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More pages, more colour and more surprises are also in store. 1985 will be The Year of the Dwarf.
An Expansion of Alchemy in RuneQuest

by Oliver MacDonald

One of the most neglected areas of RuneQuest is alchemy, which is a great pity as in many campaigns alchemists play an important part. The rules as they stand make it relatively easy, if expensive, to become an alchemist, and once the character has paid the membership fee he or she is allowed to manufacture any potions that he or she can afford. A proviso is made that should a character reveal any of the guilds secrets they are likely to find life very uncomfortable thereafter. In no way are characters encouraged to interact with the guild in any way other than the exchange of cash, however. What I hope to do is present some ideas from which individual GMs can build up a more solid base for the running of alchemists in their campaigns.

Social Status and Organisation of the Guild

Before a GM can even consider using alchemists in his or her game it is important to understand the standing of the guild within the world and its society must have been developed. This task is made doubly difficult by the RuneQuest rules. Firstly they provide not only very little information on the alchemists as a whole, and secondly so much information is apocryphal that it is difficult to imagine how other power bodies, such as guilds, could exist outside of their direct spheres of influence. The alchemists ‘guild’ will therefore as far as most campaigns are concerned have to be run as cults with the members worshipping some god or spirit of alchemy.

Such cults may be independent, worshipping some minor deity, or they may be subervient to larger ones such as Lhankor Mhy. This could lead to the interesting situation of different ‘guilds’ having knowledge of different alchemical procedures, much as with spells, however, alchemical recipes are easier to steal than are rune spells.

The guild is organised much as any other organisation with as far as most campaigns are concerned have to be run as cults with the members worshipping some god or spirit of alchemy. Such cults may be independent, worshipping some minor deity, or they may be subervient to larger ones such as Lhankor Mhy. This could lead to the interesting situation of different ‘guilds’ having knowledge of different alchemical procedures, much as with spells, however, alchemical recipes are easier to steal than are rune spells.

However the guild is organised it is likely that there would be a number of local organisations rather than one large national or international one. Cults with the aid of divine guidance are likely to have local variations in organisations, if not beliefs. Each guild will therefore have control over its own large town and the surrounding countryside, much as the real guilds of history operated.

The provision also allows for the possibility of different areas having access to the knowledge of different potions, leading to trade, ‘industrial’ espionage, underground guilds and power struggles between different groups as they try to wrest control from one another in various regions; the stuff all the best stories are made of.

A regional organisation will also serve to restrict the player alchemist. No longer may someone walk into the nearest guildhall and expect to be given access to the laboratories and all their attendant equipment just to replenish a dwindling stock of potions. Even when using the premises of a friendly guild special arrangements are going to have to be made, something which is only likely to be allowed for fairly important characters.

Guild Membership

Guild membership needs to be restricted if a campaign is not to rapidly become dull as characters all gain similar collections of skills and share the same aims in life. The present rules allow a character to become a member of the alchemists guild either by apprenticeship or by buying membership. In a campaign in which 500L membership fee is the fortune it should be this may well be sufficient. Such games are unfortunately uncommon and most characters can pick up 5000L in only one or two adventures. In view of this, membership of the guild should be more restrictive, requiring an applicant to throw under their INT x 3% on percentile dice in all cases, not just when entering as an apprentice. If it is wished nobles may be allowed a higher chance. Only one attempt per month may be made by a character to join any specific guild, though characters failing to join the guild to one area would still stand a chance of being admitted in another. However, if attempting to join an area other than their birthplace or a place in which they have lived for at least the past ten years, the entrance test should be set at INT x 2% (The same will apply to nobles, although it is assumed that they have more influence and there will be special arrangements for nobles of this sort before being able to join the guild). As well as being difficult to obtain, membership of the alchemists guild should also carry certain responsibilities. In order to manufacture potions the alchemist will require various ingredients. Many of these will be common materials that are easy to obtain, others though, will be rarer. Most guilds will therefore maintain some kind of guildhall as a meeting place and a place to live in which they have lived for at least the past ten years, the entrance test should be set at INT x 2% (The same will apply to nobles, although it is assumed that they have more influence and there will be special arrangements for nobles of this sort). As well as being difficult to obtain, membership of the alchemists guild should also carry certain responsibilities. In order to manufacture potions the alchemist will require various ingredients. Many of these will be common materials that are easy to obtain, others though, will be rarer. Most guilds will therefore maintain some kind of guildhall as a meeting place and a place to live in which they have lived for at least the past ten years, the entrance test should be set at INT x 2% (The same will apply to nobles, although it is assumed that they have more influence and there will be special arrangements for nobles of this sort).

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All members of a guild will also be expected to procure useful materials in the course of their wanderings for the guild, or if that is not possible for any reason to inform the guild so that an expedition can be mounted. No financial reward will be offered for such collecting. A member that is a regular supplier is not likely to be forgotten though and will find himself favoured by the guild. Similarly a member that does not ‘do his bit’ for the guild is more likely to find himself called for duty and will find it difficult to obtain all but the most common of ingredients.

To determine the availability of ingredients for a particular potion simply roll a d20 and if the result is equal to or greater than the level of potency of the potion then the ingredient will be available. Particularlyfavoured or unfavoured alchemists should have modifiers added or subtracted to the dice throw at the GM’s discretion. Similar adjustments may also be made according to the size and nature of the guild.

A really good GM will also take into account other factors that may affect the availability of certain commodities, such as a drought or very dry weather, which reduces the supply of rare plants, a war or plague which may put such a demand on the supplies of healing potions and antidothes that the supplies of raw materials to make them...
will be reduced.
A similar d20 throw may also be used to
determine whether the knowledge
acquired is enough to make a given potion
is available to the guild or not.
In the case of battle magic potions
assumptions that one point of spell is equal to
three potency levels of another potion.
Eg for a three point spell to be placed
into a potion the player must throw a 9
or more on d20 in order to obtain the
ingredients required.

Guild Discipline
The RuneQuest rules imply, though do
not actually state, that any member
breaking their oath of secrecy to the
guild will be killed. Furthermore, that few
GMs will need advice on any of the
above trying to assassinate characters.
However it is important that the GM
operates the guilds assassins, be they
real or spiritual, in a believable way and
they compete with one another, trying to
receive their income only from the
further on a clear night.
Pellets always go off when burnt but
fire retardant. When thrown these pellets explode into
a mass of sticky webs, covering an area
about 1m square and will last
for 1 full turn per level of potency,
before that only magic will wake them.

Fire Retardation
Sprayed on any inflammable substance
this potion will reduce its chance of
starting a fire in any situation by 5%. And
even if set fire to the object has a chance
equal to potency x 5% of going out every
melee round after being lit.
One dose of the potion will cover an
area about 1m square and will last
indefinitely.

Invisible Ink
This ink cannot be seen and read, except
with a Spot Hidden potion from which 5% is
deducted for each level of potency, until
the paper, or whatever it has been used
on, is burned. Any item is suspected of
having invisible writing on it
another alchemist may try to read it,
using their spot hidden roll (level of
dexterity of the potion or
level of the gas). Those who
withstand the gas fumigation at full
potency will be allowed to read the
ink.

Potion Ingredients
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In Open Box, science fiction and fantasy games and rulebooks are reviewed.

**OPEN BOX**

**DUNGEONS & DRAGONS COMPANION SET**

The D&D Companion Set is designed to cater for those Basic D&D players who have reached the excitement of 16th level. By this stage, most characters should be thinking of settling down, and these rules provide some ideas for this to be a little more interesting than simply marriage. The set contains two booklets, one for each player and DM. The Players Companion opens with a few comments on the changes since your character set out at first level, still wet behind the ears and terrified of a single orc and, after introducing a few new weapons, armour types and unarmed combat rules, gets on to the meat of the matter - running a stronghold. This is covered mainly in terms of the recurrent costs such as wages of the castle staff, and provides enough detail - combined with the information on income provided by the DMs Companion - for the owner to determine whether he needs to go and raid a dragon lair or two to meet his next bill. This section is rather scanty for something that should loom large in the character's mind; and also is strongly orientated towards castles, rather than other types of stronghold that different character classes are expected to build and maintain.

The Players Companion goes on to detail the new abilities and increases in skills, spells, etc, that accrue to each character class as they rise in level. This section concentrates wholly on human characters, treating all others (dwarves, elves and halflings) separately, partly because of the artificial limits banning them from the highest levels, and partly because it is assumed that they aren't really interested in human affairs and will prefer to retreat to their own people's caverns, forests or whatever. But if in your world dwarven smiths ply their trade in the towns and elven lords sit in council with human kings, you will have to make some modifications.

The DMs Companion begins with some general guidelines on running a campaign and planning adventures, going on to construct a feudal system which provides the basis for the dominions granted to or conquered by the characters. This information would be of most use of the DM while setting up the campaign world, but by the time characters reach these levels, they should already be familiar with the social structure of the world they live in. The mechanics of the system are quite good, giving the flavour of feudal times without getting too bogged down in detail, although more work will have to be done by the DM if the players wish to get involved in the day to day affairs of their domains, rather than just use them as bases for further acts of daring. This section ends with some interesting notes on the organisation and running of tournaments.

The next section is 'The War Machine', a good if mechanistic method for coping with large scale battles, and the laws of time travel. However, when characters of the levels considered here take a personal interest in a battle, they are likely to have a far greater effect on the course of events than is allowed for here.

Overall, although the set provides quite a lot of useful information and rules for setting up the social and political background to a campaign, as well as the usual helping of new spell, weapons and monsters, I feel that as far as playing is concerned, it would be better to, at the very least, semi-retire any character who has reached such high levels, leaving them to potter along with the mechanics of the feudal system (and 'War Machine' if they start fighting); spending most playing time on lower level characters. Who of course have some very interesting patrons or bosses - or some very powerful enemies.

And finally, is Basic D&D being swamped by too many rules? A competent DM should have worked out his social structure long before his players reach 15th level. If you really want more than the original D&D rules maybe you should play AD&D. Hopefully.

**TIMEMASTER**

Join the Time Corps and you can become the Master of Time! proclaims the blurb on the bright red box that contains the latest time travel RPG from newcomers to the role-playing game scene, Pacesetter Games. Immediately my hackles rise, after all time travel is a notoriously hard genre to transfer into roleplaying terms. For a start, an understanding of the theory of time is required to prevent farcical events from occurring. Secondly, if players are allowed to wander freely through time, wreaking havoc as they go, the consequences will be both dire and far reaching, altering vast tracts of history irreparably. Thirdly, by definition, time travel games offer a limitless range of game settings for the players to experience. At first sight this could seem to be a wonderful advantage; no longer will the players get bored with the same old planet after a couple of trips - now all they need to do is put down their swords and axes, pick up a couple of pistols and whizz off into the future to trash a few aliens instead of orcs! The GM will want to allow the players the opportunity to experience at least a couple of different times/places (otherwise what is the point of having a time travel RPG in the first place?) and thus will be faced with a great deal of freedom.

So, these are the problems that Time Travel poses to the role-player - how far does Timemaster go to help the GM and players overcome them?

Pacesetter certainly know their stuff when it comes to initiating the newcomer to the intricacies of time travel; both the organisation of the fourth dimension and the laws of time travel are all explained clearly and concisely in the Travellers Manual (the first of the two booklets that comprise the Timemaster rules).

The second problem is also handled well, and indeed the way in which this is accomplished greatly defines the feel of the game and sets it apart from other time travel RPGs like Avalon Hills Lords of Creation. In Timemaster, the players take the roles of a team of special agents in the Time Corps - an autonomous organisation set up after the Temporal Wars to protect History from the wild ravings of the Demoreans (left overs from the Temporal Wars) and from the sinister machinations of the iniquitous Renegades. The Demoreans are an alien life form who have sworn to bring down humanity and the Time Corps. They are both entirely consistent with the background: the Time Corps has a small list of strict regulations that the characters must follow or risk punishment by the Demoreans: the regulations cover such things as the movement of players through time and what they must and must not do in other times and as such are both entirely consistent with the background: the Time Corps has a small list of strict regulations that the characters must follow or risk punishment by Demoreans when they might do as much damage themselves.

The Corps also represents a nifty framework for character progression. Successfully completed missions can earn the characters the reward of 'Success Points' which not only help the characters gain promotion through the corps, and also may be used to buy the very powerful enemies.

This brings us to the game system itself. Character generation is simple and involves the standard set of prime requisites. These requisites may be used in their own right; for example a character can check against his strength to see whether he can lift the boulder off his trapped leg. They are also used to establish the initial level of skill that players have in any skills they possess. The
goes for Paranormal Talents - a set of psionic like qualities that require the expenditure of Willpower (one of the prime requisites) in a similar fashion to the RuneQuest method of using POW points. Probably the neatest thing about the game system is that all abilities, skills and talents are used in the same way. No longer do you have to use different dice and tables for different things, now the same table will allow you to check every ability in the same way - the results being interpreted in the appropriate way. This method may be a little complex at first, but it is quite really simple and would be used so frequently as to soon become second nature. And it does speed up play.

Combat is run using this same system and so hardly has a wonderful feel to it. But then it is not easy to create a single system that will cope equally well with everything from slings and swords to heavy artillery and lasers. It is further complicated by a horrific looking Combat Order table that makes WRG rules look simple. The mass combat rules are also simple but again, they are not really that complete.

The second booklet is the Guide to the Continuum - a slim volume that briefly outlines eight periods from history. As in Lords of Creation, the information is a little sparse and really only scratches the surface of what the GM would need to know to run a scenario properly. Nevertheless, the information on the Time Corps and the Demoreans is indispensable and greatly adds to the feel of the game.

Finally, the box contains a couple of dice, a sheet of counters (for characters, monsters and armies etc), a map and a short scenario, set in World War One. Essentially the action takes place around the Battle of Cambrai (or rather, over the battle) where the players must prevent the Demoreans from altering the course of the war (with the aid of high-tech weapons).

Overall, I quite liked Timemaster - it is an unpretentious little game, simple and yet provides the best yet framework for time travel roleplaying. It is somewhat suited to the 'one off' style of play, and yet, with effort, would also be a good campaign game (though it would have a very episodic feel to it).

Crossed Swords is the first Pacesetter scenario for the Timemaster game and it appears in a similar format to the Chaosium produced Call of Cthulhu adventures (though it is a little thinner). The action is set in the Time Parallel M1, the parallel of fictions, in the time before the French Revolution; the period of Dumas' The Three Musketeers. As such, it is unsurprising that the scenario is refreshingly light-hearted in feel and there are profuse opportunities for amusing role-playing. It involves the players being sent back in time to sort out a series of strange events involving the three musketeers themselves, the rivalry with the Cardinal's Guard, duels at dawn, bar-room brawls and all the chivalrous romance of the Parisian court. It is a scenario for role-playing - hardly a sterile dungeon crawl of the sort that some companies persist in putting out.

I look forward to further Pacesetter scenarios - though this one does have its flaws it's a good start from a new company. Now if you'll excuse me I have a certain Cardinal Richelieu to deal with...

Crossed Swords

Presentation: 7 7
For Beginners: 8 7
For Exp'd players: 6 7
Overall: 7 7

Steve Norledge

CHILL
VILLAGE OF TWILIGHT

Chill, a new game from a new company, Pacesetter, explores the twilight regions of the world in a new horror game. Physically, the box and its contents are mediocre. The flimsy box contains 2 rulebooks, 2 introductory folders and 3 of the best d10's I've seen in ages. Also included are a sheet of counters representing characters, monsters and the like. The introductory leaflet, bearing the legend 'Read Me First' outlines what an RPG is and gives a very brief sketch of the game, which it does rather well, better in fact than the rulebook. Even for an introductory scenario it's rather slow and distinctly lacking in excitement.

The rulebook itself is not so clear, but plenty of examples are included. The heart of the system is the action table, from combat to bribery, fear and poison. Characteristics are generated by the throw of the dice, with each character receiving skill points to select his skills from a short list. Finally, the characters may possess the Art, a small selection of magical or psionic abilities, such asclairvoyance, prescience and the like.

The referee's book contains some of the best material in the game. The book basically sets out the bad guys, who are a rather drab bunch of werewolves, vampires, ghouls etc. Also included are details of the Evil Way, the evil equivalent of the Art the players use. This is enlivened by short sketches of how the powers are used, these are probably the high-point of the book.

The scenario Village of Twilight, available separately, is set in the jungles of southern Mexico, with the players investigating rumours of were-jaguars or ocelot, for SAVE the organisation for which players are assumed to work. The scenario itself is for experienced characters, as is obvious from the pregenerated ones provided. It is a well laid out scenario suitable for even the least experienced referees, however, like the introductory scenario, this scenario is just not balanced. The opposition is truly awesome, a bit of adjustment will remedy this easily though.

To sum up, Chill is ideally suited for beginners, the rules are not so clear, but the examples give a good idea of how it all fits together. The horrors are, alas, rather scary, the excitement soon palls, as the players expect more than the trick and tease style terror of Chill. Some hard work from the GM would help up for the money I'd want more than this. With both Call of Cthulhu and Daredemons available at the same sort of price why bother. A few years I
D-back this would have shaken the RPG community, now it's second rate. Village of Twilight is a well written Chill scenario, but it's little use for anything else; so unless you enjoy Chill, I can't really recommend it, but I'd be interested to see a second edition. Until then stick with Cthulhu, at least it's made in Britain.

Village of Twilight

Overall: 7

Angus M McLellan

WITCH HUNT

Statcom Simulations £9.95

Witch Hunt is a new RPG set in Massachusetts in 1692, centring on the hysterical year which led to 400 accusations, 19 hangings and three deaths in prison after the clergy of the colony decided that the devil was plotting to overthrow the church.

The RPG is presented as a boxed set with a very atmospheric full colour painting on the front. The main booklet is both the rules and an introductory scenario and runs to 46 pages, you also get a double A4 black and white map of Salem village, a sample doubledescribed character sheet and two Gamescience Micro D20s.

The system itself is pretty straightforward, involving several irrelevancies such as weight and height which as far as I could see are never used whilst playing, however, the prime characteristics are simply reworded normal attributes; constitution, dexterity, knowledge and wisdom with or without appearance, speed, wit, intuition, and will. All these characteristics have between 1 and 5 subdivisions, eg, wit - boring, dull, average, imaginative, and dominating. The subdivisions do not have a part to play in the game, they are noted simply as a player guide to comprehending the abilities of the characters without having to always resort to abstract die roll levelling.

Having read the rules and poured through the examples, nothing jumps out of the script that looks too wrong, except what do you do? It transpires that the authors envisage a twofold point of the RPG, firstly to survive, and secondly the 'ultimate victory conditions' of the character classes to wit, witches wish to destroy the church and magistrates catch the former before they can. A vain attempt to make the systems more universal has meant the inclusion of a number of spells which the witches can cast upon the unsuspecting public; there are ten basic categories of spell, including broomstick riding and bone dust curse. The major problem is that sooner or later, the poor old witches will be caught out every time as they strive to cast spells as they are so dreadfully obvious.

The major concern is that if it is the witches's part to evade capture and confound and prey on the others it becomes increasingly apparent to me that the whole structure of the game falls down at this crucial point, given that the players are either law-abiding citizens or witches it doesn't take long to go round the players victimising them in turn, or have I missed the point? The 4-page scenario 'The Shadow of the Dark Man' seems incredibly sketchy and most unoriginal and disappointing, its directions both to the GM (Town Crier) and players are such that it would leave them wondering what to do.

In conclusion Witch Hunt is interesting in a limited way, in fact "limited" is a good word to sum the game up. There are precious few innovations in evidence and I couldn't imagine players wanting to bother playing it more than once or twice. It is neither 'realistic' nor comprehensive enough to merit recommendation.

Presentation: 7  Rules: 3  Playability: 5  Enjoyment: 5  Overall: 7  Jon Sutherland

THE ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES

TSR £9.50

As the name of the game suggests, it is based around the the unkillable, unstoppable Indiana Jones, his useful associates and a couple of females along for the ride. The game consists of a rulebook containing an introductory adventure, a referee's screen, two dice, a map of the world, a character dossier and last, but not least, some rather cute 3-D cardboard figures.

The rules have been well-written and are designed for someone with little role-playing experience. The game gives you a choice of playing seven different characters, although you could design your own with a bit of improvisation. Of course, there can only ever be one Indy. The characters are based on six attributes, under which you must roll to succeed in doing something. These can be modified according to the situation. The attributes used are Strength, Movement, Prowess (used for combat), Backbone (willpower), Instinct (survival), and Appeal. If Indy encountered a snake, for instance, he would have to make a Backbone roll because of his fear of snakes.

The combat system is very simple but works extremely well, involving a check against Prowess to see whether or not you hit. The system is a pleasure to play because this one roll decides if you hit and whether a light, medium or serious wound is inflicted, and where you've hit. Unlike other games, combat won't drag on for hours.

The movement section covers everything available in the 1930s - from walking to flying in biplanes, and the method for dealing with vehicle performance and accidents is nicely handled. The best six attributes are used in the chase section; this is handled using a flowchart which has been well thought out.

The knowledge and skills section is limited, unfortunately to the abilities used by the characters in the films - a section that could do with expansion, especially if you bear in mind that it's always possible to have a third film! After all, you'd expect there are special rules for dangerous events (swinging on rope bridges, falling, drowning, etc) - all your average everyday occurrences in a game with Indy), each event being assigned a danger rating which a player must roll against Prowess to see whether or not you avoid it.

Having read the rules and poured through the examples, nothing jumps out of the script that looks too wrong, except what do you do? It transpires that the authors envisage a twofold point of the RPG, firstly to survive, and secondly the 'ultimate victory conditions' of the character classes to wit, witches wish to destroy the church and magistrates catch the former before they can. A vain attempt to make the systems more universal has meant the inclusion of a number of spells which the witches can cast upon the unsuspecting public; there are ten basic categories of spell, including broomstick riding and bone dust curse. The major problem is that sooner or later, the poor old witches will be caught out every time as they strive to cast spells as they are so dreadfully obvious.

The major concern is that if it is the witches's part to evade capture and confound and prey on the others it becomes increasingly apparent to me that the whole structure of the game falls down at this crucial point, given that the players are either law-abiding citizens or witches it doesn't take long to go round the players victimising them in turn, or have I missed the point? The 4-page scenario 'The Shadow of the Dark Man' seems incredibly sketchy and most unoriginal and disappointing, its directions both to the GM (Town Crier) and players are such that it would leave them wondering what to do.

In conclusion Witch Hunt is interesting in a limited way, in fact "limited" is a good word to sum the game up. There are precious few innovations in evidence and I couldn't imagine players wanting to bother playing it more than once or twice. It is neither 'realistic' nor comprehensive enough to merit recommendation.

Presentation: 7  Rules: 3  Playability: 5  Enjoyment: 5  Overall: 7  Jon Sutherland

EXPERIENCED GAMERS, I SUSPECT, WILL REGARD THE GAME WITH HORROR - A CHARACTER WHO IS UNTHINKABLE, RIDICULOUS!

Although I found the game to be quite enjoyable (but I had the evening propping up a bar before tackling it) it only has appeal as a 'one-off' game - good for a break but unlikely to have lasting appeal. It is fun, however, and no matter what crazy stunt you attempt, Indy will survive.

Presentation: 7  Enjoyment: 8  Rules: 9  Skill: 3  Playability: 9  Complexity: 3  Overall: 7  Adrian Knowles
CRITICAL MASS

Critical Mass is a regular fantasy and science fiction book review column, written by Dave Langford. What happens ... 

AFTER 1984

By this issue, ominous 1984 will have ended without a world-destroying nuclear holocaust or brutal government suppression of White Dwarf: I can predict that rash thing with a rather peculiar theological satire which - as did his last one, Friday - shines by comparison with the awful Number of the Beast without equalling his best work. Like Job in the Bible, the hero is mucked around no end by Higher Powers; like Jurgen in Cabell's Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice, he goes to hell, heaven and beyond, finally meeting the real ruler of the universe, Koshchee.

The writing is sprightly and the book slips down easily enough. Deficiencies: first, the hero is rather an uninteresting fellow - I never worked out why the far more competent and sensible heroine was so keen on this wimp. (There's not nearly enough of the best character, Satan, latest of Heinlein's wisecracking near-deities.) Secondly, his torments consist of washing dishes to survive in a series of grubby parallel worlds through which God, like a vindictive GM, is shuttering him - all a bit monotonous.

Thirdly, the irreverent treatment of the Day of Judgment, Heaven and Hell - though amusing - falls far below Cabell's. When blasphemy stops being witty and shocking, it tends to become pointless, like graffiti scrawled on church walls. I didn't dislike this one, but ... wait for the paperback, eh?

Daybreak on a Different Mountain
[Unwin 246pp £8.95] is the first novel from Colin Greenland, internationally celebrated as an editor of Interzone. This fantasy has its own odd flavour, full of leisurely metaphysical reflection and sudden narrative jumps - try to skim a slowish bit and you lose the thread altogether.

Two unlike allies, a sceptical fighter and a semi-mystical poet, leave their year 9999 city (vaguely reminiscent of Harrison's Viriconium) on a dubious quest. There's virtually no hacking and slashing: the people met on route aren't hostile, just revealingly different. Even the magical elements are low-key and ambiguous (is the climatic moment on the sacred mountain 'real'?), and the conclusion - when the heroes return to redeem their city - suggests that scepitic and mystic are both right. I found this one unusually well written, but short on narrative energy.

Completely different and bubbling over with bizarre ideas, Ian Watson's The Book of the Stars [Gollancz 208pp £8.95] is number 2 of the Book of the River trilogy - see WD65. It's fine tongue-in-cheek fun, coming close to farce as lovable heroine Yalen dies temporarily, only to be resurrected by her world's dotty trainee god the Worm, to spy on the even dottier electronic Godmind responsible for Earth's colonization of the galaxy ... The Godmind's plan for the universe is bizarrely silly even for Watson, but what can you expect from a near-derelict whose hobby is growing roses on the moon?

All Watson's books are crammed with ideas to boggle any GM, but this latest trilogy presents them in uniquely digestible form. I hope he finishes work soon and returns to redeem the wretched program wouldn't let them go anywhere or do anything interesting. They set admiring it incredibly slow, real-life time, or - more in our next - try to find a command which didn't give 'Try another object/action' or 'You can't do that, Jim'. Eventually the test crew went home, cursing the name of Shards Software (the programmers) and muttering things like 'Harry Harrison should sue'. Perhaps this experience is not typical. More in our next.

Now the embarrassing part.

The second scene halted my trusty suckers. They complained that the wretched program wouldn't let them go anywhere or do anything interesting. They set admiring it incredibly slow, real-life time, or - more in our next - try to find a command which didn't give 'Try another object/action' or 'You can't do that, Jim'. Eventually the test crew went home, cursing the name of Shards Software (the programmers) and muttering things like 'Harry Harrison should sue'. Perhaps this experience is not typical. More in our next.

I'd call it pseudo-scholarship myself; tells you infinitely more than you wanted to know about Frank Herbert's universe. The production is quite impressive, though real or fake photos instead of line-drawings would have added greatly to the "encyclopaedia" look. Whether it's of interest to mere readers is debatable, but gamers will be fascinated. On its way: The Heidricia Encyclopaedia, covering Brian Aldiss's famous world. Is this a new trend? I hope not.

Terry Carr's Best SF of the Year 13 [Gollancz 378pp £4.95 trade pb, £9.95 hc] is really his choice of the best SF of the year - editors always have difficulty with numbers. Featured authors are Frederik Pohl, Ian Watson, Connie Willis, Greg Bear (the Nebula winner), Robert Silverberg, Cherry Wilder, Richard Cowper, Jack Dann, John Sladek (with a 1976 story; editors always have difficulty ...) and Michael Bishop. Most stories were shortlisted for major awards. No doubt Carr's good taste can be trusted. Worth a look.

John Brunner's The Sheep Look Up has been reissued [Arrow 461pp £2.95]: his gloomiest novel, its unremitting despair is at its 'cheeriest' when at the end, Europeans can smell all North America burning. The word is Schadenfreude - look it up.

Normally I view computer games with aloof, aristocratic disdain (even if I am writing this on a new word processor). However, I couldn't resist begging a copy of The Stainless Steel Rat Saves the World [Mosaic £9.95, with the 158pp Sphere novel thrown in], based on course on Harry Harrison's light-hearted story. The game is a text adventure with snappy graphic decorations; I borrowed two SF/Adventure buffs and watched in awe as they swiftly solved the first challenge (basically, you have to do the obvious thing quickly or get zapped). Now comes the embarrassing part.

The second scene halted my trusty suckers. They complained that the wretched program wouldn't let them go anywhere or do anything interesting. They set admiring it incredibly slow, real-life time, or - more in our next - try to find a command which didn't give 'Try another object/action' or 'You can't do that, Jim'. Eventually the test crew went home, cursing the name of Shards Software (the programmers) and muttering things like 'Harry Harrison should sue'. Perhaps this experience is not typical. More in our next.

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It's only 1985, but Brian Stableford and I have just finished editing The Third Millennium: A History of the World, 2000-3000 AD. Now pay attention. When this is published by Sidgwick & Jackson later in the year, you will all go to your local bookshop and buy the first available copy. (Do not just buy us a copy of your magazine. There is a fault in Dave Langford, as usual. Normal service will be resumed next month - Ed.)
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* see TORTURED SOULS! issue 6 for special introductory scenario

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**EYE of NEWT...**

**EYE of Newt and Wing of Bat**

The Manufacture of Magic Items in AD&D

Part 3: Rings, Armour and Shields

by Graeme Davis

---

**Regeneration**

**Rings:** Platinum, set with haematite and coral, the whole thickness having a minimum value of 100,000gp.

Spells: Enchant an item, regenerate, permanency.

**Shooting Stars**

**Rings:** Gold, set with a fire opal flanked by two jacinths, the whole having a minimum value of 85,000gp.

Spells: Enchant an item, dancing lights, light, faerie fire, lightning bolt, fireball, spark shower (Elementalist - WD23), wish, permanency.

**Spell Storing**

**Ring:** Platinum, minimum value 100,000gp.

Spells: Enchant an item, permanency (so that the ring is permanently ready to receive spells), wish.

**Warmth**

**Ring:** Gold, set with anthracite, the whole having a minimum value of 30,000gp.

Spells: Enchant an item, resist cold, permanency.

**Weakness**

**Ring:** Iron, set with lapis lazuli, the whole having a minimum value of 45,000gp.

Spells: Enchant an item, ray of enfeeblement (x4), permanency.

**Berserk Strength**

**Ring:** as above

Spells: Enchant an item, strength (x3), suggestion, limited wish.

**X-Ray Vision**

**Ring:** Platinum, set with a disc of perfect clear rock crystal, flanked by a pair of carbuncles, the whole having a minimum value of 75,000gp

Spells: Enchant an item, clairvoyance, true seeing, limited wish, permanency.

It will be clear from the spell requirements listed above that while a magic-user of 12th level may manufacture some magical rings, the production of the more powerful rings is restricted to higher levels, and since a permanency spell is required for the manufacture of most rings, it is not until 16th level that the enchantment of rings can most effectively be undertaken. In those cases where permanency is required in addition to enchant an item and one other spell, it is possible for the permanency spell to be omitted from the preparations, with the effect of making a 'one-
shot' version of the desired ring, the 'charge' beginning to work when the ring is recited by command word or some other means. It should further be borne in mind that any character desiring to manufacture a particular magical material will have to cast all of the spells listed, with the exception of *enchant an item*, in one day, or in cases where the spells of other professions are required, should have spellcasters of appropriate ability on hand to cast the required spells. In any case, all spells necessary for the creation of any given ring must be cast within 24 hours of the completion of the *enchant an item* spell.

Production costs in time, expense and some experience are increased if desired to prevent high-level characters from 'flooding the market' and undermining the value of magical rings as a treasure items.

**ARMOUR AND SHIELDS**

Magical armour and shields may be treated, for the purpose of this article, in an overall system which will be elaborated upon with other magical weapons. There are three magical virtues in a normal suit of magic armour:

1. It is highly resistant to blows, so that the armours of the wearer is improved, secondly, it also extends a magical protection to its wearer, reflected in saving throw bonuses, and thirdly, it causes no encumbrance. The relationship between materials and armours is treated in the DMG (pg 164), and the quality of workmanship will also have a profound effect on the magical quality of the completed item. It will be necessary to hire a master armurier for the manufacture of the basic suit of armour or shield; the base production times for the various types of armour may be taken, for game purposes, as one day per 5gp of normal cost. Thus, a suit of chain mail would take 15 days to produce, while plate mail would require a period of 80 days. At the end of this time, of course, there is no guarantee that the compiled armur will be increased in quality for enchantment; the probability increases with the craftsman's skill, but no mortal craftsman has ever been able to produce master quality armour on demand. The various possibilities of superior work; DMs should feel free to add or subtract modifiers depending on the skill of the armurier.

The armours thus produced will be unusually tough and resistant to attack, but will have no magical properties. Furthermore, it must save vs crushing blow after each battle in which it has been involved, or battle damage will reduce its bonus by one, until eventually it becomes a normal suit of armour.

In order to stabilise the bonus of the armur (or shield - all references to armur include shields), some spellcasting will be necessary. A *limited wish* will prevent deterioration (at the DM's option, or *limited wish* might be necessary for each +1 of the bonus), and for the full protection of magical armur the following spells will also be necessary: *enchant an item, protection from evil*, production from good, permanency. Finally, another *limited wish*, possibly together with *levitate and haste*, will be necessary in the case of a suit of armur, in order to produce the freedom from encumbrance characteristic of magical armur.

Magical leather armur, of course, presents a slightly different problem. The basic material should come from the hide of a monster which has a magical defence itself (ie may be hit only by magical weapons), and must again be prepared by master craftsmen, in this case a master leatherworker being required to work with the master armurier. Each makes a roll on percentile die, and the results are averaged and referred to on Table II.

### Table 1: Manufacture of Superior Armour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%roll</th>
<th>Armour quality</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Mithril Material</th>
<th>Adamantine Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Inferior</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-75</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-79</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Note: The production of equipment with a natural bonus of +5 or better is beyond mortal capabilities, being restricted to craftmen such as Hephaestus and Golbhnin in DDG)

This process produces non-magical superior armur which is then ready for spellcasting as above.

### Table 2: Manufacture of Superior Armour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Armour quality</th>
<th>Protection</th>
<th>Creature Hit by</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Inferior</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+1, -2 or better</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-75</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2, -2 or better</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-79</td>
<td>Superior</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3, -2 or better</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>+4, -2 or better</td>
<td>+4</td>
<td>+5</td>
<td>+6</td>
<td>+7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Special Magic Armour and Shields

There are some types of magical armur and shields which have additional properties over and above the basic virtues dealt with above.

#### Plate Mail of Vulnerability

This is not of any sort, but of any sort, and it may simply be this that has led to the armur being thought of as magical.

### Shield +1, +4 vs Missiles

Since this is a large shield, the extra bonus against missile fire is hardly surprising, and may simply be a reflection of the cover afforded by a large shield (see DMG p64). Large shields such as the Roman legionary shield of the Norman kite shield were primarily designed to give heavy infantry maximum cover against archers and other missile fire, and anything short of a ballista could do them any real damage. If it is desired to make some special provision for this property in the manufacture of the item, however, the spell *protection from normal missiles* might be added to the magical requirements, the tortoise or turtle shell of the material component being inlaid into the shield facing.

### Helm of Comprehending Languages and Reading Magic

**Materials:** The helm should be of silveryed bronze, set with sapphire and a minimum value of 35,000gp. Each helm of mind reading or a limited wish to alter the protection to weakness, together with the normal requirement of *enchant an item* and permanency.

**Spells:** Enchant an item, comprehend language, read magic, limited wish, permanency.

### Helm of Telepathy

The manufacture of this type is deemed to be beyond the capabilities of player characters, but at the DM's option its construction might be attempted by powerful psionic using the disciplines of telepathy, telepathic projection, ESP, and domination.

### Helm of teleportation

**Materials:** The helm should be of silveryed iron, set with alexandrite and ruby and ribbed with the carved bone of a demon of type IV or higher, the whole having a value of not less than 50,000gp.

**Spells:** Enchant an item, teleport (x8), full wish, permanency.

### Helm of underwater Action

**Materials:** The helm should be of gilded iron, set with coral, the whole having a minimum value of not less than 25,000gp.

**Spells:** Enchant an item, any water, telekinesis (to operate lenses), geas, limited wish (x2), permanency.
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The desert planet Psicas... hot... dry... teeming with sand...

The travellers have finally reached their destination, although for others, the trip was less arduous...

\* Felix!! - Oh Felix, felie wheelie, dont you ever learn like that again!

\* Okay gang, grab aspace and look this way...

Chapter 10: "Nature Rample"

The story drags on and on... people leave the cinema house in droves... Barry Norman gives it the thumbs down... Will 'The Travellers - the motion picture' ever end...

The Imperial Guard Corp is recruited from the planet Pratt, where they are cheap determined and plenty in number. They are also incapable of hitting a moving target, and readily drop down in threes at the firing of a single hero's gun and are very, very stupid...

... The three take over a little room...

... The three take over a little room...
THE MOTIVATED TRAVELLER

by Andy Slack

A recent WD article described the idea of choosing objectives for D&D characters and awarding experience points for actions consistent with these objectives. Here is a similar system intended for use with SF RPGs, notably Traveller, Space Opera and Universe, Star Frontiers, having character advancement based on experience points, would be better served by the original system.

An Adept maps of using the system are threefold: first, it provides a quick, simple guide to the character's actions and personality; this is most valuable when dealing with NPCs and for beginning players. It also provides predefined goals for the character, often a problem for players, especially those new to the system concerned. Third, it provides a way to move large sums of money from the game painlessly.

Objectives

On joining the game, characters must each specify 3 objectives. Choosing 3 makes for some interesting 'crises of conscience' as the demands of various objectives conflict.)

Possible objectives are: Adept, Altruist, Hedonist, Killer, Miser, Rover, Socialite, Warrior. The character's goal is to amass Victory Points (VP) and so increase his Victory Level (VL), which represents his reputation and self-esteem. VP are totalled monthly; in any game month in which a character fails to mass at least as many as his VL, his VL is decreased by one: in any game month in which he amasses 3 times as many VP as the new VL, his character's VL is increased by one. The GM should award VP as he sees fit, but the following are guidelines. Note that a character may gain VP twice for an action if he has two objectives which would each gain him VP for it.

A Socialite is a character who makes a career out of social climbing; their overall aim is to be rich, famous and powerful, preferably noble with it. A Socialite gains VP from Carousing and Gambling. He also gains VP as follows: for High Living, +2 VP per month. Being a member of the Travellers' Aid Society, +2 per month.

A Warrior as an objective; they may still choose whatever they like. They are usually intrigued by natural wonders and exotic sights and customs.

A Rover's VL increases by one each time he lands on a world he has never visited before, regardless of VP gained or lost that month.

Socialites are character who make a career out of social climbing; their overall aim is to be rich, famous and powerful, preferably noble with it. A Socialite gains VP from Carousing and Gambling. He also gains VP as follows: for High Living, +2 VP per month. Being a member of the Travellers' Aid Society, +2 per month.

Killers are generally nasty characters who enjoy the thrill of fighting, no matter how necessary, and are ruthless in pursuit of their goals. A Killer gains VP as follows: +1 VP per minor wound inflicted on a character; +2 VP per major wound inflicted on a character. Note: These awards are doubled if the Killer wounds another player character. The purpose of this is to ensure that those travelling with a psychopath are always a little uneasy about it. A Killer also gains +1 VP each time he wins an opposing ship in space combat.

Misers are those who desire money for its own sake; they tend to be wary of any expenditure, however necessary, and will do almost anything to make money.

A Miser's VL may never be less than the logarithm (base 10) of his cash balance in Credits, regardless of VP gains or losses. Thus a Miser with Cr10,000 must have a VL of at least 4; one with Cr1,000,000 has a minimum VL of 6.

Rovers travel for the sheer joy of travelling, and are born tourists. They are usually intrigued by natural wonders and exotic sights and customs.

A Rover's VL increases by one each time he lands on a world he has never visited before, regardless of VP gained or lost that month.

An Altruist gains VP as follows: 1 VP per week if he acts as an instructor, 1 VP per Cr500 x his VL which he donates to a worthy cause (GM's discretion is required in determining what constitutes a worthy cause), 1 VP for healing a character of a minor wound or disease and +2 VP for healing a character of a major wound or disease.

Hedonists enjoy the good things in life - good food, good living, and other pleasures. Much of their income is spent on these things. A Hedonist gains VP from Gambling and Carousing (see below). He also gains VP as follows: for High Living, +2 per month. For travelling High Passage, +2 per trip. Per Cr500 x his VL spent on otherwise useless luxuries, +1 VP.

A Socialite (as all aspire to become) is the consummate opportunist - he has a minimum VL of 5; a Socialite could not possibly be enfranchised nobility); and so on. Traveller Vargr are perhaps an exception, and should be allowed (unlike other characters) to change their VL easily.

Warriors gain VP as follows: For being on the winning side in combat, +2; for commanding a winning side outnumbered n:1 in combat, +1 (n x n); for each hit personally scored in space combat, +1.

Carousing and Gambling

Carousing is an activity lasting one week and costing Cr50 x character's VL. It gains a Hedonist or Socialite 1VP. If two or more Socialites carouse together by mutual and prearranged consent, this is called toadying; the Socialite with the highest VL present gains +1 VP per other Socialite present, and other Socialites gain VP equal to 1/2 the difference between their VL and the highest present.

Gambling uses the normal rules for the system in use. A character may make up to 6 bets per week of gambling, each of Cr50 to Cr5,000. Hedonists and Socialites gain +1 VP per Cr500 x VL bet; Socialites gain +1 VP per bet won, and lose 1VP per bet lost.

Alien Beings and their Objectives

Aliens seem best handled by restrictions on which objectives they may choose. Every SF game or writer has a race of eline creatures with the codes of the Samurai: Niven's Kzinti, Traveller's Aslan, Space Opera's Avatars, Cherry's Mri; the list is endless. Such creatures must choose either Killer or Warrior as an objective; they may still choose whatever they like for their other two objectives. In the same way, other races would be characterised by objective which they must (or may not) choose; Niven's Puppeteers or Star Frontiers' Vrack would be forced to select Miser as an objective; Traveller Zhodani would automatically choose Socialite (as all aspire to become enfranchised nobility); and so on. Traveller Vargr are perhaps an exception, and should be allowed (unlike other characters) to change their objectives annually, reflecting their changeable attitudes to life.

Non-Players

Objectives are easily selected for NPCs to flesh them out in the same way. It is easy to allocate them by a random die roll, but take into account that character's skills, characteristics and race. An extremely rich character, especially if an ex-merchant and most especially if he has a ship, is very unlikely to be a Miser. A tough character with many weapons skills is likely to be either a Warrior or a Killer, and is probably not an Altruist. An ex-Scout, again especially if he has a ship, is more likely than most to be a Rover. In short, pick objectives for NPCs sensibly; choose something for them which would start them with a high VL, and allow them to improve that VL easily.
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FREE COMPETITION!
INTRODUCTION
Set in a city, this scenario is suitable for 4-5 starting/1st level characters. A general map is provided as a rough guide to locations—precise routes are up to the GM.

FIGHTING FANTASY
GMs wishing to use this system will require Fighting Fantasy by Steve Jackson. Unlike the gamebooks, the adventure is not programmed and will rely much on the abilities of the individual GM.

Since much of the adventure depends on finding out information from living informants, the following system is suggested to allow adventurers and NPCs to fall unconscious at suitable intervals. When wounded, roll 2d6: if the result is greater than the current stamina of the character, then he falls unconscious (but may be revived later).

Some of the NPCs of the adventure have been given Luck characteristics—use them as you would a player character’s to the benefit of the individual. Some NPCs are going to be much tougher than individual adventurers, but they are very experienced. GMs should award Luck whenever appropriate.

A group of adventurers may start this adventure with up to two doses of healing potion.

THE SEAL
The Seal is a popular inn in the bazaar quarter with a very cosmopolitan clientele—it is especially favoured by adventurers who can often find partners and look out for us and the innkeeper, feels he has a duty to provide entertainment for his customers and is always on the lookout for performing troupes. Today, however, he has something special lined up for the evening—a storyteller, new to the city who has volunteered his services, plus a cut in any profits—something that’s worth the risk of employing someone untied.

A. Evening One
In the evening, the youth has already taken up a secluded vantage point by the fire, sipping lightly at a cup of tea and waiting his moment. To any other customer of the inn he looks like a well-travelled, if young, adventurer, dressed in worn patched clothes, with a weather-stained cloak around him. Much of the talk this evening is centred around the entertainment that Morgan will arrange—the last act, a juggler troupe, went down well until it was discovered they were using the event to overcharge the attention of the customers from their purses.

Mid-evening, a gentle cough stills the chatter; the youth now stands on his table and begins to speak. Although his voice is gentle, his firm, steady nature ensures that it carries to every customer, and any remaining talk is stilled. He begins a story—a great adventure of a noble hero, his journeys to foreign countries and the great and legendary monsters encountered. The audience of adventurers is quite captivated by the story—though not totally original, it is very well told. Certainly, nothing up to this standard has been heard over the last few months.

Once the story has ended, the youth is almost obscured by an appreciative audience, all of whom wish to congratulate him on an entertaining story—over an hour has passed in the telling. Once the fuss has died down, however, the youth will have disappeared, having slipped quietly away at the first opportunity.

B. Evening Two
Again the youth is seated quietly away from the majority of customers—disturbed, he will ask the innkeeper to remove the offenders (regardless of their importance). When ready, he begins another story, holding the attention of the inn as on his previous performance. He has a larger audience this evening—his reputation seems to have spread already. As if anticipating the expectant mood of his audience, he throws himself into the story with a little more gusto. The plot revolves around tales of piracy, sea monsters and eastern princesses.

Central to the tale is the description of the palace of a great sea drake: dealt with in such a fashion as to draw gazes of awe from the audience.

At the end of his story, once the youth has received his due adulation, he slips quietly away.

GM’s Notes
The players may well try to follow the youth—he will disappear into a side street and the maze of the city, although players should be given the feeling that they only just lose him.

C. Evening Three
This evening, the youth seems a little unnerved and edgy, and the story he tells seems to fit in with the air of melancholy. His narrative is a classic romance, embracing the virtues of a true knight, leading ultimately to the betrayal and ruin of the central character as his ambitions thwarted. Again, the tale has the same spell-binding qualities and the audience is as appreciative as ever. As he slips away, however, someone follows him, slipping discretely out of the shadows (D&D: spot as for secret doors: FF: Luck to notice).

GM’s Notes
The innkeeper, Morgan, has taken an interest in the youth, and has come to a business agreement with him. He will act in his best interests should the party enquire of him. Several thieves have also taken an interest in Lyanurus, one of which is now on his tail.

D. Backstreet Struggle
The players should have little trouble tainting the youth and his shadow—they are led through innumerable alleys before finally heading towards the red light district. Ahead of them, the youth stops—he has been confronted by two dark figures (they are thieves in league with the tailing thief). Breaking to run, he is trapped between the three thieves, and the youth...should the party intervene, they will have three thieves on their hands.

Thieves: (D&D) LVL1, A7, HTK4, 2, 3, 4 (FF) Skill: 7, Stamina: 15 (for each thief).

Should the event of a tight, the youth will keep out of the way (Lyanus is reluctant to use his powers since she would reveal herself publicly and have to leave the city). If the thieves defeat the party (knocking them out or scaring them away), they will capture the storyteller who will drop a ring as a clue to finding him.

If the party defeat the thieves, the storyteller will reward them with a valuable-looking ring and he will ask to be escorted to his next port of call—Clouds. He will part company with the players here, unwilling to talk further with them.

E. Evening Four
Unusually, the youth is not at the inn. Morgan is concerned for his safety—as far as he knows, Lyanus was intending to visit the inn as usual, and since the characters are well-known customers (famous adventurers or whatever), Morgan would appreciate them looking into the storyteller, to find out where he’s gone or what has happened to him. Although unable to promise great reward, he can offer the tempting bonus of free drinks...

GM’s Notes
Lyanus has been abducted at a later hour (the previous evening) on one of her thieving runs and her disappearance has been brushed up by the gang responsible. To all intents and purposes, a dark blonde has disappeared, although should the party choose to follow up their investigation at Clouds (p7) regarding the arrival of a young
man there the previous evening, the door- 
men will deny any knowledge (after all, 
they know that they let one of Valeria's 
girls in, rather than informing outsiders of the fact). What hap-

pens next is dependent on the course of 
queries adopted by the players.

BAZAAR QUARTER

The bazaar, apart from its more honest 
trades stands, is an accepted area for 
fencing low-value stolen goods - items 
that aren't readily identifiable due to their nondescript 
or common nature. The stall owners 
who deal with such goods are generally as dis-
honest as the thieves who supply them. Small time 
thieves (those not affiliated to the 
mercenary gangs of the city) can quite 
easily make a living 
without incurring the wrath of the organised 
gangs.

The bazaar is a very cosmopolitan area 
of the city. Except during the early morning 
and late evening (when the time 
stands are being erected or dismantled), 
the area is very busy with townspeople 
out to buy luxury items or food for everyday life. 
A large number of goods are available in the 
bazaar, and although some (such as 
everyday foods, staples, 
food, clothing, jewellery and ornaments) are available at reasonable prices. 

Three major events can occur in the 
bazaar which will help the players in their 
quest (other random events are up to the 

GM).

F. Jewellery Stand

Passers-by stop displaying trinkets, 
somehow catching the eye of one of the characters 
(D&D: on a 1-2 on 6 [elves 1-3]; FF: Luck roll). Some pieces of jewellery - some 
highly polished and others tarnished, 
and closer inspection reveals that they are in 
some cases clearly similar to jewellery 
from the story, though the 
storyteller in the inn. If Lyanarus has 
rewarded the players previously in a 're-
sue' attempt, then the ring that he can give 
the characters as reward will be of a similar 
style to the one he has previously given. 
The pieces are of 
crude nature and of little value. 

If asked, the stallkeeper, a rather 
unpleasant, oily character, will explain their 
origin as 'coming from a peasant recently 
arrived in the city in search of 
habitability. Although he is unaware of the 
name of the thief, he is certain that the 
man is one of the many that 
encourage a little profiteering on 
his own. (Which gang he will not know.) 

If the party take their brush with 
the stallkeeper too far, other stallkeepers 
will return the compliment and 
take an interest in the welfare of their 
own kinds. They will demand to be paid down 
if things get too heated.

Stallkeeper: (D&D) LV6.0, AC6, HTK3; 
(FF) Skill 7, Stamina: 14. 
Heavies: (D&D) LV6.0, AC7. 
Heavies: (FF) Skill 8, Stamina: 18 (for each heavy). 

G. Gypsy's Tent

A source of information which is often 
considered reliable by adventurers and 
townspeople is a reading of the cards by one of the 
gypsies of the bazaar.

Entering the tent reveals a world entirely 
different to the bustling of the bazaar outside. 
Dark blue drapes block out both light and 
sound, creating a peaceful atmosphere inside the tent. Her face 
shrouded by veils, only the wise eyes of the 
gypsy woman are visible, and with a dry, 
hoarse voice, she will ask the characters 
what they wish to know. For the price of 10 
gold pieces she will read the cards for the 
players, although she'll only be able to 
reveal the following facts.

From the signification of the page of 
the wand, the players must give 
receiving for reading to have meaning), she can 
tell them that the person that they are seek-

ing is still alive, but a prisoner against his 
will; that while he is powerful, he is weak, 
and he is easy to dominate and that many people are interested in 
his activities (a man of power, a woman of 
repute and groups of lesser individuals), yet 
that none of them act in his best interests.

An observation on the above are up to the 
GM, but don't give too much away. 

If threatened by the players, the gypsy's 
bodyguard who has been standing nearby 
behind a curtain, will intervene to defend 
her.

Gypsy Bodyguard: (D&D) LV7.0, AC3, HTK20, 
brooch (1-8 damage). 
(FF) Skill 12, Stamina: 22, Luck: 8. 

Killing either of the gypsies will invoke a 
curse (from the story), the exact effect of which is up to the 

H. Rhandal, Gangleader

Daring through the crowd of people 
behind the character is a figure wrapped in a 
well-travelled grey cloak (D&D: on a 1-2 on 6 
to receive [elves 1-3]; FF: Luck) - someone 
about the build they're looking for. The 
figure shifts quickly between stalls, as if try-
ing to evade pursuers, and to follow, players 
will have to see if they can keep up (D&D: 
save vs INT; FF: Luck). 

If the players lose the figure, they should 
be given a chance to catch up with it 
again, finally cornering the person in one of 
the side streets off the bazaar.

The figure will turn, whipping out an 
ornate rapier, challenging the party as to 
their reasons for following him. As the hood 
falls from the head of the man, a complete 
stranger will be revealed: a small, dark, 
man, potentially dangerous since he 
looks extremely skilled with his rapier. 
Beneath the cloak, clothes of a very high 
standard of quality are revealed ... the 
characters have cornered someone of some 
standing.

Rhandal: (D&D) LV6.0, AC6, HTK10, 
Thief, rapier, +1 ring of protection. 
(FF) Skill 10, Stamina: 20, Luck: 10, rapier (does one extra point of damage to stamina when hit). 

Rhandal is a leader of one of the larger 
gangs of thieves in the city, and although he 
knows that some of his minions are only a 
few seconds away, he'd much rather talk 
than spill blood. He knows of the party, 
having heard of them in the few 
occasions that the storyteller was there, and 
he has been watching the city dressed in a 
similar fashion to find out who knows about 
Lyanarus and how much they know. 

Rhandal is at this stage of the story, 
and the final stage of the adventure revolves. He is interested in talking to the characters to find 
out what they know so that he can piece 
together exactly why Lyanarus has gone 
missing. Given the chance to talk to the 
characters, he will 'suddenly recognise' 
them as being present in the inn, and bring 
up the subject of the storyteller, mentioning 
how good he thought his talent was and 
whether they know if the storyteller is still performing 
in the city, since he has a private engage-
ment in mind. If the players are willing 
to talk to Rhandal, he will suggest that they 
meet him at his residence for dinner later that 

Evening.

Should a suitable venue and the 
characters take up the offer, or the equi-

valent length of time, three of Rhandal's 
henchmen will arrive on the scene, 
concerned about the safety of their leader: if 
he is engaged in conversation, they will 
attack the party, warning them that they're 
not likely to convey the same feeling 
of wealth as their master (a little scruffy 
around the edges being a good description!).

Otherwise they will assist Rhandal, 
attacking the party.

Henchmen: (D&D) LV1.2, AC7, 
HTK6.7,7, Thief, short sword, slings. 
(FF) Skill 8, Stamina: 15.

If a fight has ensued, Rhandal will want 
the characters taken alive - despite their 
rashness, their help is going to be valued, 
and after all, for what he proposes, he needs 
quite a bit of help.

If really pressed and liable to lose a fight, 
Rhandal will reach into his jerkin and 
produce a small pouch, shaking it 
towards the characters. It is a deep 
sleep, causing all 
within it (1D4) to fall unconscious to the 
ground. (D&D characters have a save vs spells to resist).

RED LIGHT DISTRICT

Many vital clues to the mystery can 
be picked up from a tour of the red light 
district of the city, although not all are readily 
apparent.

I. Cat's paw

General observation of the streets 
and alleys will turn up the fact that a renowned 
theft/ adventurer, Cat's paw, seems to be 
spending a great deal of time investigating 
many noted thieves and the 
and rooftop level. Cat's paw is well known in the 
bazaar quarter and asking around various 
stall owners of the area will get the 
information that he is currently engaged by 
the lady Valeria. If the players manage 
to find the whereabouts of one of her 
girls, the street cat can be found-

The street cat is a short, slim built, 
dark-haired individual, who is 
dressed in worn, non-descriptive clothing, his features 

general, concealed by a hooded cloak. He 
will be wary of being approached by any 
individuals (especially those 
the streets) and will edge away from such 
confrontations (disappearing into the shadows 
and re-emerge later in order to take single 
members of the group unawares for 
questioning). A discreet approach in the street will 
make him suspicious, but 
the Storyteller will maintain that his search is very much done 
as a personal favour, with a relatively low 
profile to be maintained.

Should a suitable venue and the 
characters arrive, the street cat (who is 
preparing an inn on his home 
patch, the bazaar), then, for the 
price of a few gold pieces and some wine, he is 
prepared to be more frank in the matter. 
The disappearance of the girl has occurred in
unusual circumstances - she appears to have vanished without trace. No-one has reported seeing her and no other house of the area has taken her in - either she has run off of her own accord or for some reason. His contacts in the 'underground' have so far been unable to furnish him with any information - something that is particularly unusual. His personal feelings are that she has thrown herself on her own ends and having become established in the city has elected to go it on her own. If Valeria wasn't such a good friend he'd give up the search.


J. A Brief Departure

From a darkened alleyway off one of the side streets in the red light district can be heard (D&D: Listen; FF: Luck) a few faint moans (these will be more audible if a party stops for a few moments in their search). The sound continues to come from a dimly lit doorway - the dim light failing to reveal the doorway or the area inside. Shells are being fired in a makeshift barricade splintering as the door bursts inwards. Beyond, in a small, unlit alleyway off one of the bazaar's main thoroughfares, a girl, Valeria, is in need of urgent medical attention - in addition to what appear to be stab wounds, she is running a fever. A cure light wounds (FF: healing potion) will help solve the immediate problems of the stab wounds, but the girl is still too weak to respond (she is suffering from a disease as well as the wounds as a result of her living conditions) and attention in the minimum she will require to be in a fit state to help.

Although pretty, and very like the description Catspaw has given the players of the girl he is searching for, she is unconnected with the adventure, being a low class whore whose pimp has decided that she is cheating him and has taken it out on her. Valeria will not reveal anything about her current predicament

Introducing Catspaw to the girl will throw him - he believes that she is the one he's looking for and will suggest taking her (whatever condition she's in) to Cloudur, where she can be healed up. Although Valeria will recognise her, however, she is not the one she is looking for - she will offer to take her under her wing and return her to good health (she is a good business prospect).

K. Clouds

Clubs is a house predominantly frequented by parties of adventurers. The clientele means: it is expensive and select. The girls of the house are learned in many foreign arts. Lady Valeria, the owner, has a keen eye for a promising girl and will often help one of the party's members, as a favor for some profession, content with the knowledge that the money spent on training will be more than repaid in years to come.

Such was the case with Lyana, a girl she found wandering one of the back streets some two months ago. Recognising a 'natural', Valeria undertook the task of training her personally, and after only a month, Lyana had picked up all the necessary skills and was being presented to the clientele. Most of the girls of the house have taken a liking to her and are upset at her sudden disappearance - it isn't like her to disappear without telling someone where she's off to.

Valeria is extremely concerned for her safety - no-one disappears completely without trace - as large as his prize.

Valeria's contacts have been unable (or unwilling) to talk and she has a number of favours from friends to get them out on the streets searching for her (eg Catspaw). She will be her only avenue to anyone information they require concerning the girl if they are likely to be able to find her.

The only thing that is unusual about Lyana's routine is that she almost appeared to lead a double life. Regularly appearing in the early evening for up to two hours - Valeria suspects that she has found a young gentleman who she favours but has yet to bring up the subject with her (she believes in giving her girls some element of freedom and privacy). Certainly she has a winning way with her customers - many of whom say that she has a strange charm, something that makes them forget the cares of the world. At all times, Vyana will refer to Lyana as 'Frem' - her 'house' name.

Valeria, is still considered attractive by many of her admirers; she is of average height, slim and brunette, greying slightly. She is a skilled operator of her contacts throughout the city; crossing her would be very dangerous indeed!

Valeria: (D&D) LV10, AC10, HTK3 (FF) Skill: 6, Stamina: 10.

L. RHANDAL'S HOUSE

Situated between the thieves' quarter and the bazaar is Rhandal's house - a large, impressive stone house originally built for a merchant. It now serves as headquarters for Rhandal's respectable activities. Some traces of its former glory still remain - white marble pillars support the porch, and gold trimmings still adorn the solid oak doors.

Characters may find themselves here either as invited guests or as 'prisoners' after attending a noisy party. Once at dinner, Rhandal will put his full powers to work on his guests. Since both parties have an active interest in the story telling, Lyanarus, (otherwise the party would never have followed him in the bazaar) will reveal what he knows. Lyanarus has been running the gauntlet of a number of business propositions for Rhandal's activities. His reputation is still considered and he is building up the whole of his party as a group of adventurers.

When last heard of, Lyanarus was being held by one of the gangs that wish to keep her for her own ends and have yet to bring up the subject with her (she believes in giving her girls some element of freedom and privacy).

When first seen, Lyanarus was being held by one of the gangs that wish to keep her for her own ends and have yet to bring up the subject with her (she believes in giving her girls some element of freedom and privacy).

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3. Dining Hall. The main feature of this otherwise plain room is a large table around which are arranged twelve chairs. A large locked chest contains cutlery, tablecloths and china, otherwise there is nothing of value.

4. Kitchen. At night, the kitchen doubles as the sleeping quarters for the servants of the house, of which there are ten. Entering the room without due precautions has a 5 in 6 chance per minute of disturbing a sleeping servant who will then proceed to raise the alarm. None of the servants are particularly keen, however, and will be unwilling to fight.

5. Pantry. A well provisioned room containing a large supply of foodstuffs, steps from the room lead down into the cellar.

6. Cellar. An iron grated door shuts this section of the house off from the pantry, although it is unlocked. The rusty hinges will shriek noisily unless attended to when the door is opened. Beyond, the cellar shows signs of sporadic use - as if the rackled wine is for show rather than everyday use. A fine film of dust lies on the floor and the walls are packed.

A search party of the cellar will find (D&D: as secret doors; FF: Luck, penalty of -2) giving the feeling that something is wrong - the dust isn't natural, and another successful search (D&D: as secret doors; FF: Luck) will reveal that one of the racks is filled with lighter, wax bottles, the rack sliding away to reveal a small trapdoor. A tiny scrap of grey cloth is caught between the door and its frame. Listening, faint sounds of movement can be heard below.

7. Cell. Opening the trapdoor will reveal a darkened room and a shaky ladder leading downwards. The only inhabitants that can be seen are a pair of large rats who will run into their hole beneath the bed (which is the only piece of furniture in the room). The cell shows signs of recent use - almost as if it has been vacated an hour or so beforehand.

Lyana, the woods vampire, is still present in the cell. From the noise above, she has deduced that whoever is investigating her prison is someone other than her captors and has employed her natural ability to turn invisible, ready to escape from the cell if the above trapdoor is opened (following investigators out where necessary).

8. Landing. Like the hallway, a guard has been posted, seated at the top of the stairs, and in an equally alert state of mind as his companion below. He sleeps more lightly, however, and there is a 3 in 6 chance of him waking up if the party is too noisy. Should he awake, he will warn his master and then feign sleep, hoping to gain the initiative if approached.

Bodyguard: (D&D) LVL1, AC5, HTK7. Designs will be swayed by what is used to Kyan to mark official business.

FF) Skill: 8, Stamina: 10.

9. Study. A smaller, more used room than the library, although quite spartan in its furnishing. A locked drawer in the desk contains the keys to the cellar (used by Kyan to mark official business).

10 - 12. Bedrooms. All ornately furnished (with stolen goods), these appear to be in constant use (they are guest rooms for Kyan's business associates).

13. Kyan's Bedroom. Kyan is a particularly light sleeper and the slightest noise from outside the door (or windows) is sufficient to alert him. He will have readied a crossbow to fire at the person to enter his chamber, the bolt being tipped with poison (D&D: hits at Kyan's level of ability, save vs poison or die; FF: Luck to avoid or die). If drastically outnumbered he will attempt to flee, preferring a window exit and escape across the rooftops.

If the party are few in numbers or weak, then he will stay to fight or parley. He knows the storyteller is in his cell, but if he has escaped, this will be a shock, especially since he will be unable to work out how. Perhaps someone else has set her free?


FINALE
Lyana, deciding at last to reveal her powers since she can see it as the only way out of her predicament once Kyan's true motives behind her capture were revealed earlier that evening. Again she will have disappeared under unusual circumstances. She will return to Clouds, suitably 'battered', claiming that all has gone wrong - her lover has betrayed her and she would like Valeria to take her back into the house, with the promise that she won't make the same mistake again. Valeria will, despite a few misgivings, accept her. After a week or so, perhaps even the storyteller may reappear at The Seal after having to rush away on some important business. Catspaw, after a few days, will be able to inform the players that the missing girl has returned, and perhaps they could now use his assistance in their problem...

DM's Background - Lyana
Lyana is a woods vampire who has been drawn to the city by some of the dreams that a recent encounter provided. Initially lost, she has taken shelter in Clouds, although she finds the atmosphere limiting. With her natural talents, she is able to intercept the dreams and worries of her merchant customers and find out their secrets, and whilst they are left believing they are enjoying her favours, Lyana has left Clouds to raid their houses, stealing choice items of jewellery and the like. Additionally, the number and burden of the dreams she feeds on have had to find an outlet, something she hasn't had to cope with before. Disguising herself, she has taken on the role of a much travelled storyteller, adding the masculine ending to her name for convenience. It is the sentient objects that have warranted the attention of a number of gangs of thieves who see her as a threat to their livelihood who must either be eliminated or instructed as to the proper ways of the city. With this in mind, a number of gangs wish to seize this impudent storyteller/thief for their own benefits.

As far as all parties are concerned, it is Lynarus, womaniser and thief who is responsible - even Rhandal and Kyan are unaware of Lynarus' true identity.


WOODS VAMPIRE
AC: 5
Hit Dice: 4
Move: 120' (40')
Attacks: special
Save as: Fighter 9
Treasure: Nil
Alignment: Neutral or Good

The wood's vampire is a peaceful, intelligent creature native to woodland areas where it helps to soothe the fears and anxieties of many other woodland beasts. It appears as a beautiful human female, although it is often mistaken for a youthful man. It lives off the thought patterns of other beings, allowing them and adding to its experiences and knowledge at the same time. It is prone to preying on travellers who rest in its wood since they provide a rich source of dreams and experiences - wild fanciful excursions which appeal to its senses. Being shy, it rarely encounters the majority of the human race; although the dreams it feeds off sometimes fire it into visiting villages.

It is reluctant to attack, deterring itself with only that which is handy, plus, when suitable, its natural abilities of charm person, invisibility, remove fear, resist cold and cure light wounds, all of which may be used twice per day. Exceptionally acrobatic, it has the skills of an acrobat equal to those of a thief of its hit dice. The naturally charismatic qualities of this creature hold some sort of spell over others and woods vampires make good orators.
THRU THE BARBARIAN

So Thornds sets off on his long and arduous journey with his wisdom as his only companion...

He meets many wise men...

Remember ancient proverbs which say -

HA!

...and journeys to many strange places...

\[ text {BUT!} \]

...and learns much in the art of self defense.

He also has his hair shaved off so he looks the part!

HA!

After years of training, he is at last ready to subdue himself!

HA!

After a long search, he finally accepts his role.

With orbs focused only on Thrud, he moves forward.
PRESENT
Earth Wood
GAMES
Game Eighteen Starting Shortly!

THE MAJOR AMERICAN PLAY-BY-MAIL GAME

EARTHWOOD has been running for over 3 years in America and currently has over 2,000 players. KJC Games has been granted the exclusive right to moderate this unique computer moderated Play-By-Mail game in the UK. Twenty-five players compete to control all the cities of Earthwood and be the ultimate ruler. A typical game will last about 18 months with the first knockouts after six months.

Each player is either a king of a fantasy race or a powerful charismatic character in this world of conquest and sorcery. Your character or king controls several groups each of which is totally independent of each other. You can recruit NPC trolls, wildmen and others into your service or even control powerful creatures such as dragons or giant spiders. Your characters may also control or capture cities upon which you can spend gold to improve security, increase your workshops production, build defences and maintain or enlarge your army. With gold your wizards can undertake magical research to increase their power and knowledge and thus aid your armies in battle. Spies can search out enemy strongholds, attempt to do acts of sabotage, theft, and assassination. These are just a few of the options available to a player in EARTHWOOD.

EARTHWOOD is completely computer moderated but the turn sheet and replies are written in plain English so that you can easily understand them. No need to look through complex charts and code books to understand this game.

CRAZIMOFF'S WORLD

THE LARGEST PBM GAME IN THE UK

'A Play By Mail game with a D&D flavour'

'Undoubtedly, CRASIMOFF'S WORLD is a highly worthy game. It has been running for several years now and has a large number of players. Compared to others of its kind it is not expensive and it goes out of its way to encourage communication between players. I found the initial scenario interesting, and the world lived up to its initial promise. The fact that they are handwritten merely testifies to the immense amount of effort put in by the GM. So, with its regular newsletter, Crazimoff's World is a friendly, efficient, and relatively cheap game to play, and if you wish to try a commercial PBM game with a distinctly D&D game-ish flavour, I would unhesitatingly recommend it.

As reviewed in IMAGINE 18

Crazimoff's World is human moderated so as to allow players greater flexibility in response. There are hundreds of tokens detailing everything you can see, encounter, and acquire from detailed descriptions of towns to the workings of a spell.

I wish to enrol in
[ ] Crazimoff's World [ ] Earthwood
I enclose cheque/PO payable to KJC Games for the value of £

NAME
ADDRESS

return to:
KJC Games, 5 Vicarage Avenue, Cleveleys, LANCASHIRE. FY5 2BD.

Earthwood or Crazimoff's World can be joined for £5.00. For this you receive the rulebook and registration form, set up sheets and first three turas. Future turns are £1.50 each. European readers: Only CW, rates same as UK.

Whether you join one or both our games KJC GAMES GIVES YOU:

GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY
A FAST & EFFICIENT SERVICE
AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE BEST GAMES

Please mention White Dwarf when replying to advertisements
Dear WD,

You have a very boring Letters Page. Could you use smaller type on this page to get more letters in? At present there are not enough letters printed, but at least you print all of the letter as opposed to chopping it up.

I would use Fiend Factory monsters for exactly the reason Alan Steele [WD57] gave: interest. It is far more interesting for the players and the DM if they don't know how to deal with it. It is possible to generate interest with trolls running sweet shops (novel enough?), but most parties prefer at least a semblance of sobriety amongst the DM's gems of humour.

Raising the point of pseudonyms is quite topical: without a genuine name accompanying a letter, it will not be published - unless, please take note. -Ed.

Dear WD,

I have been playing fantasy role-playing games for a year and a half now, and I have been reading the Dwarf since issue 52. The magazine has got better since I first started reading it but the Castle of Lost Souls adventure was not worth the paper it was printed on. Anyone was so desperate for a solo adventure they could go almost anywhere and buy a good solo adventure like the Lone Wolf series. I'm inclined to agree with Stephen Saunders [WD59] Letters] about the low standard of Castle of Lost Souls.

Another criticism is about the Ninja character class. A good idea if you're going to make a character class, why not make it exciting and cover it in a lot of detail? But hopefully you will listen to my next plea.

The only AD&D scenario I've seen are for the daring, heroic adventures of the 1st-3rd level characters. Why not the occasional 15th level scenario? Any why not another really good scenario like Irlan - having seen my friend's copies I think it is excellent.

Yours,

Loth's most devoted follower and fanatic.

Advance results from our readers survey shows an overall favourable reaction to solos like Castle of Lost Souls. However, we will be making future ones shorter which should appeal to everyone! With three issues background to the Ninja class, I'd have thought that the topic had been covered in more than enough detail - perhaps the less rigid format doesn't suit everyone. Watch out for the complete Irlan in Best of WD Scenarios III! -Ed.

Dear WD,

Congratulations on your Letters page! Referring in particular to the criticisms of Tabletop Heroes and the concerned Messrs Chalk's and Dever's honourable efforts to defend themselves, it is certainly fulfilling its purpose.

Although I thought Mr. Mayson's letter rather unfair and destructive (didn't everyone), it provided incentive for readers to write in and express their own opinions and as a result some useful ideas have arisen. This seems to me to be the real purpose of a letters page: not just as something through which to print words of praise but also to make suggestions as to how to improve the quality of the magazine.

Would it not be a good idea to print a future article pertaining to the subject of miniature figure photography as put forward by Nigel Espley of Dudley? It would also be very helpful to beginner enthusiasts to print readers' own efforts at figure painting and photography and thus, as well as providing a refreshing change, show the varied styles and methods employed and give a broader picture of the hobby. Let us see some of this continual talk put into practice!

Aside from all this I can say is 'keep up the good work' and if you have access to colour printing facilities you might as well flaunt them!

Yours hopefully,

Alex Woods, Hailey bury.

Dear WD,

I have seen new character classes being published in your magazine and I think that some of them are very good but they all have a great disadvantage... most DMs refuse to conduct games that are going to drift away from the rule books.

Can you publish something that tells strict DMs that Gary Gygax is not the 'most high God.'

Yours,

Christopher Vellacott, Ripley.

Although WD prints a large quantity of useful material for gamers, it is up to individual DMs to decide whether or not to use it in their game. Don't work on Gary, try your DM instead! -Ed.

Dear WD,

As for giving too much room to the Ninja class, I'd have thought that the topic had been covered in more than enough detail. As for giving too much room to the Ninja class, I'd have thought that the topic had been covered in more than enough detail. As for giving too much room to the Ninja class, I'd have thought that the topic had been covered in more than enough detail.

We enjoyed the appearance of the first issue of Dungeon & Dragons Cartoon as featured by the BBC on Monday afternoons. Neither TSR nor Gary Gygax were responsible for the first issue of the nifty piece of work, but as for the other two, well! Come on fella's, how could you? Yes, both the plastic dolls and the cartoon are officially TSR-approved, while the Big G himself is involved with the latter.

It is bad enough that us role-players are accused of being devil-worshippers, dabblers in the dark arts, and nutters who don't know fantasy from reality, without us being seen as mindless fools! I mean, what are people going to think when they see Dungeon & Dragons linked with a group of assorted American teenagers running around fleeing from everything from bullywugs to Tiamat for the amusement of young TV viewers? This is, of course, on top of the appearance of 'Strongheart the Paladin' and his bendy pals in the toyshops across the country with Official Dungeons & Dragons or something very similar emblazoned across every pack.

Quite obviously it is an attempt to reap in the shekels as the fantasy scene continues to boom. You can almost hear it: 'Get 'em while they're young, heh, heh, heh!' Of course there is the chance that those youngsters playing with the bendy toys and shouting such things as: 'Stab, stab, you're dead' are eventually going to want to try the 'real thing' at some stage. But there is also the chance that others are going to see the same scene and say, 'Those kids are nuts!' Of course there is the chance that others are going to see the same scene and say, 'Those kids are nuts!'

Most paranoiacally yours,

WD is now hooked on the game since I was properly introduced and because I had the opportunity to try it out. Others are not so fortunate; all they will see are the toys in the shops, the cartoon, and the various modules, etc.

So, please, can't we FRPers be represented in a more favourable light? Otherwise we're going to be labelled as 'childish cranks' as well as 'dangerous cranks'. And don't you RuneQuest and Call of Cthulhu bods laugh, your turn will come!

Paranoiacally yours,

Alex Woods, Dudley, West Midlands.
INTRODUCTION
You are Corwin Calbraith, adventurer, knight, son of Cormac, Duke of Skelin and a prisoner!

For the past three years you have fought at the side of your King, striving to wrestle the Holy Chalice from the clutches of the heathen. The King lies wounded and exhausted, his coffers empty and his followers dispersed and scattered. His dream, his task, the chalice must wait for deliverance.

You left your lands supremely confident that your friend Ewald Sensalk would protect and administer them in accordance with your wishes. Three months ago you returned home. Your lands seemed strangely silent, your people sullen and oddly incommunicative. As you drew nigh, tales of black clad troopers rounding up all those who opposed the new Duke of Skelin began to alarm you. Speeding to your hilltop castle you find strange grey creatures there to greet you. Realising that resistance was useless, they escort you to a cell at the top of the highest tower in the fortress. There you have languished, confused and bewildered. You must escape to free your land and people, as days go by you grow weaker and must therefore act with speed. Go to 1.

1. As you lie on your bed you begin to feel until cell, your mind09 overpowers the possibilities as how you can escape, you have no weapons or armour, nor coins with which to bribe the guards. A routine has been established, a single guard comes up through the trap door in the floor at daylight and nightfall with not too appetising food and a very cheap bitter wine. You have three options: Do you attempt to overpower the guard on his next visit, turn to 67. Do you begin to knot together your bedding in the hope that it will reach a lower window, go to 48. Or do you start to prise up the wooden planks of the floor of the cell, turn to 91.

2. In your precipitous run you startle the horses, the racket could be heard a mile away. Do you run, go to 41 or do you try to find Aryl go to 20.

3. If you have a sword go to 22, otherwise turn to 94.

4. If you are mounted go to 12, if you are on foot turn to 34.

5. Very brave! Add 2 to your luck - you swing into the window, and land on the staircase, a torch is near you; taking it you survey your next problem, the descent and successful escape from the tower itself, go to 6.

6. You walk a few more steps, and then light begins to fill the stairwell below, a couple more and another doorway is in front of you, three hideous humanoids sit around a table eating, drinking and playing a very noisy game of cards. Do you storm in like a hero of old, go to 89. Or do you creep in like a thief (or a wise man) turn to 53.

7. Your senses tell you that you are not alone - a head pops up from behind a suit of armour you recognise Julian, one of your old servants. He looks relieved to see that it is you, and beckons you to him. Informing you it is dangerous to enter the room, he suggests that you follow him to the servants quarters; do you follow him 13, or do you decide that it is too risky to stay in the castle any longer than necessary, turn to 102.

8. Winding your way up the hill you see the woods ahead of you. Below, the road to the village cuts away into the distance. Will you head into the woods, go to 81, or will you descend to the road and ride for the village, turn to 79.

9. The guard's sword is overstrung in his hand, test against your luck to see if your kick is accurate. If you are lucky, go to 103. If you are unlucky turn to 28.

10. The trolls are moving towards you now, being mounted you have an advantage add 1 to your combat skill:

1st Troll: Skill: 7; Stamina: 8
2nd Troll: Skill: 6; Stamina: 8
If you win go to 61, if you fail turn to 24.

11. The guard has the sword: do you lunge at him, turn to 28, or do you give up, go to 35.

12. You must fight the trolls, you are mounted so add 1 to your combat skill:

1st Troll: Skill: 7; Stamina: 8
2nd Troll: Skill: 6; Stamina: 8
If you win go to 61, if you lose go to 24.

13. You follow the old man through familiar passageways, down into the bowels of the castle. Julian unlocks a small door at the end of the kitchen and enters a room. The room has two beds, he offers you a seat and pours a glass of fine claret, and begins to recount the history of the past three years. Sensalk began his regency well enough, little changed for nearly a year, until reports of Barnak, the brigand chieftain began to filter through to the castle. Barnak's men had been raiding the borders of the kingdom, carrying off valuables, stealing cattle and kidnapping people for the slave trade. Sensalk sent out patrols to curb the attacks, none came back, so he sent a messenger to Barnak to talk about a treaty. Barnak surprisingly agreed, so Sensalk invited him to seal their pact with a feast at the castle. In the early hours of the morning whilst everyone slept off the excesses of the night before, Barnak's creatures crept into the castle, captured Sensalk and slaughtered anyone who put up any resistance. Barnak has been in control ever since.

Deciding that it would be impossible to face Barnak on your own, do you decide to escape through the secret passageways that Julian knows, go to 71, or do you wish to take Aryl with you, escaping through the gate, turn to 40.

14. The creatures lie dead, they will never finish their card game, pity, one of them had a good hand! Grabbing some food and thrusting it into a pouch you swig at a bottle of tepid wine and rush for the door, beginning your descent to the outside world, turn to 15.

15. Looking quickly around the courtyard appears to be deserted, which way will you run? Straight for the gate, go to 49. Towards the armoury to get a decent blade, turn to 66. Head for the stables to find your steed Aryl, go to 17.

16. Having attempted one of your options and considered it too dangerous, you decide to sleep on it and make up your mind tomorrow, go to 90.

17. The stables are at the far end of the courtyard; running in short spurs, listening intently for the slightest noise you hear the familiar sound of horses. With luck your steed Aryl will be there. Do you rush into the stable, go to 2, or do you carefully enter the stables prepared for action, turn to 85.

18. Grabbing a weapon, you feel that you are not alone; turning you see shadowy figures in the room. Do you strike first and ask questions later, go to 99, or do you stay your blow, turn to 72.

19. Strangely the trolls do not move when you run, they seem only to be able to move within a limited area, lucky you! You need a weapon, do you go to the armoury, turn to 43, or do you run into the hut on your left, go to 63.

20. The horses are obviously scared, they begin to quieten when they realise that you mean them no harm. Aryl is proudly tethered to the rear of the cart. His forelegs rhythmically pounding with the pleasure of seeing you. Taking him gently by the muzzle you lead him to the courtyard. A yapping dog is bounding towards you. Do you mount Aryl now, go to 65, or do you try to wave away the dog on foot, turn to 3.

21. Gain two luck points. The trolls fade into the shadows behind you as you race across the drawbridge and up the hill in front of you. It is not too steep and you manage to travel a fair distance before stopping to regain your breath. As you rest you see a faint light to your left,
The figures on the road

22. The dog skids to a halt in front of you - it whelps as you swing your sword round to face it. Do you strike at the dog, go to 28, or do you stamp your foot on the ground, turn to 42.

23. Closing your eyes you jump, landing heavily on the staircase; there is a torch within reach, and holding it, as you get your breath back, you can see the stairwell disappearing below into the darkness, go to 87.

24. Gradually the treads force you into a corner, unexpectedly a blow from a club floors you. Blackness shrouds your mind; the hideous sight of a grimacing troll is the last thing you ever see. Your adventure is at an end; perhaps some other hero will deliver your people from this terror that has befallen them. Even the King, when he hears of your death, may shed a brief tear for you.

25. Like a great storm Ayrl thunders out of the darkness. In the distance strange loud curses ring out from the direction of the castle. Presently he is at your side and carefully you mount him. Do you head for the woods over the hill, go to 58, or do you ride towards the road, which is the quickest route to the nearest village, turn to 79.

26. The two trolls turn, they have large clubs if you do not have a weapon, run to 19, if you have, go to 4.

27. The sword has struck you in the arm, lose 1 stamina. Do you decide to continue your attempt, go to 78, or do you give up, 35.

28. The guard is rather unbalanced - you must test your luck, or you run the risk of being impaled on his outstretched sword. If you are lucky go to 27, if you are unlucky turn to 84.

29. The dog is within strike distance, you must fight it:
   Dog: Skill: 4; Stamina: 5.
   If you win go to 62, if you lose turn to 44.

30. There is no time to get to the sword before the guard rushes at you. Fighting him barehanded temporarily reduces your combat skill by 2:
   Guard: Skill: 5; Stamina: 5.
   If you win go to 90, if you fail go to 66.

31. Mounting Ayrl quickly you spur it towards the gap between the trolls. Throw dice, if you throw an odd number go to 87, if you throw an even number turn to 12.

32. You decide to jump:
   - test your luck, if you are lucky go to 23, otherwise turn to 74.

33. Spurring Ayrl, you head towards the gate, two large grey-skinned warriors stand rigidly there. Test your luck to see if they have spotted you. If you succeed go to 98, if you fail turn to 31.

34. You must fight the trolls:
   1st troll: Skill: 7; Stamina: 7
   2nd troll: Skill: 6; Stamina: 8
   If you win go to 65, if you lose turn to 24.

35. The guard snorts and turns; throwing your food and wine to the floor the troll retreats toward the trapdoor, lowers himself and disappears, the bolts are firmly slammed and you are alone again, go to 90.

36. You hit the wall of the lower heavily and lose grip, mercifully death takes you before you hit the ground beyond. Unfortunately your adventure is over, hopefully some other hero will save your people and perhaps the King will remember you with fondness when he hears of your death.

37. The courtyard is still silent. You can make for the armoury, turn to 101, or head toward the gate, turn to 88.

38. Leading Ayrl across the courtyard you see, dimly, two large figures in the flickering light of torches. Do you decide to mount Ayrl, go to 33, or do you reach the figures more closely, turn to 54.

39. The frame offers little resistance to your blade and falls softly on the ground. Taking a torch you inspect your victim, recognising the corpse of one of your old servants and friends, Julian. Holding back your emotions you curse your luck but still you are wary of your dangerous predicament. Do you walk back into the courtyard, go to 60, or do you decide to use the tunnels under the castle and leave Ayrl, go to 73.

40. Standing rigidly at the gate are two large grey-skinned trolls, do you spur Ayrl forward, go to 100, or do you decide to fight them, turn to 10.

41. Running outside you see a dog bounding towards you, teeth barred and barking loudly. If you have a sword you go to 22, if not turn to 94.

42. The dog barks once, spins around and disappearing into the darkness, do you go back to the stables, go to 85, or you head for the gate, turn to 86.

43. You run across the courtyard and into the armoury, if you have been there before go to 96, if not, turn to 66.

44. The dog leaps seizing your throat in a vice-like grasp. And quickly tears you to pieces. Your quest is at an end - perhaps some other hero may save your people, and when the King hears of your death he will shed a tear for you.

45. The figures on the road are very close now, as you near the distance you see them one shouts, "Stop or we fire!" Do you pull Ayrl to a halt, go to 63, or do you stem him off the road, turn to 46.
57: Your horse collides with one of the trolls, knock- it over. Spurring Aryl again as he rears up in terror you speed across the drawbridge. Heading up the hill, at the top you dismount, seeing a light flickering to your left, go to 88.

58: With your father's blade resting against your and Aryl gathering speed as he races along the rolling terrain, the woods loom closer and closer. Do you continue to head for the woods, go to 81, or do you change direction and head for the nearest village via the road, turn to 79.

59: The frame offers little resistance to your blade and falls softly to the ground - taking a torch you inspect your victim. The corpse is instantly recognisable as one of your old friends, Julian, a servant. Steeling your emotions you curse your impetuousity, but realise the danger that you are in. Taking a sword you return to the courtyard, but then you remember that there is a safer route out through the servants' quarters; do you go back inside and seek a way through the subterranean reaches of the fortress, go to 73. Or do you decide against leaving Aryl to his own devices and head back to collect him, run to 40.

60: They cut you down with a flurry of blows, but you obviously stayed too long in that cell, your swordsmanship is far too rusty. Your people will have to suffer under the yoke of oppression until another hero can emerge to take up the challenge to free them.

61: You stand exhausted, the trolls lie still twitching in front of you. With horror you realise that the parts you've hacked off are gradually moving towards each other; in your panic you run blindly up the hill outside the castle, turn to 82.

62: The dog dies at your feet, do you go back to the stables, go to 85, or do you head for the gatehouse turn to 86.

63: In the creatures semi-drunk stupor they are blissfully unaware of your skulking progress, you laugh inwardly, thinking of their hides hanging up on the morrow when your escape is discovered. Crawling through the door and down the stairs you escape to the outside world, turn to 15.

64: The trolls lie twitching in front of you; if you realise that the parts you've hacked off are moving towards each other; in panic you run.

65: Keeping to the shadows you move towards the armoury. There is no one in sight, and the door is slightly ajar; looking in, the room is silent and deserted, two torches illuminating the ranks of armour and weaponry. Do you enter the room cautiously, go to 7, or do you stride boldly over to the racks of weapons, turn to 76.

66: As the sun dies and darkness begins to shroud the crude room in which you lie, you sit up and war purposefully over to the trapdoor. Putting your ear to the ground you can hear the creaking above, then the thud of something heavy. Do you remain silent, go to 46, or do you decide to do nothing, go to 16.

67: Blackness surrounds you, the last moments of consciousness are spent with your futile struggles as the guard begins throttling you. Death takes you, and your bid for freedom is over.

68: As the dog gets close to you, but then you remember that there is a perished rug he produces a new sword, missing now for many years. This is Stroma's announcer, Julian, handing it to you. With a feeling of pride you grasp the bejewelled hilt. Testing it you realises that you could have been forged for you. Strapping Stroma and the scabbard to your belt, with tears in your eyes you clasp the old man who also weeps.

69: You decide against leaving Aryl to his own devices and head back to collect him, run to 40.

70: You miss and fall onto the ground, a snorting laugh comes from the guardhouse, go to 82.

71: You lead them downwards; the air is musty and stale, cobwebs brush against your face and rat scuttle around you. Julian is silent, concentrating on the path ahead until gradually the descent becomes a limit. Julian tells you that you are now beyond the moat, there is an anteroom at the end of the tunnel. Inside, from a chest covered with a perished rug he produces a heavy bundle and placing it on the ground, unravels it. Lying there on the ground is your father's sword, missing now for many years.

72: Suddenly you recognise the shadowy figure. It is Julian, a friend and servant. Stepping out from behind a rack of weapons. He utters the word 'Master?'. He looks very relieved to see you and beckons you to follow him to the servants' quarters. He says that he has something that you will need. You refuse politely, saying that Aryl is your friend. He tells you to look for a light on the hill outside the gate, before disappearing again into the darkness. Stepping outside, do you mount Aryl immediately, go to 33, or do you lead him across the courtyard towards the gatehouse, turn to 38.

73: You remember the passages you used when escaping, the undergrowth. Walking through the servant's quarters, you enter the storeroom for the kitchens and open a door at the end of it. The air is musty and cobwebs brush against your face as you begin to descend. Presently you hear the sound of trolls, which appears to trail your hand along the rough hewn wall you feel dampness, the most must be above you by now. In the guttering flame you see a rack of a room at the end of the passage way. Stepping inside, all that you can see is a chest covered with a perished rug; pulling it off and opening the chest reveals a bundle. Taking it carefully out and unravelling the package there lies your father's blade Stroma; with pleasure you strap the scabbard and sword to your belt. Brushing the cobwebs away from the exit, you lift the trapdoor finding yourself at the top of a gentle slope. Turn to 97.

74: You fall like a stone, plummeting downwards, the force knocking you out. You are probably dead before you hit the ground. Unfortunately your adventure is over, hopefully some other hero will save your people.

75: Very lucky indeed, add 2 luck points. Spurring Aryl around to 46.

76: Suddenly a head pops up from the saddle, one sticks his sword up to the hilt into Aryl's neck. Helplessly you struggle until the man holding you aloft seizes your throat. Your adventure is over.

77: Roughly they drag you from the saddle, one sticks his sword up to the hilt into Aryl's neck, his sword falls to the ground. Go to 84.

78: The guard is off balance - a well aimed kick to the groin falls him, his sword falls to the ground. Go to 84.

79: In a few seconds the steady clatter of Aryl's hooves tell you that you have reached the road. The panorama of the countryside can be seen covered by the dense black cloaks of night. Presently you hear the sound of men on the march in the distance, chariots rumbling. Do you continue along the road, go to 45, or do you veer off the road and turn into the woods go to 81.

80: As you ride up the hill you see a faint light off to your left, which appears to be light appearing in the darkness ahead. Do you dismount and investigate it, go to 88, or do you ignore it and continue on your way, turn to 8.

81: Aryl jumps gracefully over a fallen log. The pitch black of the woods is even in sharp contrast to the darkness of
the night. You realise that you will be safe until morning. Riding on for a few more yards, you stop and dismount. Gathering some leaves for a bed, you settle down to a fitful sleep. This is end of the first part of your adventure.

82. In a flash you recognise, the shadowy figure, it is Julian an old and trusted servant and friend. He looks to see that it is you, and says that it is dangerous to tarry here. He con- clones you to follow him to the ser- vant's quarters; do you follow him, turn to 13, or do you decide that it is tooisky staying here? Do you mount Aryl and go to 53.

83. Quickly the men run to wards you. Recognising you they grab hold of Aryl's reins; do you draw your sword, go to 65, or do you surrender, turn to 77.

84. The guard crumples at your onslaught (add 1 to luck) falls into the ground - you freeze momenta- rily as you catch sight of his face in a half-opened visor. His face is hairy and deeply scarred, a pig- like snout protrudes from the helm. He begins to rise, his sword still on the floor. You must attempt to reach it before he does. Test your luck again; if you suc- cess, go to 47, if you fail go to 11.

85. The horses are jeryt and quieten when they see you, they mean them no harm. Aryl is proudly tethered in the part-opened visor. His face is hairy and deeply scarred, a pig- like snout protrudes from the helm. He begins to rise, his sword still on the floor. You must attempt to reach it before he does. Test your luck again; if you suc- cess, go to 47, if you fail go to 11.

86. Two very large grey- skinned monsters stand rigidly at the gate, test your luck to see if they have seen or heard you, if you succeed go to 98, if you fail go to 60.

87. Cautiously you descend the staircase, faintly you hear a language unknown to you. Looking through the door- way in front of you, there are three hideous humanoid sitting around a table, eating, drinking and playing a very boisterous game of cards. Do you storm in, like a hero of old, go to 89, or do you creep in like a coward (or a wise man) go to 53.

88. Walking cautiously to wards it you see a torch flickering below you. Lifting a trap door and easing yourself down you find yourself in a room. It is bare, save for a chest covered with a perished rug. Tearing it away, you open the chest finding a bundle inside. Opening it you see your father's blade, Stroma. Testing the sword its balance is perfect and you strap the scabbard to your belt, and sheathe the blade before climbing back into the darkness above. In a grim mood you walk to the top of the hill. go to 97.

89. You rush in like a demon, the guards sit motionless for a second. You will have to fight them, if you have a sword use the normal combat skill, if you just have a torch reduce your combat skill by 1. Guard 1: Skill: 3, Stamina: 6. Guard 2: Skill: 5, Stamina: 4. Guard 3: Skill: 4, Stamina: 4. Their skills are obviously impaired by your surprise attack, and the effect of their drinking excesses. If you win go to 14, if you lose turn to 60.

90. You feel weaker this morning lose 1 stamina, you have probably contracted something nasty from the food or the rank atmosphere of your cell. You stay in bed all day, plotting and thinking. What were those options again? Overpower the guard go to 67. Knot together the bedding and swing out of the window, turn to 48. Prise up the floor boards and jump, go to 91. Time is running out, if you don't get a decent meal and a comfortable bed, you'll soon be fit for nothing.

91. It is a very laborious task, your fingers are blooded and swollen by the time you have removed enough to squeeze through; putting your head through the hole, you see a torch flickering some 10 feet below. Make up your mind whether to risk the jump or not. If you decide to jump go to 32. If you consider it too dangerous, turn to 16.

92. Two very large grey-skinned monsters stand rigidly at the gate, test your luck to see if they have seen or heard you, if you succeed go to 98, if you fail go to 26.

93. Tentatively you totter down to the first landing where you find a torch. Taking it in your other hand you continue the descent, go to 87.

94. The dog leaps at you and you must fight it: Dog: Skill: 4, Stamina: 5. If you win go to 62, if you lose turn to 44.

95. As you enter the room, you sense that you are not alone and you hear a head pops up from behind the suits of armour and utters one word, 'Master'. In a flash you recognise the shadowy figure, it is Julian an old and trusted servant and friend. He looks relieved to see you and says that it is dangerous to stay here and you should follow him to the servant's quarters. You tell him that Aryl is outside, he says that you should look for light on the hill outside the castle gate, and that this will be a beacon for you to dis- cover something that you will need. Julian disappears into the shadows. Do you mount Aryl and go to 101, or do you lead him across the courtyard towards the gatehouse, go to 38.

96. Grabbing a sword you emerge from the armory once more. Do you head back towards the gatehouse, go to 92, or do you go to the stables turn to 85.

97. You realise that you need Aryl to be able to put some distance between you and the castle by daybreak. Putting your horse in the manger you take the high-pitched whistle barely audible to the human ear, turn to 25.

98. Add 1 to your luck. The horses are jittery, and startled, you can either rush past them before they can react, go to 101, or you can choose to fight them, turn to 4.

99. Clumsily you knock over the empty flagon of wine, the horses jump up startled and grab their weapons, with a shout they rush toward you, defence is your only chance, if you do not have a sword reduce your combat skill by 1.

100. Stunned, the trolls are unable to react fast enough to stop you, contemptu- ously you spit on the ground as you rush past. If you are mounted on Aryl go to 52, if you are on foot turn to 21.

101. Tethering Aryl outside, you enter the armory, the room is silent and deserted. Two torches illuminate the ranks of armour and weapons. Do you enter the rooms cautiously, go to 95, or do you stride over to the weapons, go to 18.

102. Julian tells you that Ssenkel is a prisoner himself and that Barnak, the bard to your belt, and sheathe the sword arcs from the guard's hand and with a clang lands several feet away. Do you attempt to wrestle the guard to the floor, turn to 84. Or do you want to make a grab for the sword before he does, 30.

103. The sword arcs from the guard's hand and with a clang lands several feet away. Do you attempt to wrestle the guard to the floor, turn to 84. Or do you want to make a grab for the sword before he does, 30.

104. There are two large grey-skinned monsters standing at the gate, do you wish to rush them, go to 98, or do you decide that you should head for the stables, 17, or do you go to the armory, 66.
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With the current increase in the popularity of Superhero role-playing games, many being revised and updated, put into boxes and expanded, some Superhero Adventure modules and scenarios are beginning to appear. However, the offerings in this field are still more limited than those devoted to other types of game. A referee looking around for new ideas will need to find new sources of inspiration.

Luckily, with a bit of thought and conversion, many of the scenarios available for other games can be used in conjunction with a superhero campaign; mainly because of the nature of the comics themselves. In order to produce so many titles each month the major companies have to draw ideas from a wide variety of sources to use as story material. Apart from cribbing as many ideas as possible from Science Fiction novels and series, most comics feature a Time Travel story sooner or later, sending their main characters into the past, future or even into an alternative dimension.

There isn’t space in an article such as this to give you detailed systems for converting from the major Fantasy and Science Fiction systems to the major superhero games. If you already have Superworld this conversion is virtually done for you and you can use a wide range of RuneQuest back-up material without needing to do much work to prepare. Even if you don’t have that particular game though, you needn’t worry to much about changing the systems described in the scenarios. There is a trend today to put a lot of descriptive information into the text of a module or scenario and to tag the numerical details of NPCs and monsters on at the end of a passage or section. It is a fairly easy job to Tippex out “5 giant rats: AC5; HDV; Dam:1-3 plus disease; HTK 3,3,3,4,5’ and insert “5 giant eddies…”, and the details of how they would fit into your chosen game system. Once you’ve converted a few rooms or encounters, the rest will come easily, however incompatible the two systems may seem at first.

What you will need, though, is some idea of how to select suitable scenarios from the many available and how to fit them in with the storyline of your particular campaign. This article contains some suggestions on how to select the most applicable modules and how to get your heroes into them, out of them and how to make them relevant to the heros.

For the purposes of discussion I’ll assume that most games fit into one of four main categories: Fantasy (Dungeons & Dragons, RuneQuest, Chivalry and Sorcery, Dragonquest, etc), Science Fiction (Traveller, Star Frontiers, Universe, Space Opera, etc), Post-holocaust (Aftermath, Gamma World, The Morrow Project etc), and Contemporary (Top Secret, Espionage, Gangbusters, Daredevils etc). Of course these four categories don’t cover every available game (the piracy ones, for instance, are excluded) but should be detailed enough for our purposes.

CONTEMPORARY SCENARIOS
Practically speaking these scenarios are the simplest to use. They do not require any involvement with time travel or spaceships and tend to feature ordinary people of the sort common in Superhero games. Even a Gangbuster scenario can be updated to the modern day; organised crime hasn’t changed that much in six decades, at least in the comics.

Unfortunately, the same superhero system would be a bit boring for the heroes to fight all the time; Al Capone would be no match for Iron Man, for instance. Also, superheroes are not noted for their desire to sneak around cautiously, like spies, or follow long trails of clues, like detectives. They prefer to take the bull by the horns, which is not suited to many contemporary scenarios.

Should you want to use a scenario for a game set in this century I would suggest you try to find one which has a clear objective (eg recovering stolen plans) which can be achieved by direct means (a head-on attack for instance) and involves little detective work or subtlety. It would be more suited to ‘low-level’ heroes (Daredevils, Captain America, Batman) than the more powerful types (Thor, Hulk, Superman).

WORLDS OF HIGH FANTASY
At first, these types of scenarios may seem unsuitable for superheroes. Readers of Cerebus the Aardvark, particularly, might find the idea of superheroes and wizards side by side ludicrous. However, not only are fantasy themes often used in the comics (in Iron Man 150, for instance, between Morgan le Fay’s army of Undead and Arthur’s Knights) but more scenarios are available in this field than in any other. Though many will be unusable, there will be some adventures which will suit the superheroes.

As with the contemporary scenarios the best adventures will feature a set objective which can be achieved in a direct way, perhaps a magic amulet, stolen by the trolls, which has to be recovered. Adventures which feature a large number of monsters or last a long time are not as suited to superheroes. Similarly, map-making is not part of the super-hero role-playing gamers’ style. They expect to be supplied with a setting already mapped out, so ‘dungeon’ style adventures are best avoided wherever possible. High level magicians, demons, giants, dragons and other legendary monsters make good opponents, hordes of goblins and kobolds do not.
Try to select adventures which have set objectives, feature a lot of short encounters rather than one big ‘dungeon’, hang together logically and contain a few powerful or legendary monsters and characters rather than lots of weak ones.

There are many reasons why a group of heroes might be in the past, or in an alternative dimension where magic works. One ever-popular lead-in is capture by a mega-villain (usually Doctor Doom) who needs someone to fetch a mystic item for them. As long as the heroes are trapped in another time with only the villain’s time machine to get them home, they have to do as he says. The referee can sugar the pill, however, by making the opponents they are forced to fight villainous in their own right.

Another lead-in is to have the heroes summoned by a wizard using a magical spell, in order to do a quest for him. Superheroes could come to hate the D&D gate spell.

If you have a hero or heroine whose powers are mystic in origin, you may very well have a good reason for being in the future. Divine heroes are also useful. (Put the TSR G and D modules in Asgard, change Lothlórien to Loki and you’ve got a ready-made adventure for Thor and/or the Warriors Three!)

If all else fails there’s the ubiquitous spatial and temporal warp caused when the heroes are caught in a nuclear explosion or accidentally travel faster than the speed of light.

As long as you don’t overdo the fantasy and don’t expect superheros to act or react like D&D characters, there’s a lot of fun to be had from fantasy scenarios.

**STAR-SPANNING**

Most planet hopping SF games are set in the future. However, you won’t need to time travel to use space as a resource in your superhero game. You may assume that the Earth is a backward planet in a highly developed galaxy where other races have already established empires, and the scenarios of Traveller and Space Opera are only a star-jump away.

As before, suitable scenarios should be short with a set objective. The heroes don’t want to get bogged down on a trading flight across the Milky Way. Scenarios involving commandeering spacecraft (mercenary tickets), rescuing people, defeating alien tyranny, etc, are all good. Bear in mind that the hero must have a good reason for being in space as most will want to get back to Earth as quickly as they can.

Invading aliens are a good way to get heroes into space. Supplied with a short-range shuttle by NASA they board the flagship of the invasion force and defeat its commander.

Before the battle is over, however, they find themselves in deep space. As no world remains, the heroes could be captured by alien slavers, as the Thing once was, to take part in interstellar gladiatorial games. Maybe they were called in to test a new space ship and things went wrong.

A superhero whose origin is in space would be very useful as they would supply a lot of lead-ins to Science Fiction scenarios. The Teen Titans’ excuse for planet-hopping, for example, is Starfire, their resident alien fugitive.

The Star Wars style interplanetary adventure is the nearest thing to Superhero adventure in any other genre. Keep the story you have as a world building exercise, and you’ll find plenty of things to keep the Earth’s mightiest heroes just a short hop across the galaxy.

**BRAVE NEW WORLD**

Many of the futures shown in comics are depressing views of a world either in decay, under alien tyranny or after some kind of holocaust. The writers can show the future like this because there are many possible futures of which the bleak ones are only a few.

These ruined worlds have supplied a backdrop to some of the best comics ever produced. The title of this article comes from an issue of the X-Men which featured them as freedom fighters in an alternative futures against an invincible robot tyranny. Eventually one of them was back in time to change the future.

If you want to use Gamma World, Aftermath or Morrow Project scenarios for your heroes you should, again, bear in mind that superheroes don’t travel well across ruined landscapes. Adventures should be short with clearly-defined and direct objectives. A very useful objective is to have the heroes locate a time-travel device which will let them go back in time to change the future so that it does not occur.

Getting the heroes into the future in the first place can be done by similar means to getting them into the past. Capture by malevolent villains requiring the weapons of the future, freak accidents, scientific experiments gone wrong, are all good excuses for adventure in the future. The main problem with post-holocaust adventures is that the future-shock tends to affect the heroes. In the fight for survival they start using blast weapons and give up their bright costumes. If such mutations do occur in the characters, simply have them come back in time to a point before they went into the future to stop themselves getting, so that they went into the future and never changed. Most importantly, don’t worry about the paradoxes, they don’t exist unless you want them to. A short hop into the future can be a chastening and thought-provoking, supplying a lot of adventure and excitement.

**FUTURE ISSUES**

If you’ve played your first game and enjoyed it, you shouldn’t need much help to go design scenarios of your own. However, bear the following points in mind:

1. Try to form the Heroes into a team. Teams are easier to design and plan for and it is very convenient, all round, if they operate from a common head-quarters. Let them pick their own headquarters, organise their own duty rosters, however. The world is yours, the heroes belong to the players.

2. Design scenarios around the heroes. Don’t plan games which would suit any heroes. Comics are written around their stars, the challenges they meet are those that they could reasonably be expected to defeat and those that the readers could sympathise with. For example, just as Thor wouldn’t be seen fighting the Frightful Four, Every hero should have something to do in each game you play. If you don’t consider everyone when you are designing your games you are doing the players a disservice.

3. Don’t feel restricted to drawing ideas from comics. You can draw ideas from literally anywhere, comics, TV, SF novels, films, even from other games. I’ve heard of, and seen, superheroes tearing apart the monsters in Dungeons & Dragons modules. When stuck for an idea for a game one weekend I bought the Gamma World Legion of Gold module and put my heroes in a nuclear blast which warped them into an alternative future from which they had to escape to stop the nuclear war which caused it from occurring.

**IN CONCLUSION**

Scenarios from other games can be very useful to pad-out a superhero campaign if carefully selected and used only upon occasions with a degree of caution. Read through the introduction to a scenario in the shop before buying it or read the review of it in White Dwarf first. Choose short simple adventures with clearly defined objectives. Remember that superheroes have a unique approach to problems so you may not get as much value out of the scenario as you would if you had bought it for the game for which it was intended.

It will aid the insertion into the game of such material if at least one hero or heroine in the campaign has a mystic background, and at least one is alien. A well-designed and enthusiastically played campaign based upon a good superhero role-playing game system can give you more pleasure than any other, equally outlandish, activity. However, should your players ever feel outmatched, down at heel, out-manoeuvred, defeated, remember the words of Captain America: ‘As long as brave free men live the eternal torch of Liberty and Justice shall never die.’ □
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ALL CREEPIES GREAT AND SMALL

BUGS
By Russell May

Armbane Bug
Frequency: Common
No Appearing: 1/1-6
Armour Class: 2 [5]
Movement: 9' 9"
Hit Dice: 1/2
Treasure: Nil
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: S (2")
Size: S (11"

Buzzbug
Frequency: Uncommon
No Appearing: 1/1-4
Armour Class: 1
Movement: 9" 9"
Hit Dice: 1/4
Treasure: Nil
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Non
Size: S (11"

Stinger Bug
Frequency: Uncommon
No Appearing: 1-4
Armour Class: 2 [5]
Movement: 9 "9"
Hit Dice: ½
Treasure: Nil
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Non
Size: S (2")

Gnaw Bug
Frequency: Common
No Appearing: 1-4
Armour Class: 2 [5]
Movement: 9 "9"
Hit Dice: 1/2
Treasure: Nil
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Non
Size: S (2")

Giant Mosquito
Frequency: Common
No Appearing: 1/1-6
Armour Class: 2 [5]
Movement: 9 "9"
Hit Dice: ½
Treasure: Nil
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Non
Size: S (11"

Armbane Bug
The armbane bug is 2" long and distinguishable by its black colouration and large pincers besides its mouth. It feeds on living creatures and can be found in any location where live creatures may be encountered. It bites with its pincers for 1-3 damage. There is a 5% chance per wound of contracting a disease unless a saving throw vs poison is made. A cure disease removes this if inflicted. Armbanes are quiet and unnocturnal. They do not discriminate between victims, preying upon any suitable targets present, though usually choosing the most noxious. All have effective 60' infravision. 1/2 HD = 1-4 points, 1/4 HD = 1-2 points. Magic resistance is standard for all and % in air is always nil. The armour class is for the bug in flight: the value in brackets is the armour class when landed on a victim. Attacks on bugs on a victim are rolled as normal. All damage done is halved since no one is going to strike an insect with the full force of a sword. If the blow hits the bug takes the damage - if it misses the victim takes the damage. Bugs may be burnt off with a torch delivering 1-6 damage per application to bug and victim. The movement rates are given above as flying rates, all bugs are manoeuvrability class A for aerial melee.

Buzzbug
Distinguished by its dark red colour and the fact that it makes an audible buzzing sound when in flight, it is 1" long. A buzzbug feeds on sweat particles in the air and will attack during periods of physical exertion, usually melee. It can be found nearly anywhere. Its attack is in the form of a buzz. The method of feeding it employs is to hover about close to the victim's party and selecting one victim just after melee is decided. It will attack once per round until dead.

Stinger Bug
A stinger is distinguished by its dark blue colour and a small stinger on its abdomen, it is 1/2" long. It feeds on flesh of any sort. Stinger bugs are usually located in temperate to warm conditions. The stinger is a quiet flyer, surprising victims 75% of the time. If successful it sits on the victim, alights, unfeels, on its chosen victim. The next round it will plunge its stinger into the flesh for 1-2 damage and the victim must save vs poison. If the saving throw is made the stinger will be detected and may be dealt with swiftly. If the throw was unsuccessful the victim will fall unconscious in one round for 1-4 hours. The stinger will then burrow into the bug in 2-6 rounds and will leave a small 1" diameter hole in the flesh of the victim. Thereafter it will do 1 hit point of damage per turn, working its way around the body until the victim is dead (which occurs at 0 hit points). If the wound is not internal and can not be found. If the victim wakes during this period he will be in extreme pain and will likely swiftly become unconscious again. When the victim is dead the stinger will lay its eggs which will hatch into 1-10 stingers in 4 days.

Once in the body only a cure disease or amputation will remove it, but if it has burrowed into the neck or abdomen amputation is unadvised!

Milead Bug
The milead bug is 2" long distinguished by its black body with yellow stripes down its back. It feeds on plants and thus can be found anywhere that they are. The milead bug is nocturnal and the stripe on its back is luminous. This, combined with the fact that they fly in weaving patterns, often misleads adventurers into believing that they are lanterns, other creatures or even will-o'-the-wisps. They do no physical harm but are good at misleading and confusing adventurers, especially in locations such as dungeons and swamps.

Gnaw Bug
The gnaw bug is 2" long and distinguished by its rusty brown colour with black head. The gnaw bug feeds on dead plant and animal material and can be found in many places, and is often the bane of textile mills. It always surprises and alights unfeelt on one victim on some part of equipment made of cloth or leather. It gnaws away at belts, backpacks, straps, etc making items seem to suddenly break, rip or tear, causing much inconvenience and annoyance. They do no damage to flesh.

concentrating on the nose, eyes, mouth and ears. During this time the victim can make no attacks except upon the bug, trying to fend it off, and all attacks against the victim from other opponents negate dexterity bonus and shield and are made at +4 to hit. The buzzbug will choose the most active person for its victim and will stay until killed or the victim dies when it will move on to another victim.

Stinger Bug
A stinger is distinguished by its dark blue colour and a small stinger on its abdomen, it is 1/2" long. It feeds on flesh of any sort. Stinger bugs are usually located in temperate to warm conditions. The stinger is a quiet flyer, surprising victims 75% of the time. If successful it sits on the victim, alights, unfeels, on its chosen victim. The next round it will plunge its stinger into the flesh for 1-2 damage and the victim must save vs poison. If the saving throw is made the stinger will be detected and may be dealt with swiftly. If the throw was unsuccessful the victim will fall unconscious in one round for 1-4 hours. The stinger will then burrow into the bug in 2-6 rounds and will leave a small 1" diameter hole in the flesh of the victim. Thereafter it will do 1 hit point of damage per turn, working its way around the body until the victim is dead (which occurs at 0 hit points). If the wound is not internal and can not be found. If the victim wakes during this period he will be in extreme pain and will likely swiftly become unconscious again. When the victim is dead the stinger will lay its eggs which will hatch into 1-10 stingers in 4 days.

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FIEND FACTORY

GIANT MOSQUITO BUG

Distincted by a slim grey body with long proboscis. It feeds on the blood of animals and is in the region of 1/8" long. It makes a quiet buzz while flying and surpises 50% of the time. If it surprises a victim it alights and has one attack before being noticed. If it does not surprise it needs a hit to olligue. Once landed it sucks blood for 1-2 damage round until it or the victim dies. There is a 5% chance per round (cumulative) of contracting a disease unless the victim saves vs poison. This may be cured by a "cure disease" spell.

IGNI BEETLE

Simon Craddock

No Appearing: 4-16
Armour Class: 0 (3)
Movement: 3"
Hit Dice: d8 + 1
Treasure: none
Attack: Special (see below)
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Non
Size: (S)

The igni beetle is three inches long and one inch wide with a tough (AC0) black shell. Underneath the shell are the beetle's vital organs (AC3). The igni beetle is found in the lower regions of dungeons, where the absence of light makes them undetectable, unless they are observed closely. It lives on burnt objects are also set alight, causing more damage. The igni beetle eats the burnt food (including unconscious or dead characters) for its carnivorous larvae. The eggs are laid in 6 hours. The larvae mature within 6 to 8 hours. The larvae have 1 to 3 hit points, AC9 and inflict 1-4 hit points. The igni beetle gains the bracketted characteristics above. The heat given off by the flames affects the eggs within the beetle's body and they start to develop rapidly, hatching in 6 turns.

The beetle is attracted to flames and will attack any creature holding a torch or lantern to attain its flamed form. Once this is achieved the beetle will try to find food (including unconscious or dead characters) for its carnivorous larvae. The beetle will not lay the eggs until it has found a food source, and so if after an hour the eggs have not been laid, they hatch inside the beetle which subsequently dies and is used as food by the larvae. 2 to 8 young will survive and mature within 6 to 8 hours. The larvae have 1 to 3 hit points, AC9 and inflict 1 point of damage on open wounds. If the beetle is killed in flamed form, all the oil from the oil sacs is expelled causing an explosion inflicting 2d4 damage within a 10' radius (save results in ½ damage), except for the eggs. The oils are readily soluble in water, even when flaming, and thus can be prevented from exploding.

FLAME BEETLES

by F Blades

No Appearing: 2-8
Armour Class: 4 (3)
Movement: 12"
Hit Dice: 1 + 1 (2 + 2)
Treasure: none
Attack: 2d4 (2d6)
Defences: Special
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Animal
Size: (S)

These giant hermaphroditic beetles are about 3' long and are covered by a dull red brown exoskeleton. They are scavengers and are quite common in most areas, although they are rare in most larger settlements since they are regarded as vermin.

The beetle's shell appears to be wet-this is due to the continual secretion of oils from the oil sacs within the body. These oils are a vital part of the beetle's life cycle. They are highly volatile and when the beetle comes into contact with fire, the whole shell becomes covered with flames. In this 'flamed' form the beetle gains the bracketted characteristics above.

The heat given off by the flames affects the eggs within the beetle's body and they start to develop rapidly, hatching in 6 turns.

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CARAXE

by Matthew Williams

No Appearing: 3-18
Armour Class: 3
Movement: 6"n
Hit Dice: 2d8 + 2
Treasure: 1d30-30
Attack: 1-4/1d4-8
Alignment: Neutral
Intelligence: Animal

These small 2 feet long creatures look totally unaggressive as they scuttle around dungeon corridors in search of food, which to them is anything edible. However, they are covered in extremely hard skin, hence the low armour class, and their teeth can bite through almost anything. They will not attack adventurers unless they enter the territory surrounding the lair, which will be very well hidden. When caraxi attack they leap up at their enemies biting and scratching, and as they do this they squirt their enemy with a special secretion (roll to hit). This smells terrible and cannot be washed off. The party will not be able to surprise anyone who can smell this and they will attract wandering monsters until it wears off after 6 hours.

Caraxi were created many years ago by the evil magic-user Nashtaz, but his spells did not work properly so the caraxi turned out to be too small for his liking. He threw them into the wild before he realised their true potential. Their eggs, if ground up and mixed with different types of acid, produce potions. The potions are randomly made, so roll on the following table to determine type:

1 : Dragon control 4 : Animal control
2 : Giant control 5 : Plant control
3 : Human control 6 : Undead control
Roll for individual type controllable for each potion. From 2-8 eggs will be found in the lair.

Because of this caraxi were hunted down, and their numbers fell and they now live underground.
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RuneRites is a regular column for RuneQuest players, edited by Dave Morris

**TREASURES**

This issue we have a further selection of magical weaponry - mostly relatively common items which the typical adventurer might find himself using (or being assailed with).

**THE HELMET OF AKHUL WARA** by Oliver Dickinson

This ancient treasure was worn by a Hero of the Dragonkill War, a leader of the Yelmalio cult, and was successfully filched from the field of battle by a wyrm, in whose family it was for generations handed down as an heirloom. Its whereabouts are now totally uncertain.

It is an open helm of gold, treated to absorb 6 points per blow, and will fit the head of any SIZ 17-18 character. Four bands run up the front, back and sides, each set with four rubies (which are matched, and each worth 3500L). On the top is a larger ruby (worth some 5500L) surmounted by a gold image of a hawk. Set into the front is a Fire Crystal of POW 12. The Helmet is also a matrix for light-wall, mindspeech 2 and protection 4. Thus, the item's minimum value is in the region of 140,000L; members of a Sky cult would pay up to 150,000L, and will show considerable hostility if the possessor does not belong to such a cult and will not part with the helmet. It has a 30% chance of being recognised by certain factions in whom it will arouse hostility - these include dragonewts and draconic beings, Darkness cultists (except Zorak Zoran members) and quite possibly certain gothic figures.

The bad news: this helmet is cursed. All who see it must make INTx5 on d100 or desire it, whatever their cult orientation. Failure of a second INTx5 roll means possession. Only if a Fire Crystal is attached can this roll mean that they wish to take and sell it. These are overmastering compulsions which override all other ties - kinship, comradeship, love, etc.

Rune levels of Yelmalio (and associated cults) have a 50% chance of recognizing the helmet. It can certainly be identified in any major Lhankor Mhy temple, but an average Lhankor Mhy cultist will find it only if a specialist in ancient treasures or having General Knowledge at 50% or higher.

(Anonymous adds that this is one for referees concerned, rather than requiring the INTx5 rolls; an avianous bunch like the people I play with would all want it, whatever their INT! By the way, for those who don't have Plunder, Fire Crystals are twice POW yielding crystals which double as an igniter matrix for Sky cultists. Zorak Zoran cultists attuned to such a crystal can learn and use light and lightwall, and sacrifice for salamanders at the normal cost. -DM)

**FANG WARRIORS** by Dave Morris

Fang warriors are created from a hydra's teeth. Nine of the hydra's teeth will have this property, and these can be distinguished from the other teeth by detect magic. Each of the nine teeth can be used to create a fang warrior: the user casts 5 points of battle magic POW into a tooth which enlarges and transforms to become a fang warrior in 1-8 rounds. STR: 2d6+13 CON: 1d6+15 SIZ: 1d4+17 INT: 1d4+12 POW: one-ninth of the POW the hydra had; average 3-4 DEX: 2d6+10 Move: 8 Hit Points: 18-19 average Defence: 5% average Armour: 3 point skin Claws: (1d4+2+1d6).SR6,85%

White and wiry, the superficially human appearance of a fang warrior is quickly belied by its sharp claws and teeth and the glare of animal-like ferocity in its eyes. A fang warrior is in mindspeech with its creator and will fight as long as he/she directs; it can perform no other function. Fang warriors are permanently fanatical (already factored in above) and strike twice per round with their claws. They are immune to demoralization and harmonize, and are protected by a countermagic 2 which cannot be dispelled. Fang warriors remain in existence for two minutes and then fade, leaving in their place the hydra's teeth used to create them. Once a tooth is used it is drained of enchantment.

(Magical hydra's teeth are quite rare, and will sell for about 1000 to 2000L each. This certainly makes the task of killing a hydra financially worthwhile - which is as it should be! Fakes and non-useable teeth are often found for sale, and the buyer should beware that he may be fleeced. Fang warriors created from a given hydra are brethren, incidentally - whatever their commands, they will not attack one another. -DM)

**THE SNAKE RATTLE** by Angus McLellan

This is a short stick decorated with gaudy feathers and other gewgaws, often ending in an opidian skull or carved head. It must be treated with divine intervention 3, and if this succeeds then the rattle can be used to conjure the Rainbow Serpent.

**Rainbow Serpent**

This is a reusable rune spell (duration instantaneous: range 5m), which can be used by a character who has enchanted a snake rattle. It is usual in such that, on cast, the rattle will give off a musical note, and the spell, 4 points of battle magic POW must be expended at each casting. The reason for this is not known, though it may be that Yig (the snake god who provides the spell) requires this for power in the eternal struggle against his foes - particularly the Black Goat of the Woods. The target of the spell is visited by a terrible apparition - the rainbow serpent. The serpent drives those who see it mad with fright and its touch is venomous death. Each summoning of the Serpent has a different POW (roll 2d6+12). If it overcomes the victim's POW, he must roll POWx5% or become permanently insane. He will also be attacked by a systemic poison of a potency equal to the serpent's POW; antidotes will have no effect. As this is actually paradoxic magic. If the victim's POW is not overcome, he takes a poison attack of potency equal to half the serpent's POW. He will still go mad unless he can roll POWx3 or less on d100. An insane character gets to make the POWx3 roll every day until he succumbs and thereby recovers. Should he be unlucky enough to stay insane for more than one week, he will lose 1 POW for each subsequent week until he either recovers or ceases to exist (reaches POW 0).

**SUNSTONES** by Angus McLellan

Sunstones are rare pebbles believed to fall from the sky, so called because of the strange properties which they manifest. If a sunstone is exposed to bright light it absorbs the light, creating a small 'halo of darkness' around it. If it is then stored and later taken out, it will cast forth a light of a similar intensity. If on entering a darkened room, it will cause a growth of strange light in the room. If the sunstone is then exposed to bright light it will absorb the light again and the light in the room will disappear. Each sunstone has a different possibilities equal to the sunstone's POW (roll 1d8). If it overcomes the victim's POW, he must roll POWx5% or become permanently insane. He will also be attacked by a systemic poison of a potency equal to the serpent's POW; antidotes will have no effect. As this is actually paradoxic magic. If the victim's POW is not overcome, he takes a poison attack of potency equal to half the serpent's POW. He will still go mad unless he can roll POWx3 or less on d100. An insane character gets to make the POWx3 roll every day until he succumbs and thereby recovers. Should he be unlucky enough to stay insane for more than one week, he will lose 1 POW for each subsequent week until he either recovers or ceases to exist (reaches POW 0).

(Treasures continued on p. 44)

**Rune Rites**

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This is a short stick decorated with gaudy feathers and other gewgaws, often ending in an opidian skull or carved head. It must be treated with divine intervention 3, and if this succeeds then the rattle can be used to conjure the Rainbow Serpent.

**Rainbow Serpent**

This is a reusable rune spell (duration instantaneous: range 5m), which can be used by a character who has enchanted a snake rattle. It is usual in such that, on cast, the rattle will give off a musical note, and the spell, 4 points of battle magic POW must be expended at each casting. The reason for this is not known, though it may be that Yig (the snake god who provides the spell) requires this for power in the eternal struggle against his foes - particularly the Black Goat of the Woods. The target of the spell is visited by a terrible apparition - the rainbow serpent. The serpent drives those who see it mad with fright and its touch is venomous death. Each summoning of the Serpent has a different POW (roll 2d6+12). If it overcomes the victim's POW, he must roll POWx5% or become permanently insane. He will also be attacked by a systemic poison of a potency equal to the serpent's POW; antidotes will have no effect. As this is actually paradoxic magic. If the victim's POW is not overcome, he takes a poison attack of potency equal to half the serpent's POW. He will still go mad unless he can roll POWx3 or less on d100. An insane character gets to make the POWx3 roll every day until he succumbs and thereby recovers. Should he be unlucky enough to stay insane for more than one week, he will lose 1 POW for each subsequent week until he either recovers or ceases to exist (reaches POW 0).

**SUNSTONES** by Angus McLellan

Sunstones are rare pebbles believed to fall from the sky, so called because of the strange properties which they manifest. If a sunstone is exposed to bright light it absorbs the light, creating a small 'halo of darkness' around it. If it is then stored and later taken out, it will cast forth a light of a similar intensity. If on entering a darkened room, it will cause a growth of strange light in the room. If the sunstone is then exposed to bright light it will absorb the light again and the light in the room will disappear. Each sunstone has a different possibilities equal to the sunstone's POW (roll 1d8). If it overcomes the victim's POW, he must roll POWx5% or become permanently insane. He will also be attacked by a systemic poison of a potency equal to the serpent's POW; antidotes will have no effect. As this is actually paradoxic magic. If the victim's POW is not overcome, he takes a poison attack of potency equal to half the serpent's POW. He will still go mad unless he can roll POWx3 or less on d100. An insane character gets to make the POWx3 roll every day until he succumbs and thereby recovers. Should he be unlucky enough to stay insane for more than one week, he will lose 1 POW for each subsequent week until he either recovers or ceases to exist (reaches POW 0).

(Treasures continued on p. 44)
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PRIZE COMPETITION
Create a scenario based on the map and win £150

This month we offer all those frustrated scenario writers a chance to get their work in print. We are looking for an original scenario, based on the above map from 4-10,000 words in length, typed double-spaced, with any illustrations or maps clearly marked. It may be for any RPG you choose. Entries should reach us at White Dwarf, 27-29 Sunbeam Road, London, NW10 6JP, not later than March 20th 1985.

The winning entry will be published soon after, the author will receive £150, and we will award three runners up prizes of a year's subscription to White Dwarf.

THE CHEQUERED FLOOR
by Peter J Cate
The players enter the room through the door at the top of the diagram. As soon as they enter the main chamber, they will not be able to return for the one-way force-field (A) will prevent them. A d10 and a d6 should then be thrown to discover the position of the square B. This square can either be an illusionary tile, a black tile or simply a hole. If the square B ends up on a square that the players are standing on, then they will fall into the pit which lies under the whole of the room. Every time the players move, a throw must be made to discover the new position of B which will not be told to the players if B is an illusion. In this room the players' movement is 10' a round (ie approximately 1 square a round) due to a magical force, but if a player is in the pit, he will be able to see a hole in the 'ceiling' and maybe escape as movement is not restricted in the pit.

The wall C could be run in the same way, a d10 being rolled to determine the position of an archway which moves each round and is hidden by the illusionary wall. D is simply a passageway to allow for the movement of the hidden archway.

The damage from the fall into the pit and the size of the room and even the number of illusionary squares (!) should be appropriate to the level of the dungeon the room is situated in.

THE ACID POOL TRAP
by D H Roberts
Many DMs have deep pools of acid in their dungeon with gold, platinum, gems and jewels at the bottom of it. So with this trap, many jewels can be seen 5-10ft below the surface of a liquid filled pit. But, there is no acid in the pit, just a permanent programmed illusion of some acid. When iron etc, is dipped in the ‘pool’ the ‘acid’ fizzes around it, any anyone touching it will think they have received 1d8 hit points damage. Anyone diving into the pool will fall 10ft and receive 1d8 hit points damage from the fall (there will be a 1/3 chance that the adventurer will be knocked out by the fall and remain unconscious for 2d6 rounds while all the other adventurers will see him dissolve). For the ease of the owner of the treasure there is a set of invisible steps leading to the bottom of the pit, thus the illusionist who cast the spell is perfectly able to walk through the ‘acid’ and get any item of treasure he desires.
Tabletop Heroes is a regular feature covering figures, modelling and painting tips by Gary Chalk and Joe Dever.

HIGH AND DRY

This month we continue our series of practical painting tips with a close-up look at the technique known as 'dry-brushing'. This method of painting is a quick and very effective way to pick out the raised surfaces of a figure, and it works particularly well on areas of dense texture such as fur, feathers, chainmail and hair. Dry-brushing involves the application of a layer of dark colour to which lighter highlights are added. Since you will be painting in a light colour over a dark, it is important that the paint you choose for highlighting is completely opaque (enamels are strongly recommended). As with the wash technique outlined in last month's feature, remember to undercoat your figure with a matt white, and allow this to dry thoroughly before you choose your colours. Using the shading and highlighting guide (WD58), pick the 'deep-shadow' of the first colour you wish to apply. For example, say you are about to tackle a shaggy fur cloak. A suitable base colour would be dark brown, to which dry-brushing of chestnut brown could be added, finished off with a highlight of tan. Alternatively, an area of quilted red leather would begin with a chestnut brown base coat, dry-brushed with a medium red and highlighted with orange.

Stage-by-Stage Guide to Dry-Brushing

1. Choose the area to be painted and apply a wash of 'deep-shadow' base colour. The wash need not be as thin as usual, but thinning the paint slightly will allow it to run into all the recessed areas. This is important as these recesses will provide a contrast to the lighter highlights.
2. Next, consult the chart for the mid-shadow colour. Mix this colour on a palette (a piece of aluminium foil makes for a cheap and ideal palette) taking care to ensure that you have enough pigment in the mix. If your paint is too runny, try adding a little talcum powder; this absorbs the excess oil medium and thickens the paint.
3. Using an old brush (new brushes rapidly deteriorate when used for dry-brushing), pick up a little of your paint mix and wipe it on a lint-free piece of cloth or tissue until the bristles are almost dry (hence the term 'dry-brushing'). What little paint that does remain on your brush is now applied to the textured area by drawing the brush lightly across the surface. The paint will adhere to all raised areas, missing the recessed areas completely, and thus producing a 'shadow' effect. A word of warning! Don't let impatience prompt you to put more paint on the brush in the hope of finishing the job quickly - it will not work. The excess paint will simply fill the hollows and prevent the desired effect being attained. When dry-brushing, use as little paint as possible. You can always dry-brush additional layers if your first attempt is too thin, but you cannot remove too much paint once it has been applied in haste.

Next month we shall be taking a look at the one aspect of figure painting which often frustrates and eludes both beginners and experts alike: how to paint realistic flesh tones and faces.

This Issue's Photos

As promised, we are featuring some alternative technology' perpetrated by the Player's Guild of Nottingham. Any reader who attended this year's Games Day will have no difficulty in recognising the orc hot air balloon shown in Fig 1. The gas envelope is an ordinary plastic balloon (of the type found in most WC cisterns), with a wicker-work basket and whole scratch built from textured modelling card. The whole construction is supported by a piece of thick wire cunningly disguised as the rope that leads to the passenger compartment. The orc from the Citadel Orc War Engine Set (TA44) is busy at work. Details such as the patched gas-bag and the cauldron of oil really enhance the 'orciwhness' of the model, a clean, new balloon would simply not be as convincing (unless, perhaps, it was crewed by elves?)

Fig 2 and 3 show the fearless dwarven gliders Blue Stratos and Von Gimli, closing for the kill. The hang-giders are constructed from paper glued to a frame of cocktail sticks. The flying dwarves are casualties from the Adrime set C34/14, and are already sculpted in the correct pose for this simple conversion. This novel idea could equally be applied to several other role-playing scenarios. James Bond and a hang-glider in Live and Let Die, or SF villains in Spacehunter swoop down to collect captives from a planet's surface, and even Rogue Trooper (2000 AD) employs a neatly camouflaged hang-glider in this year's 1986 annual.

In Fig 4 we see what the orcs have devised to counter aerobatic dwarves: a multishot ballista. The model was constructed from balsa wood and cockpit plastic, and the crew taken from the Orc War Engine set. The model was painted a dark brown and dry-brushed with a cream enamel. As you can see, this technique really shows up the surface texture and helps to give the device a well-worn look.

In Fig 5 we see a pair of Tom Meier's Troglydotes defending their home. The figure on the right has a sashimono (back banner) added, made from a couple of spears and a rectangle of toothpaste tube metal. Reptiles are a most suitable subject for dry-brushing, for both technique and their scale, in a way that no other method achieves. The picket fencing is from the Irregular Miniatures range of battlefield accessories, and the hut is a line granary with door and windows.

Next month we shall be taking a look at the furry-footed brethren. These latest creations are a welcome and long overdue addition to the wide spectrum of fantasy races. The orc padding his dingy in Fig 9 is another crazy conversion from the Player's Guild. The inflatable is taken from the old Airfix US Marines Set, but is no longer available, however, don't let this deter you as canoes, coracles and small boats can easily be scratch built from balsa scraps and card.

Useful Addresses

Ahketon Fortifications, c/o The Model Shop, 190-194 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex.
Irregular Miniatures, 18, The Avenue, Nalton, Yorks YO17 9E5.
Citadel Miniatures, 18, The Avenue, Nalton, Yorks YO17 9E5.
Chronicle Miniatures, Chewton Street, Hiltpool, Eastwood, Notts.
A Santa's VTOL Super-Sleigh hummed into life, the venerable, white-haired gent eased on his red crash-helmet, complete with fluffy white bobble and trim, and hummed "God rest ye, merry gentlemen..." in accompaniment.

Outside the Grotto, snow was falling heavily.

The picketing reindeer knew the time for Santa to make his getaway was nigh, but they were preparing for a repeat of last year's rocket-powered sleigh. Enormous padded wooden buffers stood in the deepening snow at strategic points around the perimeter of the Grotto.

A reindeer by the entrance turned and galloped back to let the others know that Santa was on his way!

The other reindeer stood in a line, with banners strung between their antlers, slogans like "Powersleighs Unfair to Reindeer", "There's No Clause Like Santa's Clause" and "Reundant Reindeer Against The Bomb!"

Directing all this was Rudolph, who evidently thought that the colour of his nose held some deeper significance.

As the thin end of the Super-Sleigh nosed into the arctic daylight, Rudolph barked a command and snowballs plummeted and you will receive your presents a little late, but please remember, this year they promised that haunts. reverie by the reindeer checking his pulse and the snowballs fell through the cold air they were met by the super-heated exhausts.

Snow to super-heated steam in a split second!

Result!...The snowballs exploded!

The clear mountain air was suddenly rent by a battery of eruptions from the Grotto mouth, from which a gigantic cloud of steam billowed.

When the cloud had cleared, all that could be seen were confused and concussed reindeer, reeling about the now empty Grotto's opening...out of which whips of frozen white escaped.

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The outcome of all this is that some of you will receive your presents a little late, but please remember, this year they promise to bring a brush and pan...so you won't have to climb up a ladder, on Boxing Day, to chip frozen reindeer whoopies out of the guttering.

Patience brings its own rewards.

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PAINT BY TORCHLIGHT

Matt Love of Tomarken Fantasy Feoras, now offers an extensive service. He can supply painted dungeons, at twice the price of the unainted, Citadel Miniatures from £2.50. Matt van finished. The sample sent to us was complete and black for the main board. You can contact Matt at 22 Clifton Road, Southend On Sea, Essex.

LEGEND

Century Communications have just released their first piece of software, Legend, based on the board game by David Gemmell. The game itself incorporates two full length 48K games for the Spectrum. In the first program you play the part of a warlord and around the land of Dros Delnoch. There are 150K of text in this story, comprising your new plot. The game has five levels, including your best move, and its fun to play. It's not the best board game out there, but it's a good one.

EASYLIES

I've just received two very pretty books, Knights and Castles and Ancient Egypt, which contain a lot of large text and interesting facts. They are profusely illustrated, they are new and the use of materials for the background is very good. Each book is £1.95 each.

THE WORLDS OF BONIS VALLEJO

The Worlds of Bonis Vallejo will soon be released by Mayfair Games. This exciting new book features the artwork of the famous fantasy artist, John Howe. The Worlds of Bonis Vallejo is a fast paced game of strategy and diplomacy. With 30 individually mounted colour plates and over 1000 words, this game is as exciting to view as it is to play.

NEXT ISSUE

ALIEN WOLF - a Traveller scenario in Victorian London
DARK USURPER II - continuing the Fantasy Universe
PLACES OF DANGEROUS DARKNESS - a Place at the under-writers of fantasy city
EYE OF NEWT PART 4 - artifact construction
RULES AND ROLEPLAYING - topical comment on the hobby, Plus all the regular departments and features

WINDX TYR HAS REACHED A new high-rise apartment in the city of Bylos. He is the first person to live in a building that has been built especially for robots. The building is a modern structure, with all the latest features. The robots are simple, yet very functional. They are capable of performing a wide range of tasks, from cleaning and cooking to transportation. The building is a testament to the ingenuity of the designers, who have created a city that is both functional and visually appealing.

ONE-LINERS

The Iron Wind (Iron Crown) £5.95. The very interesting but totally unadventurous Iron Wind is a game that has no roleplaying. It has been totally revised, and brought into line with the standard ICE format, colour plates following the style of the Middle Earth series. Plenty of text, reasonable illustrations, and in a magazine format.

Boot Hill (TSR) £5.00. With a nice new box and a Remington illustration it's all Down Hill for the reader I'm afraid. The rulebook has no discernable differences to the old, and the rest of the contents are virtually identical. Never liked BH the first time around, so once upon a time in the West is far better (and cheaper).

WGS (TSR) £4.50. Mordenkainen's Fantastic Adventure, set for characters of level 9-12, pits four great and powerful heroes against the catacombs below Mauro's Castle. Typical high level AD&D scenario. I liked the character called Rigby, the silliest name for a cleric I've seen!

AC3 (TSR) £4.50. This package, called The Kidnapping of Princess Arlene, features 31 3-D figures and creatures, walls etc. and two sheets of treasure and fantasy, together with a dungeon floorplan grid. The set is basically a poor man's Dungeon Floor Plans with an existing D&D scenario, the Dungeon Tiles. What I'm sure that when I put them together looked very cheap and nasty.

Mektron (R Taussler Company) £1.50. The press release says 'Where do you go when you just want to take an afternoon off and destroy several square miles of Tokyo? Mektron: The Battletides Game. Obviously, basically the game revolves around 100 foot giant robots stomping built up areas, the rules are simple, artwork very average, and you even get a slab of polystyrene to form the flimsy box being crushed.'

UK5 (TSR) £4.50. Eye of the Serpent, a solo (DM and player) or a group adventure for AD&D. Perilous mountain climbing and "unique route planning system" with plenty of encounters, nicely laid out for first level characters.
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Wanted: 15-year-old ADDer seeks players and a DM aged 14-19. Write to: J.Tolley, 10 Highfield Road, Conv., Nr Wolstein, Vermont, USA.


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Help. Young ADD and nature lovers, would like to get together and play, has a few figures. Contact: J. Prince, Middlesex UB3 2BF or phone: 0161 5022.

Wanted and SF art work for new fan¬ ized magazine "SASE" for return to: Alex Bardy, 286 Gledwar Road, London N19 3XQ.

Wanted: Lone warrior (26 summers and still adventurous seeks mature active party in the English lakes. Age 30-35. Contact in¬ dem: in D&D since 7). Also experience in role playing. Write to: Stuart Steel Wy, 36 Braithway, Salford, Manchester, M7 2UF.

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