exhausted| 5% Parry, free movement
Finished| Have remaining Attack Pary and Defence

The numbers shown are the initial penalties, with the character's normal chance to use the weapon.

Experience Increase Rolls by Lewis Jardine

I am sure that everyone has found that player characters tend to use their favourite weapon until they qualify for an increase roll at the end of the adventure, then switch weapons in order to get another increase roll.

A character can get any number of "stars" (ie, eligibility for an increase roll) during an adventure, but each "star" gives the potential for only a 1% increase in the skill concerned. (So if Olaf gets three successful Fast Talk rolls during an adventure, he will attempt three increase rolls afterwards; if all the increase rolls succeed, his Fast Talk ability goes up by 3%) The maximum possible increase that can be gained from a single adventure is equal to half the character's INT if the skill is below 75%, or one-quarter INT if the skill is 75% or more, rounding fractions up.

This system means that a skill percentage might be any number, as opposed to the current vs system where skills are always multiples of 5%. To interface his system with the rest of the vs system, Lewis rounds any skill percentage down to the nearest multiple of 5% for purposes of determining training costs and tile choice of weapons, etc.

This system will result in a much slower increase in little-used skills (realistically) and will mean that characters trying to become Rune Lords will have to train quite a bit in the non-combat skills required for the job. Players should still find it quite possible to make it to Rune level but perhaps not at quite the same hectic rate that some players manage at the moment!

Weapon Lengths by John Beam

Do you ever have fights where one character uses a dagger and the other uses a pike? In the real world, the man with the dagger would be long dead before he got within striking distance of the pikeman. But what if he sneaked up close and jumped the pikeman? Wouldn't the pike be useless at such a close range? Not in RuneQuest! It isn't: both attack and parry with normal chances, and each with the same number of attacks.

One solution to establish ideal ranges at which a weapon can be used. Any weapon used at a range other than its ideal incurs penalties:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weapon</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>VR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>X-20</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>X-20</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>X-20</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers shown are the Attack/Parry penalties, 0 means the character has his normal chance with the weapon.

Note that these ranges do not represent the actual arm or weapon length, but rather the distance required to use the weapon freely in combat. Shields cover under the same range penalties as weapons; this does not represent the space required to use them, but their effectiveness against different lengths of weapon. Small shields should be treated as comparable to an SR4 weapon for this purpose (ie they use the top row of the table above), medium shields count as SR3; large shields, SR2.

Once this range modifier table is used, the ranges between character obviously becomes quite important. This can either be determined from figures positions (in which case the Dungeon Floor Plans will be useful), or more abstractly by moving characters' counters on a range chart. In any round, melee characters have certain options.

Close — an attempt to move closer to your opponent.

Standoff — standing off an attempt to move away from your opponent without leaving yourself open to attack.

Oppose — opposing a close or standoff manoeuvre can be done only if your weapon is within range of the character (ie with a dagger you cannot oppose a character closing on you from Extreme to Very Long range).

A character who is not opposed can move as per normal movement rules. A character who is opposed can:

1. Roll his Defence and move 1.5m closer or further away the way.
2. Give up his attack and Jump or Tumble 1.5m either way.
3. Give up his attack and parry, and Jump or Tumble 3m either way.
4. Parry a failed attack and move 1.5m either way.
5. Make a critical parry and move 1.5m either way.
6. Move 1.5m either way if the opposing character fumbles.

These are cumulative, so if, for example, you critically parry a fumbled attack, you can automatically move 4.5m either way. The range scale is designed for human-sized creatures. In the case of the 10' troll using weapons three times normal size, the range scale would be expanded:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the troll in question were using a broadsword it would be able to attack (and try to oppose) the human closing on 1 when the latter was still 18m (60 feet) away. But if the human gets close enough to hit with his own weapon he will get the advantage (the man's E, V and L ranges correspond to C for the troll, while his Normal and Closer ranges correspond to the troll's Very Long range at which point it cannot use its sword at all).

My only objection to John's system is that the -20% penalties may prove rather overwhelming. Referees running campaigns where characters tend to have skills in the region of 50% or lower might try reducing all the Attack/Parry penalties by half —DM.)
THRUUH! THE BARBARIAN

The Three Tasks of Thrud

Chapter 5: The Temple of Set

Oh, you! Tell me where to find the Eye of the Serpent— or I'll break your arms and legs off!

Hah! Before Barbarian Fool! I am the Supreme Guard of this Temple...

Look— I am enshrined with the Serpent in this Temple. I can't just let you...

Er, tell you what. I'll give you a couple of clues and you can...

O.K. Okay! Down the stairs, second on the left. Now give me a hand or I'll fall.

Thud!

Inside.

Oh, er. Can you tell me where to find the Eye of the Serpent?

Without hesitation, our hero leaps into action!

Thunk! Wok! Hiss!

Careful, Barbarian! That snake's poisonous!

I thought it tasted funny!

So at last Thrud completes his second task.

Sigh. Rescued— how can I ever repay you?

Eh? Or that's all, don't mention it.

Never realised rescuing anyone could be so easy!

Hey! What about untieing the girl. Are you looking? Hey! Come back here, you finished monkey! Path? I thought you was going to rescue me!
PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

The Sunfire's Heart

Part I: Erresea Island by P G Emery

PLBeM7 in Sages at Basil Port owns Erressea, a one of 70 or 80 cold volcanic islands known as the Aurassic Islands. It is of no real use to the Guild but is leased out to anyone interested for the annual sum of 1,000gp.

The current leasees are two foreigners known only as the Dark Leopard and Lord Silver (who is an albino). They have always paid the rent punctually, all transactions having been made through Telfior, an honest but shrewd merchant. Telfior is one of the few sailors prepared to supply the distant islands, and the gold payments are ferried across to the mainland in his ship, the Tyger's Eye.

The latest payment, however, was due over six months ago. Telfior is untraceable, and so Phalco Lins, the scribe in charge of the Guild's lands, has tried in vain to find another merchant willing to collect the rent but Erressea is too far off major trade routes for other merchants to consider the journey. In desperation, hearing of the party's fervent object to the occupation of the unalterable Heart may also be affected by its powers. (The Dark Leopard suffered this fate.) The Heart may be recalled into its stable form by reading a special spell, but only when the presence of the Heart is particularly strong. In its stable form it may also be 'claimed' by use of another spell. Once claimed, it fuses with the claimant for the duration of his life and confers upon him a chaotic alignment. While the claimant can use all the powers of the Heart, he will have effectively priced himself out of any campaign. (As an NPC, he will probably go on in an attempt to re-unify the Empire.)

The Heart itself has no powers outside the Aurassic Islands and the Black Islands. Nonetheless, it is still greatly desired by Asutren. After the demise of Starnol, the Earthfriends decided the Heart should be banished to a distant place and kept under close guard. The island of Erressea was chosen for this, and a large community of Earthfriends (clerics and magic-users) were set to guard the Heart. They and their descendants have never had any use for the outside world. For a while, the colony prospered and a great amount of building took place, but eventually they dwindled. The last Earthfriend, Jovian Sturlasson had one heir - a son who was a half-wit and therefore incapable of guardianship. Increasing age meant Jovian could no longer control the Heart, so he sealed it away in a cave in an attempt to restrain its powers. Being wise, he also left clues to its whereabouts, should the powers be released unrestrained upon the islands. Earthfriends and Earthrunes know of the existence of the Heart but few of its location.

DM'S INTRODUCTION

The fate of the two missing rent-payers is merely a part of much greater events, closely concerned with the legends and history of the Solarian Empire.

History of the Solarian Empire (DM only)

The Aurassic Islands were once a healthy, thriving part of the Solarian Empire, trading in valuable minerals, and hardy livestock. In the early years of the Empire, contact was made with the people of the Black Islands, the location of which has yet to be pin-pointed exactly. These people served a demon-like female, known as Asutren to the Solarians. The strength of the Solarian Empire lay in a potant artifact - The Sunfire's Heart. Its power was used to drive back the fey with which it was regarded. Five wars were fought against the Black Islands, the last ending in a crushing defeat for the Solarians in 1117. The Solarians were declared to be under the protection of the Heart, slaying Ascon Almeris - High Priest of Asutren - as his first act. Defeating Asutren in combat, Starnol banished her to the Outer Darkness, presumably for ever. The activated Heart then turned against the Empire, showing itself as a force of Chaos. This unchecked force of chaos angered an extremely lawful group of clerics and magic-users known as the Earthfriends. With the death of Starnol, the Earthfriends declared the Empire at an end and the islands to be run by a council. The Heart mysteriously disappeared.

The islands prospered for several more centuries although the Earthfriends dwindled. With this slow decline, so the populace decreased until, with the last of the Earthfriends dying out, the islands were left with only a few settlements.

The dating system, however, still remains as that of the Solarian Empire, with the founding year as 1. The current year by island reckoning is 1702.

The Sunfire's Heart

Its powers should really be determined by the DM to suit his own campaign. However, the wielder of the Heart should have his Charisma increased by +20, by 1100.

The Heart's powers are ineptive until it has been 'claimed' (qv).

In its stable form, the Heart appears as a small, golden sun-shaped orb which is indestructible by normal means (Ref DMG). It is a semi-intelligent, highly chaotic force. Concentrated effort on the part of someone sound in mind and body is required to keep the Heart in its stable form. Otherwise it manifests itself in different forms, producing weird images, transient illusions and atmospheric effects. Some of these show signs of purpose, but many are totally without reason. One of the most interesting is its ability to kill people, without the use of its powers. (The Dark Leopard suffered this fate.) The Heart may be recalled into its stable form by reading a special spell, but only when the presence of the Heart is particularly strong. In stable form it may also be 'claimed' by use of another spell. Once claimed, it fuses with the claimant for the duration of his life and confers upon him a chaotic alignment. While the claimant can use all the powers of the Heart, he will have effectively priced himself out of any campaign. (As an NPC, he will probably go on in an attempt to re-unify the Empire.)

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DM'S NOTES

Miraer (Map 2)

The harbour walls are grown over with grass and moss, and a large marsh has grown around the village. The once large population has shrunk to less than thirty, all of whom are living in a state of poverty. On some higher ground, stands a crumbling tower - now a mere shell. There is a weathered notice board above a hole in a nearby bank. In it is the notice: Hole for him with the sword. A short crawl will lead to an underground chamber, barely high enough to stand in. This is the only room in the inn. The proprietor, Simon, is the half-wit son of Jovian, and is now reduced to an old, dirty, crouching hulk.

Simon has no historical knowledge of the island, and if asked the whereabouts of the Dark Leopard and Lord Silver, he will whimper about how 'they took Jovian'. Persuading the party can learn that they took the last to follow the council's lead.

The rest of the villagers live in similar holes. If the party leave their boat in the vicinity the villagers are 50% likely to raid it, taking the contents andی sails before stripping the boat to the waterline for its valuable timber, leaving only its hull.
General Information

The Erreseans are a low, narrow, coastal strip of fertile land, behind which the hinterland is essentially mountainous. What vegetation there is, is mainly yellow-green grass which grows in tufts, broken up by rocky outcrops, and a few hardy conifers. The island’s beaches are of black sand, characteristic of volcanic areas.

The Sunfire’s Heart has strange effects on the island. The most noticeable is the mists that regularly appear and roll over the island. Strange illusions can also be seen in lonely and isolated spots. Two typical ones are:

A hooded figure, his head and hands covered by his robes, advances towards the party, greeting them by name before walking past them and into the distance. If struck, he vanishes.

During one of the misty periods (at night), giant footfalls are heard in the gloom, and a mighty voice recites poetry in the distance, typically:

‘I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent, but turf they trod.’

(Wordsworth: The Prelude)

Successfully dispelling these illusions has no effect.

There are no wandering monsters except in the highlands, where checks are standard (except that no monster of higher than low intelligence or 3 hit dice will be encountered).

The Lake (Map 1)

Sheltered by a rocky outcrop near the lakeside is a decrret wooden building — the Traveller’s Rest, a hospice consisting of a single 20’ working vectory, which is on the Market. The building is brightly lit with candles, and the wall is stacked with fish and is clear-water. It is also the haunt of a bunyip (FF: AC 10; HD 5; HTK 30; Move: 12'; Damage: 1-6; AL: N).

Enswick (Maps 3 and 4)

A small village of about 120 people, living in 35 houses. They support themselves from fishing, sheep-farming, goats and collecting seafood's eggs. The only inn in the village is the Traveller’s Rest. There is a few shops and the villagers mainly rely on barter.

The village is essentially lawless. The people being good-natured and happy to volunteer information without thought of reward. They may even be puzzled and confused by the offer of large bribes. Very few of the villagers have seen magic performed and thus they will be in awe of spellcasters who practice their craft. Riotous behaviour will not be tolerated, but if the characters do some service to the village, the inhabitants will be delighted. The following information can be gleaned by judicious plying with drinks or polite questioning.

A. The Dark Leopard and Lord Silver became tenants of the island some twenty years ago and have been fair to the inhabitants. They prefer to live on the magical island of Rammas (just visible across the water from the village), and would return to Enswick occasionally to buy various essentials, as well as returning annually to collect a small tax. It is believed that they were undertaking mining operations on Rammas. Lord Silver is a white-clad albino, aged about 55, and the Dark Leopard is a short, stocky, dark-skinned man clad in leopard skins, who carried a large sword. They were last seen over four months ago.

B. Telflor used to call on the island regularly, but has not been seen in the vicinity for 18 months.

C. Long ago the island of Errese was inhabited by magical spirits who used to live in the castle above Enswick; although they later moved to the island of Rammas — henceforth taboo to the villagers. They are seen no more, but sleep until the end of the world, deep within the hills of Rammas. (A few memories from the Earthfriars.)

D. The castle was built by spirits who conjured material from the Plane of the Seven Heavens and commanded it to take shape. (Untrue.)

E. The castle has become unsafe to visit at night. Strange voices, noises and lights have been reported in the vicinity. (True, but no-one has dared to investigate).

The houses of the inhabitants are mainly of wood. The main buildings of interest are shown on Map 3.

Map 3

A. Armoury. A stone building with a sturdy oak door which has no windows. It contains a few longswords, shields, bows and pieces of leather armour. By law, all men of the village must learn weapon skills, although their need for this is slight. The weaponmaster, Cambroth, HTK 14; LV1: 3; Fighter 10. He is usually paid in kind for his services and so only possesses 100cp.

B. Blacksmith. The smith, Florian (HTK 5; LV2: 5; LG), makes arrowheads and items for boats, but will undertake other commissions at standard rates. He has a large stock of iron, sold to him by Lord Silver. He is usually paid in kind for his services and so only possesses 150cp.

C. Weavers/Tailors. Raff (HTK 6; LV 10; GP) sells sallycloth, weaves woollen cloth, buys and sells old clothes and also makes clothes to order (at a fixed standard price).

D. The Burrower (Tavern). The bar-room is large and filled with smoke from the peat fire which burns even during the summer months. Frequented by a few fishermen and goatherders, it is also the favourite haunt of the secret followers of Auresten Egbert (LO). Beer costs 2cp, goat’s milk 1cp; pot luck consists of either fish stew, goat’s meat, mutton, or very occasionally, whale meat, and costs 2cp. There are no rooms to let — enquirers will simply be told to ask Jacobs at the council meeting house for the key to the guest house. The innkeeper is Olaf (HTK 4; LV2: LG).

E. Headman’s House. This solid, stone-built edifice also serves as the council meeting hall and is empty except for a large wooden table, benches and a few fancy skins of animals plus assorted heraldry hanging on the wall. The Headman, Jacobs (HTK 3; LV1; LG) presides over the council of five. He can give characters a rough outline of the history of the Aurassian Islands. He will have heard of Auresten, but knows only his name, not his true name. Although he doesn’t know how the Sunfire’s Heart came to Errese, he knows its place in history and will describe it as ‘a wondrous device like a radiant sun’. Otherwise, Jacobs is a corpulent man, of good-natured and rather silly man.

F. Guest House. Old tradition means that the villagers of Enswick maintain this building for the use of travellers; even though it has not been slept in for a number of years. The key is obtainable from Jacobs. Guests may stay as long as they like, free of charge, but must sweep out the council’s hall each week. The building is of stone construction, 30’ long and 15’ wide, with a solid wooden door at the eastern end. It is lived in with eight rooms. Although there are twenty mattresses stored in the rafters, a storage cupboard and a table plus benches. The six windows (three on each long side) are all 2 foot square and shuttered.

G. Boatyard. Five wooden jetties shelter the fleet of small open boats used by the fishermen. Gerrart (HTK 6; LV2; LG) acts as ‘harbourmaster’ and is stationed in the hut by the waterside. He will under-
MAP THREE
ENSWICK VILLAGE

MAP FOUR
ENSWICK AREA

MAP FIVE
CASTLE ABOVE ENSWICK

take small repairs, and also sells essentials such as tar, paint and rope (all at double standard prices due to scarcity). Rowing boats may also be hired out to tourists (plus 1gp deposit)

Stationed at the easternmost jetty is a 30’ sailing boat, with a deckhouse (20 hull points). The name Rediscovery is painted rather shakily on the prow. The forward and central hatches have been padlocked on, as has the deckhouse.

The Rediscovery is the ship of the strangers currently lounging in the Burrower. They arrived some two weeks before the party, and go around the village speaking of peace, love and getting back to nature.

They dress strangely—wearing white smocks embroidered with flowery designs, coloured headbands and sandals.

They are, in fact, followers of Asustren/Elshauf whose doctrines are contrary to those they preach as imposters. Welandt Brem (AC10/2; HTK14; LV3; CE; Cleric; Str: 10; Int: 12; Wis: 13; Con: 10; Dex: 9; Cha: 13) is their leader. Out of his disguise, he appears as a dark-haired, swarthy man with thick, bushy eyebrows. Somewhat half-hearted after 40 years of thankless service to Asustren, he is careful not to show this to his followers. On ship he has a suit of black plate-mail, shield and mace.

Spells: 1st—Darkness, command, curse; 2nd—Hold person.

Abakur (AC10/2; HTK3; LV2; CE; Cleric; Str: 9; Int: 11; Wis: 12; Con: 12; Dex: 11; Cha: 10) is a pallid, slightly overweight man, fanatically loyal to Asustren. On ship he has plate mail, a shield and his flail.

Spells: 1st—Cure light wounds, darkness.

Vagar (AC10/5; HTK8; LV1; CE; Cleric; Str: 12; Int: 14; Wis: 12; Con: 14; Dex: 9; Cha: 9) respects Welandt, believing Abakur to be overly zealous, and is a quiet, restrained individual of plain appearance. On ship he has his armour (black scale mail), shield and mace.

Spells: 1st—Command.

The clerics are backed up by two fighters, Torstein and Goldil, also Asustren deviates. Torstein (AC10/3; HTK14; LV2; CE; Fighter; Str: 14; Int: 5; Wis: 5; Con: 13; Dex: 13; Cha: 7; Plate mail, 2-hword, longsword on (ship) is not overly bright, although clever enough to maintain the deception of ‘peace-loving’. He obeys Welandt without question and is inclined to brutality. At 6’11” tall, with a broken nose, square left chin and a cutlass scar on his left cheek, he is quite distinctive. Goldil is unremarkable in comparison (AC10/7; HTK6; LV0; CE; Fighter). Leather armour, sword and shield on ship.

Additionally, Esh Dog (AC10/7; HTK6; LV0; CE; Assassin) is at their disposal, although for late-night scouting missions, he has not been on the island, preferring to remain hidden on board the Rediscovery. He is a small, lightly built man, plain but deceptively alert. He has a very threatening manner of speech which he uses to intimidate people.

Caged in the boat’s hold are a pair of ogrillons (FF: AC6; HD2; HTK11, 8; M: 4; DR 2-7; CE) which it is said that a group of small sea creatures.

The aim of the group is to locate Alman Almeris (descendant of Ascof), one of the greatest of Asustren’s clerics who disappeared over 150 years ago. Asustren has revealed that he is in a magical sleep somewhere on the island. When they have found Alman Almeris, their second task is to find the Heart. Asustren claims that with the sufficient power to break the curse placed on her, or at the very least be able to rule the Auric Islands through the offices of Almeris—the Heart.

revitalising the stagnant Black Islands.

Caution: In a distinct Black Islander trait and the group fear slipping into some ancient Earthfriend's trap, giving themselves away to the villagers (who hate the memory of Asustren), or incurring the wrath of Asustren herself. Thus they haven’t investigated the old Earthfriend stronghold above the village, nor the island of Femmas, containing the last clue with areas of local interest. As time wears on, the group will feel more compelled to act bravely, and if the players visit some of the stranger areas, the group will not be far behind.

They practice various unsociable acts among the villagers. They delight in writing the name ‘Elishauf’ around the village in the hope that someone will read it aloud and be snatched by Elishauf. Jakob, if pressed hard by the players will remember this practice to be that of the long,banned and almost forgotten Asustren.

Asustren’s followers will be seriously alarmed by anyone appearing in the village who tend to investigate holes in the ground, old ruins etc (in short, the characters). Their first action will be to pin to the door of the player’s accommodation ‘Elishauf’ on a note. If they fail, they will send Esh Dog to apply pressure, even up to the point of assassinating a character. If all this fails, an all out assault by the two ogillons and the followers will follow. Should the players actually capture Almeris or the Heart, these villains will try anything in desperation to get them back. If they themselves are captured, only Esh Dog and Welandt will actually talk, confessing a great deal if offered some sort of protection from Asustren.

Map 4:
1. A pinnacle of black rock. It has no significance.
2. The mastless and deckless remains of a 40’, broad-beamed merchantman have been driven hard against the shore. The prow bears the name ‘Tiger’s Eye’, the boat having been wrecked 18 months previously and lost by all hands. This wrecking is unconnected with events on the island.
3. This is a small guard-post erected by the Earthfriends, but has long been abandoned to the elements. Inside, it is a functional 15’ square building.

The Castle (Map 5):
This was the first habitation of the Earthfriends after their arrival on Ernessa. About 300 years ago it was converted into a dumpsite repository for the Heart in order to fool enemies and casual treasure hunters. The Heart and the greater part of the Earthfriend community moved to nearby Femmas, although the upper levels of the complex were still used as lodgings for low-level Earthfriends. All was well until a bizarre and fatal occurrence put an end to it. The other Earthfriends sealed the dungeon, abandoning it to its fate. 150 years ago, Alman and a small group of Black Islanders penetrated the dungeon, but none re-emerged.

The outer defences of the castle are ruined and vary between 15 and 20 feet in height. Features of the castles and its surrouneds (see Map 5). A. The Dam. Supplements the meagre fresh water supply of the castle well. The pool so formed is about 15′ deep and stocked with fish.

B. Castle Gatehouse. Only the outer walls stand (up to 40′).

C. The Earthfriend Chapel. Imparts a feeling of gloom and desolation to a LG cleric on entering. Formerly dedicated to the LG deity of the Earthfriends, the chapel has fallen into extreme disrepair; the marble altar at the western and having become green and slimy. The floor has been churned and mixed as if by the footsteps of some giant, horned creature. Unusually, the prints do not extend beyond the chapel doorway. At night, the temple is haunted by...
Buggane (Minor Demon)
Frequency: Rare
Armour Class: 0
Move: 15'
Hit Dice: 8
No of Attacks: 2 (bull) or 1 (ram)
Size: Large
Damage: 2-12/2-12 (bull) or 3-24 (ram)
Alignment: CE
Intelligence: Low

Asustren has dominion over these creatures and may place one in any temple of LG alignment that falls into disrepair in order to discourage rebuilding. It will not leave the building that it is supposed to guard. It appears either as a giant black bull or as a giant black ram and may change between forms as will. (MM p12 bull, p81 ram, giant). This particular specimen, since it is a relative back water, only has eight hit
D. All along this wall are piles of small rocks with decayed timber, tiles etc. the remains of a number of rather flimsy lean-tos.
E. Castle Well. Now a shaft 180' deep and surrounded by a 5' wall.
F. Pillar of Black Rock. 30' high and shaped into an hourglass figure. It appears much weathered and split. It radiates magic. This pillar is the supreme achievement of the Earthfriends: it was intended as an energy focus for the various permanent illusions and other tricks in the dungeon below. Damage due to weathering has lessened the powers of the pillar, and made the dungeon safer since the time Almeris penetrated it. The pillar would have to be smashed to dust and scattered, before it totally ceased to have any effect.

G. Entrance to the Dungeon. A flight of steps leading down. The dungeon tunnels have been cut out of the rock. Ceilings are 12' high and walls are very smooth and level, although unlined. Doors are wooden, unless otherwise stated, and rotten. Wandering monster rolls are not appropriate.

Level One (Map 6)
1. Steps Down. Leads to a small empty room. The door is of iron, with the inscription 'Sealed 1501'. The lock has been smashed, obviously by prodigious strength (actually by a member of Almeris' party).
2. Sleeping Quarters. These were the postulant Earthfriends 'cells'. Its barrenness testifies to the harshness of their life. It contains a rotted straw pallet, a jug and bowl.
3. This is as 2, but a brown leather book containing a collection of smutty stories is hidden under the mattress.
4. As 2, but this is also the room of one of those concerned in the event (conjuring up Asustren) which led to the abandonment of the dungeon and castle. In the pallet will be found: 5gp, a stick of chalk and a tiny jet amulet in the shape of a woman in armour.
5. As 2, but this is the room of the ringleader, named Swain, in the conjuring of Asustren. It contains a very small metal chest which is locked and hidden in a dark corner. Inside this are 3gp, a lead tablet inscribed with the words, 'I worship thee, beautiful Asustren. Admit me to thy service and spare me my servitude', a piece of parchment with the words, 'Snorri Staroest if you read this may you be cursed as a harsh master of postulants and for finding me out', and a parchment of great age, obviously much examined, entitled in common, 'Conjuring Eli'schauf' but the contents are too arcane for one without special

MAPS SIX LEVEL ONE

THE CASTLE

MAP SEVEN LEVEL TWO

KEY
Wooden door
Iron door
Liquid
Circular stairway
knowledge of conjuring demons to understand. The shade of Swain, a youngish man in a dark robe, who became tired of the harsh life of the Earthfriends, may appear in the corridor here, but will disappear if spoken to, stared at or touched. The shade has no power or voice.

6. Infirmary. It contains: 3 beds with mattresses, all badly decayed; 3 shelves with glass bottles of herbs, all labelled (DMO p220-221), although the herbs have all decayed into powder, and a cupboard full of rusty surgical instruments.

7. Kitchen and Refectory. 4 shelves support about 50 pewter plates, various cooking pots, ladles etc. There are two iron stoves and two long tables with benches.

8. Food Store. Contains numerous decaying barrels and sacks, full of equally decaying food. There is a 1% chance of catching a nasty disease here (see DMG).

9. Museum. The door is iron, but not locked. It bears the legend 'Museum'. The collection is hardly impressive, however. The items are displayed on stone pedestals and consist of: 3 wooden model boats, all longships, unlabelled; 1 stone idol, 1½ high at the shoulder, of the old Aurassic Island Bear deity, Bungol (labelled as such); 3 small metal plates, totally black and reflecting no light, obviously from a scale mail coat, labelled as fragments of the armour of Asustren; 1 frail-looking two-handed sword, labelled as the (alleged) sword of the Emperor Starnol; 1 tin of pink crystals labelled 'Badger Poison'.

No exhibit shows signs of decay (a capricious effect of the pillar).

10. This room also has an iron door, which has been forced. It bears the inscription 'Snorri Starost, Master of the Postulants'. Inside, there is a bed, the mattress of which has been slashed open and searched, a desk and a chair. A large number of parchments lie scattered over the floor: they all relate to trivial matters such as sheep-shearing, accounts, food stocks etc, although one has the words, ‘Memo: Swain is up to no good!’ A bottle of ink was also smashed in the floor during the search, also a lantern. 7 gp and 3 jewels lie at various points on the floor. The search was conducted by Almeris and his men looking for information.

11. Store. Contains a wide variety of farming implements, eg sheep-shears, bill-hooks, hoes, meat hooks, branding irons etc.

12. This room is bare, merely serving to house the stair-case down to the next level. The rock in a 7 diameter circle on the ceiling has been melted, as if by considerable heat, and so has the rock of the stairs. Five skeletons lie sprawled in the room, victims of the strange events on the level below.

Level Two (Map 7)
On this level 200 years ago, five bored postulants, after study of an old document, attempted to conjure up Asustren/Elishauf. The duty appeared (briefly). Regarding Earthfriends as enemies, she brought with her bearing heat and other magics killing all of this level and several on the level above. Stonework on this level was heated and slightly melted and doors were burnt away along with most contents of the rooms.

13. Assembly Hall. This was furnished with tapestries and pictures, but these were burnt away. Torch brackets survive at 15 intervals.

Asustren was conjured in this room and strange marks – circles, snakes, human figures, numbers – made in chalk on the floor are still faintly visible. Also on the floor are charred ends of wands, sword hilts etc – magic items destroyed as part of the conjuring.

The five involved in the conjuring are now sooty black marks on the wall (in vague silhouettes). A sixth, intended as a human sacrifice, is now a sooty mark on the floor. Before leaving, Asustren wrote her name 'Elishauf' in glowing green letters a foot tall in the ceiling. They are still there.

14. Old Instruction Room. There are charred remains of benches on the floor.


16. This room, less scorched than the rest, is where the Earthfriend formerly conducted their experiments into the magical and alchemical suspension of life and the creation of new forms of life.

There are four stone operating slabs 7x2½ and 4 feet high and a metal stretchy, badly melted. The walls were lined with wooden shelves, now burnt. The floor is covered with broken glass and a few surgical instruments.

17. The door to this room is iron, but not locked. The room was little damaged by the coming of Asustren.

18. The metal door to this passage is badly melted, but south of it, the walls are little touched by the conflagration.

19. This room marks the start of that part of the dungeon adapted as a dormitory for the Sunfire's Heart.

The door is made of a heavy purplish metal. Almeris and his men chanted on the door the following dedication in the ceremonial tongue of the Black Islands: 'Mende, mende, mondo Elishaufes!' ('Onward, onward, in the name of Elishauf!'). Inside, the room is lit by clerical continuallight (cast at tenth level of ability). Out of the opening in the north wall quite a strong wind blows and whistling and roaring are heard from the depths. (This is to deter the suggestible from further investigation: it has no real significance.

20. Rough Walled Passage. 5 high, it slopes steeply downwards. A strong wind blows up and it will extinguish any torches. A modified continuallight spell (cast at tenth level of ability) absorbs all colour and dims light to 25% of its brilliance (regardless of sources).

Level Three (Map 8)
The entire level is lit by continuallight spells (cast at twelfth level of ability). It is characterised by magical and illusory effects. The power and control for these is provided by the black pillar (Castle Courtyard, F).

Characters are not entitled to a saving throw against the illusions unless actively trying to disbelieve them; saves are made at -3. Illusory effects triggered off or disbelief, and spells cast by rooms 're-set' after twelve hours and function exactly as before. Illusions feel solid and make convincing noises when hit. Doors on this level are made of a purple metal, and unless otherwise stated, have been forced open by the earlier parties.

21. This is a rough, cave-like room. There are numerous six-inch diameter holes in the roof. Out of these a strong wind is blowing, mak-
ing roaring, booming, shrieking noises. If the party hears this, the noise of the wind will sound like a moaning voice crying, "go back!"

Over the south-west exit, there is an inscription. Beyond here see no

22. The large room is divided into three illusory rooms. These will survive striking, touching etc. in fact, anything short of successful dispelling.

A. The walls of this room are smooth and bare. The continual light spell here is modified and sheds a warm pink glow.

B. The walls, floor and ceiling here are lined with "gold" shaped into strange patterns. Countless weird symbols (all of which are meaningless). No attempt to remove the "gold" will be successful.

C. The walls of this room are gaily painted with row after row of pictures of punks, men building houses, goats, sheep, dwarves dancing with beautiful princesses, etc. On the floor is a pile of 5,000 illusory gold pieces. If they are believed and carried away, they have twice the regular encumbrance value, and furthermore, will disappear when the party attempts to move through.

When the party has crossed through all three rooms, they will disappear at once, revealing the completely bare true rooms — an objects less than 5' square and no other features.

23. Corridor: This stretch is a slight variation of the teleporting corridor trick beloved of dungeon builders.

W. Anyone passing this point will be 45% of the time be teleported to point Y, and will be aware of it. If a party is involved, they all go at once.

X. The first time this point is passed, the noise of a 10 die fireball explosion will be heard from round the corner.

Y. Someone passing this point will 73% chance be teleported to point X, and made to face the opposite direction — again, without realizing it.

24. Door: a high and barred on the corridor side. There is no lock. Almeris has played his trick through the door.

25. Community of Dark Creepers [FF], the passages beyond the door are narrow, damp and dirty. The Earth Friends ignore the creepers who provide the party's side of the door, and they lie quiet without understanding the causes of this.

P. The lair of 5 dark creepers. (AC:8, HD:1-1, HTK:6,5,3,9,2; Move: 9; Damage: 1-4; Abilities: Detect magical items at 30' create darkness three times a day, 4th level thief abilities.)

Q. The lair of a dark alster (AC:8, HD:2-1, HTK:12; Move: 9; Damage: 1-6; Abilities: Those of dark creeper, plus wall of fog twice per day. This particular one can also cast phantasmal force twice per day.)

R. The lair of a dark alster (HTK:7,5,5,4,9; Move: 30g; Damage: 1-6; Abilities: Those of dark creeper, plus wall of fog twice per day. This particular one can also cast phantasmal force twice per day.)

S. The lair of the dark creepers, with no detectable level 3 or higher in this area.

T. The lair of 7 dark creepers, with no detectable level 3 or higher in this area.

26. This room is bare apart from the existence of a 30' wide illusory fissure across the floor. This fissure appears to go down, down and down, for countless thousands of feet. The crack appears so deep that it seems impossible for anyone to ever come over from this side. If anyoneUES through the crack, he will find himself on the other side of the fissure, with all the appearances of a normal human.

27. Statue Room. The eastern end stands a metal statue with cruelly human features on a circular pedestal 1' high. It holds a wand in its right hand, which is turned vertically, while its left arm is up. The right hand of the statue is a Wands of Magic (75 charges) and the statue will turn to fire at anything that moves (maximum of two shots per round, and it will not move in one round). It can be confused by rolling twice along the ground for the ability to draw its fire. The statue can take 25 hits (ACs), or can be bent out of shape in such a way as to immobilise it by making a bend bars/lift gates roll. The magic word for a human to operate the wand is Law (AC:4, HTK:3,3,2,1; Move: 9; Damage: 1-6; Abilities: magic wand, with no detectable level 3 or higher in this area). The other arm of the statue is a sword, which is on the left arm of the statue and has a sharp blade.

28. The illusion in this room is not unlike the 6th level illusion spell, only it apparently contains a thick growth of tropical plants in swamps, including many long trees, ferns with hairy stems, fishy orchids etc. Movement through is at 1/20th normal unless the illusion is disbelieved.

The illusion conceals 3 snap shut pits with wooden lids (operate on 1-4 for 1-6HP damage). These of course will be difficult to see, and it may be difficult to work out exactly who has happened to someone who disappears down one.

29. Figure Illusions. In this room there are four illusionary figures. They are dressed in strange, yet realistic clothes. Each can take 14 hits before dispersing. The illusions will surround the party and use their spells (as 3rd level illusionists). Their spells are cast without any verbal, somatic or material requirements. In this case, normally the party will find it impossible to escape.

Figure A: Colour spray, dazzling lights, blur.

Figure B: Fog cloud, blindness (the effect will persist for only 4 rounds or until the figure is dispersed), colour spray.

Figure C: Wall of fog, blur, deafness (see Figure B, blindness, above).

Figure D: Phantasmal force, audible glamer, hypnotic pattern (this will last for 3 rounds).

The purpose of the illusions is to annoy, frighten and damage.

30. White Marble Room. Lined with white marble. This room is floored with a lake of peculiarly limpid liquid, of unbelievable clarity. In its depths are countless shapes, of point, and at various depths, in the pool are slight thickening in the liquid. The pool contains human forms (both male and female). The liquid is viscous, a preservative, and has a numbing effect. Total immersion results in swift unconsciousness and death. This is in the strictest sense a pointless room. There is a man in black chain-mail floating face upwards, quite dead, about 1' below the surface of the pool. This is another of Almeris’ men. If fished out, he is equipped as a normal adventurer, but has a small jackanapes charm and 10gp.

The pool is crossed by a marble bridge 6' wide with no handrail. When the party reaches half way, the room casts a shadow monsters spell (4th level illusionism spell) as a 10th level illusionist. The monsters are not always on the bridge but have always been on the bridge at some time. No one has been able to identify the shadow monsters, and they have been able to cross the bridge. This can be done after four hours of immersion.

31. This room is rough and hewn and full of jagged spikes of rock. Through the arch to the north is total darkness. The continual light here is modified to give the effect of a rapid dull red stove. The whole appearance of the place is alarming.

This room can cast a phantasmal killer spell on all who enter here (a 10th level illusionist). However, if the shadow monsters hit a victim, the victim is not killed. He will merely flee out of a randomly selected exit for 4-8 turns in blind panic. There is a 2% chance of contracting a strange, insidious and dangerous disease, but this is not detailed. DMs note that the northern exit is actually a teleport to one of the following locations (1d6) 1-2: Emswick village community castle chapel, 4: a point 5 miles west of Enswick, 5-6: the middle of section 25.

32. Circular Room. Around the edge runs a 1' wide walk which is 1' high. In the centre is a 3' diameter hole 200' deep, down to the next level. A hook has been fixed into the rock directly above the hole. A few strands of rope still cling to the hook.

Level 4 (Map 8)

This was subjected to a peculiar earth movement some years ago. Wells were cracked and corridors have been distorted so that they are now parallel in cross section rather than rectangular.

There is a hole running through level 4 which contains 200' deep chasms in this room.

There is a fissure 10' wide and 30' deep here.

35. Repository. The portals to this room (forced of course) are rather splendid gold-alloy double doors, worth 250gp each, but weighing the equivalent of 1,000 lbs.

This room is the dummy repository of the Sunfire's Heart, but was badly damaged in earth movements. A lot of rock fell from the roof, and the floor was heaved up in the centre towards the ceiling. Twelve 7' high black sarcophagi, with no detectable level 3 or higher here.

With the level 5 stone golem having been a very small stone golem lies crushed and smashed by a rock fall. Touching the orb produces a 15' diameter cloud of very potent sleeping gas (save at 4 or sleep for 12 turns + 1-6 turns). Usually sleeping gas would be considered harmless, but in this case, it is disguised as a statue. The golem would place them in the sarcophagi which would send them into suspended animation to take their chance in time. The only person ever to be caught this way was Almeris.

The cover of the surviving sarcophagus can easily be lifted by two people. Its interior will immediately glow with bright white light. Inside is a man, who will first appear dead, then twitch, and finally revive after three rounds. This is: Almeris (AC:2, HTK:34, LVL:8, CE; Cleric; mace armed; Str: 13; Int: 14; Wis: 16; Con: 12; Dex: 13; Cha: 17) Spells: 1st—Curse, command, create water, cause light wounds, cure light wounds, cure critical wounds 2nd—Find traps, hold person, resist fire, silence 15' radius, augury 3rd—Animate dead.

Almeris is a handsome man of about forty (but looks younger), with rather long, red-tinted glasses and neat, short-cropped silver-grey hair. He is 6' tall and dressed in black, but in his youth, he has also dressed in red. He gauntlets are black leather with iron studs. A golden brooch with a device (symbolising Astar'sen) on it pins his dark purple cloak at the shoulder.

If Almeris is rescued by the party, he will ask the current date and explain how he became caught, but will pose as an ordinary adventurer looking for treasure. He will deny all knowledge of the Earth- friend or the Sunfire’s Heart etc. The dungeon promptly to continue his search for the Heart, having realised perhaps his deception. Having got out, he will probably link up with Weland’s party, who will then take orders from him.

In this case, normally the party will find it impossible to escape.

Next issue: Part 2 — On to the island of Rammas.
CHAPTER 5: BLAST OFF
Having secured the deal with the mysterious PATRON, Hayes must now do the difficult part... telling Captain Flinn...

The PATRON arrives...

Jump-drive repaired, the Osprey leaves...

On board the crew relax, safe in the knowledge that Regina's space pursuit corp is on strike for better pay... here the PATRON is introduced to the real Captain Flinn...

Hayes moves into 4th, step down on the throttle and "kangaroos" (clutch man, clutch!) into jump-drive... THE ADVENTURE HAS BEGUN!
PLYING THE SPACELANES

Ship Encounters in Traveller
by Paul Vernon

The Starship Encounter Tables in Basic Traveller and Supplement 7, Traders and Gunboats, although adequate in many situations, leave much to be desired if used in a campaign situation over any length of time. Encounters with other vessels should be far more likely in systems with high populations and tech levels, for example, but by concentrating only on starport types on the one hand and a basic throw of 6+ on the other, the rules fail to take this into account. They also tend to make many star system encounters basically the same.

Ideally, each star system should have a unique quality of its own.

Encounter Chances
For each system visited there will usually be two chances for encountering other vessels – once when approaching the main world and once when leaving. The base chance for an encounter can be calculated using the population and tech level digits (from the planet’s UPP) and the Starport Weighting from the table below. Add these three numbers together, divide by 3, drop any fractions and subtract the result from 14. If the system is posted as an amber zone add 1 to this figure, and similarly add 4 if it is a red zone. If a Scout Base is present in the system subtract 1, and also subtract 1 if there is a Naval Base.

If the resulting number or higher is thrown on 2d, then an encounter will take place. This number applies only when travelling to or from the main world and/or Gas Giant, however, Negative DMs should be applied for ships not in the main spacelanes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starport</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Starport</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: Regina has a UPP of A-788899-A. Its population and tech level digits are 8 and 10, and its A Class Starport gives a weighting of 11. The sum of these divided by 3 is 9.3, and dropping the fraction and subtracting from 4 gives us 14-9=5. As both Scout and Naval Bases are present in the system we subtract 2 giving us a final result of 3. So an encounter will occur in the main Regina spacelanes on a 3+.

Non-Starships
For encountering non-starships, subtract the encounter chance from 12 and divide by 2, rounding upwards. Add 1 to this figure if the world is Rich, add 1 if the system contains an asteroid belt, and add a further 2 if the main world is itself an asteroid belt. If the resulting number or less is now thrown on 2d then the encounter will be a non-starship.

Example: Yuri/Regina C-360757-D has no asteroid belt and an encounter chance of 6+. (12-6)/2 = 3. Any encounter in the Yuri system will be with a non-starship on a throw of 3+.

Ship Classes
When a starship encounter occurs, the ship’s class must be determined. Only broad classes should be given so that referees can choose the most appropriate ship. These broad classes are Naval, Independent, Scout, X-Boat, Merchant and Civil Vessels.

For determining the specific class of vessel encountered a six-column table should be prepared for each star system. One column should consist of official vessels – Naval (or Independent if the system is not a member of the Imperium), Scout, and X-Boat (if the system is on the X-Boat routes). If the system has a Naval base an additional column should be for Naval/Independent vessels, and similarly there should be a Scout column if the system has a Scout base, and an X-Boat column if it contains a Scout Way Station. Official ships should occupy a maximum of 2 columns. If more than one of the above facilities is present in the system, use one column for Naval (or Independent) and the other for Scout (and X-Boat) vessels.

On the table, a full column should be devoted to them if the main world is rich, and/or there is an asteroid belt in the system. Remaining columns should be taken up by merchant vessels.

In columns containing more than one class of vessel there is an even chance for either to be encountered. Some provision should be made for encountering Pirate vessels as an additional class, just to keep life interesting. Normally two columns will be marked with an asterisk, denoting that these ships will be pirates on a throw of 11+. If a Scout base is present in the system only one column will be so marked, however, and an encounter with pirates would be extremely unlikely in a system having a Naval Base. If a Civil vessel proves to be in piratical hands this could be a captured Naval or Scout ship in addition to a civil ship or Corsair. On a throw of 12+ the pirates will be encountered attacking a third vessel.

Similarly, there is a chance that any ship encountered will be in distress and asking for aid, on a throw of 12+.

Example: Roup/Regina C-778A9A-6 is a stop on the X-Boat network, so the official ships column will have provisions for Naval, Scout, and X-Boat vessels. Also the system has a Scout base, so a further column will be taken by Scout vessels. We’ll assume that an asteroid belt is present so civil vessels will take up a full column. Remaining columns will be taken up by merchant vessels.

Usually, two columns would be denoted as possible pirates, but only one in Roup’s case due to the Scout base. Roup’s listing on an encounter table would look like this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Starship</th>
<th>Roup</th>
<th>Regina</th>
<th>Yuri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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Notes: N = Naval vessels in service with the Imperial, Subsector, or Planetary navy (flee couriers, transport ships, huge dreadnaughts etc). Non-starships could also be fighters, system defensivestars, or a variety of small craft engaged in routine tasks. Independent vessels (denoted ‘I’ in encounter tables) will be much the same, but found in non-imperial systems.

M = Merchant vessels engaged in commercial ventures carrying cargoes and/or passengers between planets or stars. Starships range in size from 200-ton Free Traders to bulk carriers and luxury liners massing thousands of tons. Non-stars, small launches to large bulk carriers carrying materials between the main planets and outer worlds.

C = Civil vessels – yachts, seekers, detached scouts, mercenary vessels, lab ships, vessels under charter, and any others in private hands. Non-stars will be a similar nature, and include those of the Civil Starport Authorities. With this class of vessel it is useful to determine the vessel’s mission [see below] before fixing upon a specific type.

Ships’ Business
The mission table can be used to determine ships’ missions by throwing 1d6 and referencing according to ship class, applying the following DMs: X class starport -2, E class -1, B class +1, A class +2.
When's the Next Ship to...?
This is a question often asked of Traveller referees, usually when they're least prepared for it! It can be answered quite easily, however, by using the encounter chances of the departure and destination worlds. Add these two figures together, divide by two, and knock off any remaining fractions. Add the jump distance between the worlds (ie add 2 if the worlds are Jump-2 apart) and consult the Ship Frequency Table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship Class</th>
<th>Missions Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scout</td>
<td>Exploration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval</td>
<td>FLT Maneuvre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X-Boat</td>
<td>Courier</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Imp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>FLT Maneuvre</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Escort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil</td>
<td>Prospecting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Formulate**

*Encounter Chance* = (Tech Level + Pop digit + Starport Weighting)/3 rounded down, subtracted from 14. +1 if Amber Zone, +1 if Red Zone, -1 if scout base, -1 if naval base.

*Non-Starship Chance* = (12 - Encounter Chance)/2 rounded up. +1 if rich world, +1 if asteroid belt, +2 if asteroid belt main world.

*Frequency Rating* = (Departure World Encounter Chance + Destination World Encounter Chance)/2 rounded up, + jump distance between worlds.

Patrol missions involve travelling between worlds and bases to ascertain that all is as it should be. Any problems encountered will be attended to, and patrolling vessels will be likely to stop others to check that their papers and cargoes conform to legal requirements.

Survey missions require the collecting and/or correcting of astronomical and planetary data.

Courier missions carrying goods and/or personnel.

Exploration missions to (or from) unexplored regions. In settled regions substitute patrol for trade instead.

Fleet manoeuvres involve at least three naval or independent vessels in military exercises. Other vessels will be warned to keep their distance.

Escort Missions, accompanying other vessels for security reasons.

Ships on transfer are on their way to their next mission.

Crews on Imperial missions will be full of their own importance and waste time with lesser beings (ie players).

Communications Missions involve information transfer between worlds.

Transport Missions involve the carriage of goods and passengers between worlds for standard fees, Trade Missions, the carriage of speculative cargoes, and Trade and Transport a mixture of both. Where an asterisk appears there is a 1 in 6 chance that the ship is also involved in smuggling or some other illegal activity.

The exact nature of business missions will depend upon the type of ship concerned. Lab ships will be involved in scientific research, detached scouts working for a patron, seekers in mining etc. Missions; examining planets and asteroids for minerals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship Frequency Table</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency Rating</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>16</td>
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</table>

Example: A character wishes to get from Roup to Regina, but has no ship of his own. Adding together the encounter chances, dividing by two and dropping fractions we get (8+3)/2 = 5½ so 5. Roup and Regina are jump-3 apart, so 5+3 gives us a frequency rating of 8. From the Ship Frequency Table we see that a ship departs Roup once every two days. The referee throws 5 on 1d and tells the player that the next ship leaves the following day. Referees can decide whether or not there will be any vacant berths aboard by using the passengers table in Basic Traveller.

The Ship Frequency Table gives us only scheduled passenger vessels, however. There will be about twice as many scheduled freighters carrying cargo only, in addition to which there is a chance that an unscheduled tramp trader will be making the trip and have a berth available. To see if a tramp trader calls, 2d may be thrown each time period in the relevant ship frequency entry (day, week, month or year) and if the frequency rating is equalled or exceeded (count ratings of 13+ as 12) an unscheduled trader has arrived.
To Boldly Go...

This month we're taking a look at some of the Sci-Fi miniatures currently available to the SF gamer. Although 'Fantasy' seems to command the lion's share of manufacturers catalogues, there are still many excellent RPG miniatures available in both 25mm and 15mm scales for those of you who prefer deep space to dungeons. If you use the larger scale (25mm), you can add to and vary existing figures with some very basic conversions.

Fig 1 shows a SF Troop Carrier or 'military shuttle' that originally started life as a WWII German armoured car. The basic body is a 1/35th scale Tamiya kit that has the following additions: Wings and 'applied' armour (which simply means it has plates of armour 'bolted on' wherever necessary) cut from 0.040 Plasticard; landing legs and rear fins salvaged from various old kits; heavy laser and twin searchlights taken from a 1/35th scale WWII accessory pack; and exhaust ports and conduits made from disposable razor handles and biro refills. Jumble sales are rewarding places to visit for broken or old plastic kits, which can be given a new lease of life as useful bits of 'pseudo-tech' to deck out any SF conversion. But always be prepared to find some of the best 'kit-bashing' materials in the most unlikely of places. The rocket pods on top of the craft started life as plastic salt and pepper pots, and were 'requisitioned' for imperial service from my young son's toy tea set (...is nothing sacred?)! Toy cars, trucks and 1/72nd scale military kits can also be applied with 'techno-junk' to hide their origins, and in turn provide the SF gamer with cheap and effective 'hardware' backup for his miniatures.

Fig 2 shows a couple of 25mm star troopers from Tabloptop Games of Nottingham. TTG produce the excellent Laserburn Sci-Fi combat and role-playing system which we highly recommend if you are looking for a 'realistic-but-fun' set of close combat rules. They come complete with templates for weapon/blast effects, and are specifically designed for use with both 15mm and 25mm scale miniatures. If the thought of commanding space-pirates, outlaws or revolutionaries against squads of imperial marines, battling it out in some beleaguered space port or on a cratended asteroid, is enough to inspire you to start SF gaming then its worth considering which scale to use. 25mm is the most popular scale for fantasy gaming, but for SF gaming, the nature of combat is very different. Unless your scenarios are restricted exclusively to a boardgame close combat, both the range and accuracy of SF weaponry dictates the need for a large playing area. By choosing the smaller 15mm scale, you can automatically increase the ground-scale of your playing surface. TTG produce a special range of 15mm figures specifically designed for use with Laserburn. They are well detailed and supported by some superb 15mm vehicles, that are well-priced at around £25.

Grenadier Models have recently produced a boxed set of Imperial Marines, two of which are seen in action in Fig 3. Each set contains a complete section of these heavily-armoured assault troopers, together with a useful rocket-launcher (a sort of Sci-Fi mortar for close support). Designed by John Dennet and Andrew Chernak (designer of the Call of Cthulhu figures), they are available as part of the 'Official Traveller ANZ Range'. Adventurers, Ship Crew and Alien Animals are also available at £7.95 per box, with further releases due in the autumn.

Flying vehicles and jet-packing adventurers always seem to pose a problem during a game when they take to the air. One solution is shown in Fig 4. The Citadel adventurer and his hover bike are resting on a perspex about 20mm wide by 50mm high. Generally we've found that one rod of this size is all that is needed to support a single figure or small vehicle, whilst two or more can be used for larger craft. The main advantages of using perspex rods are that they occupy a small area of ground space, and enable you to use airborne troops and craft in combat with miniatures on the tabletop. In these particular models, the illusion of being 'in flight' is greatly increased. These rods are available in all lengths, colours and diameters and are reasonably priced. (The address of a London supplier is given at the end of this article.)

Fig 5 depicts a Citadel Imperial Marine advancing with a laser rifle (s33), and wearing the highly reflective 'Star Wars' battle armour. Whatever happened to the evolution of camouflage? This figure is part of the Spacefarers range that was originally released back in 1981. In Fig 6, we have a couple of Redemptionist fanatics about to be savaged by a pack of robo-dogs. The figure on the far left was originally a 'fantasy' wizard. His staff was cut away and substituted with a laser rifle from the Citadel Sci-Fi weapons pack. A backpack was added from scrap plastic and a power line made from twisted fuse wire was used to connect the two. His partner is a Star Lane pirate equipped with a laser pistol. The robo-dogs are made by Asgard Miniatures, and the full details of their capabilities can be found in the latest Laserburn supplement - 'Robot Book' [TTG: £1.85]. Asgard produce both 25mm and 15mm SF ranges, the latter being a copy of the former. If you are looking for some really tough troopers, then check out their 'dreadnought' armoured startroopers. The following description by Bryan Ansell of Citadel will give you some idea of their capability: "If power armour has replaced the light tank, the 'Dreadnought' has replaced the main battle tank. Toughened armour plate with an immensely powerful exo-skeleton, it usually incorporates heavy weaponry and a specially powerful jetpack."

We have found that an excellent source of SF weaponry can be found in the various weapon packs supplied for use with 1/35th scale plastic figures. By converting and re-shaping the parts, totally new and original weapons can be made. The SF grenade-launcher, for example, can be made by adding the top section of a German WWII 'potato-masher' grenade to the breach section of an assault rifle. Needle rifles, hand flamers and sun-guns can all be converted from sub-machine gun parts, whilst 1/35th scale bayonets make the ideal light sabres! We'd like to thank those readers who have written in to us over the past few months with queries and comments. If
you would like further details on how to achieve some of the painting techniques shown in the photographs, then drop us a line with an SAE, care of White Dwarf, and we’ll do our best to help out.

**Useful Addresses**

Tabletop Games, 53 Mansfield Road, Daybrook, Nottingham; Marchmade Perspex, Dean Street, London W1; Asgard Miniatures, 97 Carrington Street, Nottingham NG1 7FE.
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Dear WD,

Congratulations! WD54 was the best you have produced since number 32. The reason for this, I think, was that there were more articles aimed at role-players in general and not just the chosen few AD&Ders.

I have been annoyed, however, with your approach to the subject of multi-system adventures. If you are going to bother with them why don’t you give stats for some of the less popular systems such as C&S, DO and T&T? I also think it is time that you stopped ignoring FGU games; Aftermath, Bushido, C&S and Space Opera were all given extremely good reviews in your magazine, but in the time I have been buying WD I have only seen three scenarios for FGU systems.

Why, oh why do we have to put up with ridiculous arguments between FRP weirdos about hobbits of all things? It’s no wonder people think we’re mad!

Yours constructively,
Russell Henry, Stockton-on-Tees.

Much as we would like to have scenarios for the FGU games you mention appearing in the magazine, we are at the mercy of our contributors! And, as for the letters about hobbits, the final word as far as WD is concerned is... – Ed.

people just accuse me of being bitchy, but they probably won’t believe me. Anyway, what is so wonderful about the issue? Well the appearance is pretty spectacular for a start, but you’ve also got three really good articles: Chris Hunt’s, Ian Marsh’s and the Treasure Chest feature. Good grief, a whole five pages of useful material! And Langford shredding Battlefield Earth which is only boring because I’ve heard it so many times already.

Cheers,
Pete Tamlyn, Aylesbury.

Dear WD,

I am writing to express concern over accusations of depravity [WD47] and satanism [WD54] levelled at fantasy role-playing games.

Having scanned WD back issues I can sympathise with such criticisms; every issue is full of illustrations, stories and advertisements which could easily be construed as indecent in any number of ways.

Ian Livingstone [WD54] righty discounts such ill-formed opinions, but it is insufficient simply to dismiss this negative aspect. Indeed, much of what is published may attract to the hobby those already interested in satanism. As gamers, we should seek to advance the positive nature of fantasy role-playing: its creative and historical element, the notion of co-operation and the essential fun and humour of the hobby.

This would save us from lapsing into entrenched ideologies which cannot benefit FRP. We must endure ourselves to a wider public and overcome by persuasion, not dogma.

Yours,
Peter Schoff, London.

Dear WD,

Alex McDonald may have put his finger on a major flaw in the Vivamort cult, since total loss of POW should mean complete annihilation [WD49, p20]. However, it is clear that from the account of Vivamort in Cults of Terror that the Devil has somehow provided a means for survival of consciousness without POW. In the ceremony which turns an Initiate into a Runes Lord or Priest, Vivamort clearly arranges for this to happen to the Initiate, if the latter is successful. The new vampire will start at 0 POW, though, and had better do some draining fast!

Keep up the good work,
Oliver Dickinson, Haxby, York.

Dear WD,

It was with increasing dismay that I found Messrs Chalk’s and Dever’s pitiful efforts still in the pages of White Dwarf [issue 54]. Their photographs continue to show that neither of these gentlemen knows the meaning of good composition. The cliches of photographing miniature figures, nor can either paint miniatures particularly well (although a twelve-year-old would be proud of their ‘standards’, I hasten to add). If some creative improvement is to be applied, the flat uninspiring backgrounds (obviously pictures, as opposed to being carefully chosen parts of the set) and lack of depth of field (from poor angling and set up of the camera) are the first items that should be brushed up. However, reading the column provokes only more dismay; the gentlemen can obviously not write particularly well, except, perhaps, to continually praise Citadel (your ‘house’ figure range) and Essex Miniatures almost without exception; as a result, I cannot believe any judgement to be impartial in this column. I hope your readers will prefer to believe their own eyes instead of their verbos comments; standard captions about the wargamers of five or so years ago cannot be tolerated by the more quality-aware and selective market that exists in roleplaying. I shall certainly continue to exercise my judgement from close inspection of the figures in my local games shop, rather than believe the laughable figure column in your magazine.

Yours,
Matt Mayson, Coventry.

Dear WD,

Fame at last! Criticised by Dave Langford! The honour! As the perpetrator of the Grey Dominators [WD52] whom Dave accuses me of misappropriating from the works of Harry Harrison [WD54], I can only plead Guilty But Insane, m’lud. The fault was one of carelessness, not malice, m’lud, and I would like to ask that the incident of the Wodenians in WD44 be taken into consideration — with all due apologies to Poul Anderson... Despite all this, I do apologise for my past carelessness, but ours is a hobby based on borrowings, and it would probably fade away if they were removed. (Same goes for a lot of the SF/Fantasy books on the market, of course.)

Yours Derivatively,
Phil Masters, Stevenage, Herts.
High Planes Drifters

ROK-OR
by James Waterfield

No Appearing: 1-6
Armour Class: –4
Movement: 9"
Hit Dice: 9d8
Treasure: Special, see below
Attack: Two claws for 1d12 each, bite for 2d10
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Average

The rok-or is a huge (12') beast with a thick exo-skeleton of a stone-like carapace.

Being creatures from the Elemental Plane of Earth, they have the ability to move easily through solid rock. Normally, rok-or live within mountains, surfacing on rare occasions to feed. They crave gems and can detect them from a distance of 60'. They will attack anyone with gems, eating them whole to get at the precious stones.

Due to a rok-or's ability to merge with rock, it surprises anyone, except dwarves and gnomes, on 1-4 on 1d6. The claws of a rok-or are amazingly sharp and powerful; they can easily slash any non-magical metal armour to shreds, completely destroying it. If the victim has a shield, there is a 50% chance that the shield will be destroyed instead of the armour.

The stone-like armour of the rok-or gives it total immunity to any fire-based attacks (e.g., fireballs). It can also resist electrical attacks to a certain degree, taking half damage if failing its saving roll and taking no damage if it saves successfully. Edged weapons do no damage to the rok-or and have a 50% chance of breaking (~5% for each +1 of the weapon) on striking the creature. Blunt weapons do full damage with no chance of breaking.

Slingstones, giant boulders, etc hurled at a rok-or are simply absorbed into the creature if they strike. Slingstones give the beast 1 extra hit point per stone, while large boulders give it an additional 10 hit points. If a rok-or is not killed in battle, it can regenerate hit points by simply retreating into the rock, regaining 10 hit points for every turn spent in rock.

The treasure of a rok-or is found inside the stomach where 1d100 gems may be found depending on the age (hit points) of the beast.

MAGMITE
by Roger E Moore

No Appearing: 3-10
Armour Class: 3
Movement: 9"
Hit Dice: 4d8 + 2
Treasure: P, R, Y (special)
Attack: 4d4 touch, plus special
Alignment: Neutral (lawful tendencies)
Intelligence: Very

Magmites are very rarely encountered creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire, where they are usually found in lava caves near pools of molten rock or metal. Efreeti brought a few of them to the Prime Material Plane as treasure guards, a few of whom escaped to form small colonies in volcanic regions near active lava flows.

A typical magmite stands 2' tall and resembles a thick-limbed, four-legged spider with broad pad-like feet. It appears to be made of molten rock that glows bright orange-red with yellow and white streaks and spots. There seems to be no definite front or face to the creature, and it can set off walking in any direction from a standing start. Its excellent heat-sensitive vision (120' radius) is provided by two six-inch antennae which project up from the central body. Other than that, they appear to have no sense of smell, hearing or taste but are known to possess very good tactile senses.

An aura of intense heat surrounds the magmite to a 5' radius; any creature within this aura attacks at –2 to hit due to the heat and will suffer 1 point of heat damage every other round unless they have some magical resistance to heat. There is no saving throw for the heat damage from the aura.

Magmites are immune to most spells, but a few affect them. Any heat or fire based spells will restore any damage suffered by the magmite on a 1 for 1 basis. Normal non-magical fires and heat sources do not affect them. All cold or frost based spells or attacks will slow magmites for 1 round per hit dice damage of the attack, though no actual damage will be caused to them. Water, either magically produced or natural, will not affect a magmite at all but will be turned immediately into a 10' diameter cloud of steam around the creature. This cloud will last for 2-5 rounds and effectively blinds the magmite and any others within the cloud.

Magmites are unaffected by poison, which their body heat destroys before it can affect the creature. They are also immune to all save magical weapons.

Anything that touches a magmite (ex-
cept living creatures or solid rock) must make a saving throw against magical fire or melt and be destroyed; magical items receive appropriate bonuses, and flametongue swords or weapons are immune from destruction. Frostbrand swords will do only 1 point of damage per hit. Scrolls or spells that protect from enchanted monsters or elements will keep magmites at bay.

The treasure of these creatures will often consist of several pools of molten precious metals and a few fire-resistant gemstones. Less often, this treasure is in a solid, though extremely hot, condition and is stored in rocky pits or tunnels within the colony’s lair.

Magmites possess a limited form of telepathy that allows them to communicate mentally with persons within 30’ of them and with other magmites. They have no other psionic-type powers.

this area, they must save versus poison or temporarily lose 1 point of strength. Any strength lost will return at the rate of 1 point per turn once the affected person has withdrawn from the chilled area. If a person’s strength drops below 3, then they will lose consciousness until their strength has returned to 3.

Touching an ice mephit with bare flesh causes 1-4 damage per round of contact. Their claws do 1d4 damage plus 1 point of cold damage (2-5 total). They can also breathe forth a cloud of frost (10’ diameter), 3 times per day which does 1d8 damage to those within it unless a save versus breath weapon is made in which case half damage is taken. Once per day, an ice mephit can also cast cool metal, and, once per hour, they can attempt to summon another mephit with a 15% chance of success. There is an 80% chance that the mephit summoned will be an ice mephit; 10%, a steam mephit; and 10%, a smoke mephit.

There is an 80% chance that a fire or lava mephit will attack an ice mephit on sight and vice versa.

MIND SHADOW
by A Jewson

No Appearing: 2-8
Armour Class: 3
Movement: 8" (flight)
Hit Dice: 1d8+2
Treasure: None
Attack: Special
Alignment: Chaotic/evil
Intelligence: Average to very

These weird creatures exist mainly on the plane of their ruling demon or devil whom they serve. They are often sent by their masters to the Prime Material Plane where they appear as small, shadowy bats. While in this form, they can only be hit by +1 or better weapons and can only remain on the Prime Material Plane for 10 rounds unless they manage to possess some creature.

Though they have no natural attacks, mind shadows have the ability to possess any living creature or any corpse (but not undead ones!).

For a mind shadow to take possession of a corpse, the corpse must have been dead for no longer than a week or be extremely well preserved. The mind shadow must then make contact with the corpse for one round after which the mind shadow will fade into the body. The corpse will then become animated under the complete control of the mind shadow. The corpse will have twice its original number of hit dice regardless of any experience level (a corpse of a 12th level fighter for example) when twice the number of a 1st level fighter, for example). Once the corpse is reduced to zero hit points, it will collapse and the mind shadow will then be forced to vacate the body and resume its battle-like form for a further 10 rounds after which it will disappear back to its plane of origin unless it gains possession of another creature. A cleric can turn a possessed corpse as a shadow. Successfully turning such a possessed corpse will render it uninhabitable to the mind shadow which will re-emerge and in a flutter of darkness disappear back to its plane of origin.

A mind shadow can also attempt to gain possession of any living creature. To do this it must first remain in contact for 1 round (successful hit against AC10) and during this time attempt to mentally subdue the victim who cannot relocate in any way during the round. The success of this attempt depends on the ‘possession factor’ of the individual mind shadow. This factor ranges from 11-30 (1d20+10). The victim must total their intelligence and wisdom (or double their intelligence if a monster) and then add the roll of 1d6. If this total exceeds or equals the mind shadows ‘possession factor’, they have successfully resisted the subdual attempt. The mind shadow will then disappear to its plane of origin. If however, the victim is unsuccessful in this, the mind shadow will fade into their body and take complete control. A cleric may attempt to turn a live possessed creature but does so as for turning a ghost. If successful, the effect is as described above.

The mind shadow can only possess a live creature for 2-7 days due to the energy required to keep the creature’s mind subdued. After this time limit, the mind shadow must return to its home plane which it can do at will. A mind shadow can never go from the possession of one live creature to the possession of another live creature without returning to its homeplane for a rest. It can, however, posses a corpse after voluntarily leaving either a live creature or a corpse.

If a live possessed creature is killed while still possessed, then it becomes a possessed corpse with attributes as described above.

Any possessed creature, alive or dead, gains the mind shadow’s magic resistance of 50% but does not become immune to non-magical weapons unless it was before possession. The exorcise spell will, if successful, completely destroy the mind shadow. Usually, the threat of this spell will frighten off a mind shadow. Any possessed creature, whether dead or alive, retains its original Armour Class.

While in possession of any body, the mind shadow cannot be harmed in any way, other than a successful exorcise, but can only be driven out and then harmed.[]

ICE MEPHIT
by John S Davies

No Appearing: 1
Armour Class: 4
Movement: 12"/24"
Hit Dice: 3d8+1
Treasure: None
Attack: Two claws for 1d4 each, plus special
Alignment: Variable, usually evil, and mostly lawful evil
Intelligence: Average

Ice mephits are most commonly found on the frozen Eighth Plane of Hell. Steam, fire or lava mephits entering these frozen planes are attacked on sight, while smoke mephits are barely tolerated.

Ice mephits are often used as messengers by creatures of the Lower Planes. Thus, when encountered on the Prime Material Plane, they are usually on some diabolical errand or mission. They share the other mephits’ twisted sense of humour and love of the tasteless and vulgar; delighting in tormenting helpless creatures. They also speak the common mephit tongue as well as their ‘alignment tongue’.

They are about 5’ tall with wings and fangs. They are translucent blue and radiate an intense chill in a 5’ radius about themselves. This chill does no damage, but for each round that anyone is within
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Treasure Chest is a regular department for readers’ AD&D/D&D ideas. This issue, something on technology.

Don’t Touch That Dial!

Technology in AD&D/D&D by Phil Hine

Try building a hand cannon or iron-bolt thrower. The best way to discourage this is to let them try. Medieval hand-guns were non-standardised, short-ranged and more often a liability – a threat to friend and foe alike. All this, plus a long loading time, deafening report (bound to attract all wanderers for miles) should soon send them back to Wizard Prang’s trusty fireballs.

Ornithopters

Ornithopters are a type of aerial craft, which remain aloft by flapping huge mechanical wings. They appear in Moorcock’s Runestaff series and also Frank Herbert’s Dune series. For D&D they could be treated as semi-magical, another ‘indirect’ device is the Glowglobe, a 6” diameter glass, stoppered sphere, filled with a luminous gas or liquid, that lights up a 5x5’ area. A Glowglobe’s light lasts for 7-20 days before it needs replenishing and costs 100-250gp, each fuelling costing a further 50gp.

Technological devices may cause interesting conflicts between innovators and existing guilds. Any device that threatens existing industries is going to attract its own Luddites. A case in point is a steam-powered toilet. After much bribing he gained an audience with his country’s king. In the meantime the city dungcollectors, having got wind (pardon the pun) of the new invention, banded together and hired a magic-user to arrange an ‘accident’ to happen. Result – the king’s audience chamber was flooded with odour and the plumber, for his pains, had his head removed!

It is very difficult to predict the long-term effects of this kind of innovation into a D&D campaign. Generally DMs, especially novices should be very careful. Don’t introduce a device that is too easy to obtain, or that has no drawbacks. Think how, for example, a flying carpet would be treated in our world, then apply the same principal to technology in a D&D universe. Think of the sociological implications of innovation – is it going to be sanctioned or disliked by the authorities, what problems could arise for those using it and how alone the device introduced; by tinkering inventor, sage, magic-user or creatures alien to your world (whether from outer space or another dimension).

Finally, how might the deities in your campaign react? Some may advance and encourage innovation, sending dreams providing the necessary information, to alchemists and engineers. Others, no doubt lamenting the decline of worship in worlds where Technology has superseded magic, would seek to suppress the spread of such knowledge and send out their Human agents to destroy manifestations of Technology. Any Paladins out there fancy going steam-engine-bashing?

Recommended Reading

Roget Zelazny’s Lord of Light – SF classic based on Hindu mythology where ‘Gods’ keep the rest of humanity from gaining technological know-how, and with Raksha’s (Alien Demons), L’Sprague de Camp: The Clocks of Iraz; The Rug and the Bull (short story) – both have elements where innovation is opposed by tradition. Moorcock’s The Runestaff series and Frank Herbert’s Dune – source for Ornithopters and other semi-magical devices.
Microview is a regular alternate-monthly department for computer games, edited by Russell Clarke.

**The Psytron!**

by Carol Hutchins

This month, Microview has been ruthlessly chopped down to one page to make way for the large scenario appearing elsewhere. First victims of the column are the GAP and the article I had intended to include (sorry Steve). However, the review of Psytron (Beyond Software) by Carol Hutchins remains.

Up and coming articles in Microview include planet generation for games such as Traveller, Star Frontiers (and other SF rolegames) which was postponed from this issue. A companion article of Car Wars programmes, all aimed at easing the construction procedure for vehicles, and a boff side of the fence view of Beyond's new epic Lands of Midnight. And of course, we have the return of the GAP's! Normal service... buzz... crackle... will be resumed as soon as possible - RC.

Psytron by Beyond Software for 48k Spectrum is available from Games Workshop and other retail outlets. This is one of those games that seems to grow on you. You are the automated brain organising the defence and maintenance of a space station under attack from extremely hostile forces using spaceships to bomb your vulnerable places and dropping saboteurs to wreck the airlocks, making repairs of the stricken regions near impossible. The saboteurs, which resemble strange three-legged cats, bravely give their lives (they have little choice in view of the large explosive charge strapped to their backs and the complete lack of any method of retrieving them after completion of their mission) for the unknown cause of the enemy.

The screen is laid out clearly. The top half consists of a view out over one of the sections of the base. You, the Psytron, are situated in the centre of the base which is laid out around you like a daisy with each petal representing a section. There are ten sections in all and the bottom half of the screen is divided widthways into thirds. Starting at the left hand side of the screen there is a section telling you what the view above represents, e.g. Pleasure Dome - important to keep intact as damage to this affects the efficiency of your repair crews - and if you stay in one section for more than five seconds, switches to a scrolling display of the damage status of the base.

The next third is a scanner warning you of sectors that are being locked on to by the alien craft or which have saboteurs in them and the final third is a 'Droid window' showing you the view of a small remote droid and its perimeter track which enables you to hunt down the saboteurs.

The first level consists of learning to control the remote droid which chases these 'cats' around a perimeter track and attempts to destroy them before they reach their target. You only have one of these droids and you must teleport him around the base to the right section to catch the saboteur (the right section being illustrated by the scanner as mentioned before). Percentage points are awarded at the completion of the fixed time, in this case five minutes, for the efficiency with which you protected the base. To reach the next level you must achieve a 'pass mark' i.e. an average of over 50% in five attempts - one-off flashes of brilliance do you very little good.

The second level introduces you to the art of shooting the alien space craft before they can drop their bombs or their saboteurs. This is done by lining up a cross-hair sight and firing your antimatter weapon. Accurate shooting gives you a better percentage rating at the end but this is difficult because of the delay in between firing and reaching the target plus the evasive manoeuvres of the aliens. Again to pass this level you must get an average of over 50% over five consecutive turns.

The levels continue to increase in difficulty with the third level being the first real test of your ability as a base defender. Now the 'Skywatch' (level 2) is combined with 'Droid Mode' (level 1) and the aliens will sometimes drop the saboteurs. The action does not stop in the other mode so when you are pursuing a 'Tri-pedroid' through the bases connecting tunnels the ships are still blowing you to pieces and vice versa! You also have to worry for the first time about the passmark - it is still 50%. To aid you slightly a 'Matter Disruptor' is introduced. This acts just like a Defender smart bomb - clearing the sky of all alien craft (visible and invisible). There's a catch, though - these weapons are unstable, there is a 10% chance of it exploding and destroying the generator and this gets worse if the aliens manage to damage the generator.

Level four introduces the first non-arcade feature of the game: the 'Freezetime Generator'. This consumes large quantities of fuel and literally stops time! The aliens can do nothing while you are in this mode and you can get busy with base station reports. Damage done to different buildings in the installation can be repaired by allocating crew to the task. When called, 'Damage Reports' on each section scroll up the screen. The scrolling stops when all have been viewed. Next the player can scroll through the base. The third level, repair, when a heavily damaged building appears at the top of the list, pressing 'A' allows you to change the crew allocation there. A maximum of 250 crew can be sent to work on the repairs. If you have let saboteurs damage the airlocks that lead down to the building being repaired then the work is slowed down proportionately.

So now you have survived ten minutes at this level, five times and have scored an average of 60% (pew! L). Level five looms...

'The Psytron has got through to the supply ship and is communicating the needs of the base to its captain. As status reports show the supplies of the base being run down by the ravages of the attack, new weapons, supplies and crew can be ordered. To preserve personnel and keep the installation operative, Psytron must ensure that supplies are kept up to the correct levels. This is the moment briefing for level five. Everything from level four continues and you must protect the docking bay to ensure speedy arrival of your supplies via the supply beam. If an alien craft breaks the supply beam then transmission of supplies is terminated. You order what supplies you need from the freezetime mode, so don't go burning your fuel up too fast! Level six is the 'Final Conflict' and is level five with the timer counting up. To see how long you do really well, Beyond are offering a QL as a prize for the first person to send them the code that will appear on the screen when you 'conquer' the game. I think it is just possible that the QL will be one of the first releases by the time someone does that!

To sum up - I found it very exciting and thought that the addition of Freeze Time a very novel twist. I would strongly recommend it to anyone who enjoys the games which follow after the ravages of invincible opponents tedious in the extreme.

**Graphics:** 9 **Long Term Interest:** 10 **Instructions:** 7 **(Until you win the QL!)

**Playability:** 8 **Value For Money:** 9 **Overall:** 9
ACROSS THE TIME LESS WASTES THE TRAVELLERS CAME...SEEKING A NEW WAY

Cresting the ridge of the great crater they were confronted by a strange device.
Hewn from gargantuan blocks of marble...

...it held promise...

...of Destinies fulfilled.

Androx rushed along the dimly-lit alleyway, clutching a roll of printed paper to his breast with his left hand. The cobblestones were still gleaming from the mist that had hung in the air since morning.

As he turned a corner the moonlight picked out a stalker.

"So that's what's been causing the disturbance".

For the last few nights people had been found half-eaten and strewn about the streets, not to mention other species. Rumours had circulated that a deity was having a "go". The destruction seemed similar.

The wind changed subtly. The creature turned, its spiked tail thrashed plumes of dust, swirling frantically like momentary wreaths in the lambent, silver light. Androx eased into the shadows of a doorway and reached into his pouch, hoping the beastie hadn't seen him.

A growl rumbled from its throat as, with head lowered, it advanced in its strange crouched, lurching gait that had suggested the title. Shaped like a scaled-down Tyrannosaurus Rex, it was about half-size, but infinitely more vicious. Withdrawing his hand, he flipped a liqueorite PK into his mouth.

The slavering monster seemed to grin at Androx. It appeared amused, as if rushing up to tell him a new joke it had heard. Not until it was some twenty-five feet away did Androx do anything. In the blink of an eye lid it had scrambled its brain into inert aspice with a psionic blast. When the dust had settled, Androx measured the distance between its head and his foot.

"Damn! Only two and a half spans. I did better with that wyvern last week".

He cursed silently. What was he going to tell everyone in the Psycnic Circle this week? With a shrug of his shoulders he turned homeward.

Entering via the iron-studded door, which he duly barred and bolted, he got himself a drink and sat in the armchair by the fireplace, unrolling the latest copy of "White Dwarf" and sitting down to read. It wasn't until he got to "Microwind" that he spilt his drink.

There, in that advertisement, was the strange edifice that had recently haunted his dreams. The letters had always been blurred, glimpsed through mists, or lost between sheets of rain, a portent of some impending doom.

But now, there they were - "The Nemesis Collection".

Glancing down the page his eyes caught a familiar word.

His name.

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MEMORANDUM

FROM: Jevr & Jon
TO: WD Readers

Being a contributing editor for WD does have its perks - one of which is phoning up all the film companies trying to get news (and, more importantly, comp’tickets) for all the new sci-fi and fantasy movies. While we didn’t do too well on the ticket front (sniff) we did find out some titbits of infomation.

Pop stars, it seems, are the people to have in your sci-fi/fantasy movie, not only is Sting starring in Dune, The Movie (which will be released in December), but Grace Jones has a part (as an Amazon - what else?) in the new Conan movie. Star Trek III will be out soon in the UK - in America it’s grossed more than The Colour Out of Space set in the Cthulhu mythos, so start saving those SAN points COC fans!!!

See you next month

Jevr & Jon

NEW CONCEPT FOR PBM GAMES

Mitre Games have come up with a new idea called ‘Play-by-Mail gaming’. Very soon they will be releasing boxed editions of Tribes of Craine and Star Master in the UK: these will be available from your local games shops for £9.95 each. Much like board games the sets will contain all the rules, charts etc. that you need to play, but they also have a voucher for three moves (and the set is a deal) in the first PBM game in which you participate.

PBM gaming is an exciting part of our hobby that deserves more exposure - hopefully these new Mitre PBM games will do just that!

BEYOND MIDNIGHT

Mike Singleton, the designer of the Starfold PBM computer moderated game, has produced ‘The Lords of Midnight’ for. Beyond, first of 3 ‘epic’ games set in the same universe. Lords of Midnight’s main new feature is that there are some 32,000 screens allowing Beyond to use a new idea called ‘landscaping’ - this means that the characters can be moved & the background is redrawn each time giving the new perspective & view.

The game can be played as either a quest type adventure using two of the characters in the story, or as a tactical wargame, or both.

At present it is only available for the Spectrum 48K but will soon be converted for use with the Commodore 64. It retails at the reasonable price of £9.95

DIFFERENT WORLDS, DIFFERENT REALITY!!!

Contrary to a recent gossip column in Different Worlds, George Schubel Jr. has not died of a heart attack. Apparently they were misinformed about the recent heart attack suffered by George Schubel Sr who retired from company affairs.

Though he did indeed suffer a heart attack, he has already completely recovered. Mr. Schubel (the younger) is the designer of Tribes of Craine, Star Venture, Strategic Conflict, Computer Boxing and we hope, many more computer games in the future.

GOLDEN HEROES

Apologies to all those who have been eagerly waiting for the new Golden Heroes RPG. After seeing the advertisement in the last two issues of WD, due to unforeseen production hitches Golden Heroes won’t be ready until September. We’ll have more news next issue on the exact date.
Vacuous Grimoire 2
‘Vacuous what?’, the masses cry. ‘Grimoire’, floats back a tormented voice. It’s the same tune that some guy called Richard Roberts at 52 Whalesmead Road, Bishopsstone, Eastleigh, Hampshire sell for 50p. He’s a solo in a mental asylum, an AD&D module hints on computer adventures and more.

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Sex, Drugs and Spelling Mistakes
Will not be found in issue four of Runestone - just good ol’ FRP. including D&D, RuneQuest. Costs £30pm from Bill Lucas, 19 Olden Mead, Lordship Estate, Letchworth, Herts SG6 2ZF. (Guaranteed totally indecent.)

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Oh, Snugur
Drofais he saying Snugur no nose biggest wimp this side of Snake Mountains. Also Mildred Plagueface love Pretty Boy (old man) Antares. PS Me sure me can smell dwarf!

W-S-M Area
Male 18, experienced AD&D player, with knowledge of RuneQuest, D&D, Starfrontiers and Traveller looking to play in a campaign in any of the above or others. Tel: W-S-M 32204 and ask for David White – or write to: 13 Exford Close, Corporation Estate, W-S-M, Avon.

Scarborough Wargamers
Are you struggling to find people to play against? Come to Scarborough Tech (near back end) and join the club. We play AD&D, RuneQuest, figure gaming (figures supplied) and a wide selection of board games. Contact: Bob Mott, Rutland Terrace, Queens Parade, Scarborough, North Yorks.

D&D/Traveller
New to D&D/Traveller? Old Hand? Need someone to play with? So do we. Come enjoy July August experiences, possibly continuing further. To adventure with me, contact: Paul Weddell, 127 Cladon Way, Coulson, Surrey CR3 1DN.

Wanted!
D&D, James Bond 007 role-players/GMs, aged 10-16, living in Harrow and surrounding areas. Contact: Marc Henry, 20 Highview, Finchley Middlesex HAG 3PA. Tel: (01) 866 3412.

Guide Wanted
Aged (30), but not yet senile, novice RPGer seeks players/club who will help guide him through strange and fantastic worlds. AD&D, Traveller or will attempt to learn others. Contact: Paul Hardy, 13A East St, Rochford, Essex SS1 1DB.

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Newport (Gwent) Area
Established AD&D group is looking for enthusiastic members aged 18+. Experience is not essential, but a lively imagination is. For more information, contact: Julian (Newport 856403) or Mike (Newport 280932).

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14-year old DM player seeks other enthusiasts in Cornwell area for regular games; knowledge of rules not essential. Write to: Simon Langdon, Belhay, Pentyr N Looe, Cornwall PL13 2JX.

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Experienced AD&D players of either sex, aged 14+, needed for private game. Contact: DM David Allan, 1 Hill Lane, Hawkwell, Hockley, Essex.

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WD1 26, 28, 32 in good condition. Please contact: G King, Cromwell Cottage, Ferry Lane, Bourne End, Buckinghamshire HP10 5JN.

Urgent: Wyrmus Footnotes
I’d like to contact anyone who either owns or would like to own any copies of Wyrmus Footnotes. I’m Angus McLellan, 6 Blackwell Close, Billingham, Cleveland, or on the phone: Stockton-on-Tees 560846.

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RPG, Boardgamer, primarily AD&D. Please contact: Jim Smith, 35 St Margarets Road, Esher, Surrey KT17 1AB.

Grimsby
Players/DWanted in Waltham, Grimsby area for Basic AD&D. Contact: Rob St. George, 140 Barker Rd, Waltham, Grimsby, South Humberside DN37 0UF.

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Wanted to find a group that meets regularly, to play AD&D and other games. Any age, sex. Contact: Mr S Jocelyn, 135 High Street, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 3YD.

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