Introducing a hollow concept in solid adventure!

—HOLLOW WORLD—

Travel from the Known World into the center of the planet—and discover vast and strange lands—the Hollow World! Bring life to new empires, kings and their armies and all the exotic creatures of this previously unknown realm.

THE HOLLOW WORLD BOXED SET provides original adventures, new player characters, monsters of this realm and ways to link the Known World to the Hollow World.

Danger, excitement and challenge abound, because these new races and monsters may not be ready to share what they consider to be their planet.

Can be played with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® and ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® 2nd Edition Gaming Systems.

AVAILABLE NOW...

LOOK FOR IN NOVEMBER

AVAILABLE EARLY 1991
Explore New Realms
Meet New Monsters

Enjoy these new fantasy adventures, or create one of your own!

Monstrous Compendium #7
Brand new AD&D 2nd Edition outer space monsters for the SPELLJAMMER® campaign world.
#5991 $9.95

Legends & Lore
by James M. Ward & Troy Denning
This classic must-have accessory is updated with more information on monsters, heroes and villains for the AD&D 2nd Edition game.
#5729 $20.00

Hollow World
by Aaron Allston
This exciting new boxed set describes the exotic peoples and horrific monsters of the vast and strange hollow interior of the Known World.
#5967 $18.00

Homeland
by R.A. Salvatore
Book One of the new FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Dark Elf Trilogy features the young elf Drizzt trying to live with honor among his unprincipled kinmen.
#8239 $4.95

The Horde
by David Cook
This new FORGOTTEN REALMS™ boxed set provides game information on the world of The Horde, a vast army of barbaric horsemen.
#7341 $18.00

Spin a Tale of Fantasy and you could Win!
Enter TSR's exciting fantasy/adventure short story contest. Win the Grand Prize and your story will be published in DRAGON® magazine. You'll also win a Collector's Chess Set worth over $250. Entries are due October 31, 1990. Ask a Waldenbooks bookseller for details.

Waldenbooks
Your Guide to Great Reading

To order, call 1-800-322-2000, Dept. 451 or check the Yellow Pages for the Waldenbooks store nearest you.

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS

Why Is the DM Smiling?
Four ways to enliven your fantasy-game campaigns.

Inside Information — David Flin
Stop listening to tavern rumors and get the real story!

Romance and Adventure! — Tom Schlosser
Romance? In a fantasy game? You’re kidding, right?

“It’s sort of like a wand...” — Gary Coppa
You don’t have to tell the players everything. Just tell them enough to get them into trouble.

The Classics Campaign — Marc Newman
Old dungeons never die, but novice player characters do.

OTHER FEATURES

Role-playing Reviews — Jim Bambra
Glorantha and Krynn: Two worlds of high adventure!

The Voyage of the Princess Ark — Bruce A. Heard
How can you land on the South Pole when your world has none?

The Role of Computers — Hartley, Patricia, and Kirk Lesser
Warfare, from the BattleMech’s cockpit to the gold dragon’s saddle.

The MARVEL®-Phile — David E. Martin, Chris Mortika, Scott Davis, and William Tracy
Two “leftover” Marvel heroes make their gaming appearance: Dakota North and Stick.

Shadow Play — fiction by John P. Buentello
Assassins aren’t paid to ask why, but sometimes they do.

The Role of Books — John C. Bunnell
The space Legionnaires are looking for a few good men; the not-so-good ones join Phule’s Company.

Scouting For New Options — Kim Eastland
If you don’t trust thieves, you need a scout! A character class for AD&D® 1st Edition games.

The Ecology of the Griffon — Christopher Kederich
Rule Number One: Never leave one behind to guard your horses.

Through the Looking Glass — Robert Bigelow, Jay Clenndenny, and Ralph Cooper
A method to your ‘Mech madness: Campaign rules for FASA’s BATTLECHE® game.

DEPARTMENTS

5 Letters  68 Gamers Guide  85 TSR Previews
6 Editorial  76 Forum  94 Dragonmirth
88 Sage Advice  80 Convention Calendar  96 Twilight Empire

COVER

Jim Holloway had a lot of fun with this month’s cover, which he has named “Butch and Sundance: The Early, Early, Early, Early, Early, Early Years.” The elf and halfling have discovered that their DM decided the campaign should be more exciting—from the DM’s point of view, of course.
What did you think of this issue? Do you have a question about an article or have an idea for a new feature you’d like to see? In the United States and Canada, write to Letters, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Letters, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LD, United Kingdom.

Why the psi?

Dear Dragon:  
In DRAGON issue #155, I noticed that you are still using psionics with your elfon god charac-
ters. Why didn’t you change those abilities to magical abilities? Why don’t you include Mon-
strous Compendium sheets with “The Dragon’s Bestiary” articles? I’m sure that many readers would be thankful to have them.

Andy Mandiak  
Rochester NY

One only of the four deities in “The Elfin Gods” had psionic talents, and these talents were noted as applicable only to campaigns using the AD&D® 1st Edition game’s psionics system. No exact magical analogs for psionic attack and defense modes exist in the AD&D game, though you might use the mind flayer’s mental blast (formerly psionic blast or mind blast) from the Monstrous Compendium as a substitute for psionic attacks, with the mind blank spell for psionic defenses.  

We usually don’t put monsters on full pages when using Monstrous Compendium format because we cannot be sure that each entry will fill the page. We have a large number of mon-
sters left in our files that we are slowly convert-
ing to AD&D 2nd Edition game format (which fits well in any AD&D 1st Edition campaign). When possible, we will place monsters on full pages—but don’t hold your breath!

The NPC lineup

Dear Dragon:  
I really wish that you would republish some of the new types of characters like the anti-
paladins and the savants. It really would be great if you could do that. If you can’t, please tell me what issues they were in and where I can get them. I’ve looked in many bookstores but none of them have the old issues. Please do something!

Jessie Lin  
Castro Valley CA

We don’t plan to reprint NPC classes in this magazine, though we might do so for a Best of DRAGON Magazine Anthology. Back issues containing these classes might be available through the Mail Order Hobby Shop, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. (write for details and a free 1990 catalog). We leave it to adventuresome gamers to convert these classes into character kits for AD&D 2nd Edition campaigns.

To aid your search, here are as many of the previously published NPC classes and variant/ nonstandard PC classes as we could find (includ-
ing once-official PC classes from Unearthed Arcana and PC classes not used in the AD&D 2nd Edition game), with the issues in which these classes have appeared. We’ve also added references for articles that might be of interest to those playing such characters. Note that all of these classes were created for the AD&D 1st Edition game. Many are not suitable for use as player characters as they lack the statistical information and innate game balance to play them properly—but have fun anyway!


Continued on page 7
A story

Once upon a time in a campaign far, far away, there were two adventurers named Black Bart and Ursula. Black Bart was a dark-haired fighter from an AD&D® game world, with a sneaky grin and a magical sword for every day of the week. Ursula was a good-natured barbarian with flame-red hair from the GAMMA WORLD® game, an expert with pistols and grenades. The details of how the two met are murky, but the important thing was that they did meet—and unexpectedly fell in love.

Romance is not a commonly discussed topic with regard to role-playing games. The article "Romance and Adventure!" in this issue is the only one I recall on the subject, aside from notes in an article by William Armintrout on TSR's old META-MORPHOSIS ALPHA game, which appeared in The Space Gamer magazine. If romance appears in an adventure at all, it is as a minor subplot (one example takes place in the WGS Fate of Istus AD&D module, on page 52).

I have a feeling that, in average game play, a full-blown fairy-tale romance with daring deeds and the works is most likely when only one of the two characters is a player character, the other being an NPC. Once in a while you get the same effect between characters run by two people who are already romantically involved in real life (I've seen it happen), but that's rarer.

Ursula was the NPC of the couple mentioned above, but Black Bart never seemed to notice. They were seen everywhere together, happily bashing monsters and braving every quest that came their way. The peak of their careers came when they piloted their own cargo lifter during the great Damnation Alley coast-to-coast run across the ruins of North America, about which volumes could be said but my editorial isn't long enough. Black Bart and Ursula were a bright spot in every game adventure, right up to the moment when Ursula died.

The end came very suddenly. A chaotic-evil fighter played by another player became irked with the rest of the party one evening and attacked everyone at once. This was particularly bad since everyone in the group, including the attacker, was as heavily armed as liberal DMs and transuniversal-campaign travel will allow. Guns roared, +5 swords lashed out, and 20-HD fireballs erupted across the campsite in a savage, no-quarter battle.

Ursula caught the chaotic-evil fighter's main attack. She doubled over, nearly dead after the first melee round, and dropped her weapons. The fighter moved to finish her off and cut up the rest of the group, failing until the last moment to notice that Ursula had tugged the pin out of a torc grenade and was clutching it to her chest. The resulting explosion completely disintegrated everything for almost 50' around: the evil fighter, Ursula, their equipment, the dirt and rock under their feet, everything. The party was saved. Of the two combatants, nothing remained.

Black Bart wasn't the same after that. He became moody, which is a nice way of saying that he took out his frustration on every unfortunate monster that came within sighting distance. Something had to be done, so when it came my turn to be the DM, I brought Ursula back to life. But there was a price tag.

It seems that Ursula had been under surveillance by a mad scientist in another universe, and he'd fallen for her even if she was an unsophisticated barbarian. When she was attacked, the mad scientist worked the controls of his time-space machine and popped her out of harm's way in the last fraction of a second before the torc grenade blew up (but he thoughtfully left the grenade behind for the fighter). Ursula became a prisoner in the scientist's citadel, a mile-high needlelike tower in the wastelands of a world known as Barsoom.

Black Bart began to have dreams in which he saw Ursula calling out to him for rescue. Immediately seizing the chance to find his true love, Black Bart learned of Ursula's location during visits with high-level sages and wizards, and he gathered his allies for an assault. Warriors from lands of fantasy and science-fiction rallied to his cause, and the adventurers were soon neck deep in combat with banths, pirates, Green Martians with radium rifles, and worse.

Black Bart was relentless. When his crew reached the deserted city where the mad scientist lived, he ignored all the monsters that attacked the group, marching steadily on for the tower and killing everything that got in his way. In the final battle at the top of the spire, Black Bart fought the scientist in single combat and threw his headless body from the balcony. The subsequent escape from the tower (whose base was triggered to blow up if the scientist was slain) made up the final chapter of the adventure, and Ursula and Black Bart were together again.

I haven't the faintest idea of what happened to those two characters after that. I would hope that they are happily hacking their way through the multiverse even now. The memories of that adventure would last for years, and we remembered too the cause for which it was fought.

Cheers to you, Black Bart and Ursula, wherever you are.

Roger C. Moore
Letters
Continued from page 5

Savant: 65, 140
Scribe: 3, 62
Sentinel: 89
Shaman, humanoid: 141
Smith: 70
Sumotori (two): 157
Thief-acrobat: 65, 69
Timelord: 65
Witch: 3, 5, 20, 43, 114

Also known as...
Denmark

Dear Dragon:

I am writing in response to Ethan Ham’s recent article, “Also Known As . . . the Orc” (issue #158). Using alternate monster names is a good way to keep players guessing—especially in a low-level campaign in which characters shouldn’t automatically know what they’re fighting and how to defeat it. However, as a student of Scandinavian languages, I was very disappointed to see several errors in the lists of names:

—The names sotrolde (for aquatic ogres), havmand and havfrue (for mermen), and skovtrolde (for wood trolls) are all Danish—not Celtic, German, or otherwise.

—The name hau-bui (for wights) is not Celtic, either, but Old Norse (compare the Norwegian word for the “walking dead”: haugebond).

—The names maru (for the succubus) and skogsrå (for female wood trolls) are both Swedish.

—Finally, the name huldraolf listed for elves is indeed Scandinavian, but it is a misprint; the correct spelling should be huldrafolk.

Most DMs, I realize, care little about those technicalities. But to me, having a Celtic NPC call a monster by a Nordic name would ruin the whole idea behind Ham’s article (that names vary from culture to culture).

Kimberley E. Usher
Charlotte NC

Your input is appreciated. Having done a fair amount of research in the past, I know that such errors often lie in the source material itself. I would like to point out that name confusion among cultures can be helpful to the DM; a Celtic NPC might have heard a dying Nordic NPC refer to his slayer as a skrimst, which is the Scandinavian name for an aquatic ogre (known in Celtic society as a soetrolde). The Celtic man might then spread rumors about this “new monster” and have the foreign word produce much confusion as to the killer’s true identity.

On another topic, I know from experience that renaming a monster and making minor changes in its appearance or abilities may seem simplistic, but it has dramatic effects in actual play, often generating fear and respect for the creature far out of proportion to the monster’s actual power. I once wrote about a gaming episode in which a party (including one of my characters) had a night encounter with a red dragon that shot beams of light from its eyes like spotlights (like Smaug in the animated version of The Hobbit); when the dragon asked for our mules and treasure, we gladly gave them up. I’m fairly sure we could have killed the monster—but we lost our nerve and ran for it instead.

Ω
ENJOY THE CONVENIENCE OF HOME DELIVERY!

Fill out and mail the subscription card in this issue.

If the card is missing, write to:

Subscriptions:
DRAGON® Magazine
P.O. Box 111
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

TSR Ltd. Subscriptions
120 Church End
Cherry Hinton
Cambridge CBI 3LB
United Kingdom

DRAGON is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1990 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Why Is the DM Smiling?
Rumors aren’t your only source of adventuring advice
However, that is often the complete repertoire of information-gathering techniques used by characters. This article describes other sources of information, what sorts of knowledge might be obtained from them, and what limitations they possess—using a bit of real-world history.

**Libraries**

Libraries are a fantasy staple, especially in the lands of powerful wizards. PC mages are likely to want to visit a library to research new spells or old scrolls. The typical vision of a fantasy library is of a room stuffed full of thousands of books covering a vast range of esoteric subjects, like the library of a long-established university. In the real world, before the invention of the printing press, books were both expensive and rare. Geoffrey Chaucer (A.D. 1340-1400) was an educated and extremely well-read man for his time. He was renowned for his collection of books, a collection larger than those of several of the colleges of Oxford or Cambridge. He had in his possession 60 books. Most libraries of this time were smaller than this.

It is true that there existed a few libraries that were noticeably larger, such as that of the monastery of Glastonbury. This library was one of the largest in England and contained several hundred books, mainly of the Scriptures but also on the classics, history, philosophy, and science. Such libraries were very few, very famous, and not at all easy to enter. These libraries gathered their books over many years, often through theft and conquest. Other libraries, such as those at Pergamos or Alexandria, were reputed to have contained hundreds of thousands of books. These claims, in the light of library sizes that have been authenticated, are probably grossly inflated.

To get access to an important fantasy-based library such as these, one should be very well connected. It is possible that the price of being allowed to read a book there might be the gift to the library of another book. A possible scenario for a PC mage might be developed around acquiring a particular book as a gift for such a library in order to read a book that the library possesses.

The reason that books were so rare in the days before the printing press is simple: Every book had to be hand written, hand decorated, and hand bound. In addition to being rare, books were expensive. While it is not easy to compare prices of 600 years ago with those of today, it has been estimated that a single book might cost about $1,000 in today’s terms. In 1341, Richard de Bury, Chancellor and High Treasurer of England, paid 50 lbs. of silver for 40 books from the Abbot of St. Albans. Even a single book would be a considerable treasure if the PCs could appreciate its value.

It follows from the relative expense of books that few people could afford them. Thus collections of books would be a rarity, and “trivial” books, such as *101 Uses For a Dead Kobold*, will not exist.

Where might libraries be found? At centers of learning, certainly. Guilds might also have collections that are likely to be highly specialized in guild interests. The monarch and court will have access to books also, as might nobles and other wealthy individuals, such as rich bards and writers. In feudal Japan, literacy was expected of nobility and courtiers, as was the ability to compose poetry. The masses, however, remained illiterate.

Historically, the scarcity of books and the low level of literacy in the population were linked. The introduction of the printing press was not followed by a mushrooming of literacy, however; early printed books were nearly as expensive as handwritten ones and were aimed for the same exclusive audience. Over the centuries, printing technology improved, literacy rates increased, and the demand for cheap reading material rose.

Attitudes changed so that learning was seen as a valuable end in itself, which led to the widespread founding of charitable schools. Later, an increase in leisure time prompted an interest in books for recreational purposes. These changes contributed to the rise in literacy and in the demand for books. Because of these complicated factors, even the invention of the printing press will not revolutionize the role of the written word in a fantasy campaign overnight.

Other factors influenced the amount of written material available. Nomadic societies, where people are constantly on the move (e.g., Huns, Mongols, and Gypsies) would simply not have the space to maintain a collective library.

Since books were written for a rich and well-educated class, they tended to be written in an intellectual style and concentrated upon matters of importance to the readers. Most books were religious works or histories—precisely the sorts of things in which many PCs would be interested.

In Dark Ages Europe, most of the books were written by monks such as Bede and by nuns such as Hilda of Whitby. These books were usually written in Latin, and it is conceivable that in a fantasy game campaign, those who write books might also do so in a religious or otherwise nonsecular language.

Even if books are written in the tongue of the common people, there still might be difficulties in reading them due to language drift. Words change their meanings over the years, new words appear, and old ones disappear. For example, Middle English is a very different tongue from our modern language, and even the points of similarity can lead to confusion on important meanings. Characters may come across books that are centuries old, with dust inches thick upon the cover. Along with the problems of fragile material and faded lettering, there may also be a need for an expert in languages to be able to understand what the book actually says. The penalties for this may be dangerous misfires (in the case of spells), or incorrect or misunderstood information. For instance, a long-lost group of elves might be described as “battleworthy,” which in current usage might mean “trusted allies, of worth to us in battle,” whereas in the language of the time it might have meant “bloodthirsty and skilled in fighting.” A group of PCs acting on such misleading information could get into a nasty jam!

A PC mage is unlikely to cast a comprehend languages spell on a “legible” book to clarify such problems, as the words are deceptively similar to those they know. Therein lies the danger.

When books are handwritten, errors creep in during the course of copying. Such errors are used by modern researchers to trace the lineage of handwritten Bibles. Of course, misprints are not exclusive to handwritten texts. An early printed edition of the Bible contained among the Commandments the exhortation that “Thou Shalt Commit Adultery.” Such mistakes could be dangerous in the case of enchantment spells, magical misfires, or possibly even a spell that is more effective than the original spell.

**Religious orders**

It was usually the case in both western and eastern societies that monasteries and nunneries were centers of learning and study. A large religious center is likely to be the repository of a surprisingly broad selection of learning and knowledge.

On a smaller scale, a local church might well be useful for records of the parish (or whatever the campaign equivalent might be). The local priest is likely to be literate even if no one else in the village is.

The local priest is also of interest to those seeking information. Apart from being able to explain the nuances of local beliefs (which in itself could be of value if the PCs wish to avoid offending the local people), a priest is often a confidant and may know many secrets about local inhabitants. An example of this in ritual form is seen in the Roman Catholic confessional. Traditionally these secrets are regarded as sacred, and it will not be appreciated if adventurers attempt to ferret out such knowledge. Religions having a ritual similar to the confessional are likely to have magical means of preventing these secrets from emerging, even under mind reading.

On a wider scale, cities where bishops or their equivalents hold sway are likely to contain better records and perhaps even something akin to a local Doomsday Book (which listed landowners and land values for England in 1086). The historical stereotype is...
that lowly priests were upright, honest, God-fearing people who were all but incorruptible, while bishops, archbishops, and the like were political manipulators with the moral scruples of a Borgia. If this is true in your campaign, then the more powerful members of the church may be open to bribery or even blackmail by the PCs in a way that ordinary clerics are not.

A possible scenario might involve the PCs coming across evidence that a high-ranking cleric in their church has been abusing his position. The PCs must first confirm this possibility; if it is true, they must decide what to do about it. If they expose the cleric, the church may suffer from the bad publicity, and if they don’t, the church may suffer from the displeasure of its god. Of course, the cleric will try to prevent the PCs from exposing him. Perhaps he will arrange a mission for them in which he hopes they will die gallant deaths for the church, their knowledge unspoken.

**Nobility**

Any royal court will be concerned primarily with matters of direct interest to it. Consequently, the adventurers are likely to find an abundance of rumors among nobles about various political intrigues and the doings of those both in and out of favor, ambition newcomers and old hands alike.

The collection of peoples at court will probably not be found elsewhere: astrologers, generals, wizards, ambassadors, favorites of the king, and the usual run of spies, assassins, spiritual advisors, and so on. If adventurers wish to find a particular specialist, the court may be the best place to find him.

A scenario set in a court presents a number of unusual restrictions and challenges to the PCs. Suppose that they wish to obtain some information from a courtier. What can they offer in exchange? A courtier will probably have enough money, but if the PCs have some information, perhaps they could make a trade. What sort of information could the PCs have that a courtier would be interested in? Any information that could have helpful political repercussions is the most obvious answer. Suppose the PCs know that a dragon that lived in the only passable road to the east was sometimes accurate. According to Pliny, the basilisk was a creature able to slay men with a glance from a considerable distance. Tales of the basilisk are believed to be based upon the royal cobra, which can spit poison. Travelers, therefore, can be useful sources of information upon the strange things that exist over the hills. Locals who tell of seeing walking trees might usually be laughed at. For foreigners who tell the same tale about distant lands are likely to have their stories treated with greater respect. If the adventurers oblige in telling tales, they may find that the villagers will be more friendly in return and perhaps become garrulous.

**Legends**

"Do you see that mountain over there, the one with the great rift? Well, there was this giant, you see, who saw a yeoman shooting a bow. The giant decided that a bow would make hunting easier for him. So he made his own bow from two whole yew trees. For an arrow, he used the mast of a ship. For a string, he used the hides of seven cows. Then the giant went hunting. Suddenly, his keen eye spotted a huge bull grazing, and he fired his arrow at it. But he missed the bull by three leagues, and the arrow tore up the mountainside, creating that rift."

Tales concerning prominent natural features are universal. Such tales would probably have grown in the telling, but in a land of magic where giants exist, it would be unwise to dismiss such a tale as being without foundation. Even if it isn’t literally true, the tale above might derive from the sighting of a giant near the rift. Perhaps such giants are still living.

Tales also exist concerning people and items. A sword might be known as Ljot’s Blade, of which it is said that whosoever uses this blade shall gain great fame and fortune, but yet die young. This tale might be an indication that the sword is a cursed sword *+2 that the characters would do well to leave alone. But rumors are often exaggerated, and Ljot’s Blade might be a completely ordinary nonmagical sword!

**Sages**

In our current technological society, information sources such as books and computer databases multiply the information that is available on any subject to such an extent that specialists are hard put to keep up with developments even in their own specialized fields, let alone in fields that they know little about. In earlier days, however, when there was less information available, it was possible to master the whole scope of knowledge and be expert in several widely differing fields. Isaac Newton was, among other things, an expert on mathematics, astronomy, alchemy, physics, optics, and religion. One can point to other examples of people who were geniuses in several fields, such as Leonardo da Vinci and Galileo.

Consequently, a sage from a preindustrial society is likely to be widely regarded as an expert in diverse fields. Such a person, as well as being a very useful source of information, is also likely to be interested in any knowledge that the PCs might have. Perhaps the best way to make friends with a sage would be to present...
her with some unusual beast, live or dead. If the sage knows that the PCs are adventurers, she may request some form of payment for information other than money. The capture of a rare beast (possibly a dangerous species) in order to give it to a sage, so that the sage will answer the PCs’ questions, could form the basis for a scenario.

**Local experts**

A rural village sometimes has at least one acknowledged expert on a particular subject, who might even be regarded as the font of all knowledge on this topic. This expert might be a herbalist, an alchemist, or a retired adventurer. Such people are likely to have their knowledge in the form of oral lore rather than in papers or books. They are also certain to have rather parochial information. For example, a herbalist may know of a herb, that grows locally that, when treated in a certain manner, is very good at countering the effects of a particular snake’s poison. This antidote is unlikely to be known elsewhere; in areas where the snake is less common, the antidote will be of limited use. Against other snakes and poisons, this antidote will almost certainly be ineffective. The search for such a remedy could be built into a scenario.

Local experts might be regarded as all-knowing on their favorite subjects by local people, and contradicting an “expert” will bring much shaking of heads by the locals and mutterings about disrespect.

**Marketplaces**

The lifeblood of many a town and farming village is its market, a place for gathering and bartering. Not only is a market a useful spot for adventurers to acquire food, horses, and supplies, it also gives PCs an opportunity to learn about the local area. Regardless of what local farmers say about their poverty and hardships, a reasonably accurate idea of an area’s prosperity can usually be gained from seeing the prices and amounts of things on sale in the market. High prices and limited availability indicate that there is a shortage, while cheap, plentiful supplies indicate a prosperous community or a glut.

If the adventurers discover that the region on one side of a pass has an abundance of cattle, while the region on the other side has a cattle shortage, the possibility for a profit to be made is obvious. Of course, if no one else has taken cattle through the pass in this way, it could be that bandits, orcs, or giants live in the pass—in short, an adventure!

Another example would be if horses are suddenly in short supply in local markets. Horse traders and herders would grumble that herds of wild mustangs near the mountains have been decimated as the result of an influx of griffons in the area. Who’s going to drive the griffons out? The adventurers, of course.

Markets would also be more profitable than taverns for thieves to perform their business. When tavern customers are sober, they are hard to steal from but have money. When they are less sober, they are easy to steal from but have less to be stolen. However, people exchange lots of money in a marketplace; noise, bustle, and strangers provide ample distractions for thieves to perform secret dealings and doings. Of course, PC thieves are quite likely to spot (and be spotted by) local thieves operating in the same market. Such contacts could provide useful tips and warnings for a PC thief at a later date. This could also provide an immediate danger if local thieves don’t want outsiders to move in on their territory, but that is another matter.

**Magic**

All of the above methods of finding out information might be regarded as rather superfluous in a game in which a magician can find out almost anything by use of the correct spell. It may be, however, that no PC wizard can perform the required spell, while NPC mages may be unwilling to cooperate or are too expensive for the PCs. In addition, there may be magical defenses to prevent information being obtained magically. Use of mundane routes to knowledge may attract less attention from a foe expecting the PCs to use magical means.

Divination spells answer specific questions. “Is there anything interesting in this area?” is the sort of vague question that the local skald, merchants, and farmers can answer more easily than any spell. Nonetheless, a scroll with a legend lore spell would certainly come in handy more often than not.

Note for the DM: Since magic is written into scrolls and spellbooks, mages must be literate. If literacy is an uncommon skill, it might be regarded by the ignorant as intrinsically magical, as it was in Dark Ages Scandinavia. Any book, magical or not, might then be looked upon with fear. What awful and unholy conjurations would a black- covered tome contain? It might be merely a tax-assessment record book! Terrified peasants might hide or bury all the books they find, making it all the more difficult for PCs to read those books and gain their valuable (if non-magical) insights. Perhaps some otherwise normal books do contain information-gathering spells as well as mundane data.

**Final words**

It has been said that it isn’t what you know, it’s who you know. This holds true to a large extent in ferreting out information. An individual might know a lot, but no one knows everything. However, someone who knows how to find people who are likely to know about the matter at hand (and is able to gain the needed information from them) will be at a distinct advantage in any fantasy role-playing scenario.
The most ancient of the seven houses of the Naugrim, the folk of Durin are the most renowned in Middle-earth. Like all Dwarves they are a secretive people, with a great love of gold and treasure, but possessing also a matchless skill in fashioning both metal and stone. Their smiths and weapon-makers are unequalled in their craft. They possess no magicians as such, but their Alchemists are wise in the lore and enchantments of metallurgy.

Suspicious of strangers, they keep hidden from sight both their treasure and their women. Indeed, the latter is so rarely seen that some claim the Dwarves possess no females, but are born from the very stones themselves.

Dwelling, as they do in subterranean halls and caverns, and stunning where possible, contact with other races, the Dwarves’ method of warfare is largely defensive. They have little need of light armor, or missile troops, fighting usually at close quarters, and in small numbers. Accordingly, their warriors are heavily armed, with finely crafted helmets, often in the shape of fierce animal faces. Their favoured weapons are the axe and the Mace.

These fighting methods proved successful even offensively, during the great War between the Dwarves and Orcs, when King Thror, his son Thrain, and the host of the Naugrim, defeated and destroyed all the Orc lairs from Gundabad itself to the southern Misty Mountains, fighting a curious underground war in pursuit of the Goblin-King Azog, who was eventually to meet his end in single combat, at the hands of Dain Ironfoot, at the battle of Azanulbizar.
"We that are true lovers run into strange capers."

As You Like It, William Shakespeare

by Tom Schlosser, Adalind Adventures
The DM sat in his chair and sorted through the paperwork from the evening’s adventure, wondering how to motivate the players for the next session. All of the common motivations came to mind. The king could force the party to go on an adventure, offering great riches if they succeeded and death if they failed. The party could hear the usual rumors of treasure hidden in some ruins. Maybe one of the character’s mentors needed some spell components, or an old enemy had surfaced and was threatening the mentor’s life. Or perhaps the adventure would stumble on the party instead of the other way around. There could be arson at the party’s inn, or a murder, a kidnapping, or other mayhem. Just in passing, the DM considered introducing some romance into his campaign. He immediately dismissed it as too difficult to play, too embarrassing for the players, and too likely to devolve into bawdiness. What to do, what to do... 

Romance may well be the most overlooked aspect of any fantasy role-playing game. While amply represented in fantasy novels, it is rarely seen in the games that try to simulate those novels. Although it can be tricky for the DM to set up and has the potential to be awkward to play for both the DM and the players, it can add an extra dimension to any FRPG campaign.

Before continuing, some distinctions need to be made. Romance is not the same as seduction. Romance is intricate, other-oriented, emotional, and complex to role-play. Seduction is of no real interest in role-playing, being simple, self-oriented, and easy to role-play. I reduced it to an opposed saving throw in my campaign, since the players found it boring and unrewarding in the game anyway. Romance, then, is the attempt of one character to gain the attention and affection of another character. It is an effort to prove one’s worth, to serve diligently, and to bestow honor upon the other character.

**What good is romance?**

Romance adds an extra dimension of realism to the game, an extra tool for the DM to motivate adventures. Romance also increases the depth of involvement that the players have in their characters. Without it, a campaign is less human and less personal. It can soften the rougher edges of the game, giving the players and the DM a gentle break from the mayhem of combat, political maneuvering, and criminal investigations.

By making the game more personal for the players, romance makes it easier for them to define and refine their characters through role-playing. Combat, political intrigue, and criminal investigations are all subject to logical solution. All three can be reduced to their tactical aspects as the characters try to defeat whatever antagonists they encounter. Romance, on the other hand, forces them to think with their hearts instead of their heads. Impressing the object of their affections cannot (and should not, from the DM’s point of view) be reduced to a matter of giving presents and performing deeds of valor. The PC must emotionally interact with the romantic interest and those associated with it. It is much more than counting how many pieces of gold the character is willing to spend on the object of his affections.

The DM can increase the believability of the game through the use of romance as well. By engaging the emotions of the character, the DM makes the campaign seem more real, the characters more three dimensional. It is impossible to imagine the real world without romance, and it certainly must exist in a fantasy one as well. By introducing it to the game, the DM removes one more barrier between the world that we live in and the one created for the game.

Romance can also provide an excellent motivation for adventuring. If the players have grown tired of the same old introductions to an adventure, a romance can provide a fresh reason for the characters to take the risks associated with their quests. The way in which it can lead to adventures can be direct, such as a rescue attempt or the removal of a curse, or it can be more subtle, such as the desire to win honor and renown (and thus have one’s valorous deeds recounted to the object of one’s affections by bards and minstrels). Romances can also color ordinary adventures, if the character involved in the romance thinks of possible gifts when choosing items from a treasure horde with the rest of the party.

Complete adventures for a single player can easily be drawn from a romance. This works especially well when only a few members of the party can attend a gaming session. Perhaps the object of the character’s affections was slighted by an NPC, and the PC is determined to bring this NPC for the loved one’s honor. Perhaps something was stolen from the character’s romantic interest, and the character must try to retrieve it. Or maybe the character gets to escort the loved one to a tournament, feast, or festival, and they meet with various adventures on the way. These kinds of adventures do not need to be complex to be interesting, since they are automatically given depth by the romance.

**Basic matchmaking**

When creating a romance, the choice of which PC to offer it to is very important. Obviously, the character involved in a DM-designed romance should have a charisma above some minimum value. Quasimodo is not going to make a very believable hero in a romantic fantasy. On the other hand, if a player with a character whose comeliness score spells out “mutant” wishes to engage in a romance, the DM should certainly give it a try. More important than the attributes of the character are the attributes of the player. The DM should decide whether the object of the romance is to encourage a reticent player to engage in more role-playing or to provide more entertainment for the group by offering it to an outgoing one. If it is the first romance in the campaign, it is probably a good idea to offer it to one of the group’s better and more extroverted role-players. A good, experienced role-player is more likely to be willing to explore the emotions of the selected PC than an inexperienced one. It is likely to be something new to the players, and the possibility of the DM being able to use romance again may depend on the success of the first one. Once the other players in the party see how much fun it can be, they’ll be more likely to try it themselves.

The design of an NPC for a romance is different from the design of one for combat. For a romance, the NPC’s likes and dislikes are as important as hit points and character class, as the PC is out to earn the affection of this NPC. For most normal NPCs, it is perfectly acceptable to use any of the personality generation tables in either edition of the DMG. For a romance, however, the DM should draw up the NPC carefully. The personality traits and quirks should be created specifically with the PC in mind. The NPC should be attractive to the PC, but have sufficient quirks or annoying habits to make the romance interesting.

Since the game is based primarily on heroic fantasy, the NPCs introduced as romantic interests for the PCs should be of a heroic nature. Royalty, other adventurers, unusual races, and even supernatural creatures such as dryads or nymphs can fit the bill. Such a selection increases the fantasy aspect of the game as well as its realism.

The DM must keep in mind that these NPCs should not be patterned after the NPCs typically hired to help the party. There is no reason why this NPC should have skills or powers that would be helpful to the party. Their primary purpose in the game is one of role-playing enhancement, not tactical or strategic improvement of the party. This is not to say that they cannot help the party out of jams once in a while, but the DM and the players should perceive them as people rather than tools.

*Example:* The DM chooses to offer a PC named Artos Branwyk a chance for romance. Artos is an 8th-level fighter whose player runs him like a walking vendetta list. Artos never swallows insults for long; his pride is practically legendary. He has won some renown in the campaign world for his courage and prowess at arms.

There is no lord in the land who would not accept Artos as a member of his personal bodyguard. The NPC drawn up by the DM as Artos’ possible romantic interest is one Lady Tranis, the daughter of an important lord. She is just as proud as Artos and refuses to bestow her favor on anyone who hasn’t...
wants a suitor that is at the same time a man as if they were peacocks, and she no one has. She despises proud, strutting to her. She has a weakness for magical really shown himself worthy of it. So far Tranis, but when she implies he is not to say the least. Artos wishes to woo Lady chooses to pursue it) should be explosive, appreciative at one moment and displeased and imperious the next.

The combination of these two (if the PC chooses to pursue it) should be explosive, to say the least. Artos wishes to woo Lady Tranis, but when she implies he is not quite worthy of her it is an affront to his honor. To Lady Tranis, Artos is an adequately heroic figure, but he doesn’t seem subservient enough. The DM must keep her encouraging enough to keep Artos interested, yet sufficiently displeased to keep him wondering just what he has to do to win her affections. The development of this romance could span many adventures. If Artos doesn’t bother to find out her weakness (that should not be known publicly) and play to it, this romance could become a practically eternal quest for the poor fighter.

“Catherine, this is Vincent.”

The most important step in running a campaign with romance is introducing it. The way in which a DM starts a romance will color it throughout its life. There are the heavy-handed approaches such as having NPCs use philters of love and charm spells, but using these is like using howitzers to hunt grasshoppers. The kind of arm-twisting enforcement they impose on the players can contradict the essence of the romantic love that the DM is trying to introduce. The DM should try to introduce it delicately and tactfully, carefully choosing the setting used to start the romance.

Selecting the setting for the introduction of the romantic interest gives the DM an opportunity to use his imagination. The DM should recognize an important trade-off in preparing the introduction, however. If the DM uses a more traditional introduction such as having the party rescue a princess being held against her will, succor a knight under a curse, or be introduced to the chosen NPC by a family after performing some service for that family, the players will have a familiar point of reference in the campaign. Because such a scene is familiar to the players from books or movies, the players have an easier time visualizing it, and the realism of the game is enhanced. Some DMs may consider this trite or boring, however, and opt for a more original introduction. If the party first meets the NPC at a tavern where the NPC turns out to have been disguised as a different race, from getting wet in the rain or allow the owner to silence barking dogs). She is capricious in the judgment of her suitors, appreciative at one moment and displeased and imperious the next.

The development of the romance should be entirely voluntary on the part of the PC, or else the result will be the same as if a philter of love had been used. You cannot make someone fall in love.

Example: The DM decides to start by making Artos the pursued. The party completes some task for the family of Lady Tranis, and the family holds a feast for them. During the festivities, Lady Tranis flirts with Artos. Intrigued, Artos tries to pursue it further, but the lady declines, indicating that although he is a remarkable warrior, he is not quite good enough for her. If Artos remains true to character, he’ll take this as an insult and try his best to prove her wrong. On the other hand, Artos’ player may not find this interesting at all, preferring to dream of busting orbs’ heads rather than of the lady’s smile, thus ignoring her completely. If this happens, the DM should just drop the whole issue.

Other possible introductions include a PC mage taking on an attractive NPC mage as a student, with the NPC initially showing no interest in the PC. Perhaps the party includes a druid who could meet a dryad while communing in some sacred grove. A monk or priest PC could offer charity to a beggar and find that the NPC, once rags and dirt are exchanged for a bath and clean clothing, stirs strange and wonderful thoughts in the PC’s heart. As long as the PC can back out gracefully, the DM is free to try just about any introduction imaginable.

Keeping the thrill alive

The details of a real-life romance are extremely personal, and it is best to keep it that way in an FRPG as well. There is no reason why the DM and the player must role-play every excruciating detail. If the character wants to compose a love sonnet, the player should not actually have to write it out during play. The DM could have the player pay a certain number of gold pieces to a local minstrel to have it composed and sung (assuming the PC is not inclined or talented enough to do so) and leave it at that. The same goes for gifts and letters. In the example above, it is sufficient for the DM to tell Artos’s player that the Lady Tranis is flirting with him. The DM’s goal should be to add an extra dimension to the campaign, not embarrass the player.

Just because the player doesn’t have to specify all the details of the romance, that doesn’t mean the DM should allow the player to treat the romance as a monthly expenditure, with greater results given for more gold pieces spent. The key here is for the player to be creative in courting the NPC. The PC should also be rewarded for trying to find out as much as possible about the NPC’s preferences. If the PC is the pursued, then the DM has the responsibility of being creative with the NPC’s advances.

It is also extremely important to discourage the use of magic in the courtship. Just as the DM should avoid using potions to force the players into romances, the players should not be encouraged to win the object of their affections by charm spells and the like. If the players argue this point, the DM can rule that the spell or magical device used will sufficiently change the personality of the NPC such that the NPC will no longer be attractive to the PC (a loss of free will will always kills a romance).

The key idea in running the romance is to maintain some minimum distance between the lovers. If soap operas allowed their couples to be happy, no one would watch. To keep the interest in the romance alive, there should be difficulties associated with it. This is not to say that everything the PC does should be ungrATEfully received or that an NPC will suffer endless rejection from a PC. Highs and lows should go hand-in-hand with this role-playing interaction. If the PC gets a good fix on the NPC’s weaknesses or the PC becomes content with the affections of the NPC, there are a variety of ways to shake things up.

A rival for the affections of the NPC is a good way to jar a complacent romance. The presence of a rival does not necessitate a duel, but that is often an exciting climax to the rivalry. It is possible that the circumstances of the rivalry do not allow for any violence, such as a romance at a royal court or a romance between two paladins. The introduction of the rival to the PC is much like the introduction of the romance, an opportunity for the DM to use his imagination or as a familiar point of reference for the players.

The beloved NPC can be capricious, changing likes and dislikes on a whim, possibly causing the PC to fall out of favor. Perhaps the PC made a thoughtless remark to the NPC that has been taken the wrong way and caused hurt feelings and anger. Perhaps the NPC has an acquaintance whose lover gives more to the acquaintance than the PC has given to the NPC; thus the acquaintance is better regarded, causing more hurt feelings and anger for the NPC. The DM can also use
such mood and personality swings to try to change the PC from the pursued to the pursuer. It is worth noting that this kind of disruption in the romance should be used sparingly, as it is an exercise of arbitrary judgment on the part of the DM and is rarely welcomed by the players.

Families and political allies or enemies can also be used to shake up a stale romance. If the PC belongs to an organization or family that has wronged the NPC’s family (or vice versa), the family may forbid the romance. Perhaps the NPC is a ward of some royal court that doesn’t see eye to eye with the PC’s politics. A disruption in the romance such as one of these has been the central theme of countless stories and can provide plenty of opportunities for role-playing.

A final example of a class of events that can jar a romance is the hidden truth. Soap operas beat this theme into the ground continuously, but they still maintain their popularity. The number of ways to use such secrets boggles the mind. Maybe the NPC is an impostor, a reformed assassin, a political refugee, or in hiding from a cruel spouse. Of course, the PC doesn’t learn this from the NPC directly, but hears rumors of it and eventually discovers the truth. Exposed secrets like these can be used to impart information that is relatively unrelated to the romance but is needed for an upcoming adventure.

**Example:** Taiya the druid (a PC) meets Sir Persant in a tavern. The good knight finds her attractive and asks to wear her token in an upcoming tournament. She assents and Persant goes on to win the tournament. They are happy together until he becomes uneasy. He tells her of a family curse, a hairy monster that follows the eldest male of the family in hopes of killing him. It seems that this beast can only be killed by someone close to the victim. Recently, Sir Persant has heard rumors of the beast prowling nearby. Persant has to go off on a campaign with the local army against some humanoids, so Taiya offers to hunt down this beast and kill it.

Persant has lied, however. The hairy beast is actually his youngest brother, bitten by a werewolf when the two were out hunting. In his only act of cowardice ever, Persant fled the scene while his infected brother killed the beast. His brother (sliding toward evil but desperate to be cured) has been trying to find him for some time, and Persant is afraid of him. Persant believes he is the only one who knows the identity of the werewolf and what happened to his brother, but he is wrong. After he is gone, Taiya starts receiving anonymous notes about the creature, vaguely warning her of Persant’s duplicity. What she does and what conclusions she draws from the notes are up to her, but all will not be well when Persant returns from the wars.

This example may seem complex, but it’s nothing compared to what could have been created by the DM. Imagine the effect on the campaign if one of the people in the know turns out to be a party member who didn’t want to disturb Taiya’s happiness, but now wants to warn her of what she’s going to be facing. Or what if Persant’s uncle turns out to be a doppleganger in communication with the youngest brother who knows the party’s mage is actually the adopted half-sister of . . . You get the picture. An adventure like this can be a very refreshing change from the political intrigues and the monster hunts.

**To all good things...**

Good things must end as all things do, and there may come a time when a romance becomes a liability to the campaign. The interesting aspects of it have been explored, every possible adventure has been wrung from it, and the players are becoming bored with it. The DM can use the end of a romance to retire old PCs by allowing the PC to marry the NPC and quit adventuring. The NPC can die, perhaps by the hand of some enemy of the party, causing a vendetta to start. If the players are really bored with it, the DM can just let it cease to exist, claiming a loss of interest in the two parties. Above all, the DM must not continue to force a dying romance to life. At the DM’s discretion, the chance of rekindling the romance can be left open, but this is not necessary.

**To sum up**

Romance adds spice to an old campaign, an extra dimension of reality to the fantasy world, and brings out the role-playing skills of the players. Initially it requires great detail in designing, but the rewards can be considerable. Three things to avoid in designing and running a romance in a campaign are:

1. Do not force the romance on the player. Allow the player to back out of it gracefully and with no embarrassment.
2. Do not make the romantic interest of the player just another tactical weapon to be used in combat or politics. The NPC should be a person and not a tool.
3. Discourage the use of magic such as charms. Overkill like this makes the whole thing worthless. There is no point in designing the Flying Dutchman for the PCs to meet if they have the USS New Jersey with which to capture it.
ENCOUNTER GAMES has been established as a specialist games shop for more than 15 years, and we’re told that it’s the best! For those of you who are not lucky enough to live close to a good games shop, Encounter Games is able to offer a competent Mail Order Service. We undertake.... to despatch your order promptly – usually within 48 hours of receiving your order.... to inform you if there will be a lengthy delay in obtaining any out-of-stock items.... to offer you a full refund if we are unable to supply.
THE UK’s FINEST MAIL ORDER

SHOPS

GAMES SHOP!

GW Products specialist.

Callers welcome, if you’re in the area, drop in.

Role’n’Play

AT

4 BROAD STREET

WOLVERHAMPTON

0920-310207

OPEN 6 DAYS & A WEEK 0.6.00.0.00pm

Mail Order Charges Fixed (£1.00 added to order, £2.00 added to post free orders).

MAIL ORDER SPECIALIST

FREE Catalogue, send large SAE.

PBM available, write for details.

Retail outlet - Stationary & Games, 4 The Crescent, East Clevley.

KIC GAMES

AT

PO BOX 11, CLEVELEY

BLACKPOOL, LANCs FY5 2UL

Phone 0253-866345 FAX 0253-869960

Mail Order Charges: Under £10.00 add 20p, over £10.00 add £1.50. Europe, surface plus 20p, minimum £2.50, air add £3.50, minimum £5.25. Others: Air: add 10%, minimum £2.50.

Dont Miss...

PALLADIUM: RIFTS £15.99

Mutants In The Yucatan £4.99

Leading Edge: ALIENS RPG

GDW: Captain’s Edition Harpoon

Battlefield: Europe & Red Empire

Battle of Britain Boardgame £22.50

D&D Hollow World Boxed £11.95

Chaosium: Pendragon

Mansions of Madness

NORTH LONDON’s

most completely stocked specialist

GAMES SHOP!

We have Dark Cults (£4.99), the US card game.

Send Large SAE for full list.

Leisure Games

AT

91 BALLARDS LANE

FINCHLEY, N3 1XY

081-348-2327

OPEN 6 DAYS & A WEEK 9.30am-5.30pm

UK Mail Order Charge: 10c on receipt. Minimum order £5 - Maximum £30.

R - RPG: A - RPG add-on

B - Boardgame

M - Miniatures Rules

(+C - includes Counters)

ACCESS & VISA

Welcome at all these outlets - Phone your order through together with your Card number and Expiry date.

THE MIDLAND’s finest

GAMES SHOP!

GW Products specialist.

Callers welcome, if you’re in the area, drop in.

Role’n’Play

AT

4 BROAD STREET

WOLVERHAMPTON

0920-310207

OPEN 6 DAYS & A WEEK 0.6.00.0.00pm

Mail Order Charges: Fixed (£1.00 added to order, £2.00 added to post free orders).

MAIL ORDER SPECIALIST

FREE Catalogue, send large SAE.

PBM available, write for details.

Retail outlet - Stationary & Games, 4 The Crescent, East Clevley.

KIC GAMES

AT

PO BOX 11, CLEVELEY

BLACKPOOL, LANCs FY5 2UL

Phone 0253-866345 FAX 0253-869960

Mail Order Charges: Under £10.00 add 20p, over £10.00 add £1.50. Europe, surface plus 20p, minimum £2.50, air add £3.50, minimum £5.25. Others: Air: add 10%, minimum £2.50

DON’T MISS...

PALLADIUM: RIFTS £15.99

Mutants In The Yucatan £4.99

Leading Edge: ALIENS RPG

GDW: Captain’s Edition Harpoon

Battlefield: Europe & Red Empire Battle of Britain Boardgame £22.50

D&D HOLLOW World Boxed £11.95

Chaosium: Pendragon

Mansions of Madness

NORTH LONDON’s

most completely stocked specialist

GAMES SHOP!

We have Dark Cults (£4.99), the US card game.

Send Large SAE for full list.

Leisure Games

AT

91 BALLARDS LANE

FINCHLEY, N3 1XY

081-348-2327

OPEN 6 DAYS & A WEEK 9.30am-5.30pm

UK Mail Order Charge: 10c on receipt. Minimum order £5 - Maximum £30.
"It's sort of like a wand..."

by Gary Coppa

Player 1: "Whew! That was a tough battle! I thought those four kuo-toa had us for a second."

Player 2: "Yeah, good thing I had my sword +2! I only needed an eight to hit their armor class of four!"

Player 3: "You mean it's a good thing my 3rd level fighter/thief henchman, Gondam, picked one of their pockets and found that potion of speed. His two attacks per round did it."

Player 1: Okay, guys, let's not fight about it. We all did well. Now [rubbing his hands together], the treasure! [All players turn to look at the Dungeon Master.]

DM [shuffling papers and rolling a few dice]: "You find a spear +1, a potion of fire breath, a wand of metal and mineral detection with only five charges left, 100 electrum pieces, and five gems."

Player 2: "How much are the gems worth?"

DM [rolling more dice]: "Twenty gold pieces each. You are splitting up the treasure when suddenly..."

What's wrong with this picture of an AD&D® game? It seems perfectly fine. The treasure is rich but not excessive; the monsters were tough but not too easy or too hard; the magical items are reasonable and did not upset game balance. In fact, the DM did an admirable job of avoiding all the usual game-balance pitfalls.

So what's missing?
It's not a Myth
- well, yes it is.

It's not mything
- sort of.

It's Finally Here
- the game you've been waiting for!!

It's Myth

Fortunes

Don't Myth it!

Now at a store or distributor near you.

The Best Games are always from Mayfair Games.
The answer is mystery. The players know everything. They know exactly what their player characters' magical items can do and what their PCs' limits are, how skilled the PCs' henchmen are, what the PCs are fighting and what its abilities are, and how much the valuables are worth without getting them appraised. What is lacking is the sense of the unknown, the feeling that there are secrets left in the game world for the characters to unravel. Even a seasoned PC of 18 years' experience will have only a tiny amount of knowledge about the myriad of monsters and artifacts listed in the AD&D Dungeon Master's Guide and Monstrous Compendium. So how can he possibly recognize a potion of flame breath, especially if he has never seen one before?

What this campaign needs is a dose of good old-fashioned mystery. There are many ways this mystery can be introduced, and these can be divided into four general categories: monsters, magic, money, and miscellaneous.

Monsters

Monsters are the most common obstacle the characters are likely to encounter, but this does not mean that the monsters should be common, run-of-the-mill automatons that seem as if the DM pulled them off the assembly line. Monsters are supposed to be horrifying nightmares from myth and legend, and each encounter should be a new, exciting challenge for the characters, not just: ‘Ho hum, another eight-hit-dice hydra.’ The characters should never be allowed to be entirely sure about their opponents’ capabilities. How is a poor DM to do this, you ask, when the players have memorized the vital statistics of every monster in the Monstrous Compendium? The answer: Remember that monsters are more than lists of vital statistics. The descriptions given of them in the books are there for a reason; an orc is an orc is an orc, right? But consider this verbal description: “You see some humanoids, approximately six feet tall, wearing ring mail and carrying spears and shields. They are wearing helmets, so you can’t quite make out their faces.” Now suddenly the opponents could be orcs, hobgoblins, short goblins, a character party, any lycanthrope in human form, preserved (or recently slain) zombies, dopplegangers, animated statues, or githyanki. Of course, some extra description may be required in many cases (at close range, a death knight would be easy to distinguish from a hobgoblin), but not always (a thief might not realize that the creature at whose back he just threw a dagger was not actually a death knight but was an allied cavalier). The DM must use his own judgment, but the idea is to always keep the characters on their toes. After a few attacks on giant snakes that turn out to be guardian nagas, the characters will be a bit more thoughtful before going into battle.

This idea can be expanded by not always strictly following the statistics for monsters given in the books. And while any alterations made by the DM should not be completely off the wall, they should keep characters guessing. For instance, to take a variation on an example from an old DRAGON® Magazine article, consider a goblin with 18/76 strength—not an extremely big change, but the characters may have pause when the creature does up to 10 hp damage with its short sword. When the goblin’s sword breaks, and it grabs Arthur’s heavy lance and hurls it at Galahad, the characters will be more wary of those puny creatures they once thought were such pushovers. This doesn't have to be done very frequently (in fact, once often suffices) to make the players far more wary about what their PCs attack— which is as it should be. A fighter who...
The Lord of the Glittering Caves was so in love with her that he was willing to trade all the treasures of Middle-earth for a single strand of her golden hair.
QUEEN GALADRIEL

A fantasy collector doll. Inspired by the beautiful heroine of The Lord of the Rings.
The first issued under license from the estate of J.R.R. Tolkien.

She was the guiding light in J.R.R. Tolkien's unforgettable fantasy, The Lord of the Rings.

Now, the same artist who has captured the vision of Tolkien's world for millions creates a magnificent collector doll.

A glittering portrayal of Queen Galadriel by acclaimed fantasy artist Greg Hildebrandt. His very first collector doll. A golden vision. Her luxuriant tresses cascading in radiant profusion. Her stunning features are painted delicately by hand on fine imported bisque porcelain. Her gracefully sculptured hands and legs are also crafted of luminous bisque.

On her left hand, the mystical Ring of Nenya, hand-painted in 24 karat gold. And in her right, a fully faceted crystal.

Regally costumed in luxuriant charmuese, its creamy folds flowing to the ground. Billowy sleeves are lined with rich gold lamé. A golden chain accents the bodice, and glistens with an inlaid pendant set with a faux pearl. Her waist is encircled by a wide mesh belt that sparkles with faux gemstones.

As a Queen, she wears a golden crown and a dazzling cape of shimmering golden fabric.


Franklin Heirloom Dolls
Franklin Center, Pennsylvania 19091

Please enter my order for Queen Galadriel, an original collector doll by Greg Hildebrandt.

I need send no payment now. I will be billed for a deposit of $59* when my imported doll is ready to be sent to me, and for the balance in four monthly installments of $59* each, after shipment.

*Plus my state sales tax and a one-time charge of $3. shipping and handling.

SIGNATURE ____________________________

ALL ORDERS ARE SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE.

QUEEN GALADRIEL

Please order by September 30, 1990.

Mr/Mrs/Miss: ____________________________

Address ____________________________________________

City ____________________________________________

State/Zip ____________________________________________

11503-42
attacks everything he sees is a very short-

lived fighter.

Given monsters that the characters have previously encountered, it is probable that the PCs will know what they face (any 2nd-level idiot can recognize a kobold). On the other hand, if the monster is actually some rare, exotic creature that simply looks like something the characters recognize, then the DM is justified in describing it as such. In the case of the humanoid mentioned previously, the characters would probably assume that the armed humanoidos were really orcs, until the foes turned into wolves, threw a fireball, or did something similar. Humans make observations based on past experiences. If there’s no reasonable clue that a monster is different, then the characters will logically believe their opponents are orcs. Then, when the first fireball hits the party, the DM can say, “Well, they looked like orcs.”

As another example, a mage who has encountered a manticore in his travels will most likely believe a lammasu or androsphinx to be another of that species, not realizing that there are entirely different monsters that look almost exactly the same. When the mage first sees the creature, describe it like this: “It’s got the body of a winged lion and the face of a man. It looks like a manticore.” The mage will have to be careful or else risk fighting a beast with whom he would prefer to negotiate. The existence and appearance of some monsters are common knowledge (there isn’t much you can do with a unicorn), but even these often have lesser-known relatives that just add to the confusion (how many people, even adventurers, know how to tell a dragon from a wyvern?). Even the ranger who knows goblins inside and out (literally speaking) might not realize that nilbogs exist and look exactly like goblins, and so would have no idea why his sword was not working against this monster. (Nilbogs, from the FIEND FOLIO® tome, are some of my favorite creatures.)

Another way to add mystery is to remember that the PCs cannot see or hear everything; their senses are limited. A description of a monster a mile away should be very different than a description when it is within 20 yards; on the open plains, it would be practically impossible to tell a storm giant two miles away from a berserker at a third of that distance. Something may seem much larger or smaller when it is far away, and the PCs will notice fewer details. Characters advancing on a group of orcs from a half-mile away will not be able to tell that those orcs are all carrying bows, with which they will pelt the party with arrows while the characters close for melee. The characters need not be told everything.

Another way that limited senses comes into play is with numbers of the enemy. In a forest, it would be very hard to tell the exact number of orcs attacking you, even if they are right in front of you. The best thing to do is to give the players an estimate (e.g., “You think there are about 15 of them.”). If the players ask for a more exact number, say, “Are you going to stop fighting to take a head count?” The characters have to cope with not being entirely in control of the situation, not knowing whether there are more orcs than they can reasonably expect to handle. This adds realism to the game and gives players the uncertainty their characters would experience in wandering through the great unknown.

Magic

Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines magic as: “extraordinary power or influence seemingly from a supernatural force.” In a fantasy role-playing system like the AD&D game, magic is the mystical force that heroes, monsters, and gods draw on to perform feats unattainable in the modern world, and as such is better understood by those who live in fantasy worlds than by us—but it is not a force having any understandable. Why are there so few wizards in fantasy worlds? Magic is such a complex and variable force, taking on myriad aspects in the game universe, that it takes years or centuries of devoted study to even begin to understand it. Yet many DMs allow players to blithely identify and interpret magical signs as if the PCs were the most studied of mages.

One of the most common problems is with magical items. Most magical items do not glow or make funny noises without a command word being spoken first, so there is no way to tell if items are magical without a detect magic spell. However, even if the DM does not immediately list all items with magical dweomers, the characters may still infer what is and isn’t magical from what the DM does or does not mention. If certain rings, brooches, bracelets, etc. are only mentioned by the DM when they are magical, it will be a sure tip-off to the players. Most fighters will wear nonmagical gauntlets, belts, cloaks, boots, and jewelry of almost any sort, and most items the characters find will be normal ones. But my players have frequently sold magical gems for their jewelry value, simply not realizing that little things like coins and gems can be magical, too. If you do not mention “normal items” in the loot when characters search defeated opponents, then do not mention any magical items that resemble normal items, either. If the characters take everything that “looks magical,” they will take the wands and scrolls but will probably not take the dead wizard’s robe of eyes. Conversely, it would be practically impossible to cart off all the “normal stuff” from every battle to have it checked for magic in town. PCs will soon learn the value of having a detect magic spell with them on the road.

Another common mistake made by inexperienced DMs is to tell the players what a magical item is and what it does, whether or not the characters can be reasonably expected to know this. For instance, in the example at the beginning of the article, the DM told the characters that they had found a wand of metal and mineral detection. Most likely, none of them had ever even seen one before; even if they had, all such wands by no means look identical. Some may have ancient carvings depicting the wands use, others may have magical command words inscribed on them, and still others may be entirely featureless. True, an amulet of the planes might be very easy to tell from a phylactery of long years, but it would most likely be indistinguishable (barring any descriptive carvings on its surface) from a medallion of ESP. This especially applies to potions, which can be of any color, consistency, taste, or odor. No guarantee exists that if your last transparent green potion was a potion of extra-healing, your next transparent green potion will be, too—or even that your next extra-healing potion will be transparent green.

This is not to say that the characters will be forever in the dark about the functioning of their magical items. There is the identify spell, expressly designed for that purpose. If the PCs wish to be safe, they can instead go to a mage’s guild, where wizards have the facilities and the specialists to safely identify the party’s magical treasure (for a stiff fee, of course). This method could also be used to determine the number of charges in a rod, staff, wand, or other charged item, information that should be withheld from the players until they have to resort to this or similar options. (If the mage’s guild didn’t have a monopoly on needed services, it wouldn’t be much of a guild, would it?) Also, the PCs may meet high-level characters in their travels who may be able to perform research to find command words (though they might not know what function it will command), offer snippets of information from ancient tomes or legend lore, or simply refer the PCs to an acquaintance who may have more knowledge on the subject. In one of my campaigns, a cleric possesses a magic ring, given to him by his gypsy mother, that not even the most powerful mages have been able to identify. He has been referred from place to place, gradually gathering what little information they could give him, and after two game years he has still not found the answer.

This kind of adventure not only makes the players feel rewarded when they finally do discover the item’s properties, but it is also an easy way to set up new adventures. (Consider a magical wand, unidentifiable by any local mages, which bears a strange, magical mark identified as the signature of a hermit illusionist who lived on top of a distant mountain.

We come to the problem of players who have memorized the magical item lists.
screen, noting the magical bonuses of each character’s weapons. To me, it adds spice to an otherwise boring topic.

A final aspect of magic that I feel the characters often know too much about is magical spells. How many times have you heard a DM say something like, “The wizard looks angry after that last remark. He starts casting a cone of cold. You have five segments to act. What do you do?”

This seems very unreasonable. Mages must study for decades to be able to learn the complex motions involved in spell-casting, so how can fighters interpret those motions with no trouble? Instead of saying that the wizard is casting a cone of cold, the DM can say that he is casting a spell; if the PCs are close enough, they might see what material components (if any) the wizard is using. Of course, the players will want to look at the AD&D Player’s Handbook to evaluate the spell—but don’t automatically let them! If a wizard PC has enough levels to cast the spell, his player can check the Player’s Handbook; otherwise, tell him he has never encountered that spell. If the spell is fairly standard, such as magic missile, any but the most inexperienced wizards would be able to identify it immediately. But classes having no experience with spells should not be allowed to know what spell is being cast or how long they have in which to act; they must stay on their toes and be ready for anything, as anyone would have to do in the world of adventuring.

Money
Player characters can accumulate vast amounts of gold and gems in almost no time. The abundance of monetary treasure in the world is exceeded only by the characters’ greed to obtain more. And when characters gain hundreds and thousands of pieces of gold, they have everything under control. Why should they not? They know exactly how much gold they own, starting with the dice roll from the smallest daggerer to Baba Yaga’s hat. In our world, prices are never constant; in a world with so much less communication and trade than ours, think about how much prices would vary from place to place and from time to time, even for something as simple as a arrow.

One way to remedy this is to roll for prices whenever anyone buys anything. I suggest rolling 1d100, with 01-35 indicating underpriced by 5-50% (5 x 1d10) of the normal cost, and 51-00 indicating overpriced by 10-200% (5 x 2d20). These adjustments can be used not only for normal items but for magical items, sage expenses, training, and whatever else the characters have to pay for in town. This adds realism as it sometimes makes it necessary for characters to shop around for bargains.

An even better way to do this is to assign price ratios for certain items in specific places. For example, consider a city involved in a war; prices in general will be high, metal weapons can be bought or sold for possibly double or triple their normal costs, and magical weapons might go for up to 10 times their listed value. Training would be hard to come by but might be financed by the city if the characters agree to stay and serve a term in the city’s garrison; food and housing might fall in price because of the inns competing for all the new business from soldiers and from people displaced by the war, or skyrocket due to a shortage of supplies and money.

As another example, villagers from a town located in a barren mountain chain might buy wooden objects for three or four times their normal worth, but metal objects and weapons might be of little value due to the proximity of dwarven mines and traders. The local wizard might be a cranky old man who would charge many times the normal price to waste his time teaching Allian, the Annoying Aspiring Apprentice, or he might be a seeker of knowledge who will not ask for money but might ask the PCs to find some snippet of information or perform some task for him in return for the training. (This is a wonderful way to get characters into an adventure.) In all cases, remember that money is not the only thing that makes the world go round, but most NPCs will take the characters for as much as they think they can get. There are very few kind, generous, wealthy merchants who remain wealthy for very long.

In the same vein, gems may have varying prices depending on the area in which they are sold or appraised. The chart on page 26 of the AD&D 1st Edition Dmg (or Table 86, page 134, of the AD&D 2nd Edition Dmg) helps account for varying gem markets, but feel free to amend this chart based on individual circumstances. Also remember that few characters, with the exception of thieves, will have any practical experience in appraising gem values. They might not realize that huge gems they thought would be worth fortunes are flawed and worth only a few gold each. Huge, flawless gems are extremely rare, and most novices to the field cannot tell a diamond from a glass fake.

The exchange rates of gold and other precious metals are not always the same, either, and a DM can make a platinum piece equivalent to six or seven gold pieces (or even one or two), based on the relative abundance or scarcity of the metals in that region. Ancient Egyptian artificers made hundreds of works in gold; silver, which was scarce in the Nile valley, was considered far more valuable than gold. Maybe there are fantasy towns in which the characters’ gold will be worthless, but any copper they have on them will be worth an equivalent number of platinum pieces! There are endless variations on this theme, enough to keep the campaign challenging even to the richest characters.

Continued on page 28
Another problem the characters may encounter is that of hauling all their loot around; carrying thousands of gold pieces is hard work! The characters may get it into their heads to change their gold into platinum or even into gems of equal value in order to accumulate even greater masses of treasure. For this, the characters will have to go to the moneychanger. But do you think any businessman would be involved in a venture that doesn’t stand to turn a profit? Most moneychangers will charge a stiff fee to change the characters’ cash, typical from 1-10% of the amount changed. If the characters think it is ludicrous that they should have to pay for simple moneychanging, they can go through the thieves’ guild or less established intermediaries, but they’d better look out for fool’s platinum (a variation on the second-level mage’s fool’s gold spell) and glass gems. They’ll be in big trouble if they try to pay for anything with this money! You get what you pay for, but you never get something for nothing. Which brings us to one more thing relevant to the characters’ money (or impendence thereof) — the thieves’ guild. It’s not called that for nothing, you know. Apprentices and journeyman thieves spend their time in town loaded down with so much stolen gold that they’re practically trudging it behind them. Characters will probably be lucky if they even get to their hotel rooms without a good portion of their loot falling to the seamiest side of society. In my campaigns, thieves know a “secret signal” to warn other thieves away from their party when they get into town, but any party traveling without an “escort” is fair game for the guild (and any party can be hit by free-lance and probably more experienced thieves). Of course, thieves are even more rewarded when they pick the pockets of those characters who have just had their money changed to a more transportable form.

Miscellaneous

A few more topics under the theme of mystery in the campaign do not fit nicely into any of the other three categories. One of these is the concept of “levels.” How many times have PCs asked NPCs, “What level are you?” Levels are a means for the DM to gauge the relative strengths of characters to monsters, and for players to ascertain the extent of their own character’s abilities—not those of other characters or NPCs. In the actual game universe, there should be no real concept of character levels any more than there should be a concept of monsters’ hit dice; a monster may be “really tough” according to rumors from adventurers who have encountered the critter, but this may be because it has a high armor class (“Our swords just couldn’t get through its hide!”), high dex-terity (“It moved so fast, we just couldn’t hit it!”), some magical defense (“Our swords just passed right through the beast!”), or a lot of hit points (“We kept hitting it and hitting it, but the sucker just wouldn’t lie down and die!”). Similarly, an NPC can surprise us, just as even our closed friends do sometimes. NPC henchmen, hirelings, or traveling companions in all likelihood have abilities that the character would not guess at, or conversely lack an ability that the character felt sure the NPC must have. NPCs are people, not lists of statistics, and it is important that the characters learn a little about the NPCs at a time, just as they would a new friend in real life. Level titles are a questionable case, although they can add spice to the AD&D 1st Edition game, as in the case of the cleric who finally gains the status of “High Priest” in his church, or the mage who finally attains the title of “Wizard” and all the benefits thereof. I let the PCs call themselves by level titles and will usually remark when an NPC has reached name level (e.g., a Wizard instead of just a magic-user, a Master instead of just a monk; but a fighter is only a Lord when he owns land, a thief only a Guildmaster when he is the head of a guild). I am not usually more specific about NPC levels. If a player has the audacity to actually ask an NPC, “What level are you?” he receives the response, “What are you talking about?” Perhaps the most important point I can make pertains not to any individual problem, but to the way a DM should speak in general: the problem of semantics. A DM may try to institute some of the ideas outlined in this article, but often his own words reveal what he is trying to keep secret. The DM should never be too specific. When the players ask if the chasm is short enough for the PCs to jump across, say, “I think so.” When players ask if the monster the PCs have just fought for an hour is really dead, instead of saying “Yes,” say, “It looks like it.” In the real world, we are never completely sure about anything; we have to rely on our judgment. One of my favorite replies to questions is along the line of “You don’t know.” (“Can I pick the lock?” “You won’t know until you try.”)

These are the kinds of responses that the DM should get in the habit of using, to reflect the characters’ uncertainty about even their own capabilities. As mentioned on page 19 of the AD&D 1st Edition DMG, PC thieves should not be certain of their success. If one asks, “Am I hidden in shadows?” the response should be to the effect of, “You’re trying.” Finding and removing traps is another problem. Too many times, when the player asks, “Are there any traps?” the DM responds “No.” Whether the player missed his roll or there were simply no traps present, the DM should say “You didn’t find any.” This is much more indicative of the character’s state of mind after checking: it is his opinion that there aren’t any traps, but some might have escaped his notice.

Putting it to use

The ideas presented in this article are little things at most, but they add spice and excitement to a campaign. It is often difficult to get started using these ideas, as they go against the grain of telling the players everything you know, but once you develop the habits, they seem to come naturally. Not letting players know more than they should soon becomes second nature. My players are fond of citing a time during a campaign when I was asked, “Did it feel like a spell was cast?” and I responded, “Possibly a little bit, but not really.” It is little things like this that keep the players on their toes, which is as it should be when they go adventuring in the dangerous but exciting world of AD&D games.

Let’s take a look at the encounter at the beginning of this article, revised to take into account the principles herein:

Player 1: “Whew! That was a tough battle! I thought those lizard men had us for a second!”

Player 2: “Yeah, I can’t believe how well they fought! It was a good thing I had my enchanted sword, Narsil. It clove through their slimy green scales like butter!”
Player 3: "You mean it's a good thing Gondam here grabbed that potion! To Gondam, I never knew you could pick pockets!"

DM [playing the part of Gondam]: "Well, I moonlighted as a thief a while back to supply money for my weapons and armor. I guess the subject just never came up."

Player 3: "You did what?! Talk about an ungrateful...

Player 1: "Okay, guys, let's not fight about it. We all did what had to be done. Now [rubbing his hands together], what did the lizard men have on them? [All players turn to look at the DM.] Did they have any pouches?"

DM [shuffling papers and rolling a few dice]: "Only one of them is even wearing a belt, but there is a pouch on it. Inside are five gems—rather small, but they seem to be of good quality. Gondam looks at them for a moment, and says you might be able to get thirty or so gold pieces for each of them in town. In the same pouch are three vials, each about the size of a standard oil vial. All three liquids are transparent, though one is bright red and the other two are colorless. These items are mixed up with some electrum pieces, probably close to 100. What looks like a wand is also thrust through one creature's belt."

Player 1: "They were only lincloths and gaudy bracelets. The bracelets are inset with lewd and baroque designs depicting what appears to be a woman with clawed hands and a head of a squid performing various disgusting acts. The lizard men wore no boots or any other clothing or ornamentation.

Player 1: "Gondam, are the bracelets worth anything?"

DM [as Gondam]: "No, not really. The gold plating is fake, and the gems are glass. Pretty poor imitations, too. Wouldn't get a gold for any of them. [One set could be bracers of defense, but the players might never know.]

Player 1: "Well, okay. Leave them behind. We'll need all the carrying space we can get. The lizard men all had spears? Any other weapons?"

DM: "They did have spears, although one broke, if you remember. All three spears are of good quality but don't seem to be exceptional in any way. The lizard man that had a pouch also had a dagger thrust into his belt. The dagger's of lousy quality; it's rusted."

Player 1: "Okay, we'll take the spears for now. I'll strap them to my back."

Player 2 [arguing with Player 3]: "I tell you, those things weren't lizard men! They fought too well! And what about those bracelets? Isn't there a race that has a godlike lobster lady? They're called... yuan-ti, yeah, that's it! [to the DM] Is that what they're called?"

DM [shrugging]: "Sounds okay to me."

Player 1: "Okay, they must inhabit the cliffs we saw down the coast. We can backtrack to town, hire some men, get that wand identified, then take on those yuan-ti."

Player 2: "I'll check the libraries. Aren't yuan-ti immune to fire or something?"

I guarantee you a much more interesting game. Enjoy!

Other helpful articles on maintaining mystery in fantasy RPGs include: 'Keep 'Em Guessing,' by Ed Greenwood, in the Best of DRAGON magazine anthology; 'Also Known As... the Orc,' by Ethan Ham, in DRAGON issue #158.

---

Mysteries, Monsters and Magicks! Treasures and Terrors! Phantasmagorical Fun!

THE FANTASY GAMER'S COMPENDIUM

It's back! Newly revised and expanded, THE FANTASY GAMER'S COMPENDIUM...the fantasy gaming reference that is actually 7 books in 1. The BOOK OF MYSTERIES introduces a new character class known as the Lords of Mystery, as well as a unique set of skills for that class. THE BOOK OF MONSTERS details authentic monsters from legend and folklore, as well as providing charts explaining their strengths so that they can be used with all role-playing systems. The BOOK OF DEMONS examines 85 different demons described in European folklore, the Kabala and the Bible. The BOOK OF HEROIC WORLDS introduces four new magical spells, and provides interesting incantations for your magic-user to memorize and recite. The BOOK OF SHAMANS introduces a new type of spellcaster whose ability is based upon unique, primitive magics drawn from nine levels of power. And THE BOOK OF TERRORSOUS is in fact TWO books, Part One telling of fabulous treasures listed in folklore, while Part Two details those suggested by high technology and science fiction stories. This reference volume is designed to be complimentary to all fantasy role-playing systems.

---

THE ADVENTURE NEVER STOPS!

SHADE OF THE SINKING PLAIN

Can you meet the challenge of the faceless Shade and survive? Such is the peril awaiting in this fantasy adventure module, with over 100 pages (including a map of the marsh-bound castle of the Shade); an enormous battle barge; an 11x16" quad map of the Plane; new spells and much more! (Set in the world of ICE's Loremaster(m) series, and readily adaptable to most RPRs.)

THE SERPENT ISLANDS

Will you face the horrors that thrive on the Serpent Islands? Will your bones moulder 'neath their mud? This adventure is suited to 5.7 player characters of moderate skill levels in most popular FRP systems. Detailed information for players and GM alike provide new magic items and spells; monsters; maps and three dungeon levels.

DUNGEON TILES (ZTF2004)

This boxed set includes 72 full-color, 2½-inch square cardboard pieces representing corridors, Shawn, rooms and more for 25mm scale, plus 108 ½-inch die-cut markers for furniture and furnishings to fill those chambers. Includes suggestions for use to add new dimension to your favorite fantasy RPG.

---

ZOCCHI DISTRIBUTORS, Dept. D161
1512 - 30th Avenue, Gulfport, MS 39501
(601) 863-0215

DRAGON 29
An unlikely love born in the ashes of destruction.

Amidst the catastrophe sweeping the continent of Maztica, Erix, the former slave girl, and Halloran, the legionnaire, flee enemies on all sides. Both have chosen their destiny...or so they think!

As the gods tear at the True World, Erix unwittingly becomes a beacon of hope amongst the rising clouds of chaos.

VIPERHAND is the second novel in the exciting Maztica Trilogy. Douglas Niles, best-selling author, has written the newest epic saga set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® fantasy world.

Look for Volume One in the Maztica Trilogy.

IRONHELM, on sale now and Volume Three, FEATHERED DRAGON, available in April 1991 at all fine hobby and book stores.
COMING EVERY MONTH FROM TSR

NEW HEROES FOR A NEW DECADE
NEW MONTHLY COMICS MODULES

13: Assassin—
By Mike W. Barr
& Robb Phipps

Buck Rogers—
By Flint Dille,
Buzz Dixon, Paul Smith
& Frank Cirocco

Intruder—
By Steven Grant
& Tim Gula

Warhawks—
By Roy Thomas
& Peter Ledger

R.I.P.—
By Marv Wolfman
& Pat Oliffe

WITH CONTINUING STORIES BY SOME OF THE BEST NEW AND ESTABLISHED COMICS TALENT AND NEW GAMES CREATED BY THE EXPERTS AT TSR.
OVER 40 PAGES OF FULL-COLOR THRILLS—FOR ONLY $2.95!

BUCK ROGERS is a trademark used under license from The Dilys Family Trust.
The TSR logo is a trademark of TSR, Inc.
Old AD&D® modules needn’t die young!

by Marc Newman

Recently I discovered all of my old AD&D® modules, which had been sitting in a box since they were first used and exhausted of possibilities. All the early TSR modules were there, like the famous Against the Giants series and A2 Secret of the Slavers Stockade. I spent a while happily looking them over and reminiscing about what it was like to play AD&D games in the early 1980s when I purchased these modules. In particular, Gary Gygax’s Tomb of Horrors caught my eye.

I was amazed at how much of the lich’s tomb I still remembered after all these years. Most of these “classics” left me with lasting memories, but the memories from this one were particularly vivid. Suddenly I had an uncontrollable urge to run this scenario again and see how my new players would fare against the tricks and traps of the tomb. When I first ran it, my PCs had a special magical item that let them avoid most of the carnage, so I was eager to see if a different group would do so well. Besides, I was in the eighth grade the first time, and now I felt I could give the module the rich presentation that I wasn’t able to give them. I made some phone calls to prospective players, and soon even the skeptics shared my enthusiasm.

Most of these old modules were created for tournaments. Tomb of Horrors was designed for GAMA’s ORIGINS™ I, so it provided sketchy characters that add to its suitability for noncampaign gaming. We planned to use it as a one-shot since we were not in the middle of a AD&D campaign at the moment. This module is also very tough! I remember that when I originally ran it, my players ganged up on me when things got ugly.

We played Tomb of Horrors in one all-night session, and it worked out successfully. The party played well and fully utilized the power of certain spells in surprising ways. (Who would have imagined that a levitated coffin becomes a practically frictionless missile?) The PCs took a minimal amount of damage until the final confrontation.

Since dusting off the module turned out to be such a success, I got the idea of having a “classic” campaign made up of one or more of these old scenarios. I’m sure this idea has occurred to many, but here are my thoughts on what to expect and to change.

First of all, the modules must be brought up to date with the rules you are using. All of the old modules were written before Unearthed Arcana was published, so rules like weapon specialization and nonweapon proficiencies will have to be added to AD&D 1st Edition campaigns. All NPC fighters in the scenarios should be specialized, and monsters should be toughened to make up for the specialized fighters in your adventuring group. Spells will have to be examined, too. Gary Gygax and other early module writers were fond of traps and magical protections against which certain spells were useless. As the DM, you will have to look at all the new spells available to player characters and see if the use of any of them should be circumscripted. The spell lists of NPC wizards should also be updated to reflect their new options; what is good for the PCs should also benefit their foes.

Luckily for the DM, making all the changes is not as much work as it seems. Much of it can be handled with common sense as the appropriate parts of the scenario are reached. For instance, if a magical wall stops lightning bolts, it is probably impervious to chain lightning, too. If all PC mages are in the habit of wearing armor or stoneskin spells, then the NPC mages should also have them.

The old modules were also written without later character classes in mind. Imagine a barbarian unleashed in the halls of the fire giants, or a thief-acrobat nimbly dodging traps in the Tomb of Horrors. Again, the DM may want to spice up the classics by making NPC fighters into barbarians. Similarly, new monsters can be changed or added. Maybe a crypt thing from the Fiend Folio® tome lurks in the Tomb of Horrors.

Illusionists should probably be totally revamped to take into account their expanded spell powers. The role of clerics has also changed. For instance, the death’s door spell greatly changed the way PCs and NPCs alike are healed, letting them avoid most of the nasty effects of reaching negative hit points, Balance these new powers carefully.

In an AD&D 2nd Edition campaign, more will have to be altered. Morale levels and THAC0s for NPCs and monsters should be added, and you should seriously consider beefing up the power of PCs who hope to venture into the Against the Giants series if you use the giants from the Monstrous Compendium. Character class changes will also take time to make, and the four Complete Handbooks on the classes offer lots of kit options for upgrading NPCs of every sort.

Finally, decide if the “classics” campaign is going to be a series of one-shots or an integrated quest. A one-shot will provide entertainment for a session or two, but a campaign must be planned out. Keeping the same PCs from module to module adds depth to the campaign. If you use the tournament characters provided, I recommend that they be fleshed out with broader equipment lists and with histories and personalities like those provided with the characters in RPGA™ tournaments published in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine. Furthermore, the scenarios should be linked in a consistent manner, much as the giant-drow-Abyss series was finally collected in GDQ1-7 Queen of the Demonweb Pits, or the Slave Lords modules in A1-4 Scourge of the Slave Lords.

These early modules were written in a more primitive era of gaming, when the atmosphere was a little more wondrous and gamers were less jaded. The times were simpler but had a certain charm and energy. It was a fertile period where the early writers were building a foundation for AD&D game design that the next generations have refined. An occasional return to the “basics” lets us see where we’ve been while having a lot of fun re-playing these adventures.

These-classics also had many excellent ideas that were among the first of their kinds. S3 Expedition to the Barrier Peaks has a mixed-genre setting that is brilliant. The Against the Giants series went beyond fortress bashing. And the D series was more than just the first underground adventure, it was also the best.

You, too, may find it rewarding to dig these old modules out of your closet and modify them for play. Along with rediscovering a great adventure, you can get more than your money’s worth from a forgotten purchase and make a nostalgic visit to the origins of the AD&D game.
Worlds beyond our own

©1990 by Jim Bambra

Fantasy gaming worlds are now available in abundance and cover a wide variety of cultures and settings. Some recreate historical periods of Earth history, some reproduce the fictional worlds of successful authors, and some draw their inspiration from a diverse number of sources. Game systems like Chaosium’s PENDRAGON® game and I.C.E.’s MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE PLAYING® game are designed to fit into their own chosen gaming worlds, with world and game limiting and defining one another.

Other game systems are more generic. TSR’s D&D® game existed happily for years with only the vaguest of campaign settings. Similarly, the AD&D® game didn’t gain its first official world until 1983, with the publication of the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting. Since then, both the D&D and AD&D games have shown that they are readily adaptable to a wide array of settings. The D&D game’s official Known World currently boasts no less than 18 different cultures and settings all neatly described in the series of Gazetteer and Creature Crucible supplements. While ostensibly part of the same gaming world, these supplements have greatly expanded the background of the D&D game and allow for a wide variety of game styles.

TSR, Inc. is now about to literally open up the Known World with the introduction of the Hollow World boxed set and a series of adventures that take PCs on a journey into the center of their world.

The AD&D game has an equally impressive array of campaign backgrounds for all to choose from. The WORLD OF
GLORANTHA*: Genertela, Crucible of the Hero Wars

RUNEQUEST® game supplement

The Avalon Hill Game Company

$24

Boxed set with a 40-page booklet, a 100-page booklet, a 36-page booklet, and a large two-color map

Design: Greg Stafford, Sandy Petersen, and William Dunn

Editing: William Dunn and Sandy Petersen

Cover illustration: Steve Purrill

Interior illustration: Kevin Ramos and Steve Swenson

Cartography: Charlie Krant and William Dunn

I'm a relative newcomer to the RUNEQUEST game, having paid little attention to the game or its supplements until The Avalon Hill Game Company published the third edition, under license from Chaosium, in 1984. Even though I had heard many good reports about the RUNEQUEST game, in those days I was too busy working in AD&D and GDW's TRAVELER® campaigns to pay it any attention.

Consequently, I'm unfamiliar with many classic RUNEQUEST game supplements.

When I did look at the RUNEQUEST game, it struck me as detailed and very workable, but a little too complex for my tastes. The alternate-Earth setting presented in the third edition was interesting but too underdeveloped to really fire my enthusiasm. The Introduction to Glorantha in the third edition set was more like it. It presents an overview of the world of Glorantha, detailing its history, deities, and creatures clearly and concisely, but it left much about the world unanswered. Players of previous editions of the RUNEQUEST game now have a lot to work with. The emphasis placed on Glorantha in the third edition, but I failed to see what they were getting at since I knew so little about it.

With the publication of Gods of Glorantha (reviewed in DRAGON issue #127), my interest in the RUNEQUEST game and in Glorantha in particular was fired. Now, with the GLORANTHA boxed set available, I can see why veteran RUNEQUEST game fans were so excited. Glorantha is beyond a shadow of a doubt one of the greatest game worlds ever to see print.

Glorantha was first conceived by Greg Stafford, before the age of role-playing, as a fictional setting for his stories. Over the years, Greg added to the background of the world, drawing on his wide knowledge of Earth's myths and legends. With the assistance of Chaosium's writers and editors, Greg succeeded in creating a world rich in history and myth. With my new knowledge of Glorantha, I clearly saw how much the RUNEQUEST game's development owed to Glorantha. The two have an almost symbiotic relationship. Greater vibrancy was added to the God Plane, and priests became important as intermediaries between people and the gods. Chaosium's designers have drawn on the mythic content of Glorantha, making it fascinating and very credible.

Since the beginning of Time, 1621 years have passed. For those of us who know the correct ritual. The Hero Wars, a magical conflict of epic proportions, are about to commence. The breadth of vision here is stunning and is a prime example of the world designer's art.
Four cultures are recommended as being suitable for newcomers to Glorantha. These are the primitive Hsunchen hunters, the nomad warriors of Prax, the barbarians of the Orlanthi culture, and the medieval culture of western Genertela. The basics of each culture are told to the young player characters in the form of a question-and-answer dialogue with either their fathers or uncles. The questions (such as who we are, what makes us great, how do we live, what is important in life, who rules us, what is our relationship to others, and who rules our gods) give useful insights into the featured cultures. These are further backed up by more detailed essays on the cultures that further define lifestyles, customs, and beliefs.

The above information, when used in conjunction with the “What the Priests Say” handouts from the Gods of Glorantha supplement, creates a believable world setting and a firm grounding for Gloranthan player characters to begin their adventuring careers. The only drawback is that only human characters are covered, but nonhuman races are described in the Trollpak and Elder Secrets supplements.

Information on cults worshiped, cultural levels, occupations, and magic are given in the Genertelan Player’s Book for all major levels, occupations, and magic are given in conjunction with the “What the Priests Say” handouts from the Gods of Glorantha. In addition, the “Elder Secrets” supplement is a boxed set for all major cultures of Genertela. GMs who wish their player characters to belong to one of these cultures can use the four given cultures as models, with relevant information being extrapolated from the Glorantha Book.

Evaluation: This boxed set is a very impressive product. To be used effectively, the Gods of Glorantha supplement is needed; without it, the deities of Glorantha remain little more than a collection of names, and without it Glorantha comes to life. The two supplements complement each other perfectly and allow latecomers like myself to fully appreciate the world of Glorantha.

Whether you play the RUNEQUEST game or another system, Glorantha is a world to study and marvel at for its complexity and detail. Players of the RUNEQUEST game have cause for celebration and more than a little smugness in knowing that the one of the greatest campaign worlds has been designed for them.

Time of the Dragon
AD&D® DRAGONLANCE® Supplement
Boxed set with a 48-page booklet, a 112-page booklet, 22 full-color reference cards, and four full-color map sheets
TSR, Inc. $18

Design: David “Zeb” Cook
Editing: Mike Breault and Jon Pickens
Cover: Robin Wood
Illustrations: Stephen Fabian
Cartography: Dave Sutherland and David “Diesel” LaForce

The first DRAGONLANCE saga adventure was published in 1984. Since then, novels, adventures, and other supplements on this setting have proliferated and proved to be very popular. The first four DRAGONLANCE saga adventures are soon to be rereleased in one volume for use with the AD&D 2nd Edition game. TSR, Inc., clearly has no desire to let the DRAGONLANCE saga die and is eager to expand the campaign’s possibilities.

Yet the DRAGONLANCE saga has not met with universal approval by players of the AD&D game. Many found its plotlines narrow and constraining; they felt that their characters had little real choice over their actions. The “obscene death” rule, in which important characters could not die (they merely appeared to die, only to pop up again later), may have encouraged heroic role-playing, but many players felt that regardless of what their characters did, the PCs would succeed. The saga’s plot seemed to be a great beast with a life of its own. Others have criticized the world of Krynn for having too many inconsistencies and for being too trite with its two-dimensional heroes and its clearly defined boundaries between good and evil. However, love it or hate it, the commercial success of the DRAGONLANCE saga cannot be denied. The DRAGONLANCE saga is here to stay, and it has been expanded dramatically.

Time of the Dragon is a boxed set for the world of Krynn, but it does not involve the continent of Ansalon, where the events of the War of the Lance unfolded. With the war over, Time of the Dragon introduces us to the continent of Taladas, which has its own unique cultures and geography. Playing no major role in the War of the Lance, Taladas has remained relatively untouched by its events. The peoples who inhabit this continent have marked different views and lifestyles from those of Ansalon. The same gods exist, but they are known by different names and manifest themselves in different ways. The absence of the gods following the events of the Cataclysm has had its effect on the development of Taladas, but in a satisfying and intriguing way. Divorced from their deities, the clerics of Taladas compensated by finding new ways to maintain their influence. Now that the gods have returned, they have refrained from making clerical powers widely available. Only a chosen few clerics from each culture are able to perform miracles.

The dragons of Taladas are also different in their outlook. When Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness, returned to Krynn, she released the evil dragons and kept them secretly within Taladas. She later called the evil dragons to join her, but some refused to go. When the good dragons searched the world for their stolen eggs, they journeyed to Taladas. Once released from their Oath, not all of the good dragons flew to Ansalon; some of the evil dragons before them, some good dragons remained in Taladas. Consequently, the dragons of Taladas have attitudes unlike those of their cousins in Ansalon. They are more neutral, and many of the good dragons are riddled with guilt. Red dragons are noted for their cowardice rather than their traditional desires to destroy.

Other races have diverged and developed differently from those on Ansalon. The need to survive has colored their outlooks, making the cultures of Taladas darker in mood than those of Ansalon. This makes the continent gritty in feel and adds to its appeal. To see how this has been achieved, take a look at The Guide Book To Taladas.

The Guide Book To Taladas: This book takes us across Taladas one area at a time. After a brief history of the continent, Taladas’s geography and its impact on its peoples is discussed. The foremost event in Taladas’s history was the Cataclysm, during which one particularly huge meteorite struck the continent. Volcanoes erupted, and earthquakes shattered the land. Volcanic dust fell over the continent, the seas were poisoned, and land masses shifted. In the center of Taladas now lies a vast sea of molten lava, surrounded by belching volcanoes. The races and cultures of Taladas adapted in many different ways to their new environment.

The rest of the Guide deals with the detailed geography of each area and with the peoples who live there. The emphasis is on exotic cultures, not on the feudal societies and economies that make up the bulk of fantasy game worlds. This is a refreshing and intriguing change.

The northwest part of Taladas contains the steppe-dwelling Uigan, who draw their inspiration from the Mongols and Huns of historic Earth. The elves of this area are similar to the Uigan, being nomadic horse warriors. On the other hand, the gobhins follow a settled lifestyle, living in small villages and hunting for food. They ambush elven and human horsemen, and they make war with the elves.

The background on these cultures is nicely detailed, evoking lifestyles and belief systems that fit in well with the land around them. As mentioned earlier, the loss of clerical abilities following the Cataclysm is neatly integrated into the histories of the peoples. The effects of the selective return of these powers are also well described.

Other cultures and races are given a similarly detailed treatment. Of special interest are the Marak kender, the Minotaur League, the Fianawar (surface-dwelling dwarves), and the gnomoi (gnomes). The Marak kender have changed from the cute, cheerful ones of Ansalon into a race marked by suspicion and paranoia. Marak kender are just as likely to rifle your pockets, but they’re doing it for their own protection, so that magical items cannot be later used against them. The Fianawar, having been driven from their underground homes by the Cataclysm, have developed a fear of the underground. The League of Minotaurs is the largest power in Taladas, and its soci-
Highlights Include:

- Nearly 30 exciting and unique Occupational Character Classes including the Cyber-Knight, Borks, Glitter Boys, Psi-Stalkers, Dog Pack (mutant humanoid dogs), Crazies and many others.
- Supernatural creatures. Some, like the Dragon, are actually player characters, others are horrifying menaces from the rifts.
- Biowars and cybernets, offer a vast range of mechanical augmentation.
- Super-technology with mega-damage body armor, energy weapons, rail guns, power armor, and human augmentation.
- Palomarics, including the Barster and Mind Melter O.C.C.s and new psionic abilities.
- Magic! In addition to the more traditional wizard types, we introduce techno-wizardry, the true synthesis of magic and technology, with some fabulous results.
- An entire savage world of the fantastic and super-technology is within reach of your fingertips. A world unlike any you've experienced before. A grim and brutal place where survival is a daily struggle and champions must step forward to protect the helpless. Note: Some parents may find the violence and supernatural themes of Rifts unsuitable for young readers/players.
- Cover by Keith Parkinson!
- 16 pages of interior color paintings by Kevin Long, Keith Parkinson, Kevin Siembieda, and others.
- Interior art by Kevin Long and Kevin Siembieda!
- Written by Kevin Siembieda. Three years in the making!
- 250 pages! $24.95 plus $2.00 for postage. Available now at hobby shops and comic stores everywhere.

Have you seen Palladium Books' Other RPGs?

Beyond the Supernatural™ ties directly into Rifts™ with its psychic powers and the concept of ley lines and magic energy. The supernatural monsters (and characters to a lesser degree) can be dropped into the new RPG with ease. The Rifts Conversion Book (coming soon) will provide exact information on how to integrate Beyond characters smoothly into Rifts™.

Beyond the Supernatural™ is a role-play game, complete in itself, of contemporary horror. Player characters include the parapsychologist, psionic, psychic sensitive, mega-psyc, arcanist, and others. The monster section is comprehensive and unique. The magic system really works in the modern world. Over 250 pages, $19.95 plus $2.00 for mail order.

The Palladium Role-Playing Game offers an exciting and different fantasy world. Men of arms have real strength, the magic of the Diabolist and Summoner is unlike any elsewhere, combat is quick, clean, and realistic. If you like other fantasy games, you'll love this one. 274 pages, beautifully illustrated, $19.95 plus $2.00 for mail order.

Heroes Unlimited™ is still one of the few super-hero games that enables players to create heroes who are bionic, robots, magic users, and aliens, as well as super-claws, martial artists, weapons masters, psionics, mutants and humans & animals), and even crazy heroes. Over 250 pages, $19.95 plus $2.00 for mail order.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles® & Other Strangeness captures the magic and strangeness of the TMNT black and white comic book and more. Players can create any kind of mutant animal hero. This isn't some little kid, movie knock off, but good role-playing for over five years. 112 pages give you the complete game and introductory adventures, $11.95 plus $1.00 for mail order.

Then check out the science fiction source book/adventure series called After the Bomb® for something completely different.

Ninjas & Superspies™ REVISITED! At last, this complete RPG and compendium of martial arts is revised to be easily interchangeable with Heroes Unlimited™, TMNT®, and Rifts™. Contains rules for creating secret identities and spy organizations, cybernetic implants, and 40 different forms of hand to hand combat. Over 100 pages, $14.95 plus $1.00 for mail order.

Other great role-playing games include Revised RECON®, Robotech™, Robotech II: The Sentinels™, and a ton of adventure and source books. Send 50 cents (postage and handling) for our complete catalog of Palladium Books games and supplements.

Palladium Books®
Dept. D
5926 Lonyo Ave.
Detroit, MI 48210

Available at hobby stores and comic book shops everywhere!
ety, while reflecting the belief that might makes right, also has built-in controls to regulate it. The gnomes of Taladas are split into two distinct groups: the minoi and the gnomoi. The minoi love to build devices but lack the logical minds necessary to make them work effectively. The gnomoi are far more practical and control gnomish society, taking steps to make sure that it stays stable and develops.

Overall, the continent of Taladas is an intriguing and impressive game world. Where it falls down slightly is in its presentation. The information is all presented from the point of view of the DM, with no sections specifically for players to read. The burden of introducing the players to Taladas and bringing the world to life falls squarely on the GM. Sections written specifically for players, such as occur in the Glorantha boxed set and in many of the D&D Gazetteers, would have enhanced this product immensely and made it more accessible.

The Rule Book To Taladas: This 48-page booklet contains game rules specific to Taladas. It makes new player character races available, including the bakali (a race of lizardmen), goblins, minotaurs, and ogres. It also discusses any changes required to make standard character classes fit smoothly into Taladas. Player-character kits that summarize the various abilities, skills, proficiencies and backgrounds for 34 common character classes and races are provided. These make character generation easier and provide backgrounds for PCs, but fail to give a detailed overview of cultural and racial outlooks.

Anyone interested in the military side of Taladas will find the army organization charts and statistics for the BATTLESYSTEM supplement invaluable. Even if the BATTLESYSTEM supplement is never used, the information presented here is also very useful in standard role-playing encounters.

A selection of monsters that inhabit Taladas round off the book. They fill useful niches and are integral to the background of Taladas.

Maps: Time of the Dragon contains some of the finest maps to ever appear in a role-playing product. The large two-part map of the continent of Taladas is excellent. The third map in the set is a blow-up of the lands of the League of Minotaurs, and the fourth map shows the minotaurs-controlled city of Kristophan. Like the continental maps, these are nicely rendered, ‘with good use of color.

Cards: The color cards are also impressive and have been used to good effect to show clothing and armor styles, gnomish devices and a gnome citadel, and areas of the city of Kristophan in more detail. The standard of the artwork on the cards is very high, with the armor and clothing cards being particularly noteworthy.

Evaluation: The background of Time of the Dragon is plausible and meticulously presented, with neatly integrated cultures and races. It can easily be used as a campaign setting in its own right, as it is not tightly tied to the world of Kryn. Time of the Dragon is well worth looking at and marks a departure from the standard DRAGONLANCE saga setting. It has plenty to recommend it to gamers looking for a harsh and gritty fantasy world. Check it out; you won’t be disappointed.

Short and sweet

A few items were dropped from this column in DRAGON issue #158 for lack of space. Let’s take a quick look at some light-hearted approaches to horror role-playing.

IT CAME FROM THE LATE, LATE, LATE SHOW* game, by Bradley K. McDevitt. Stellar Games, price not available. Lights, cameras, ACTION! This game lets you play second-rate actors in some of the worst movies ever produced. That’s right, you can take the starring role in such turkeys as Attack of the Killer Tomatoes and Plan Nine From Outer Space. You get to do all those dumb things of which only movie actors are capable, like sticking your head round the door to see who’s making the chopping noise with the axe instead of calling the police or running for your life. Cheap tongue-in-cheek fun, this game is well worth a look. This game is available from Stellar Games, P.O. Box 156, Swanton OH 43558, U.S.A.

GHOSTBUSTERS INTERNATIONAL* game, by Aaron Allston and Doug Kaufmann. West End Games, Inc., $18. They’re back! The Ghostbusters have returned not only in a movie but in the second edition of the GHOSTBUSTERS role-playing game as well. This new edition retains the flavor of the original game (see “Role-playing Reviews,” DRAGON issue #132) but adds oodles of new game rules, Whether those rules are actually needed depends on your tastes. I thought the game worked fine as it was, but others decided that it needed a more tactical gaming feel. The new rules look like they’ll work just fine, so if you’ve never experienced the thrill of getting “slimed” or blasting away with a proton pack, here’s your chance.

Tobin’s Spirit Guide, by Kim Mohan. West End Games, Inc., $13. There are more spooks and spirits around than could possibly be crammed into the GHOSTBUSTERS INTERNATIONAL rules, so here’s lots more of the pesky slimes for your Ghostbusters to trap. With an introduction by no less an expert than Dr. Raymond Stanz, it’s got to be good.

GHOSTBUSTERS INTERNATIONAL products are available from West End Games, Inc., RD 3, Box 2345, Honesdale PA 18431.

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. The use of the name of any product without mention of its trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.
The book... the movie...
Now... the GAME!

THE HUNT FOR
RED OCTOBER TM

Experience the spine-tingling action as you search the Atlantic for the advanced Russian nuclear submarine. Or plan your evasive action as you try to escape from the Russian Fleet. You don’t need to have read the book or have seen the movie to enjoy this game. It’s easy to learn with endless variations of play. Enlist in...

THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER Game
Available at fine toy, book and hobby stores.

Come aboard... Let the hunt begin!
Prepare for a Future of Great Adventures!

Contains complete index to issues #1-2

Dungeon
ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

JULY/AUGUST 1991 ISSUE #24
VOL IV, NO 6 $3.75 USA

Fill out and mail the subscription card in this issue.
If the card is missing, write to:

Dungeon
ADVENTURES FOR TSR® ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

Subscriptions:
DUNGEON® Adventures
P.O. Box 111
Lake Geneva, WI 53147

DUNGEON is a trademark of TSR, Inc. ©1990 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Eimir 16, 1965: It was merely a day after we left the moon Myoshima when the alarm was sounded. Five large ships were sailing through space on an intercept course with our Princess. They were very close, coming around a small field of asteroids that had shielded them from our view. There was no time for evasive maneuvers.

The ships were of a strange build, most of them bearing bird features. The largest of the five, a very large war galley, had an eagle figurehead, and its hull was engraved with golden feathers. Two large eagle claws jutted out on either side of the galley’s prow. The vessel bore the banner of a capital ship. Many pennants and main sails revealed a black lion against a white background. Clearly, we had run into the clutches of a Heldannic war fleet.

The boltmen raced to their battle stations and braced for combat, while the sailors feverishly prepared the riggings for an imminent boarding. Yet the rakasta Kenju and his two henchmen remained near the center of the deck, calmly observing the proceedings with haughty and arrogant postures. They showed no signs of fear or nervousness.

Oddly enough, I soon discovered there was little activity aboard the Heldannic “warbirds”; certainly no Heldannic sailors were preparing for battle. The ships came almost within ramming distance of us—and inexplicably continued full ahead, totally ignoring our potentially doomed Princess Ark. I could clearly observe Heldanners moving about their ships, mending sails and scrubbing decks; one of their leaders casually paced the upper deck, mumbling some obscure prayer while picking his nose. They were totally oblivious to our presence!

The ships came so close that I could hear an eerie military march emanating from the war galley. I dismissed that as an auditory illusion, and all was fine. The ships sailed on and soon disappeared behind us into the celestial void. Kenju and his henchmen simply returned to their cabins, apparently satisfied and no more surprised at the results than they would have been had they seen another group of asteroids pass by us. Somehow, they had been confident of this event’s outcome.

I had the chance to observe the Heldannic ships at my leisure as they unwittingly sailed by. The war galley was very heavily armed with catapults and ballistae. I could see metal bolts all along its hull, holding
COURSE OF THE PRINCESS ARK
20. Elmir 24, 1965
21. Nyxmir 21st
22. Nyxmir 22
23. Nyxmir 23rd
24. Nyxmir 24th
Next course due north
together an ominous coating of metal plates. This ship was not built to fly in the air, like the Princess; it would require far too much magic to be worthwhile. I suspect it was built in this airless void with the help of several smaller vessels. Large feathery oars slowly rowed the galley through space, occupying four decks of the ship. The strangest sight, however, were a half-dozen small black boats—for lack of a better term—tethered to poles at the sides and stern of the galley. These were each large enough for one man and had man-made wings and tails like those of ravens. Two rods, probably weapons packed with Heldannic clerical magic, jutted from beneath the wings.

Escorting the war galley were four smaller ships, each bearing some resemblance to a vulture. More lightly armed, these lesser ships seemed built more for speed and maneuverability than for heavy assault. From astern, all four ships displayed appropriate birdlike tails. It was a sight I’ll not soon forget.

**Eimir 17, 1965:** Our three rakasta guests haven’t come out of their cabins yet. So much the better. At least they haven’t interfered with ship’s duties.

I have begun studying Lord Katayama’s monolith. After several hours of experimenting, I determined that the monolith has the ability to bend light around a sphere with a set radius—a sphere large enough to encompass the Princess Ark. These are the same properties of Myoshima’s core. Smaller fragments of the monolith retain this light-bending power, with areas of effect appropriate to each fragment’s size. This explains why the Heldannic fleet ignored the Ark, and also why the rakasta felt so obviously secure. The Heldanners simply could not see us! The Princess Ark is practically invisible! This Imperial gift has proven to be a very useful contraption in war.

**Eimir 18, 1965:** I observed the stars and their alignment with our world as a means of measuring the speed of the Princess. Although it is hardly noticeable to the crew, our speed in the void has varied greatly. It seems that our speed has to do with the proximity of other physical bodies, such as ships on intercept courses, asteroids, moons, or planets. The farther we are from physical obstacles, the greater our speed potential becomes. This is vital for future voyages, since it would enable journeys into the void far from our world and at little risk of smashing into obstacles.

In effect, what seems to be “full speed ahead” on our Princess remains a stable constant when we are close to a moon, in our world’s skylights, or within sighting distance of an oncoming ship. Away from celestial bodies, our speed could increase a hundredfold—indeed, perhaps even more. I do not have the means to fathom any conceivable limits.

It appears that the constant use of a means of propulsion such as magical power or very fine silk sails increases our speed, especially more so when traveling away from a world. Removing the means of propulsion would not be sufficient to halt the ship, which would instead continue on its course at a constant speed. Inertia remains a definite force in the void.

**Eimir 22, 1965:** I have finally located Herr Rolf, our fugitive Heldannic knight, several hundred miles ahead of our ship and riding a winged sabre-tooth tiger common to Myoshima. He has put his few hours of lead time to good use. I am now following the knight with my crystal ball. Straps have kept him on the saddle during the times he has fallen asleep. Herr Rolf is getting very close to our world’s great blue skylights, heading toward the south pole. The Princess is pursuing, following a southerly course slightly above the skylights. It would be preferable to capture him while the Princess is still in the void, as that would save us the trouble of returning later to complete further studies of this outer space. I would intercept the man myself in normal conditions, but my inexperience in this environment demands that I remain aboard. We will maintain our course and pursue the fugitive.

**Eimir 23, 1965:** We are finally closing in on Herr Rolf. He is now in visual range of the command crew. It should only be a matter of a few hours before we catch up completely. Unfortunately, I fear that we must soon reenter our world’s skylights, several hundred miles south of the N’Djatwaland. We are much too close, and we can feel the effects of the skylights’ pull on the Princess. There is no alternative but to carry on.

**Eimir 24, 1965:** Trickery! I should have known better. As soon as we entered the skylights, the Princess began a dangerous dive. Every beam and mast of the Princess screamed in the dizzying fall, but the ship managed to progressively alter its course and gentrify our course, heading away from the pole. This beautiful ship sensed the danger and acted on her own to save herself and her crew! She barely avoided the worst and landed heavily on a thick snow bank. The truth of our fate became as brutal as a frigid, antarctic wind howling around us in the night. We were stranded without magical power.

Herr Rolf is a devil of man. He must have been aware this region was anti-magical. Fortunately, the effects were progressive. Herr Rolf perceived he could not escape the Princess, as she was much too fast for his winged cat. He had to find a way to escape us. He’s probably flapping away on his winged cat even now. His assessment of the Princess’s speed was amazingly accurate—a fine mathematician, that knight. He obviously did not waste his time during his journey aboard our ship.

I will find Herr Rolf even if I must devote the rest of my life to the endeavor. But the task of saving the crew and the Princess remains a more pressing matter.

**Eimir 25, 1965:** Something very strange is happening. Night has now lasted far longer than it should, and the sun still has not risen anew. According to tome three of the Arcanean Worlds, by the respected sage Nesfutar, complete night never falls upon the frozen lands, and neither does the sun ever rise high above the horizon there. But here, neither the light of the moon nor that of the sun could be sensed at all.

The crew was given heavy winter gear and completed repairs of the Princess. Fortunately she suffered little damage. We are still stranded in this bleak land of ice and howling winds. Magic of any sort has been totally ineffective. The threatening cover of dark clouds hasn’t shown any sign of thinning so far. Snow storms occur with discouraging regularity. I estimate our position is due south of the Vulcanian Coast.

The rakasta finally emerged from their cabins, warmly dressed. They had also managed to totally cover their great cats with fur boots and several layers of coats sewn together. Kenju mentioned their cats were used to warm climates and wouldn’t last long without protection in these temperatures.

I plan to head a scouting party to seek out native villages for help, probably to the north—or what I surmise is north. In this kind of weather, I hope the remainder of the crew can survive several days without too many difficulties. After that, I fear the Princess will have to be abandoned.

**Eimir 26, 1965:** The sun still hasn’t returned. After a long discussion with the crew and our feline guests, it seems the best course would be for me to leave with Kenju and Myojo, his first henchman. The cats would be able to smell their own tracks and return to the Princess if we became lost. Traveling in this poor region—without magic—seems nearly hopeless.

I will be riding the third great cat, while Kenju’s other henchman Jiro remains aboard the Princess. We would move much faster this way. Talasar argued vehemently against the decision, for I was quite vulnerable without magic and nothing so far could be said about the rakasta’s loyalty. If I did not return within five days, my orders to Talasar were to execute Jiro, abandon ship, and proceed due north to the Vulcanian Line.

**Burning 1, 1965:** Jiro’s great cat has proven to be a difficult mount to control, but I’ve managed well so far. At least we’ve been blessed by the speed of these animals. We found no villages, and we lost some time hunting seals and polar bears to feed the cats. It was virtually impossible to keep an accurate orientation. The sky remained overcast, masking the stars, and the uselessness of magic still prevailed.

In the course of our latest hunting expedition, our mounts followed a scent and stumbled upon the frozen remains of a dead winged cat. This must have been
Herr Rolf’s mount. So Herr Rolf is stranded as well! His cat did not survive the cold, and without his own clerical magic, he could not heal or revive the animal. Fine; then we know he is close.

Fresh prints of Herr Rolf’s heavy boots were visible in the snow. According to Myojo, Herr Rolf camped there until recently. Many other footprints and signs of a fight were apparent in the snow, and Myojo concluded the aggressors pursued Herr Rolf back toward the general direction of the Princess—or so I judged, compared to our own footprints.

Ever since this discovery, Kenju and Myojo have acted even more insolent than usual. Kenju’s subordinate was so bold as to even lay a hand on his swords hilt at my order to set camp. Apparently, the two rakasta since the incident. They remained mounted, displaying the most contemptuous and unconcerned attitude possible. I suspected my magic was gone again, as we probably had reentered the anti-magic zone. I would have died in the matter of a cat’s eye blink if either rakasta had suspected my renewed weakness. I caught a few increasingly worried glances from a frantic Myojo as a wailing elven savage almost reached me.

All of sudden, a huge white monster rose from behind a hill. The thing was a hideous sloth, half the size of the Princess herself and equipped with flesh-rending teeth. It lunged for the savages, ripped two of them apart, and swallowed them in teeth. It lunged for the savages, ripped two of them apart, and swallowed them in no time. The rest of tribe fled as swiftly as possible. I managed to get the Princess, along with our fearsome new companion. Herr Rolf would have to wait.

Burymir 4, 1965: We finally made it back on time to the Princess. There was no further hindrance from Kenju. Before leaving our last campsite, however, Myojo bowed deeply and presented me with his katana. He had offered me his loyalty! Aha! I could use this. Of course, Kenju was greatly angered, and the two haven’t spo-

---

“Up, Away, and Beyond” Errata

Because of an editorial error, four small diagrams were left out of the layout for “Up, Away, and Beyond” in DRAGON® issue #160. The diagrams are presented here, each showing the effects of gravity (according to Bruce Heard) in the universe of the D&D® game.

- **D1** POSITIVE GRAVITY
- **D2** DISK WORLD
- **D3** SHARD
- **D4** UNBALANCED SKYSHIP
The Princess was eventually fitted with outrigger skis to prevent her from rolling on her sides, and the sloth was harnessed to pull the ship. As the Princess slid across the snow, the crew’s morale began to improve. Myojo and Xerdon volunteered to mount to the two remaining great cats and scout the surrounding for signs of the elven barbarians. The sloth is moving very fast for its size, it took several times to allow Myojo and Xerdon to catch up and get some rest. We are making great progress over the flat, wind-beaten ice pack, but still no sign of the sun. Why?

Burymir 12, 1965: Despite our great speed, we have not reached the limit of the anti-magic region. I suspect the sloth has perhaps taken us in a direction other than what we had expected. Despite this, it still communicated to me that it went “toward warmth.” I was concerned. For all I know, it may be heading for a volcano, but we are too far into this journey to turn around now.

There is no sign of Herr Rolf. Without his magic, he must have starved and frozen to death—or perhaps he was captured by the elven barbarians. We may never know.

Burymir 19, 1965: The sun still has not returned. I know not what to think. If we were reaching the edge of the frozen lands, periods of day and night would become evident, but this . . . Darkness has prevailed for days with no sign of change.

Yet the sloth does not seem concerned. Polar bears and occasional monstrosities from this dark world of ice have been sighted and hunted down. Unfortunately, none of these creatures has been kept for study. The need for restocking food supplies has remained a constant concern. Heating is an even worse problem. There are few places aboard where fires may be lit, and even fewer things that can be burned. During our occasional halts, the sloth digs through the ice pack to hunt and feed itself. Sometimes it returns with a hunk of whale or a mouthful of walruses. Their fat becomes vital for heating.

Xerdon caught two sailors attempting to cut away some of the rigging, hoping to burn that and get some warmth. I loathe the idea of turning the Princess into a mere source of firewood. The two were flogged and thrown in the brig.

Burymir 26, 1965: The crew is getting very weak, and desperation has affected even the toughest veterans. Food supplies are minimal. Many men are sick with fever, especially among Lady Abovombe’s Cestian contingent, who among all the crew have suffered the most from the cold. Discontent among the crew is getting more apparent each passing day. Weapons have been locked in the armory. Only officers, the most trustworthy boltmen, Myojo, and myself are armed. Magic still does not operate. The sloth still does not seem to be affected by the darkness.

A late note: A large amount of food has been stolen. The guard was ill and fell unconscious during his watch. No trace was found of the stolen supplies. No doubt the culprits have already devoured it.

Nyxmir 05, 1965: Light has begun to return, and just in time. Talasar had major difficulties keeping discipline among the men. Even the Word of Razud brought little strength to his worshipers. A fight broke out, and Talasar barely escaped. The return of the light, so tenuous as it was, calmed the growing psychoses dividing even the oldest of friends.

Nyxmir 12, 1965: Indeed the light is increasing, although it has an unusual reddish tint. The ice, the snow, and the skies all range from deep purple to a fiery amber hue, unlike anything we have seen before. The temperature has risen substantially, and wildlife can be found more readily. Morale is improving among the crew, but uncertainty remains. The sloth persisted in its course, probably led by some Immortal will. It had been a month since we left Herr Rolf’s tracks. I have no idea where we are.

Nyxmir 15, 1965: Two men have been found dead. Both the guard on duty at the supply hold and the watchman at the stern had their heads crushed, each by a single blow. More food supplies were stolen, as well as one of the great cats. It wasn’t long before Myojo spotted the cat’s footprints. Judging from their depth in the snow, one man with some heavy gear has left the Princess, probably with enough food for several days.

Nyxmir 16, 1965: No one is missing among the crew, and both Jiro and Senju are still being detained. How could this be? How could we have had a stowaway for so long without noticing it? Who that could have been is a mystery.

Myojo volunteered to go after the fugitive’s track with the last remaining cat, but I refused. There is a better way. I have instructed the sloth to follow the track. The scent was faint, which has slowed down the huge beast’s pace, but I think it is important we find out what happened.

Nyxmir 19, 1965: Myojo spotted the fugitive’s last campsite. We knew then who he was. Heavy footprints were found near those of the missing cat—marks left by heavy boots, those of an armored knight.

So it was he whom I thought was dead! Herr Rolf must have discovered the Princess and climbed aboard during a snowstorm. Lord Katayama’s monolith cannot magically conceal the ship in the anti-magic area as it had in the void. No one could have seen Herr Rolf, and of course none of the ship’s magical wards would function. To think that he remained concealed within the Princess’s hull for over a month is unbelievable.

After some investigation, it is now clear that Rolf hid in the plant hold, where I had stored our Cestian gobbler specimen. The carnivorous plant had gone dormant from the extreme cold and thus ignored the knight. Rolf managed to take control of the animated remains of the late Azoth, which reinforced my conviction that Rolf is a powerful cleric. Talasar probably turned our undead Azoth with ease, then sent him back to his task.

Rolf was indeed the one who stole food from the unconscious guard and murdered the others, but those will be the last of his tricks. My magic has returned, and so has Talasar’s. Soon we will get to the end of this knight’s charade.

Nyxmir 21, 1965: It still isn’t right. Light has returned indeed, but now it is night that is amiss! The clouds cleared for a moment, revealing for the first time in over a month the warmth of sunrays—but strangely, the sun is red! It seems much smaller than usual, and most oddly it now stands motionless at the sky’s zenith! It is a mystery as to what has happened to the Immortal clockwork of the heavens.

Unfortunately, the sloth stopped immediately upon witnessing the sun’s appearance. I sensed this was the end of its journey with us. Already we could feel the Princess shivering with regained power, as if she were reborn. It was time to soar again into the sky and freedom.

Nyxmir 22, 1965: Finally, the Princess was ready to take off. The outrigger skis were discarded, the wings unfolded, and the sails repaired.

As we took off, the sloth roared. A brief moment of sadness overcame my thoughts. Then a roar of equal strength startled us all, as the Princess responded in kind to her gargantuan savior. Most peculiar that was. . .

Nyxmir 23, 1965: This is a time of fantastic discoveries for the Sons of Alphatia. Upon soaring above the clouds, we discovered a totally different landscape than our own maps depict. This is not our world!

Oddly enough, the new sun really is red. The air remains very hazy to the point

Continued on page 100
Explore the mutant jungles of Central America

Mutants of the Yucatan

The latest book in the After the Bomb® series is available at last. Author, Erick Wujcik, has done it again, creating another exciting source book for the post-apocalyptic world of mutant animals.

This time he takes us through the rain forests and jungles of the Yucatan, more deadly and primal than ever. There are tribes of vampire bats who stalk humanoid prey after dark and the Lo-Ki-Ya cannibals. Rampaging army ants, mutant tarantulas the size of elephants, and a host of strange and wondrous mutant animals.

Highlights include:
- Over 22 new mutant animals.
- The mysterious gene-molded-cats.
- More trouble with the Empire of Humanity.
- Jungle encounters tables and more!
- Directly compatible with Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Heroes Unlimited.
- $7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling. Available NOW!!!

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and After the Bomb® Game Shields

Because you demanded it, Palladium Books® has created a game shield and adventure booklet for the TMNT® series of games.

The two, color, game shields, one for TMNT® & Other Strangeness and the other for the After the Bomb®, present pertinent charts and tables for quick reference. The package also presents a 24 page booklet containing two adventures in the Yucatan and source information, such as the quick roll mutant animal villain. $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling. Available now!!

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles & Other Strangeness is all you need to create your own batch of super-hero mutant animals. This exciting rule book enables you to recreate the "Turtles" comic book action or transform any animal from canary to thriceros into the crime fighters of tomorrow.

Plus pristine, animal powers, martial arts, a comic strip by Eastman and Laird, stats on the Turtles, Casey Jones. Shredder, and other characters, as well as "four great adventures" $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling. Compatible with Heroes Unlimited.

Transdimensional TMNT® expands the world of mutant animals into a megaverse of dimensions and shattering the limits of time. $11.95

NEW!!! Turtles Go Hollywood picks up where Trachin' Turtles leaves off...with West Coast action and adventure. Your heroes stumble across a drug ring operated by an insidious group of mutant animals who have no regard for human life. $7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.

Mutant in Avalon! Coming this fall! After much delay, Mutants in Avalon will ship this fall (September!). Another title in the popular After the Bomb®, this adventure and source book explores the post-holocaust British Isle and the return of King Arthur (mutant animal style)!

Mutants in Avalon will contain new mutant animals, magic, King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and a whole lot more. Written by British author James Wallis. Tentatively a 64 page item that will sell for $9.95 (or $11.95 if expanded any further). Watch for it!

TMNT Sourcebooks: $7.95. Please add $1.00 for postage:
- TMNT Guide to the Universe
- After the Bomb® Road Hogs
- TMNT Adventures
- Trachin' Turtles!
- Mutants Down Under

Available at Hobby Stores and Comic Book Shops everywhere!
Saddle up your silver dragon and hit the sky!

**Reviews**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer games’ ratings</th>
<th>Not recommended</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Superb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DragonStrike

Strategic Simulations, Inc.
675 Almanor Avenue
Sunnyvale CA 94086
(408) 737-6800

DragonStrike *****
PC/MS-DOS version $49.95

DragonStrike is an enormous amount of fun to play. It’s a dragon-flight simulator that combines air-to-air and air-to-ground combat from the perspective of a warrior astride a great winged beast. Given the feel of powerful flight and the reassuring weight of the dragon lance resting in its saddle mount, you’re ready to do battle with any number of evil dragons.

The land of Ansalon has been overrun by evil Dragonarmies. Only you and the forces of Good can stop the onslaught of the evil Dark Queen, Takhisis. As a Knight of Solamnia, you ride a good dragon from your base on Sancrist Isle against the enemy hordes, advancing through the three orders of knighthood: the Knights of the Crown, the Knights of the Sword, and the Knights of the Rose. To become one of the latter is a rare privilege; to survive and advance through the 22 different battles in DragonStrike is a rare feat as well.

Every mission is fully explained. You can even safely fly over a mission area to get a taste for the battleground—a good way for novice lancers to learn how to effectively guide a dragon in flight. You can use the keyboard, a mouse, or a joy stick to do this. You must also use combinations of keys on the keyboard to control various aspects of the simulator. For example, we
found the mouse was quite effective in controlling the dragon; push forward on the mouse and the dragon climbs, pull back and it dives. Moving the mouse to the left or right causes the dragon to move in those directions. Pressing the right mouse button fires the dragon's primary breath weapon, while pressing the left button fires the dragon's secondary breath weapon. To properly aim the lance, you must use another set of nine keys on the keyboard; you can assign any keys you wish to the flight controls. Your view is from the saddle atop the dragon, so you can easily determine if your lance is properly aimed to strike a target. Navigating the dragon properly saves time and energy in concentrating on adjusting the lance. By moving the dragon in any direction and by keeping the lance in the center position, you can pierce the hide of an evil beast quite nicely!

The vivid graphics screen (ours was in EGA mode) displays not only the main view from the back of your dragon but also your current direction of flight (north, south, east, or west). A height and pitch indicator shows your dragon in relation to the ground and his angle of flight up or down. The amount of breath, power, and speed left to your dragon are shown, as are the remaining hit points for both yourself and your dragon. These values can be displayed as either numeric values or as colored bars. Also on-screen is a Crystal Ball that enables you to determine where enemy forces are located. An Arrow of Enemy Detection shows you where the nearest enemy unit is currently located, and three doses of Keoghtom's Healing Ointment are available. Other magical items found during your adventures are shown on-screen as well.

As you pilot your dragon into combat with an enemy dragon, vicious hand-to-hand and tooth-and-claw combat are handled automatically. As a knight lancer, you can sustain damage only from an attack from above, but don’t forget that your life depends upon your dragon; an attack from below would certainly injure him. If enough damage is taken to reduce your dragon’s hit points to zero, you’ll both fall! Keep an eye on your dragon’s power; should his power fall, a good maneuver is to wait until your dragon’s power returns to full, then climb and drift for a while. You’ll still be pursuing the enemy, but your dragon will get enough rest to be at full power for combat.

Should you succeed and complete a mission, an award ceremony is held. You’ll learn if you have gained rank or are entitled to join a new order. You can complete DragonStrike no matter which of the three orders of knighthood you are in.

The first mission for new lancers is called “Snow Blind.” Your army has left Sancrist Isle to battle Takhisis’s forces, and you have been left on the island to watch the nearest enemy unit is currently located, and three doses of Keoghtom’s Healing Ointment are available. Other magical items found during your adventures are shown on-screen as well.

As you pilot your dragon into combat with an enemy dragon, vicious hand-to-hand and tooth-and-claw combat are handled automatically. As a knight lancer, you can sustain damage only from an attack from above, but don’t forget that your life depends upon your dragon; an attack from below would certainly injure him. If enough damage is taken to reduce your dragon’s hit points to zero, you’ll both fall! Keep an eye on your dragon’s power; should his power fall, a good maneuver is to wait until your dragon’s power returns to full, then climb and drift for a while. You’ll still be pursuing the enemy, but your dragon will get enough rest to be at full power for combat.

Should you succeed and complete a mission, an award ceremony is held. You’ll learn if you have gained rank or are entitled to join a new order. You can complete DragonStrike no matter which of the three orders of knighthood you are in.

The first mission for new lancers is called “Snow Blind.” Your army has left Sancrist Isle to battle Takhisis’s forces, and you have been left on the island to watch for enemy white-dragon scouts. Should any scouts appear (and naturally, they do), you are to hunt them down and prevent them from warning the Evil Queen of the good alliance’s plans. Your next mission is entitled “Occupational Hazard.” Here you approach the Isle of Cristyne and spot several wyverns about to drop onto members of your force’s naval fleet. Wyverns, as you probably know, have deadly sting-ers. Riding your bronze dragon, you can eliminate the wyverns and save the ships. The third mission, “Black Plague,” has you in combat against a black dragon that has wreaked havoc on the knights’ outpost in southern Ergoth. This is a real sneak; watch out for back attacks!

All of the missions are exciting and increasingly dangerous. Your first mount is a bronze dragon; you graduate to a silver dragon and finally to a gold dragon as you join different knightly orders. Considering that the gold dragon has a 190’ body and a 159’ tail, you’d think little could measure up to his stature. Well, think again! Takhissis’s Death Dragon has an armor class of -11 and 200’ of body length, with a Death Gas breath weapon! Other forces that oppose you include manticores, sivak draconians, and flying citadels—fortresses held aloft by magic. Included with the game on the back page of the user’s manual is a keyboard command diagram to assist gamers in learning key presses for this arcade flight simulator. The copy protection method used is to match two symbols shown on-screen with two symbols in your book. You are then asked to enter a specific numbered word from a specific numbered paragraph on that page, and all is well!

DragonStrike supports the AdLib sound board. One reason for this arcade game’s success is that Westwood Associates programmed the material for Strategic Simulations, assuming top quality. You can also change the amount of on-screen detail to speed up the game, if you wish.

We thoroughly enjoy DragonStrike, the latest member of SSI’s AD&D® computer games. It is highly original in design and play, offers enormous dollar-to-play value, and is a superior arcade/strategy game. We don’t think you’ll want to miss this one. Try it out at your dealer and see if you don’t agree that DragonStrike is highly addictive.

Activision
3885 Bohannon Drive
Menlo Park CA 94025
(415) 329-0800

Mechwarrior
PC/MS-DOS (EGA) version $49.95
This game requires a PC/MS-DOS computer running at no less than 8MHz with 512K RAM, or 640K RAM on a Tandy microcomputer. A color monitor is also offered for the AdLib sound board or the Roland MT-32. A joystick is optional.
If you have played FASA’s BATTLETECH® game or Activision’s Battletech computer game, you can probably guess that Mechwarrior involves tactical-level, 3-D combat
Mechwarrior (Activision)

This is a highly entertaining, edge-of-the-seat combat/adventure game that finds you ultimately controlling an entire lance of 'Mech combat machines (if you’re lucky enough to survive your first missions, that is). The programming was managed by the staff at Dynamix, the coders responsible for A-10 Tank Killer, Arctic Fox, and Abrams Battle Tank.

Before you can participate in Mechwarrior, you must enter the data needed to complete a 'Mech ID and code check. You match the 'Mech picture on-screen with an identical 'Mech pictured in the user's manual, then cross-reference the code check for that 'Mech and enter an authorization code. Once that’s accepted, the adventure begins.

You start the adventure having been accused of killing your uncle, Duke Vandenberg, by one Jarris McBrin. Jarris has his eye on your uncle's title, but you've got to prove your innocence by finding the real killers, whose symbol is the deaths' heads. You can change crew assignments when you're killed in pointless firefights. Fight only with a forward view of the terrain with your terms or you'll see a new contract offered. You can move the mouse cursor over any dot and quickly learn the name of the planet and its leading attribute. For example, those interested in finding the best pizza in the Star League are advised to head for the planet Galuzzo in House Kurita! You can access each planet’s database for more information. Access a house, and a list of all aligned planets are displayed. Move the cursor over a planet’s name and press RETURN; the Star Map returns, and the flight path from your current location to the new planet is indicated, as well as the cost, in credits, it’ll require to get there.

The first undertaking on any new planet should be to go to the local bar and order a drink. Most times you’ll be told that it’s been pretty quiet and you should come back another day. Occasionally the bar-tender will reveal critical information to you. When you follow his tips, remember your mission is to clear your name, not to get killed in pointless firefight. Fight only when there is no other course of action.

When you are involved in actual 'Mech combat, the screen reveals 'Mech controls. On the left side, one will find a 'Mech control screen that is quite compact. You can rotate your 'Mech’s torso while tracking an enemy 'Mech with weapon cross-hairs. The 'Mech control screen is quite compact. You can rotate your 'Mech's torso while tracking an enemy 'Mech with weapon cross-hairs, or you can instantly autoalign your 'Mech's torso to the aiming crosshairs. There’s a weapon-status board where you select a weapon to fire. Indicators for life support, sensors, gyros, and engines are

Messages from others using the complexes. Keep your pen and notepad handy.

At the complexes, you can repair, reload, and sell your 'Mechs. It’s not uncommon to buy a 'Mech at a reasonable price on a major world, then sell it at a premium on a minor planet. You can build quite a hoard by using this maneuver throughout the galaxy.

When selecting a contract, you can attempt to alter the contract to reflect what you believe your value is in completing the assignment. A total amount for the completion of the mission is revealed in the contract, as well as a percentage of the salvage that you will receive upon victory. Additionally, a final percentage is offered up front. Try to increase these percentages and the total payment; you'll be surprised at how often you can earn far more than the contract initially stipulates. Submit your revised percentages and totals to the house in question, and it'll either accept your terms or you'll see a new contract on-screen (and usually the new contract has upgraded the percentages to reflect your demand for higher amounts). However, you won’t always succeed in obtaining higher payments. The house may grow tired of dickering and refuse to offer you a contract. You must be wise enough to figure out how close you can push the house before it closes the contract to you.

To travel from planet to planet, a star map is offered. You can move the mouse cursor over any dot and quickly learn the name of the planet and its leading attribute. For example, those interested in finding the best pizza in the Star League are advised to head for the planet Galuzzo in House Kurita! You can access each planet’s database for more information. Access a house, and a list of all aligned planets are displayed. Move the cursor over a planet’s name and press RETURN; the Star Map returns, and the flight path from your current location to the new planet is indicated, as well as the cost, in credits, it’ll require to get there.

The first undertaking on any new planet should be to go to the local bar and order a drink. Most times you’ll be told that it’s been pretty quiet and you should come back another day. Occasionally the bar-tender will reveal critical information to you. When you follow his tips, remember your mission is to clear your name, not to get killed in pointless firefight. Fight only when there is no other course of action.

When you are involved in actual 'Mech combat, the screen reveals 'Mech controls. With many combat simulators, you have a forward view of the terrain with weapon cross-hair. The 'Mech control screen is quite compact. You can rotate your 'Mech's torso while tracking an enemy 'Mech with weapon cross-hairs, or you can instantly autoalign your 'Mech's torso to the aiming crosshairs. There's a weapon-status board where you select a weapon to fire. Indicators for life support, sensors, gyros, and engines are
all directly below the main viewscreen and are easy to read. A target display shows how much damage you’ve inflicted on an enemy ‘Mech. By using Automatic Weapon Selection and the TAB key, you can fire all your weapons at a single target automatically. You must watch the heat indicator for your ‘Mech; should you overheat, you will not be able to move or fire.

Some specific hints for those entering the world of MechWarrior include:

— Light ‘Mechs can jump over enemy units to get behind them;
— Zanzibar in the Capellan Confederacy has some great buys;
— Lands End is probably a good starting point;
— An assignment to Dustball should be accepted;
— Brown is both helpful and dangerous;
— Stone Arrow;
— Wendall can lead you to Willard;
— Okefenokee; and
— Kearney knows all!

MechWarrior is a great strategy/adventure game. We found that the sound sometimes became monotonous, especially in the bars, but thankfully there is a sound-off option. The game can be played using a mouse, joy stick, or keyboard. We found the keyboard/mouse option best for the adventure portion of the game, and any can be recalled when you wish.

MechWarrior will have you sitting on the edge of your chair as you take enemy ‘Mechs head-on. The combat sequences alone would have been enough for most gamers. Add in the adventure of finding your family’s killers based on clues you must find throughout the Star League, and you’ve got an offering with an extremely high entertainment value. We recommend MechWarrior not only to arcaders but also to adventure gamers.

Electronic Arts
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo CA 94404
(415) 371-7171

Budokan ****

Commodore Amiga version $39.95

Martial arts are back again. In Budokan, your character learns four different types of martial arts and uses them in a competition called the Budokan. Each style of martial arts has over 25 moves, so the game takes time to master. At the beginning, you enter different buildings to practice karate, kendo, nunchaku, and bo. You can practice the moves by yourself or against one of three skilled opponents. A bar at the top of the screen shows your stamina and ki. Stamina drops as the player performs complicated moves or is hit by the opponent. This bar slowly returns with rest. Ki represents mental power; the more ki, the more damage is inflicted with each hit.

After you spar, the computer gives you pointers on how to improve your fighting. You can then enter a sparring building to compete against another human player or against the computer itself. You can even fight the computer using a different form of martial arts; e.g., you can use the bo style while the computer uses karate. When you feel that you have practiced enough, you can enter the Budokan and fight other computerized opponents. You choose which martial art to use for each match. Each style can be used only four times, so use the weaker styles on opponents with less strength and save the better-prepared styles for later. If you win, you progress to the next level. If you fail to beat an opponent one of three times, you drop to the next lower level.

Overall, Budokan is a refreshing martial arts game with competition and variety. The moves, however, are a double-edged sword. It is fun to have a variety of attacks and defenses, but some are hard to accomplish, and you might become frustrated when attempting to do one move but ending up with another move that puts you in a precarious situation. This happened to us a number of times, and we turned off the computer before we took out our frustration on it. The animation and sound were well done. Except for the one negative point mentioned, we recommend Budokan to any martial-arts or arcade fan.

News and new products

Accolade (408-985-1700) enters the animated graphic-adventure game category with two new offerings. The first is Search for the King. Players assume the identity of Les Manley, an employee of WILL, the lowest-rated television station in New York. The station has put up a reward of $1 million to anyone who can find the King, the world’s greatest and most elusive entertainer. You control the actions of bumbling Les Manley in search of the King, trying as you do so to become familiar with the character. What seems logical may not always be the correct move. The second offering is Altered Destiny, wherein players are introduced to a world from another space and time. Designed by author Michael Berlyn (The Eternal Enemy and four other science-fiction novels), you
20 NEW 30 Sided Dice Tables Including a complete Micro-Module "The Search For Fezenclap's Treasure" Ideal game accessory for using 30-Sided dice in your fantasy role-playing.

AL HUNSTVILLE COMIC SHOP 536-5186
CA DIAMOND BAR ALL-STAR GAMES 588-5098
CA WESTLAKEVILLAG 581-9458
CO ENGLEWOOD MOUNTAIN MAG 765-1989
CT NEW LONDON NEW ENGLAND DICE PEDDLER 442-6037
FL MIAMI SUNSHINE COMICS 264-1250
FL ORLANDO FANTASY APOTHECARY 273-6692
GA HINESVILLE CASTLECOMICS 368-5257
GA VALDOSTA STAR BASE ONE 1-800-954-2000
HI HONOLULU SPACE CASTLE 528-3203
IL CARBONDALE CASTLEPERILOUS 529-3137
IL N. CHICAGO TED'S ENTERPRISE 580-3213
MA CAMBRIDGE PANDEMONIUMGAMES,VIDEO,BOOKS 547-3721
MA WORCESTER MUSIC OUEST 754-9593
NJ DOVER PAPERBACK BAZAAR 742-2523
NJ HILLSBURG IMAGINATION WORKSHOP 560-6421
NJ WILMINGTON PATS GIFT'S & MORE 729-4331
NY HUNTINGTON OSCAR'S BOOK SHOP 427-5155
NY N. MERRICK L & S COMIX 489-9586
NY PLATTSBURG GAMEMASTER 581-5033
NY SCHENECTADY ARMADILLO GAMES 377-6134
NY ST JAMES FOURTH WORLD 548-5656
OH NORTHWOOD GREAT EASTERN COMICS 557-1213
OH TOLEDO MIND GAMES 531-5540
OR CORVALLIS TRUMPS HOBBIES 753-7540
VA CHARLOTTESVILLE PHANTOM GAMES 971-1929
VA LYNCHBURG CONTINENTAL HOBBY CENTER 393-8434
VA KENTUCKY BOOK WORLD 624-4492
WA SPONKAN MILLY'S SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY 934-0057
WA PARKSVILLE BOOKS & THINGS 422-0666
CA WINNIPEG MANITOBA CAMPAIGN OUTFITTERS 452-8711

VISIT THESE FINE HOBBY GAME & COMIC SHOPS FOR ARMY TO PRODUCTS AND ALL YOUR GAMING NEEDS.

AK ANCHORAGE FIRST EMPIRE 337-6427
CA FULLERTON THE GAME CASTLE 871-5600
CA GARDEN GROVE BROOKHURST HOBBIES 636-3680
CA LANCASTER SKELCHER STRONGHOLD 264-4461
CA MERCED ARMY CASTLE 723-6663
CA SAN DIEGO GEMETOWN 291-1666
CT WEST HARTFORD WAR & PIECES 232-6068
DE CLINTON BETWEEN ROCKS 798-3378
FL FT. LAUDERDALE COMIC & GAMING EXCHANGE 742-0777
FL FT. LAUDERDALE DRAGON LAIR GAMES 587-3937
FL JACKSONVILLE XENOS 777-9286
FL LAKEWRIGHT THE FANTASY FACTORY 676-3413
FL ORLANDO ENTERPRISE 1701 696-1704
GA CONYERS DRAGONWARE HOBBIES 483-1629
IL BLOOMINGTON HOBILAND, INC. 629-3622
IL GLENDALE HEIGHTS GUARDIAN HOBBIES 980-5454
IL MT. PROSPECT GAMES PLUS 577-9656
IL MOLINE THE GAME EMPIRUM 762-6577
IL SOUTH ELGIN GAL HOBBIES 696-6324
IN ELKHART BOOKS & BEYOND 262-1798
IN MUNCIE WIZARDS KEE 285-5145
IN SURFAN WESTERNMAN SOFTWARE 852-4542
IN VALPARAISO VALPARAISO PET & HOBBY 462-8346
KS KANSAS CITY J'S HOBBY HAVEN 267-3030
KS MISSION THE WARDLORD 362-5518
MA BOSTON COMPLEAT STRATEGIST 267-2461
MA MAINE EXCALIBUR HOBBIES 325-2069
MA WORCESTER MUSIQ PEACE 754-9597
ME BATH TOY SOLDIER 443-3711
MD BALTIMORE ARMY MUSEUM MILITARY HIST. 764-8700
MD CENTERVILLE ALLEY CAT COMICS 754-3431
MD WALDORF SMALLWOOD VIDEO CENTER 645-1981
MI LANSING RIDER'S HOBBY SHOP 485-3024
MI PONTIAC THE STORE 673-1480
MN MINNEAPOLIS PHOENIX GAMES 823-2222
MN ROSEVILLE LEGACY GAMES 488-8649
MN ST. PAUL THE SOURCE COMICS & GAMES 646-7670
MN ST. PAUL THE SOURCE GAMES ANNEX 645-3048
MO INDEPENDENCE MONTY'S BOOKSWAP 737-1427
MO OVERLAND GAMES, CRAFTS & HOBBIES 423-2199
MO ST. LOUIS HOBBY SHOP 351-4818
MT MISSOULA TREASURE CHEST 549-7962
NH CONCORD TOY CITY 225-9379
NH DOVER PAPERBACK BAZZAR TRISTATE PLAZA 742-2628
NH MANCHESTER THE COMIC STORE 688-3605
NH NASHUA THE COMIC STORE 881-4855
NJ PARAMUS GAME MASTER LTD. 843-3308
NJ LAS VEGAS PAGE AFTER PAGE 384-1690
NY COMPLUTUS COMIC STRATEGIST #1 609-3440
NY NEW YORK COMPLEAT STRATEGIST #2 582-1272
NY PLATTSBURG GAMES MASTER 561-5033
NY ROCHESTER CAGY EGON 392-5158
NY YONKERS DRAGONS DEN 785-4630
NC MOREHEAD CITY TWIN BOOKSTORE 726-1810
OH BOWLING GREEN HIDDEN REALMS 355-5356
PA JENKINTOWN JENKINTOWN HOBBY 854-7555
PA KING OF PRUSSIA COMPLEAT STRATEGIST 246-8942
PA KUTZTOWN PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH HOBBIES 663-9060
PA LEMOYNE MAGIC SHOP 737-7559
PA PHILADELPHIA COMPLEAT STRATEGIST 563-9260
PA CHARLESTON GREEN DRAGON 797-2062
TN NASHVILLE GAMES EXTRADINORARIO 800-777-GAME
TX LUBBOCK STAR BOOKS COMICS 744-9150
TX SAN ANTONIO DUNGEON ROOM & COMIC 770-2272
VA ALEXANDRIA EAGLE & EMPIRE GAME SHOP 360-5636
VA CHARLOTTESVILLE STANDARD BEARER 975-1439
VA FALLS CHURCH COMPLEAT STRATEGIST 532-2477
VA NORTON'S CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS 449-3451
VA RICHMOND ONE-EYED-JACOUES 359-5163
VA STERLING PARK WARGAMERS HOBBY SHOP 465-6738
VT BURLINGTON QUARTERSTAFF GAMES 861-3966
VA LYNWOOD FANTASTIC GAMES & TOYS 775-4871

ARMY OVERSEAS

CD - MONTREAL ARMORY CANADA-LAVIERE INT. (514)341-1561
FRP - PARTacho ARMORY/DES HECUBE 1-800-954-2000
FRD - MANHEIM THE ARMY'S FANTASY FORREST 137-2574
IT - VERONA THE ARMORY'S FERNANDO FERRARI 452-5319
N - WASHINGTON THE ARMY'S FERNANDO FERRARI 85-3024
SWE - SVERIGEBORG THE ARMY'S WIZARDS GAMES 521-1258
UK - PETERBOROUGH THE ARMORY/DUNGEON 312-668
REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE - LEISURE CRAFT 543-3959
control P. J. Barret, who is sucked into a television set and enters a fantastic alternate world. Both games are for PC/MS-DOS machines for $59.95.

The Avalon Hill Game Company (801-254-9200) has released Legends of the Lost Realm for the Macintosh ($39.95). A sorcerer's evil rule must be defeated; you avoid traps and enemies as you journey through a treacherous world. Also out is Combat for the Commodore 64/128 (and soon for Macintosh and PC/MS-DOS computers). You create robots that must destroy an army of aliens that has landed in the year 2020. You can play the game either solitary or with a friend. There are more than 300 weapons combinations, seven scenarios, and three modes of play, all for $24.95.

Cinemaware (805-495-6515) is releasing three games. Wings, a World War II simulation/action/adventure game for the Amiga, recreates the life of a rookie pilot who joins an elite flight squadron during the intense air battles over Europe. It uses the various aircraft from the war in dogfights, bombing, and strafing runs in over 2,000 different missions—for $49.95. Next there’s in Three, an animated fantasy that is a treasure hunt of puzzles, each adding an episode to an expanding story. There are 90 puzzles, 60 scenes, and no dead ends that force you to start over. This is for the Macintosh for $49.95. Finally, Brainblaster, is a double game package that includes Xenon 2 and Bombadig. Both are quality action games with 3-D isometric points-of-view, for Amiga, Atari ST, and PC/MS-DOS computers ($39.95).

Electronic Arts (415-571-7171) will ship its first 16-bit Sega Genesis video game products this summer, including Populous and Badokan. Other NES titles are currently being worked on.

From Interplay Productions (714-545-9001) comes Future Wars: Adventures in Time for the Amiga and Atari ST. This game uses the Cinematique system to enable the mouse to control inventory management, conversation, and character movement. The point-and-click interface uses a series of pop-up text and command windows to eliminate the need for a language parser. You start the adventure working in a modern city, then uncover a time machine that takes you back to the Middle Ages. There you find an intergalactic plot that brings you face-to-face with the ultimate threat to mankind. Mankind’s future depends upon your ability to crisscross through time, solve puzzles, defeat a wide assortment of mutant monsters and alien storm troopers, and perform a rescue or two. The price is $49.95 for Amiga and PC/MS-DOS. For Atari ST the price is $39.95.

Konami Inc. (708-215-5100) has released several new programs plus a new voice command video-game accessory for use with Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) zapper games. Called the Laser Scope, this sleek, plastic headset utilizes an eyesight target locator and voice-activated firing sequence that allows players to easily manipulate the control pad for greater interaction with the game. This multi-use headset offers a removable eyesight for a stereo headset option, a room silence feature and sound enhancer for NES games, and a 15’ extension cord.

Mindscraft (800-525-4933) has debuted The Keys to Maramon. The Island of Maramon is having problems. Monsters emerge from its cellars and caverns every night to terrorize its citizens and loot the buildings. You play a hero or heroine hired by the town to protect Maramon. Every night involves combat; every day involves a visit to the town’s shops and buildings for equipment, supplies, and information. You select one of four heroes. The price is $39.95 for C64/128 and $49.95 for PC/MS-DOS computers.

Clue corner

Champions of Krynn (SSI)
1. Remember, draconians each have a different way of dying. Baaz turn to stone, kapak melt into harmful pools of acid, and bozak explode. With baaz, the main difficulty is in keeping your weapon. After a fight with a non-draconian foe, get his weapon, whether it be a broad sword or a mace—anything! Keep this weapon, then use it when your normal weapon is lost within a dying baaz.

2. In Thrrott, it’s safe to rest in a room after you’ve killed its inhabitants—usually. In the catacombs below Thrrott, it’s safe to rest only in the treasure room. When resting in unsafe rooms, always settle your party into a corner with no doors. That way, wandering monster attacks are minimized.

3. The flail and chain mail of the high priest (who appears in Thrrott after discovering the party’s disruption of the conversation) are magical (+1).

4. Use the disk asked for when you enter a city as a hint. “A” is the easiest, while “F” is the end of the game.

5. At the second outpost, you’ll be asked to do a lot of things. At the commandant’s HQ, you’ll find the roster listed in order of difficulty. Do not attempt a mission greater than the first mission.

6. The Dragonlance is in Gargath, but it’s hard to find. The entrance is in the large house, in the corner of the room containing the priest, undead, and snakes. The keep itself is pretty tough.

7. When attempting to pass the knight’s test of honor, remember one thing: These are knights. Knights are good. Also, do not take anything during the test of greed. When the game asks for a character to step through the ring of fire or to answer a question, make certain your knight is the one to complete the action—even if he has only one hit point remaining. Don’t worry about being hurt or killed, even in the fight against undead dragons, until after you’ve rescued the knight’s spirit and he has healed you. There’s a surprise in store for you.

Curse of the Azure Bonds (SSI)
Do you desperately need experience points for a character? After the fighting has stopped, continue the battle. Then make one of your characters flee, save for the one who needs the experience points. Watch the total XP mount!

If you need to get rid of some money but don’t want to drop it, create a character just for storing money, then dump it all on that character. The same advice goes for scrolls or strange weapons.

Jason Dunn
Calgary, Alberta

1. Complete a bit of adventuring to pick up rumors and experience before heading for Essembra. Cast all defensive spells before heading for Hap, as you will be attacked by three black dragons on the way to that area. Make certain that your cleric has memorized Slow or Neutralize Poison.

2. A female PC will allow the party to accept a commission from a female drow called Silk. A sly, highly charismatic character can gain experience for the party by talking to salamanders. Crimdrac can be defeated by a combination of Magic Missiles and magical swords.

3. Once you are transported to the top of Dracondras’ tower, you have the choice of fighting him or the dragons. If you run, the dragons attack.

4. On your way down through the tower, you have the following encounters at the bottom of each set of stairs:

   a. a drow lord (AC -5, 106 hp, shield with Glyph of Pain, casts Haste on himself);
   b. an illusion (say “no” to it);
   c. a glyph-trapped scroll; and
d. a set of trapped (folding) stairs.

   Any character with 18s in wisdom and intelligence will win the trial of the sphere.

5. Position your fighter/mages in the first two slots of your party. Dracondras’s Lightning Bolts will reach them. If you can, make sure they cast a Minor Globe of Invulnerability before this encounter. Dracondras has cast this on himself as well, and he also casts Fire Shield when he is physically threatened.

6. Some tavern tales you’ve heard may be true. The Mulmaster Beholder Corps rumor is true. Stay on the first floor of the tower under Dagger Falls to find the Corps; they all have +4 long swords, as well as a few friends.

Kevin O’Collier
Camp Stanley, Korea

Dragon Wars (Interplay)
1. There are several things that must be done to win this game. When you are creating your characters, make certain each one possesses the swim skill. Make
two magic-users, one skilled in high magic and the other in druid magic. (Later in the game will come a method to obtain a druid as well as a sun magic-user, so it’s not totally necessary to create those magic-users at the start of the game.) Create another character with high strength and fist-fighting skills (at least 20 strength, 20 dexterity, and 6 in fist-fighting). Fist-fighting will save your characters from a fist fight. Also make a character with 24 dexterity so he can hit first (I included climb, city lore, lockpick, hiding, and bureaucracy in this character as well).

2. In Purgatory, map the entire city. Make certain you don’t fight the king’s guard and pikemen, as they are really hard to defeat. There is a 1,000 gold reward for defeating Humbada. The arena contest is not required, but it does give your characters experience and the feeling of accomplishment.

3. There are three methods of escaping from Purgatory. One is risk free, the second is a little more risky, and the third will result in death. Don’t go into the Apsu waters! Try this: Go to the northwest tower, face west, go forward, turn left, go south down to the southwest tower, turn west, and you’re out of Purgatory. At the slave camp, don’t fight; talk to them and you will obtain a lot of information.

4. In the slave camp, explore. The old man likes the fact that you use magic, but no points are lost. The individual you can obtain here doesn’t seem very useful.

5. In Forlorn you may need extra experience to win the fight with the creatures in the ruins. Explore the bridge, as there are clues and treasure there. You must pay an amount equal to the number of people times 10 to cross the bridge. Don’t fight them, as they are quite powerful.

6. On the Isle of the Sun, there is a lot to do in the Magic Forest. First, there is treasure to the west near the water. In the building, use the horn if you have a character with at least 22 strength—and congratulations, you now have a new druid. Save at least two mushrooms.

7. In Phebus, go to the northeast area. There is a tavern where a sun magic-user can be found. The dogs have treasure. On the ninth day in the prison, there is a way to escape. Hide to get past the guards and explore. Find a shovel, or climb to get to the stairs in Halifax. Then enlist in the Army. In the camp, go north; you will be in Byzanoole.

8. In Byzanoole, find the dwarf and go down the stairs. Don’t fight the woman in white and red. Follow the directions of the men. In the city square is a secret passage. Go in, making sure all of your characters’ health and magic abilities are at their highest levels and that you have two dragon stones for each magic-user. Save your game before and after the fight.

9. On King’s Island, first go to the insane area to the south. There are three useful items there: the signet ring (which you must use to get out of the area), the branches, and the stone head. For the list of where to go to find each stone part, look at Quag. When you are finished there, leave. The dungeon is pretty boring. You still have the magic quiver, right? Use the Gatlin Bow with the magic quiver and look at the damage caused. It works at a 20’ range. Explore Kingshome.

10. In Quag can be found the places to obtain the stone parts: the stone arms are at the ruins on Forlorn Island, in the dungeon; the stone head is in the insane area; the stone torso is in Necropolis; and the stone hands are in Freeport.

George Lane
APO NY

1. Make your own characters. Don’t transfer them from The Bard’s Tale I-III. Sure, retain their lesser magical skills, but their skills are bad. The best four characters to start with include:

- Low magic, high magic, arcane lore, town lore, high intelligence and spirit, and bow weapons skill;
- Low magic, high magic, bandage, forest lore, high intelligence and spirit, and crossbow weapons skill;
- Climbing, lockpick, high strength and health, and a weapons skill (one character should have sword skill and the other two-handed sword skill, so the two most important and powerful weapons won’t have to be used by the same person later on; those two weapons are the Freedom sword and the Holy Lance); and
- Bandage, bureaucracy, high strength and health, and a weapons skill.

2. Druid skills will be made available later in the game (by wrestling a god), and sun spells can be found in a tavern in Phoebus. Don’t waste your starting points acquiring these skills. As you gain levels, increase your characters’ health, dexterity, and either spirit for magicians or strength for warriors.

3. Before you venture from Purgatory, complete the following:

- Acquire all lesser spells for your spellcasters. If you find the right shop, the spells are free;
- Defeat the gladiators as you will be given an item that helps you leave the continent;
- Find Urlik; who is in a tavern in the northeast—he’s a great fighter and not a bad wrestler;
- Find the power regeneration source in the southeast tower; and
- Leave an offering at Irkalla’s statue as this will be beneficial to you later in the game.

4. I found five ways to leave Purgatory, listed in order of increasing risk:

- Sell yourself as a slave, as this is one of the safest and easiest ways out. You’ll have to solve a couple of puzzles, though. If you select this method, remember that dying men love water. Good luck; you’re going to need it.
- Go to the Underworld. I advise that you wait until your characters become very experienced.
- Swim to safety (extremely difficult).
- Find one of the secret doors in the walls.
- Hide in a sack and get thrown over the walls! All you have to do is to find the smelly wall.

John Head
Wheaton IL

1. In the middle of the city of Necropolis is a secret door that leads into a large compound. Nergel dwells within. Make sure you have a mushroom to give to him.

2. If a party member dies, the only way to bring him back to life is to use the magic pool under Necropolis.

Daniel “Beeb” Inger
Suffern NY

MechWarrior (Activision)

A good salvage percentage can sometimes bring in more money than the regular payment for assignment completion. Davion offers the best contracts, but be careful of a contract that looks too good; you’ll be in over your head.

Buy the biggest ‘Mechs when you can afford them. Having more ‘Mechs will get you bigger contracts. I managed to acquire two Warhammers and a Battlemaster for the final battle in addition to my original Jenner.

Having a fast jump-capable ‘Mech for the final battle can give you the victory with the least amount of damage (it is hoped). Remember, Dark Wing’s ‘Mechs are a lot better than the house ‘Mechs.

David Begley
Teaneck NJ

It’s September, time for our readers to pick up their pens and postcards and mail in their votes for the best software adventure of the year! When voting, please specify the system version of the software for which you are voting (PC/MS-DOS, Macintosh, Apple II, etc.). The results of the voting will be published in our December column. Thanks for your interest and your vote!
Chris Harvey Games

Enter a world of Fantasy & Make-Believe
Try and buy a game from Chris Harvey

On second thoughts, don’t bother… Use one of the renowned shops listed below and get all the benefits of dealing with the greatest games wholesaler in the world® but with the personal attention of your local shop – just drop in and say, “Chris Harvey sent you.” © Possibly untrue… or should he probably? © But don’t blame us!

The Great Old Ones® • Teenagers From Outer Space® • Rolemaster® • Mega Traveller® • Transdimensional Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles® • Supremacy® • BattleTech® • C&C• Ruinequest® • Car Wars® • Ghostbusters® • International® • F&M® • Star Wars® • Paint

Ares Magica• The Mortor• Mercenaries• Creatures of the Dark• MechWarrior®• Immortan II®

NOW AVAILABLE
Probably the most comprehensive
GAMERS’ PRICE LIST
in Europe

Available for 50p from shops listed below or direct from

The Phoenix

NATO Yeltsin

CHRIS HARVEY GAMES for 50p plus a large SAE

The Phoenix Trading Station

Year of the Phoenix

Harpun

Harpun

Batman RPG® • Red Storm Rising® • Canal Priests of Mars® • Shadow World® • Conklin

Temple of the Beastsmen® • Chieftain® • The Glory® • Prince Valiant® • Challenge• Ninjas

Last Battle of the Saibans III • Torg® • Empire of the Petal Throne® • Richard The Lionheart

Encounter Games 2

7 High Street Arcade
Cardiff
CF1 2BB
(0222) 221159

Toppers
54 Watergate Street
Chester
CH1 2LA
(0244) 328080

Tower Models
44 Cookson Street
Blackpool
FYI 3ED
(0253) 23797

Trivial Book Shop
Inn Mail Order
Meranbear 3
3000 Hanover
W.Germany (0211) 39099

War & Peace
8 Upper Orwell Street
Ipswich
IP1 1NN
(0473) 230556

Kings Lynn Model Centre
40 Norfolk Street
Kings Lynn
Norfolk PE30 1AH
(0553) 766755

The Model Shop
19/20 Station Road
Harlow
(081) 863 9788

Shrewsbury Models
15 Market Gardens
Shrewsbury, Shropshire
t (0233) 245559

Role & Play
6 Green Street
Wolverhampton
CB2 3UJ
(0233) 355188

Players, Unit 13
Cafffield Close
St Mellion Way
Ipswich
IP1 1NN
(0473) 310057

Alcove Mail Order

Ballards
54 Crouchend Road
Turnbridge Wells
Kent
(0800) 31830

Swarovski Models &
Hobbies
Pyeong St
Swarovski SA1 3QX
(0922) 65977

Game Inc.
99 Frank Street
Plymouth
PL1 1QA
(0752) 672149

Paulines
18 East Street Centre
Southampton
SO1 1OU
(023) 221789

The Stamp Corner
62 Northfield Road
Dudley
W3 8P4
(0345) 22338

Sheffield Space
Centre
33 The Whicker
Sheffield S3 9HS
(0742) 759903

Tidy Martial Arts
16 Castle Street
Harrogate
(0442) 633098

Spirit Games
68 Station Street
Glasgow-For-Treat
Staffs
(0385) 511293

The Model Shop
209 Denegate
Manchester
M3 3NN
(061) 834 3972

Westgate Games
91 St Dunstan Street
Canterbury
CT1 2AJ
(0227) 457527

D & G Games
66 Crescent
Alcester
Worcestershire
(0387) 323603

The Stamp Corner
13 East Street Centre
Southampton
SO1 1OU
(023) 221789

J & B Small
43 Darlington Road
Pleak, Walsall
W.Midlands W22 9QT
(0292) 22338

C & C Games
30 Meadow Street
Wensley-Super-Mar
Aven
(0424) 641282

Paladin Games &
Minorities, Unit 9,
Wigford Arcade, Pricetown
Northwards Co, Devon
(0374) 811166

Abell Toys
45 St Peter's Gate
Stockport, Cheshire
SK1 1DI
(061) 480 7665

Tralis & Things
170/172 Chorley New Road
Norwich
(0662) 72348

Thrift & Things
135 Claremont Road
Plymouth
PL1 3AP
(0752) 512558

Stationery & Games
4 The Croft
Bedford
(0996) 2755

Swallowing Models &
Hobbies,207 Chester Rd
Wolverhampton
Wolverhampton
(0253) 35511

Thunderbirds II
116 Priory Grange
Cherry Hinton
(0772) 20427

Medway Games
29-6 High Street
Chesham
Kent MJ5 4RN
(0634) 814750

Another World
168 Castle Street
Edinburgh EH3 8DF
(031) 557 5255

The Regal
Badger Craft Centre
Nantwich
West Yorkshire
(0724) 594945

Paperback Book Shop
( undated ? games only
334 Westgate
Lancaster LA1 1NS
(0925) 381281

The Gamekeeper
101 Gowy Road
Tunbridge Wells
(0451) 7240

Fantasy World
103 St Johns Hill
Clapham Junction
London SW11 3BY
(071) 738 0617

Another World
40 St. John's Hill
Reigate
(0208) 728022

Phantastic Games
103A St. John's Hill
Reigate
(0208) 728022

Phantastic Games
Unit 2b In Shop Indoor
Market, Waterlow Rd
Reigate
(0208) 728022

Games Emporium
51 St John's Street
Bury St. Edmunds
Suffolk

TRADE ENQUIRIES ONLY
CHRIS HARVEY GAMES, PO Box 38, Bath Street, Walsall WS1 3BY
FAX: 0922 721644
“I love leftovers!”

By now, you’ve all gone out and purchased the MU6 Gamer’s Handbook of the MARVEL UNIVERSE™ 1990 Character Updates book. This 256-page compendium contains a myriad of Marvel characters never before put into the game’s statistics, plus important updates on your favorite characters, like Spider-Man’s Captain Universe powers. The designers, however, had more characters than they had room for in the book, so DRAGON® Magazine has grabbed up four of the characters that didn’t make the final cut. We present two heroes this month and will publish two villains in November tissue #163. Also look for a special Halloween “MARVEL-Phile” next month by Dale A. Donovan.

Special thanks to Steven Schend, Judy Gifford, Peggy Cooper, and Barb Nish for their assistance in compiling this column.
Dakota North is a determined young woman with good business sense and superb detective skills. Because of her many talents and successful exploits, North has gained world fame as a private investigator. North could be encountered when she opens an office in your campaign's major city. She could meet your heroes while working on the same case, or she could be hired by the heroes to do some investigatory legwork that they cannot perform themselves. North could—unknowingly—accept a case from a nondescript villain to investigate the civilian identity of one or more of your campaign’s heroes.

HISTORY
Dakota North is the daughter of Samuel J. North, a retired agent of the CIA. Little is known of Dakota’s early life other than at a relatively young age, she chose a career as a freelance private investigator. Her business is apparently quite successful in that it currently supports four branch offices around the world.

In North’s earliest recorded case, she was hired by Major George C. Cooper, a former intelligence agent and associate of North’s father, to protect Cooper from the operatives of an international arms dealer, Sheik Ibn Bheik. Fearing for his safety, Cooper passed a cartridge of experimental quickly dissipating nerve gas hidden inside a pen case to North’s younger brother, Ricky. After chasing her wayward brother across most of Europe, North was captured by Bheik along with her brother and an associate, Amos. In escaping, North lost the pen to Bheik, who subsequently accidentally released its deadly contents. Bheik and his men were killed.

A subsequent case of North’s involved the pre-teen super hero group, Power Pack, and the vigilante known as the Punisher.

STICK™

**KNOWN POWERS**

- **Proximity Sense.** Unearthly rank combat sense. Stick could not be blindsided, and this ability worked even in darkness.
- **Enhanced Senses.** Applied to taste, touch, hearing, and smell (Stick was blind).
- **Amazing power rank.** Telepathy. Excellent power rank
- **Bio-Energy Drain.** Amazing power rank, three area radius. By mentally linking with another member of his martial-arts group, Stick and his fellow member could drain 50 Health points each, per round, from every enemy within three areas. After draining 1,000 points of bio-energy, the drainer’s body exploded. Stick and his partner could do nothing else while draining life energy. If less than 1,000 Health points were drained, Stick and his helper each made an Endurance check on the Stun column.
- **Weapons:** Stick’s weapon of choice was a quarterstaff with which he could do Good damage. When fighting with the staff, his Fighting rank was considered to be Unearthly. Stick could use his staff to deflect arrows and thrown weapons such as shurikens. This action requires a successful Agility FEAT roll.

**Talents:** Stick was a martial-arts master and knew all five types of Martial Arts (A through E). He was also a Weapons Master and a Weapons Specialist with his “stick” (quarterstaff). He had the Trance and First Aid talents.

**Contacts:** Stick was the leader of a group of six other martial-arts masters. He helped Daredevil when the latter was learning how to use his radar sense. Stick also knew Black Widow, and he taught some skills to Elektra.

**ROLE-PLAYING NOTES**

In your campaign, Stick might have been the trainer of any martial artist or weapon-using hero or any hero with proximity sense or heightened senses. Although he died in the comics, he could still be alive in a game-campaign world. He could act as a counselor for heroes, guiding them and occasionally providing them with important information. He and his group of martial-arts masters could also provide a great place in which injured or hunted heroes or NPCs could hide.

**HISTORY**
Nothing is really known about Stick’s early life before he befriended Matt Murdock (Daredevil). Stick was a blind man who had somehow developed a special “proximity sense” and enhanced his remaining senses. These abilities allowed him to sense far more than a normal human could.

Stick became the leader of an elite group of warriors based on the top of an unnamed mountain. Stick was a master of martial arts and was especially adept in using a long stick in combat, from which he took his name. The members of the order developed a number of mental powers that were either psionic or mystical in nature. Each member of the order was required to rid himself of all destructive emotions.

Stick’s group spent many years fighting the Hand, a Japanese-based group of ninjas who hired themselves out as mercenaries and assassins. The members of the Hand served a demonic entity known as the Beast.
Long ago in New York City, a young man named Matt Murdock was accidentally struck in the face by a canister containing radioactive waste. The radiation blinded him but also provided him with a unique “radar sense.” After leaving the hospital, Matt was found by Stick, who taught Matt how to use his new radar sense, which was similar to Stick’s proximity sense. Stick also taught Matt various methods of hand-to-hand combat.

Later, while enrolled at Columbia University, Matt met Elektra Natchios and fell in love with her. After Elektra’s father, a Greek Ambassador, was killed by terrorists, Elektra left Matt and the United States, going to Japan. There she was trained under a sensei who had been thrown out of Stick’s order because he had not been able to completely rid himself of all his destructive emotions. Elektra reached a high level of martial prowess, but she was still filled with hate because of the death of her father. Elektra’s sensei told her about Stick’s order, hoping that it could teach Elektra to achieve inner peace.

Stick accepted Elektra as a pupil and trained her for one year. She became even better at combat and began to develop the mental powers that the members of the order possessed. Stick eventually had to expel her as she had still not been able to rid herself of her hatred. Elektra joined the Hand for a time, then became a freelance assassin.

Years later, Matt Murdock (as Daredevil) met Elektra again. Shortly after that, Murdock lost his radar sense after being caught in the concussive force of a bomb blast. Murdock found Stick, who was pool-hustling in New York City, and Stick helped Matt develop his radar sense again.

A while after that, the Hand began a campaign to kill all the members of Stick’s secret order, which at that time had only seven members, including Stick. After Stick was attacked by four Hand assassins in New York City, he summoned the other members there. Only three other members arrived: Claw, Shaft, and Stone (the other members had apparently already been killed). Stick and his fellow members were able to kill Kirgi, the Hand’s deadliest warrior. Later that night, a horde of Hand assassins attacked Stick and his friends at Matt Murdock’s apartment. Daredevil and the Black Widow were also involved in the battle. Claw was killed during the fight. Stick and Shaft then joined hands to drain the life force of the remaining Hand members. Stick ordered Stone to help Daredevil and the Black Widow escape. Stone fled with his two charges, reluctantly leaving Stick and Shaft behind. The bodies of Stick and Shaft exploded shortly thereafter, having been filled with more life energy than they could contain.
Lorin kept to the shadows as he edged closer to the flickering glow of the campfire. He moved only a few inches each time, cautiously closing the gap between himself and the two men seated cross-legged by the fire. Not a stone or leaf was disturbed by his passing, which is the way he wanted it. The pair of horses hobbled to a stake some yards from the camp heard him well enough, but they paid no mind.

The dirk felt hard and comforting in his hand, and for the seventh time he debated whether to kill both men outright or simply hold them for whatever food and valuables they carried. Lorin did not enjoy killing, not even now with a contract waiting to be fulfilled. Besides, an assassin with a reputation for indiscriminate murder was little better than a cutthroat, and about as reliable. He had no desire to build such a name for himself his first few days in the profession.

A sudden growl from his belly caused him to freeze just as he began another movement forward. He sank down to the hard surface of the desert, seeking the shadows. Counting each breath until he reached thirty, he rose again and looked toward the campfire. Neither man had stirred from his place.

Enough of such nonsense. Lorin of Bredith was no cutthroat to be caught by the protests of a hungry belly. Had he not come all this way across the desert to dispatch Mellenar to his grave; and at a lord’s request, no less? He would hold the pair at knife point once he got closer. The night would mask his position long enough for him to be off before they could fathom what was happening.

Lorin quickened his movements, sliding silently into the ring of light cast by the fire. He disliked exposing himself so. Darkness was a friend he could trust. Being one with shadows for so long made him wary in any place where none were cast.

One of the men, the larger of the two, reached toward the metal pot hung by posts above the fire. Lorin detected the rich smell of a meat stew, and his stomach pulled at him again. He held the dirk firmly in his hand, ready to strike, and moved toward the man’s back. That was when the light left the world.

Lorin felt a presence surround him—something animal, wild and full of anger—and then he was rolling in the dust, clawing at some black creature that covered him like a foul smelling blanket. It clogged his eyes and ears, slipping down into his throat and gagging him. He struck at the thing with his blade, and streaks of light from the fire appeared where he slashed but were swallowed instantly by the flowing darkness.

Lorin’s mind began to deaden; his thoughts became unclear. He wondered if this was how it was to die. He felt as though his body floated in a pool of still water and realized without fear he was no longer breathing. The darkness became thicker before his eyes closed, and his last thoughts were of money he would never collect on his contract.

Those thoughts were the first he came back to, and when he opened his eyes he saw he was still holding the dirk. The smell of food was strong about him, and he
shifted his eyes to stare into the fire he lay beside.

“There is no need for the knife,” a deep voice said. Lorin turned toward the sound, keeping the dirk raised, ready to strike.

The man who sat before him was heavily muscled, with cold black eyes that refused to return the fire’s warmth. He grinned from behind a full growth of beard and reached for the cup that lay in the sand before him. Lorin saw the flash of silver on his fingers and counted at least a dozen rings before the beefy hand withdrew with the cup.

“That will not do you any good,” the large man said, taking a drink from the cup. He wiped his beard on a satin sleeve and smiled again. “If I wished you dead, you already would be.”

“From you, or from the one seated behind me?” Lorin had heard the clumsy movements of the smaller man at his back. He guessed the other was just within striking distance. If he had to, he could stab backward at the man and have enough time to throw the dirk at the other man’s heart before they could move against him. The thought of killing his first men made him shudder for a brief moment.

The large man grinned again and finished his drink. He motioned toward Lorin’s rear, and the smaller man stepped into view. “Kagge would not be the one to worry about, although he did ask my permission to kill you before you woke.”

“And I still think we should,” Kagge said, squatting next to the other man. The small man was stout but solid, with a sad face that almost made Lorin want to laugh. “He could be dangerous to us.”

“Only if he carries disease.” the other man said. Lorin’s hand tightened about the handle of the blade, his anger rising at the insult. Before he could move, something brushing at his back, and he saw the edge of the darkness grow closer about him.

“No slight given,” the large man said calmly. “As you can see, however, I am fully protected. If your temper is a short one, then perhaps you should go back to the desert now.”

Lorin watched the dark, formless shape withdraw into the night again. He let out a slow breath and sheathed his blade. “As long as I’m here, I might as well eat,” he said, add added, “I am Lorin of Bredith.”

The large man nodded. “You are a long way from home. I am Pelar, of the world these days, soon to be exclusively of Tanske. You’re welcome to our food.”

Lorin spooned a healthy portion of stew into the bowl that Kagge offered him and sat with his back against the darkness. Somewhere behind him, the thing that had attacked him moved almost silently.

“Where are you bound?” Pelar asked, reaching to pour wine from a flask into Lorin’s offered cup.

“Tanske also. I do not seek my home there.”

“Are you a trader then?”

Lorin nodded, watching both men’s eyes. Pelar’s were ice cold in their blackness. “Of sorts. I am always on the lookout for opportunities. Why do you seek to make Tanske your home? Are you from there?”

Pelar shook his head, and a scowl briefly flashed across his face. “No, but all I wish is there. Tell me, have you heard of Lord Mellinar?”

Lorin simply shrugged, wondering if the other man could sense the tension in his face. Why did he have to be so exposed now? In the light he was no good. Questions and answers were for diplomats, not for him.

“He is now Lord of Tanske,” Pelar said. “A warrior, but the people there seem to think he makes a good leader as well. Tomorrow he becomes a warrior once more. After that, Tanske will be without either.”

Lorin felt his stomach turn despite the food that now lay within it. If Pelar meant to battle Mellinar for the leadership of the town, he might never collect his payment. He was beginning to regret ever stepping foot out of Bredith.

“Why do you want to kill this Mellinar?”

Pelar’s scowl deepened, and deep in his black eyes a fire began. “Mellinar and I were comrades, from the Battle of Roelein to the day Lord T’lain knighted us full warriors in the service of the gods. He was a brave fighter but limited in his vision. I found other ways to serve the cause—ways he disliked.”

Lorin’s gaze swept back toward the darkness, watching as it flowed and ebbed along its edges, the animal presence close now. He did not have to ask what kind of ways Pelar spoke of. He had yet to meet the knight who felt kinship with one who gave himself to the dark arts.

“He was a fool to spurn my friendship.” Pelar said, pouring himself another cup of drink. “I found ways to bring our lord more power than anyone dreamed. He could have stood by me.”

Lorin felt for the dirk in its sheath. “What happened?”

“He convinced the lord I was evil and had me driven out. He drove out all who practiced with me and scattered us over the desert.”

Including another who now wished him dead, Lorin thought. He hadn’t bothered to ask why Lord Crespin had placed a contract on Mellinar’s life. It had been enough, when he went to the Lord of Bredith seeking his first contract, to be given such a generous assignment. It made sense to him now why the lord would send a novice. A true assassin would never have touched the job.

“So you plan to fight him now?” Lorin asked, Pelar laughed, sending a roar out into the darkness. The black shape at Lorin’s back shuddered and began to move forward. Lorin felt his skin crawl as it advanced, and was ready to dive into the fire if it came any closer. Pelar motioned once, and the thing retreated again into the darkness.

“I would be a fool to face Mellinar in combat. He was the best warrior in the lord’s army, and if the rumors are correct, he’s lost none of his skill. I’ve been hearing tales of his exploits in keeping Tanske safe from desert raiders since I began this trip.”

“Then what do you propose to do?”

The large man scratched at his beard. “I plan to kill him.”

“And spread his bones across the city,” Kagge said, drinking deep from the flask he held. “Then we rule in his place and take his woman. I will enjoy that.”

Pelar cast him an angry look, and the other man grew silent. “You felt the power of the bothra when you tried sneaking into this camp. Do you think even a knight could live through that?”
Lorin did not reply. He’d heard of the bothra, the shadow creatures that those who followed the dark arts were said to employ. If Pelar sent a bothra against Mellenar, the Lord of Tanske was as good as dead, and Lorin’s first commission as good as lost.

“You did not say why you were bound for Tanske,” Kagge said. He poked the sharp end of a branch into the fire, watching Lorin steadily. “How do we know you won’t tell Mellenar that we’re here?” He turned toward Pelar, crouching close to him like a dog to its master. “I still say he should die.”

Pelor shook his head and fixed the assassin with a gaze as dark as the night. “It doesn’t matter. Let him howl to the wind if he wishes. Nothing can stop the bothra from killing the man whom its master commands it to seek. The creature will not be stopped.” He smiled again and sat back. “Perhaps you should tell Lord Mellenar, if you get the chance. I would enjoy thinking of him running in fear from me.”

Lorin nodded and stood then, backing slowly from the pair. He did not bother to reach for his blade. The madman before him would have instructed the bothra to destroy anyone who threatened its master. He allowed the darkness to swallow him once more and fled into the desert.

The sun was just footing the distant hills when Lorin reached the outskirts of Tanske. The wall guards regarded him with sleepy looks as he passed through the city gates but did not challenge him. The streets of the city, which should have been filled with those who made their living through the night, were bare and silent. Mellenar apparently liked his city quiet at night. Lorin could understand why Pelar and the Lord of Bredith sought the life of such a man.

A merchant setting up his wares for the day’s work provided Lorin with instructions for reaching Mellenar’s dwelling. He smiled when he spoke of the Lord of Tanske, and Lorin noted that it was built in the same manner as all the other homes along the lane. He sat on a stoop across from the dwelling and waited. There was something bothering him about this knight-turned-lord, and it was more than just the thought of losing his money.

The morning sunlight flooded the nearby square before life began stirring in the Lord of Tanske’s home, and Lorin pushed himself into the shadows cast by the stoop’s awning. He watched while a half-dozen children of varying ages spilled into the tree-lined lane.

A man and woman followed close behind. The man was tall and well built, with a smile that spread wider each time one of the children ran before him. The woman he held stared up at him with loving eyes and left his side only to pick up a boy who had fallen from a low branch of one of the trees.

Lorin pulled the dirk from his sleeve and palmed it, the point digging into the flesh of his fingertips. Deep within him, he felt a different sort of cutting pain. He broke from the shadows and crossed the lane, squinting against the glaring sun.

“Lord Mellenar?”

The knight turned at the sound of his name, and Lorin saw for the first time the large broadsword at his side. The Lord of Tanske made no move to reach it but pushed his wife back behind him.

“I don’t recognize you,” Mellenar said, his eyes dropping to regard the hand where Lorin held his blade ready. “You’re a stranger here in Tanske.”

Lorin nodded and stopped before the lord. He nodded toward the woman, watching her frightened eyes attempting to size him. Mellenar turned back to her and cupped her chin in his hand. “Asala, take the children to the square. I’ll be there shortly.”

Lorin waited for the woman to usher the children down the lane. The blade hidden in his hand burned with the heat of the morning sun. A surge of disgust filled him. He turned to Mellenar again, slipping the blade back into its sheath. “We must talk, Lord.”

“Who has sent you?” Mellenar asked. Still he did not make a move toward his own weapon.

“A fool, it seems,” Lorin answered. He thought again of all the gold that had been shown to him back in Bredith. He thought of never being hungry again, and of forever living deep within the shadows of the world. “But not as big a fool as the one I met in the desert. I bring regards from a wizard called Pelar. I believe he was once a friend of yours.”

Mellenar nodded, but his expression did not change.

“He was a friend. He is no longer. If you are here to help destroy this city, know that it will not matter if I die. The council will never give up what we have fought so long to acquire.”

“There doesn’t seem to be much fighting going on now.” Mellenar nodded. “A hard-won peace. Too many here have lost good friends. We’ve established treaties with the neighboring cities. All we wish now is our own place.”

Lorin looked down the lane toward the square where Mellenar’s wife and children waited. “You have given this place a new life, it seems. I agree it is fair to give it a chance to thrive, but I think it needs its warriors, too. It needs its lord.”

Mellenar sat on the steps before his home, lifting his face toward the sun. He sighed once and nodded. “Perhaps that is so, but I think Pelar will argue the point. What are his plans?”

“He has a bothra in his service,” Lorin said quietly. Mellenar glanced at his broadsword and nodded. “That is bad. I may have to leave this place to face it. I wouldn’t want Asala or the children to see.”

“You plan to light it?”

The lord nodded. “What else is there?” Lorin sat down next to the lord and watched the children playing in the square. The sunlight felt hot and heavy above him. “You may be right. The only way out may be for you to die. How much do you know of the bothra?”

“They’re loyal until their task is done, then the wizard has no hold on them. They will not stop until they’ve killed.”

“So I’ve heard,” Lorin said. “So I’ve heard.”

○ ○ ○
The assassin watched from the darkness of the lord’s receiving room. He knew the shadow creature would come, but from where? He hefted the useless dirk in his hand, watching a single drop of blood slip from the blade. How many times would he watch a similar scene in the future?

Movement from the far side of the room caught his eye. The bothra appeared near the lower edge of the open window, winding and flowing through the midday light, seeming to flee from the sun. In the full daylight it no longer resembled an animal. Now it was little more than a window, winding and flowing through the midday light, the center of which seemed darker than the most starless night Lorin had ever seen.

The shadow creature rolled across the floor, shifting and pulsing, following an invisible trail to its source. Lorin waited until it reached the line of blood he’d allowed to flow across the floor. Then he stepped from the shadows, dragging his burden behind him.

The bothra stopped when it sensed his presence and that of the still, bloodied form he held. The creature seemed to regard Mellenar’s body with a visible contempt, but the anxious writhing it had displayed earlier lessened as it drew near.

Lorin did not move as the blackness touched his feet and crawled up his legs to flow over the body of the Lord of Tanske. It seemed to absorb the blood that covered his body, growing fatter, a dark leech setting to feed. It remained only an instant, then flowed back to Lorin’s form.

“Hear me, dark one,” he said, plunging the bloodied knife into the black mass. “Here is the blood of the one you sought. I have done the task your master set for you. You have failed and must never be free.”

The bothra shook with rage, sending an icy shudder through Lorin. He released Mellenar’s body and allowed the creature to cover him entirely.

“Killing me will not free you,” he shouted into the darkness smothering him. “I have taken your task from you. You serve Pelar no longer. To be free, you must now serve me.”

The blackness receded instantly, flowing like mud in summer rain. Lorin watched it retreat to a corner of the room and laughed. “Pelar is not the only one who knows your ways,” he said. “You’ve failed your mission and forfeited your freedom to me. Hear me, foul thing, and you may yet be free.”

The bothra rolled forward again, almost laying itself at his feet. Lorin swallowed his disgust and continued. “You have but one purpose here, to kill. You may have your freedom if you do so. I command you to seek your former master. Kill Pelar and you are free.”

The room turned to a sea of darkness as the monster sprang forward, stretching toward the window. Lorin watched it flow back in the direction it had come, then stepped toward the window.

“Pelar and Kagge must both die. Do not fail.”

Lorin did not move from the window, not even when Mellenar’s still-bloody form stirred and rose from the floor. The knight moved slowly toward him, favoring the arm where Lorin had cut a bloody gash with the dirk. He leaned against the sill and watched the cloud of darkness disappear on the horizon.

“I did not believe it would really work,” the lord said, wiping the blood from his face. “I could feel the thing all around me. It made me want to choke.”

“You would have done far worse if you had dared to breathe. Be thankful such creatures aren’t as blessed with brains as they are with power.”

“Do you think it really will kill Pelar?”

Lorin nodded and sheathed his dirk. “You spoke of how the freedom of this place was hard won. I think the creature will fight just as hard for its own freedom.”

Mellenar clasped Lorin’s shoulder, a gesture the young man was surprised to find he did not mind. “I owe you my life, Lorin of Bredith. I and my family will always welcome you as one of our own.” He bound his wounded arm with a length of sash from the window curtain and regarded his guest with a knowing look. “You never did tell me why you came to Tanske. If there is anything I can help you with, anyone you wish to find.”

Lorin shook his head and smiled at the Lord. “No need. I already found him.”

Mellenar’s eyes, as piercing as the wizard’s had been, held a look of understanding. “And was your business successful?”

“As successful as it needed to be,” Lorin said. He reached out and held Lord Mellenar’s shoulder for a moment. “As I said before, a city needs its warrior to keep its peace. Tanske chose its leader well.”

“Will you stay the night?” Mellenar asked.

Lorin shook his head and turned toward the window again. The midday sun was at its apex, shining full into the dwelling. Lorin closed his eyes, feeling the warmth on his face, then opened them to the brightness once more.

“No,” he answered slowly, “I think not. Bredith awaits my return, and I have much to consider before I reach it.”

Mellenar nodded. “Such as?”

“Such as what I am to be in the world,” Lorin answered. He felt himself smile. “At least I know what I am not.” He looked again toward the light beyond the window. “Besides, I have a desire to begin the journey in the daylight. Night will come soon enough, and there are some great many things I wish to see before the darkness falls.”
Security Scan Complete — Enter Command
>Retrieve Message Number 0915090
Ready
>Playback

Incoming Transmission / Identification: Operative 5103
Phases One and Two complete ... nearing The Forever City ... resistance mounting ...
Storm Knights ... require reinforcements immediately ... there are powers here, unbelievable powers ...
End Transmission
What is reality, and which dice do you roll to get there?

Even if the pseudo-physics made sense, the Outsiders fare unreasonably badly in *Game’s End*. Right up till the end, they bicker and work at cross purposes as their own world begins to fall apart. Magic manifests, phones go dead, doors lock by themselves—but these supposedly intelligent young people don’t even pause to plan strategy or reason their way out of impending disaster. Nor do they notice they’re being manipulated, let alone whether their puppeteer hails from Gamearth, from the next reality up the scale, or from the other side of a three-book contract.

This would be just barely forgivable if a pending fourth volume allowed the former Outsiders to come to terms with their existence and provides the trilogy’s punch line when two Gamearth character her existence and the major men’s parts are generally nonhuman and semi-human races, but there are vast wildernesses, several intelligent players. Of the three, one princess must come to terms with her magical destiny and powers. Of the three, one male leads, only the remote wizard Orogastus emerges as a truly multidimensional personality who might not deserve his black reputation.

The setting is both familiar and distinctive. Civilization is broadly medieval, but there are vast wildernesses, several intelligent nonhuman and semi-human races, and just enough well-concealed and disintegrating technology to tag the milieu as a long-lost human colony world. Most of the magic appears to be of psionic origin though some relies on hardware that’s at best barely understood by its users.

Within these parameters, the story itself is a thoroughly traditional character-building quest adventure, in which each princess must come to terms with her destiny and powers. Of the three, one turns to magic, one to war, and one to statecraft and marriage, neatly covering all the bases. Only together can the sisters wield the tripartite magical device needed to “rebalance” the world and counter Orogastus’ plans.

Not surprisingly, the lead roles go to three independent-minded sister princesses; Norton, May, and Bradley are all noted for favoring strong heroines. While the novel can hardly be called a feminist tract, the major men’s parts are generally less than compelling. One king is a wizards tool, the other is a victim of events, and the puppet’s son is likeable but no match for the youngest princess. Of the male leads, only the remote wizard Orogastus emerges as a truly multidimensional personality who might not deserve his black reputation.

The setting is both familiar and distinctive. Civilization is broadly medieval, but there are vast wildernesses, several intelligent nonhuman and semi-human races, and just enough well-concealed and disintegrating technology to tag the milieu as a long-lost human colony world. Most of the magic appears to be of psionic origin though some relies on hardware that’s at best barely understood by its users.

Within these parameters, the story itself is a thoroughly traditional character-building quest adventure, in which each princess must come to terms with her destiny and powers. Of the three, one turns to magic, one to war, and one to statecraft and marriage, neatly covering all the bases. Only together can the sisters wield the tripartite magical device needed to “rebalance” the world and counter Orogastus’ plans.

Not surprisingly, the lead roles go to three independent-minded sister princesses; Norton, May, and Bradley are all noted for favoring strong heroines. While the novel can hardly be called a feminist tract, the major men’s parts are generally less than compelling. One king is a wizards tool, the other is a victim of events, and the puppet’s son is likeable but no match for the youngest princess. Of the male leads, only the remote wizard Orogastus emerges as a truly multidimensional personality who might not deserve his black reputation.

The setting is both familiar and distinctive. Civilization is broadly medieval, but there are vast wildernesses, several intelligent nonhuman and semi-human races, and just enough well-concealed and disintegrating technology to tag the milieu as a long-lost human colony world. Most of the magic appears to be of psionic origin though some relies on hardware that’s at best barely understood by its users.

Within these parameters, the story itself is a thoroughly traditional character-building quest adventure, in which each princess must come to terms with her destiny and powers. Of the three, one turns to magic, one to war, and one to statecraft and marriage, neatly covering all the bases. Only together can the sisters wield the tripartite magical device needed to “rebalance” the world and counter Orogastus’ plans.

It may be both praise and condemnation to say that *Black Trillium* will certainly appeal to readers who enjoy the work of any one of its collaborators. While it clearly reflects skillful craftsmanship and technical proficiency, the very ease with which the writers’ styles blend makes one wonder how distinctive they were in the first place. Make no mistake: *Black Trillium* is an entertaining, well-told tale, but it is no more than that, regardless of the eminence of its authors.
Edward Marston  
**The Queen's Head**  
Fawcett Crest 0-449-21791-4 $3.95

You won't find this one in the fantasy section of your neighborhood bookstore. It may, in fact, be sufficiently obscure to have vanished from the mystery shelf between the time I write this and the time it sees print. And it's just dry enough (that's dry as in wine, not as in boring) that it may be an acquired taste. But chase down *The Queen's Head* anyway, because Edward Marston's tale of murder most theatrical in Elizabethan England is as sharp-eyed and useful a travel guide to its period as you're likely to find for the price—and a well-plotted mystery besides.

Its protagonist is Nicholas Bracewell, behind-the-scenes manager of a prominent acting company, and the time is the weeks just before and after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Nicholas is very nearly an ideal viewpoint character for the historical voyeur; left to his own devices, he inhabits the pubs, boardinghouses, and streets of the vast middle class, but when matters call for it he is entitled to walk and listen among the nobility whose wealth provides sponsorship for London's theatrical endeavors.

Marston's plot ranges widely on both levels. The unexpected murder of one of Bracewell's actors sends him investigating into taverns and alleys of dubious repute, while the company's leading actor recruits Nicholas as middleman in a prospective tryst with a gentle-born lady (under the nose of the actor's wife). Meanwhile, every theatrical company in London is scrambling to produce a play commemorating the British defeat of the Armada, dangerous pranks threaten one of the company's child actors, and Bracewell's mistress is becoming understandably concerned for his safety.

The narrative is lively and detailed, giving plenty of sensory information about scenes as well as advancing the action. There's more than enough background for gamers to construct and populate several city locales; it's not inconceivable that an entire campaign might be built around a theatrical troupe. Marston has a keen eye for personality as well as for place, and the small eddies and intrigues among the actors are eminently believable.

If there's a weak point, it's that Marston must slightly stretch credibility when he eventually connects most of his subplots into a larger conspiracy, a good portion of which is conducted offstage. But that's a minor matter in an otherwise engaging yarn, and the many virtues of *The Queen's Head* more than outweigh its few blemishes. Gamers willing to step across the bookstore to collect the novel should be more than pleased with what they find.

---

**Horselords**  
David Cook  
TSR 0-88038-904-4 $4.95

*Ironhelm* begins like an unexpected swimming lesson. David Cook plunges readers instantly into the heart of the Tuigan horde and keeps them there virtually throughout the novel. The reluctant historian Koja finds himself forced to adapt to the barbarians' unfamiliar lifestyle, but it isn't long before he's moving through the currents of Tuigan intrigue with a fair degree of confidence.

Meanwhile, a continent or two to the southwest, the events of *Ironhelm* are unfolding as if covered by an entire television network news division. Douglas Niles' narrative scatters hidden cameras all over the landscape: in the capitals of two rival Maztica empires; on the ships of an expedition network news division. Douglas Niles' news division lacks an anchorman, and *Ironhelm* therefore has a distinctly choppy quality. In addition to leading characters Erix and Halloran, at least half a dozen other supporting players serve as viewpoint observers at one point or another, and most of them gain individual subplots in the bargain. Besides the invasion from without, Maztica is threatened by internal political and magical intrigues—and covert forces of great good and great evil are rapidly becoming involved as well. There is simply too much going on for the novel to maintain a consistent focus.

The two books are about even in terms of historical and cultural lore. *Ironhelm* may have more real-world parallels, as Niles sets up the Realms' version of the Spanish conquistadors versus the natives, but *Horselords* probably has the edge in terms of pure, accessible cultural information. On the flip side, *Ironhelm* definitely offers more “AD&D® game flavor” than does *Horselords*, which could almost pass as a straight historical novel until near the end, when Cook sets up a highly charged magical finale.

---

**Ironhelm**  
Douglas Niles  
TSR 0-88038-903-6 $4.95

The cumulative effect is rather striking: the Forgotten Realms have gone multi-cultural with a vengeance. *Horselords* begins with a strong Far Eastern flavor, while *Ironhelm* appears to be the first part of the Realms'-eye version of the Spanish conquest of Central and South America. But if the novels share a common theme—the introduction of new civilizations into the Realms—they differ both in emphasis and in execution, and there are some instructive observations to be made from the contrast.

*Horselords* begins like an unexpected swimming lesson. David Cook plunges readers instantly into the heart of the Tuigan horde and keeps them there virtually throughout the novel. The reluctant historian Koja finds himself forced to adapt to the barbarians' unfamiliar lifestyle, but it isn't long before he's moving through the currents of Tuigan intrigue with a fair degree of confidence.

Meanwhile, a continent or two to the southwest, the events of *Ironhelm* are unfolding as if covered by an entire television network news division. Douglas Niles' narrative scatters hidden cameras all over the landscape: in the capitals of two rival Maztica empires; on the ships of an expedition network news division. Douglas Niles' news division lacks an anchorman, and *Ironhelm* therefore has a distinctly choppy quality. In addition to leading characters Erix and Halloran, at least half a dozen other supporting players serve as viewpoint observers at one point or another, and most of them gain individual subplots in the bargain. Besides the invasion from without, Maztica is threatened by internal political and magical intrigues—and covert forces of great good and great evil are rapidly becoming involved as well. There is simply too much going on for the novel to maintain a consistent focus.

The two books are about even in terms of historical and cultural lore. *Ironhelm* may have more real-world parallels, as Niles sets up the Realms' version of the Spanish conquistadors versus the natives, but *Horselords* probably has the edge in terms of pure, accessible cultural information. On the flip side, *Ironhelm* definitely offers more “AD&D® game flavor” than does *Horselords*, which could almost pass as a straight historical novel until near the end, when Cook sets up a highly charged magical finale.

---

**Ironhelm**  
Douglas Niles  
TSR 0-88038-903-6 $4.95

The cumulative effect is rather striking: the Forgotten Realms have gone multi-cultural with a vengeance. *Horselords* begins with a strong Far Eastern flavor, while *Ironhelm* appears to be the first part of the Realms'-eye version of the Spanish conquest of Central and South America. But if the novels share a common theme—the introduction of new civilizations into the Realms—they differ both in emphasis and in execution, and there are some instructive observations to be made from the contrast.

*Horselords* begins like an unexpected swimming lesson. David Cook plunges readers instantly into the heart of the Tuigan horde and keeps them there virtually throughout the novel. The reluctant historian Koja finds himself forced to adapt to the barbarians' unfamiliar lifestyle, but it isn't long before he's moving through the currents of Tuigan intrigue with a fair degree of confidence.

Meanwhile, a continent or two to the southwest, the events of *Ironhelm* are unfolding as if covered by an entire television network news division. Douglas Niles' narrative scatters hidden cameras all over the landscape: in the capitals of two rival Maztica empires; on the ships of an expedition network news division. Douglas Niles' news division lacks an anchorman, and *Ironhelm* therefore has a distinctly choppy quality. In addition to leading characters Erix and Halloran, at least half a dozen other supporting players serve as viewpoint observers at one point or another, and most of them gain individual subplots in the bargain. Besides the invasion from without, Maztica is threatened by internal political and magical intrigues—and covert forces of great good and great evil are rapidly becoming involved as well. There is simply too much going on for the novel to maintain a consistent focus.

The two books are about even in terms of historical and cultural lore. *Ironhelm* may have more real-world parallels, as Niles sets up the Realms' version of the Spanish conquistadors versus the natives, but *Horselords* probably has the edge in terms of pure, accessible cultural information. On the flip side, *Ironhelm* definitely offers more “AD&D® game flavor” than does *Horselords*, which could almost pass as a straight historical novel until near the end, when Cook sets up a highly charged magical finale.
Ironhelm’s other distinction is that, to my knowledge, Niles establishes new ground for the fantasy-adventure genre. Most fantasy and SF with Central American overtones is more historical than imaginative; Niles takes the opposite road, which is refreshing. *Horselords* can’t make that claim, and in fact there are some strong resonances between Cook’s novel and *Imperial Lady*, an Andre Norton-Susan Shwartz collaboration (which is itself well worth reading) available from Tor Books.

The various pluses and minuses make it difficult to render an absolute judgment as to which novel is better. For pure craftsmanship, *Horselords* is easily superior, but *Ironhelm* gets higher marks for inventiveness. In this case, readers who prefer one book are just as “right” as those who prefer the other.

leader, Captain Willard Phule, who is court-martialed into the slot after talking some of his colleagues into strafing a peace-treaty signing ceremony. (It wasn’t his fault that no one told him the war was over.)

But Phule is no ordinary Space Legionnaire. He’s also the heir to the galaxy’s largest munitions empire and an absurdly wealthy man in his own right. So when the commission before the Legion’s least popular company is dropped in his lap with instructions to “turn things around,” he takes the job perfectly seriously. And before long, his unconventional logic and vast resources have turned the dregs of the Space Legion into an unconventional but effective team of soldiers.

Though Asprin’s stated intentions are humorous, the pace of *Phule’s Company* is frequently almost leisurely rather than frenetic. That’s both refreshing and inevitable, since a substantial portion of the book serves mostly to establish the company’s characters and milieu. The humor is never far from view, though, and it’s here that Asprin shows admirable versatility.

Some of the comedy derives from the juxtaposition of Phule’s spectacular wealth with the usually spartan customs of the military. Other comedy is character driven; there’s the utterly silent Legionnaire who turns into a talking dynamo when put in charge of the company’s radio net, the fearsome-looking alien who’s a closet pacifist, and the company cook who specializes in stickfighting on the side. And another layer of amusement comes from the understated voice-over narration provided by Phule’s personal butler and confidant, Beeker.

Fortunately, the novel isn’t just a setup for the series to come. Not only is there an entertaining showdown between the underdog Legionnaires and the Regular Army’s premier fighting unit, but Asprin works in a second climax involving what may or may not be an alien invasion of the backwater planet where Phule’s company is currently guarding the swamps. Between these episodes and Phule’s continuing efforts to cope with matters outside the company proper, there’s more than enough plot to keep the story moving.

The premise, meanwhile, is a nearly perfect gaming vehicle. I’d lay odds on seeing a licensed game version of the *Space Legion* long. The combination of swashbuckling, space opera, and general craziness is too good to pass up, and there’s plenty of room in Asprin’s universe for gamers to populate their own “Omega companies” of merry adventurers. *Phule’s Company* is a cheerful, reliable adventure from a writer whose good reputation may get even better.

It’s been just six months since the last Mercedes Lackey update, but already there are two and a half new Lackey books out. Oddly enough, *Magic’s Price* (DAW, $4.50) is the weakest, bringing the Last Herald-Mage trilogy to a somewhat rushed and ambivalent conclusion. The problems may have been inevitable in part, since the ending sequence has been given from the beginning, but a split from the viewpoint doesn’t help matters either. Valdemar fans should be pleased but not overwhelmed, though the next book sounds promising.

Followers of Lackey’s contemporary occult investigator, Diana Tregarde, will be well satisfied with *Children of the Night* (Tor, $3.95), a prequel to last year’s *Burning Water*. This time Diana is in New York coping with several sorts of vampires and coming to terms with her personal powers. While there are some rather overt philosophical borrowings from the Valdemar books, and Andre LeBrel is really too good to be true, Lackey’s blend of intelligent characterization and solid psychological tension remains distinctive and satisfying. (Warning for completists: This novel expands and in some ways contradicts the short story “Nightside,” previously published in *Marion Zimmer Bradley’s Fantasy Magazine.*)

*Knight of Ghosts and Shadows* (Baen, $3.95) counts as only half a Mercedes Lackey book because it’s a collaboration with newcomer Ellen Guon. But it also counts as a glittering success and a magnificent addition to the ranks of “urban faerie” novels. The blend of Hollywood wheeling and dealing, Renaissance faire folk music, and disintegrating elven society is seamless and intricately logical, with just the right proportions of high magic, cynical humor, and commercial intrusion (plus a couple of ingenious in-jokes for the very astute). Lackey and Guon have a real winner in this one, though the cover art is unfortunately underwhelming.

Another satisfying collaboration is the second StarBridge novel, *Silent Dances* (Ace, $3.95), in which Kathleen O’Malley joins forces with A. C. Crispin to present a colorful and complex story involving two sets of avian aliens, mysterious merchant conspiracies, and a naturally deaf young woman whose “handicap” makes her the ideal liaison with the bird-people. These ultrasonic cries are dangerous to normal ears. This is another rewarding adventure in the Andre Norton mold, and it goes a long way toward proving the versatility and potential of the StarBridge universe.

In the “and now for something completely different” department, the leading entry is *Wolfhelm* (Questar, $4.95), Richard Knaak’s third Dragonrealm novel. After two generally predictable books, Knaak goes off in a totally new direction, sending the semi-human war leader Gryphon off to another continent in search of his missing past. There are still factions and subplots packed together like piranhas in a sardine...
can, but this time the mysteries are less
derivative and therefore more mysterious.
The book is still no more than light adven-
ture, but now it's imaginative light adven-
ture, which is a major improvement.

Ru Emerson's latest novel is both some-
thing old and something new: Spell Bound
(Ace, $3.95) is a left-handed, partly histori-
cal retelling of the Cinderella story. Emer-
sion, as ever, is very good at creating
atmosphere, and there are intriguing bits
involving conflicting schools of magic, but
the novel tries to go in too many directions
at once and doesn’t go far enough in any
of them. Gamers interested in 17th-
century Germanic society might give this a
try, but it's really more a curiosity than
anything else.

The Lost King (Bantam, $4.95) might also
be called a curiosity; it’s Margaret Weis’s
first solo novel after a long series of collab-
orations with Tracy Hickman. It starts a
series of far-future tales that seems to
combine elements of classical philosophy
and nuts-and-bolts space battle. It’s a bit
unsettling to find the divine right of kings
being debated quite pragmatically in the
bowels of a state-of-the-art spacegoing
battleship, but Weis lays her groundwork
carefully and gives her particular future
some intriguing touches. This is a wait-
and-see yarn; we won't know precisely
where Weis is going with her premise
until she gets there. So far, though, it looks
like an interesting trip.

That’s not so much the case with The
Hawk's Gray Feather (Roc, $18.95), which
begins a new trilogy in Patricia Kennealy’s
Keltiad cycle. This time she's transplanted
the legends of Arthur, Merlin, and Taliesin
into her spacefaring Keltic society, and
done so with the same personable read-
ability that marked her earlier works.
Other critics have complained about the
lack of overt high technology in Kennealy’s
novels given her premise, but in practice
the setting seems less critical to this cycle
than does her direct yet lyrical style. "Un-
cluttered by history" may be an apt de-
scription; at any rate, this is certainly one
of the livelier Arthurian books to appear
of late.

Last but not least come four books that
simply build on what their predecessors
have promised. Dick Tracy: The Secret
Files (Tor, $4.95), is an anthology in the
same mold as previous collections high-
lighting Batman and the Joker. Co-editor
Max Allan Collins also writes the Tracy
comic strip, and gamers in the detective
arena should find these stories thoroughly
palatable. Doctor’s Orders (Pocket, $4.50)
is Diane Duane’s latest (and possibly last;
reports differ) Star Trek novel, in which

Dr. McCoy is left in command when Kirk
vanishes unexpectedly during a mission.
As usual, Duane’s characterization is pre-
cisely on target, and rarely has Klingon-
baiting been this much fun. Wyrd Sisters
(Roc, $4.95) is the latest Discworld novel to
reach American shores (we’re about two
books behind the British, I think), and it
finds Terry Pratchett ringing his unique
brand of change on Shakespearean drama
and village witchcraft. Nobody else can do
this sort of lunacy tempered by wisdom,
which may be just as well. And finally, Alis
Rasmussen concludes her Highroad se-
quence with The Price of Ransom (Bant-
tam, $3.95), in which there are more
reverses and plot twists than some writers
use in entire trilogies. Not all trilogies end
as well as they start, but Rasmussen really
has saved the best for last, and the High-
road novels are definite standouts in the
interstellar pursuit category.

(The columnist now breathes a deep sigh
of relief, having seen the surface of his
desk for the first time in ages, and marks
the next deadline on his calendar.)  

Ω
CAST YOUR OWN FANTASY FIGURES

SALE SAVE!!!

40% OFF on molds & kits

Write for our special sale catalog or call
(409) 364-2020

THE DUNKEN CO.
P.O. Box 95
Calvert, TX 77837

PLAY BY MAIL GAMING

For more information about play-by-mail games and companies, send for The 3rd Edition Journal of the PBM Gamer, which is a listing of PBM Companies and their games. Send $2.00 to Paper Mayhem, Dept. DM, 1518 Adams St., Ottawa, IL 61350.

PAPER MAYHEM “The Informative PBM Magazine”

Subscribe to Paper Mayhem and discover the world of play-by-mail (PBM) gaming. We cover many of the PBM games that are in this page, plus many more, covering the subjects of fantasy, sci-fi, historical, sports, etc. Each bimonthly issue brings you the latest in PBM gaming.

Paper Mayhem has been publishing news about PBM games and companies since 1983 and has improved to keep up with the ever-changing hobby. Why delay and miss out on all the fun? Read Paper Mayhem and take advantage of PBM gaming.

Send subscriptions to: Paper Mayhem (Dept DM) 1518 Adams Street Ottawa, IL 61350-4664

Subscriptions:
Sample $4.50 1 year $20.25 2 year $35.10

CATALOG OF DRAGONS

The catalog offers T-shirts, posters, stationery, color stamps, t-shirts, jewelry, scarves, coffee mugs, and more. This Gnome Dragon T-shirt is silkscreened with a pulling on jade green 100% cotton T-shirts Size: S, M, L, XL $15.50 - $22.50 shipping (Call for 5% off domestic)

Dancing Dragon Designs - Dept D99
1811 Fieldbrook Rd. Arcada, CA 95921

FREE DICE BAG!

When sending for our free catalog!

THE ADVENTURERS’ GUILD offers innovative and unique RPG aids, 40 different realistic costumes, and so much more.

AG MAGAZINE BONUS! You can order our real, exact magazine rate now at 10% and become a 1 year member of AG for only $5.05 pp. Indicate height and weight.

THE ADVENTURERS’ GUILD Dept. D, 401 New Castle Road Marshalltown, Iowa 50158

The Last Grenadier
335 N. San Fernando Blvd.
Burbank, CA 91502
(818) 848-9144

Our Catalog is $2.00, refundable w/1st order

TSR-Citadel-Palladium-Ral Partha
FASA+ ICE+Steve Jackson Games
Visa/Mastercard

C’MON...GO FOR THE GOLD

We at GRAPHIC IMPRESSIONS are proud and excited to offer our newest original design on our top quality silk-screened T-SHIRTS to you the serious gamer.

Our shirts are available in:
red, black, green, and blue
embroidered with gold ink.
Be the first in your guild to show off your “Sports”

GRAPHIC IMPRESSIONS
192 39th st. Dept. D0-1
Ashland, KY 41101
Please specify size S.M.L.XL.
Order only please. Ky residents add 6% sales tax.

Catalog of Dragons

Catalog of Dragons

Kreative Imaginaria, Inc.
P.O. Box 2734
Send $2 for catalog
Kensington, Md. 20891
$3. Refund
(301) 564-3620 with purchase!!
Dragons, Castles, Unicorns, Creatures in Pewter, Brass, Ceramics, Posters, etc.
Black & White 100% Cotton Red & White
S.M.L.XL reg. 14.95
Dragons T-shirts $12.95 each
Both for $25
Add $4 handling in USA or Canada - $5.00 overseas
(Md.)
(Send check or Money Order-US $) add 5%
Baltimore Area Gamers

Contact: 9624 York Road
Cockeysville, MD 21030
Phone: (301) 667-0440

Fantasy Nine Pack
High Quality - European Style

Gem Sets:
- Clear, Red, Blue, Green, Orange, Smoke, Yellow, Purple
- Solid Set: $2.95

Percentile Sets:
- Any two colors: $1.50

Dice Bags:
- Genuine Leather, holds 30 dice
- Black, Brown, Tan, Red, Purple: $4.00

Merlyn's Merchandise

Chess & Games Books

- 1-800-593-WORD (orders only)

For catalog, send $1 for p/h:
Merlyn's
N. Brosseau
Spokane, WA 99203

DIAMOND DICE, Inc.
324 S. Fairview, Park Ridge, IL 60068
(312) 692-7165 — DEALERS INVITED —
All orders add $1.00 for postage/ handling —

DICE SALE 🎲 4-6-8
10-12-20
BONUS — 8 FREE dice with set 🎇

All sets contain six different dice.
- Sets of solid dice = White, Red, Dark Red, Tan, Green, Blue, Dark Blue, Brown, Tan, Blue, Yellow, and Black
- Sets of solid dice with white dot = White, Red, Green, Blue, and Purple
- Sets of solid dice with red dot = Black, Dark Red, Dark Blue and Brown
- Sets of solid dice with yellow dot = Green, Yellow, Diamand, and Red
- Sets of transparent dice = Blue, Purple, Red, and Green
- Sets of transparent dice with white dot = Clear, Red, Yellow, and Blue
- Sets of transparent dice with red dot = Clear, Red, Yellow, and Green
- Sets of transparent dice with yellow dot = Clear, Red, Yellow, and Blue
- Sets of transparent dice with black dot = Clear, Red, Yellow, and Blue

Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00
Buy 100 assorted solid dice (10d6) = $14.00

For more information on obtaining your copy of The Complete Guide On How To Make Chainmail Armour, send SALE to: Ruth Mar Armoury, P.O. Box 332, Macomb IL 61442

Imaginative Mail Order
- GREAT PRICES!

RAL PARThA GRenaDiER BATTLETECH CAR WARS
TSR MORE! — FAST SERVICE! —
Send $1 for Catalog (Refundable with first order!)
Box 100
Hawleyville, CT. 06440

EARTHLY POSSESSIONS UNL
Dept. B, P.O. Box 9969, Wyoming, MI 49509

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons and the TSR logo are trademarks owned by and used with permission from Tsr, Inc. ©1979 TSR, Inc. All rights reserved.
The scout—a “thief” without the thieving

by Kim Eastland

The scout class is presented for players and DMs who dislike using thieves or assassins in an AD&D® 1st Edition game campaign. It either takes the place of the thief class or stands on its own if the DM still allows thieves. Scouts are not a subclass of the thief class. Scouts use many of the abilities inherent to the original thief class while adding a few skills from other classes.

Scouts have been called “rangers of the dark” because their functions and abilities lend themselves to leading parties through underground caves, dungeons, and so on. Scouts tend to be quiet and intense, well knowing the amplifying effects of caverns and hallway echoes. They love to explore underground realms, though some have been known to operate briefly aboveground, usually in wilderness areas having canyons, mountains, and other rocky areas with climbable surfaces.

Parties prefer to travel with scouts as opposed to thieves or assassins whose ways are usually misunderstood (or are understood all too clearly). Good-aligned scouts abhor assassins, cowards, or sightseers underground. The onlySCOUTS offer an option that has long been lacking for adventuring parties: a “thief” who won’t pick your pocket. The scout offers excellent investigative abilities and survival skills useful to everyone. Even thieves might like to have a scout around to check the corridor ahead for monsters!

abilities described on page 27 of the

Scouts' surprise function operates under the following conditions: If operating by himself, or 30' away from a party, or in a party composed entirely of scouts, a scout surprises foes on a 1-3 on 1d6, and is surprised on a 1 on 1d6, as per a ranger. If the PC is a ranger/scout mixed class, then he surprises opponents on a 1-3 on 1d6 if in unfamiliar terrain, or on a 1-4 on 1d6 if in familiar terrain. He is surprised on a 1-2 on 1d20 if in unfamiliar terrain, or on a 1 on 1d20 if in familiar terrain.

Underground tracking: When following opponents in an underground setting, a scout can track as well as a ranger of two levels higher (use the information on outdoor tracking in Unearthed Arcana, page 21). If the PC is a ranger/scout, he tracks underground as a ranger four levels higher than his highest class. A scout tracks outdoors at one-half his normal chance; a ranger/scout can track outdoors normally as allowed by his ranger level.

Back protection: At 4th level, a scout gains the back-protection ability of a barbarian (Unearthed Arcana, page 19). Back protection allows the scout to sense an attack from behind, as from a thief or assassin, and the back attack then loses all bonuses to hit and damage. Unlike the barbarian, however, the scout is not allowed to strike back if he has completed normal melee for that round. The scout gains a 20% chance to detect back attacks at 4th level, then gains 5% per level thereafter.

Detect secret doors: At 6th level, the scout can detect secret doors. The scout can detect concealed or secret doors by merely passing within 10' of them and rolling a 1 on 1d8. If he is searching for such doors, he has a chance to find a secret door on a 1-2 on 1d20, and a concealed portal on a 1-3 on 1d8.

Detect illusions: At 8th level, the scout can detect illusions. He begins at 8th level with a 20% chance to determine that some sight, sound, or other sensory phenomenon is actually an illusion/phantasm spell. This ability gets better at a rate of 7% per level. This detection requires one round of concentration on the illusion. Regardless of level, the chance to detect such spells may never exceed 75%.

Scouts offer an option that has long been lacking for adventuring parties: a “thief” who won’t pick your pocket. The scout offers excellent investigative abilities and survival skills useful to everyone. Even thieves might like to have a scout around to check the corridor ahead for monsters!

restrictions defined by the magical item itself or those laid down in this article. They never use shields and may wear only leather, padded, studded leather, or elven chain mail armor, opting for maximum maneuverability. Their weapon choices are limited only in that scouts cannot use weapons longer than 3/2, nor can they use two-handed weapons such as polearms, pikes, staves, spears, battle axes, bastard swords, bows, crossbows, lassos, etc. Swords are preferred, and hand axes, daggers, and hammers are also used (doubling as tools). Scouts can use slings and hurled weapons such as javelins, throwing axes, daggers, and so forth. Scouts attack once per round and receive two initial weapons' proficiencies. Scouts gain one weapon proficiency every four levels. The weapons' nonproficiency penalty is -3 to hit.

Scouts use the to-hit and saving-throw tables for thieves, and have six-sided hit dice (as stealth is preferred over direct combat). Scouts advance in experience as thieves, as shown in Table 1; the only difference is that a scout gains 3 hp per level beyond the 10th, not 2 hp like a thief. Scouts do not pay for their training past 10th level.

Unlike a thief, a scout gains no bonuses for back stabbing, though he has normal bonuses for attacking from behind or with surprise. Scouts also cannot pick pockets or set traps, and stealing is neither their specialty nor purpose. They usually avoid doing anything that might allow someone to track them, leaving everything just as they found it (doing otherwise only in rare cases).

The scout’s functions of opening locks, finding and removing traps, moving silently, hiding in shadows, hearing noise, and climbing walls are as per the thief abilities described on page 27 of the AD&D® 1st Edition Player’s Handbook, but their progression is slightly different and is given on Table 2 (with modifiers on Tables 3-5). Scouts also have functions similar to the thief-acrobat’s tightrope walking and tumbling-falling, as described on pages 23-24 of Unearthed Arcana. The distance covered by the fall at any given level is listed in the Table 6. Scouts do not have a separate language like thieves’ cant and have no extraordinary ability to read languages. Any scouts may gain the nonweapon proficiencies given in Table 7. They start with three nonweapon proficiencies, then gain one every four levels thereafter.

The scout class can be combined with any other class in a multiclassed or dual-classed roll except with an assassin, barbarian, cavalier, monk, paladin, or thief. A scout never takes on followers, henchmen, or hirelings, and he may build an abode only within sight of a town (the source of his income).

Scouts have certain other special abilities, as follows:

Surprise: A scout’s surprise function operates under the following conditions: If operating by himself, or 30' away from a party, or in a party composed entirely of scouts, a scout surprises foes on a 1-3 on 1d6, and is surprised on a 1 on 1d6, as per a ranger. If the PC is a ranger/scout mixed class, then he surprises opponents on a 1-3 on 1d6 if in unfamiliar terrain, or on a 1-4 on 1d6 if in familiar terrain. He is surprised on a 1-2 on 1d20 if in unfamiliar terrain, or on a 1 on 1d20 if in familiar terrain.

Underground tracking: When following opponents in an underground setting, a scout can track as well as a ranger of two levels higher (use the information on outdoor tracking in Unearthed Arcana, page 21). If the PC is a ranger/scout, he tracks underground as a ranger four levels higher than his highest class. A scout tracks outdoors at one-half his normal chance; a ranger/scout can track outdoors normally as allowed by his ranger level.

Back protection: At 4th level, a scout gains the back-protection ability of a barbarian (Unearthed Arcana, page 19). Back protection allows the scout to sense an attack from behind, as from a thief or assassin, and the back attack then loses all bonuses to hit and damage. Unlike the barbarian, however, the scout is not allowed to strike back if he has completed normal melee for that round. The scout gains a 20% chance to detect back attacks at 4th level, then gains 5% per level thereafter.

Detect secret doors: At 6th level, the scout can detect secret doors. The scout can detect concealed or secret doors by merely passing within 10' of them and rolling a 1 on 1d8. If he is searching for such doors, he has a chance to find a secret door on a 1-2 on 1d20, and a concealed portal on a 1-3 on 1d8.

Detect illusions: At 8th level, the scout can detect illusions. He begins at 8th level with a 20% chance to determine that some sight, sound, or other sensory phenomenon is actually an illusion/phantasm spell. This ability gets better at a rate of 7% per level. This detection requires one round of concentration on the illusion. Regardless of level, the chance to detect such spells may never exceed 75%.

Scouts offer an option that has long been lacking for adventuring parties: a “thief” who won’t pick your pocket. The scout offers excellent investigative abilities and survival skills useful to everyone. Even thieves might like to have a scout around to check the corridor ahead for monsters!
## Table 1
Scout Experience Points and Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>6-sided dice</th>
<th>Level title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-1,250</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Observer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,251-2,500</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Spotter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,501-5,000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Point man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,001-10,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Outrider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,001-20,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vanguard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20,001-42,500</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Forerunner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42,501-70,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Huntsman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70,001-110,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>SPY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>110,001-160,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>scout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>160,001-220,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Master Scout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220,001-440,000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Master Scout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>440,001-660,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Master Scout</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

220,000 xp per level for each additional level beyond the 12th. Scouts gain 3 hp per level after the 10th.

## Table 2
Scout Skills and Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>scout level</th>
<th>Open locks</th>
<th>FIR traps</th>
<th>Move silently</th>
<th>Hide in shadows</th>
<th>Hear noise</th>
<th>Climb walls</th>
<th>Rope walk</th>
<th>Tumble-fall</th>
<th>Back protec.</th>
<th>Detect illusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. This includes the ability to carry up to 1,000 gp of additional encumbrance with no wind present, or to carry a normal load in moderate wind with no penalty to the chance of success.
2. This includes the ability to carry up to 2,000 gp of additional encumbrance with no wind present, to carry an additional 1,000 gp of encumbrance in a moderate wind, or to handle a strong wind while unencumbered.
3. This includes the ability to carry up to 3,000 gp of additional encumbrance with no wind present, to carry an additional 2,000 gp of encumbrance in a moderate wind, or to carry an additional 1,000 gp of encumbrance in a strong wind.
4. This includes the ability to carry up to 4,000 gp of additional encumbrance with no wind present, to carry an additional 3,000 gp of encumbrance in a moderate wind, or to carry an additional 2,000 gp of encumbrance in a strong wind.

Wind conditions are mentioned on page 23 of the AD&D 1st Edition volume *Unearthed Arcana*.

## Table 3
Racial Adjustments to Scout Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Open locks</th>
<th>F/R traps</th>
<th>Move silently</th>
<th>Hide in shadows</th>
<th>Climb walls</th>
<th>Rope walk</th>
<th>Tumble-fall</th>
<th>Back protec.</th>
<th>Detect illusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwarf</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
<td>+ 15%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
<td>- 5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elf</td>
<td>- 5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnome</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+ 15%</td>
<td>- 15%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-elf</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+ 10%</td>
<td>- 15%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-ling</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+ 15%</td>
<td>- 15%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half-orc</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+ 5%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>- 10%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4
Dexterity Adjustments to Scout Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dexterity score</th>
<th>Open locks</th>
<th>FIR traps</th>
<th>Move silently</th>
<th>Hide in shadows</th>
<th>Rope walk</th>
<th>Tumble-fall</th>
<th>Back protec.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-15%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>+20%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>+20%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
<td>+20%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
Armor Adjustments to Scout Abilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Armor worn</th>
<th>Open locks</th>
<th>FIR traps</th>
<th>Move silently</th>
<th>Hide in shadows</th>
<th>Climb walls</th>
<th>Rope walk</th>
<th>Tumble-fall</th>
<th>Back protec.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+5%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>+10%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elfin chain</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studded/ padded</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-30%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This category applies when wearing bracers of defense or a cloak, but no large or bulky protective devices.

Dexterity bonuses always apply to scout abilities when wearing any scout armor. Any scout armor worn can be covered by another garment. Elfin chain mail can be worn under normal clothing, but studded leather and padded armor are stiff and can be covered by only a full body cloak.

Table 6
Scout's Tumbling-Falling Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scout level</th>
<th>Height fallen *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-9</td>
<td>30'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-13</td>
<td>40'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>50'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>60'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* At this height or less, the scout takes no damage from a fall if he first successfully rolls his tumble-fall chance given on Table 2 (with modifiers as appropriate from Tables 3 and 4).

Table 7
Scout Nonweapon Proficiencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal lore</th>
<th>Miner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal noise</td>
<td>Mountaineering*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal training</td>
<td>Riding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind-fighting*</td>
<td>Rope use*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating</td>
<td>Sound analysis*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction sense*</td>
<td>Stonemason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endurance</td>
<td>Survival (cold)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire-building</td>
<td>Survival (heat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing</td>
<td>Swimming*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fungus identification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The initial three nonweapon proficiencies must be chosen from one of these six. The animal-lore, survival (cold); and survival (heat) proficiencies are from the Wilderness Survival Guide; all others are from the Dungeoneer's Survival Guide.
"LOOK AT THE WORLDS A HUMAN CAN EXPLORE FOR JUST $1!"

Choose any 5 for $1 with membership

Prices in bold print are publishers' hardcover editions. Prices in red print are Club hardcover editions.

HERE'S WHAT YOU GET WHEN YOU JOIN . . .

5 BOOKS FOR $1—PLUS A FREE CLUB TOTE. Send no money now. You'll be billed $1, plus shipping and handling, when your membership is accepted.

A GUARANTEE OF SATISFACTION. If you're not 100% satisfied with your books, return them within 10 days at our expense. Your membership will be canceled and you'll owe nothing. The Club Tote is your free gift to keep.

THE FREE CLUB MAGAZINE. You'll receive 14 issues of Things to Come a year. Each issue includes 2 Featured Selections plus a number of Alternates from the Club's library of almost 500 books. Twice a year, you may also receive offers of Special Selections.

SHOPPING MADE SIMPLE. To get the Featured Selections, do nothing—they'll be sent automatically. If you prefer another book—or none at all—simply return your Member Reply Form by the due date shown. A shipping and handling charge is added to each order.

AN EASY-TO-MEET OBLIGATION. Take up to 1 year to buy 4 more books at regular low Club prices. Afterwards, you may resign membership anytime. Or you may continue to enjoy the benefits of belonging to The Science Fiction Book Club.

HUGE DISCOUNTS . . . as much as 65% off publishers' hardcover editions. Club books are sometimes issued in size to fit special presses. All are printed on high-quality, acid-free paper.

RISK-FREE RETURN PRIVILEGES. If you get an unwanted book because your Club magazine came late and you had less than 10 days to decide, simply return the book at our expense.

FREE TOTE with membership

YES! Please enroll me in The Science Fiction Book Club according to the risk-free membership plan described in this ad. Send me the 5 BOOKS I've indicated—plus my FREE CLUB TOTE. Bill me just $1, plus shipping and handling.

THE Science FICTION BOOK CLUB
Reading That's Worlds Apart

MAIL TO:
The Science Fiction Book Club
650 East 30th Street
P.O. Box 6367
Indianapolis, IN 46206-6367

Please write book numbers here:

Mr./Mrs. Miss/Ms. please print
Address
City State Zip

If you're under 18, your parent must sign here.

Members accepted in U.S.A. and Canada only. Canadian members serviced from Canada, where offer is slightly different. Sales tax added where applicable. We reserve the right to reject any application.

DRN 8/69
"Forum" welcomes your comments and opinions on role-playing games. In the United States and Canada, write to: FORUM, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: FORUM, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Ltd, P.O. Box 1, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. We ask that material submitted to "Forum" be either neatly written by hand or typed with a fresh ribbon and clean keys so we can read and understand your comments.

For some time, we have been collecting letters from gamers concerning the attacks being made upon role-playing in general (and the D&D® and AD&D® games in particular) that charge such games with being harmful to gamers. These letters address the specific prejudices that gamers encounter and suggest ways to overcome that prejudice. We welcome further letters from our readers on this topic.

People who say that evil PCs aren't disruptive don't know what they're talking about. There used to be three gaming groups at our school: my own, a friend's, and one consisting of evil PCs. The DM of the evil PC group is rumored to be a satanist. I don't know if it's true, but it would seem to fit him. He could be best described as a troublemaker, the kind of guy who makes the teacher's life difficult. Most people don't like him, but he has attracted a small group that revolves around him. They play often, always using evil characters.

The school staff was basically out to get this DM. He had participated in such stunts as stealing phosphorous from the school lab and insulting a visiting priest. The staff was desperate to find some way to punish this DM. If the staff gave him lines or detention, he ignored them. If they suspended him, he stayed home, keeping his entire group with him. As a last resort, the staff banned D&D games at our school.

I remember when the vice principal came to me and my friend and explained that role-playing games were now banned in our school. We both protested, but to no avail. Playing D&D games was against the rules.

The sad thing is that this rule didn't really affect the person it was meant to punish. The evil-PC DM just played at home. The people it really affected were those in my group and my friend's group. I now play with only two players, sometimes three. Most of my friends simply live too far away to play often.

I don't even really mind playing RPGs in a sort of evil way if it's done right. I myself sometimes play [West End Games'] PARANOIA® game. But these guys [in the evil-PC group] were running around killing each other's characters and assassinating the king. That kind of stuff just gets a beginning player upset. So why do they do it? It seems pointless to me.

That DM I was talking about graduated this year. I just hope D&D games are allowed back into our school.

Tony Pace
Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

If you haven't heard any attacks on fantasy role-playing games lately, you just haven't been listening in the right places. Several "snake-oil peddler" groups are traveling across rural and small town America, holding "seminars on satanism" for local police departments and the general public. Our games are called satanist recruiting devices, and coyote scavengings are described as occult ceremonies. The TV "evangelists" who are attacking games when they aren't engaged in off-air immorality that gets them more headlines. The attack has even crossed the Atlantic with the recent involvement of the Cambridgeshire county council.

Yet in this country gamer defense has been dismissed, occasional, and almost totally ineffectual. While several people have tried to counter these charges, they have been working almost on their own, with no way to exchange information with others working on the problem, and they generally are denied media access.

For instance, how many are aware that Dr. James A. Mercy, head of the intentional injuries team at the Centers for Disease Control and probably the top authority on suicide in the nation, has stated that he knows of no evidence linking game playing with suicide? How many have heard that the head of one of the top antigame organizations that he is a member of the faculty of a major medical school? I did and was told that at one time they gave an honorary appointment to the clinical faculty to any local doctor requesting it, but when the current school head took the job, the custom was abolished and the doctor in question had no classroom duties. Using honorary credentials is like doing surgery with an honorary medical degree.

I have these documents because I am currently writing a book on the subject. My main emphasis is on the theological angle (I am an ordained United Methodist minister) and the lack of media access for gamers. I particularly need a copy of Bothered About Dungeons & Dragons' Law Enforcement Primer on Fantasy Role-Playing Games; answers to specific questions about the unsuccessful suit by B.A.D.D.'s founder against the Hanover County (VA) school system on September 17, 1984; and any accounts of how these games have helped players, A game-playing law-enforcement officer could get the free (to police only) Primer, a player with access to the Hanover County courthouse could check the court record, and many players have accounts of how games have helped them improve math grades, deal with introversion, etc. The only problem is, how does anyone know these resources exist or that someone needs information that you have?

We don't need an organization. Organizations have a tendency to become more concerned with their own power than in the cause for which they were originally organized. What we do need is an informal network of those conducting serious research into this problem. All researchers I know of have their own special fields of expertise and emphasis, as properly they should have. This is an advantage and should not be repressed by "reports by committee" from a static organization. Still, there is hardly a need for everyone to use the same source to get the same information when it can be circulated among the network.

Since our side is based on the truth, we have no need for secretly distributed material like the Primer. By insisting on at least three independent sources of information, we can avoid the danger of agents provocateurs or of just plain honest error. I am willing to serve as a clearing-house in the initial stages, but ultimately each of us can put newcomers in touch with the pertinent sources and even that small degree of organization will no longer be needed.

Any who are interested can send me full particulars with an SASE, and in a couple of months I will let you know what turns up.

Paul Cardwell, Jr.
111 E. 5th Street
Bonham TX 75418

I recently read something interesting I thought you might like to be aware of next time one of you appears on Donahue or something, arguing about the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game vs. teen suicide and whatnot. It is often cited that a certain ardent player of D&D games has committed suicide, and it is suspected that the game had something to do with the young man's death. I'm sure you understand what I'm talking about.

Anyway, I recently read a popular-reading mathematics book, Innumeracy: Mathematical Illiteracy and Its Consequences. On page 126, the author discusses this issue from a purely statistical standpoint. He writes about an article he read that stated that 28 teenagers who played the game had killed themselves. I have read similar articles, and I'm sure you know of many more.

The statistics always seem unsettling until you realize, as the author (John Allen Paulos) points out, that three million copies of the game have been sold; furthermore, the annual suicide rate of teenagers is 12 per 100,000. Given that three million game sets were sold, and following the average suicide rate of 12 per 100,000, you would expect 360 D&D game players to have committed suicide (12 X 30).

You could thus create an argument that playing D&D games lowers the suicide rate — I doubt those advocating banning D&D games would agree, but it's worth a shot.

You might want to pop into a library to check out the book yourself; it's useful in learning how to see through certain fallacious arguments you're often faced with.

Robert W. Heym
New Orleans LA

I have been playing role-playing games for the last 10 or 12 years, and that is why I am writing this letter. For the last few years we have seen [religious] fundamentalism grow. I have nothing against fundamentalism and have several friends who are fundamentalists, but I am opposed to the school of thought that regards role-playing games as satanic. I do not wish to see role-playing games banned; I don't think any of us do. That is why I am suggesting that we get organized.

Right now there is no organization that I know of that represents gamers as a whole. As far as I know there is no organization that is opposing all of the things that the fundamentalists have against role-playing games. Part of this is probably due to lack of interest or because people don't know what to do. There's also the fact that many gamers are below voting age and thus cannot legally do anything. I am asking for you to help me change this.

Many of you will think that I am overreacting. I don't believe that I am... Almost two years
I’d like to thank Bryan A. Walker for his comments in DRAGON issue #145. I’m sure many more people are interested in the future of role-playing games rather than such topics as how many spells a 1st-level mage gets or what harpy babies look like. Many of us are concerned about the fate of our favorite pastime, the RPG. I can’t begin to count the number of articles and stories I’ve heard on TV or read in magazines and newspapers in which the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game is blamed for murders, suicides, and satanism. Groups such as RADD (Rothed About Dungeons & Dragons) point the finger at RPGs for everything that goes wrong with kids today. They say such things as murder, rape, and satanic rituals are used and encouraged in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, and I can’t believe it.

I’ve been playing RPGs since I was 11. That’s a young age to start, but in the five years I’ve played I haven’t seen anything to give D&D games a bad reputation. A D&D game is more like a fairy tale than some evil satanic toy. Knights in shining armor kill evil dragons and pious clerics banish evil priests. Maybe something could be said if we played the parts of the dragon and the evil priest, but we don’t. Role-playing games are usually for good-oriented characters. The AD&D 2nd Edition game didn’t get rid of the assassin class for nothing.

I have to say that I’ve never seen anything bad come of playing D&D games. I play just about every weekend and holiday, not to mention just about every day during the summer. I also listen to heavy metal music and enjoy going to heavy metal concerts and clubs. Most of the people I associate with have played RPGs at one time or another, and usually I have taught these people to play. I have a superficial interest in the occult, and I spend quite a bit of time reading fantasy novels. According to some people, these signs would mean I’m a satanic freak. Yet I was born a Catholic, I am still a Catholic, I attend church every Sunday, and I don’t smoke or do drugs.

I can list several points in favor of role-playing. A psychologist (from Hawaii I think) wrote that he used D&D games to help his patients. Many letters have been written about how role-playing games have helped others’ ADD-capped friends. And Douglas J. Hutchinson points out in issue #146 that RPGs help develop linguistic and social skills. I have a point of my own. In high school I was required to take a Greek mythology class. In that class, we discussed half the creatures in the Monster Manual, creatures that were a very much a part of the Greeks’ mythology. The “cult threat” (that is blown very much out of proportion anyway) must be much worse than estimated if our schools are teaching our children about satanic creatures.

I’m not saying that we should become educationalists, I endorse education. We have to show people that role-playing games is not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a bunch of suicidal/satanic maniacs. We’re different, yes, we are not a threat, that we are not a threat. I’d be disheartened to have to wonder if someone who’s put at risk . . . or who claims to be.

If the people who want to create a “risk free” world ever win, we’re all doomed. So the best we can do is just to keep on keeping on, doing what we know is right and not let the carping bother us. That, I’m delighted to see, you already know. Well done!

Craig H. Barrett
Canon City CO

I am writing to tell you how angry I am about the misconceptions so many people have about role-playing games, and the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game in particular. More and more I hear people say they don’t want to play D&D games because they will commit suicide or something. This has been blown out of proportion in recent years.

I even understand that there is a group in the next town that plays for two or three days at a time and none of them have ever done anything bad because of the game. I think that a person who flips “because of the game” had something wrong with his head already.

C. P. Bates
Chester SC

The controversy goes on and on: Is the D&D game hazardous to our children? As the mother of an about-to-be sixteen-year-old enthusiast, I would like to go on record on the game’s behalf. Three years ago, my son (then twelve) bought the Basic Set. He is an only child, so I began to play with him. Together we entered a world of incredible wonder and excitement. Our only problem was that we had trouble finding others to share it with. (That, of course, is the fly in every serious DM’s ointment and has nothing to do with this letter.) Eventually, we found two more players. It was with a great deal of sorrow that I had to tell my little group recently when one of the members moved out of town. But hope is within reach: We have recently received the backing of our local library. So a new campaign lies ahead.

On the positive side, the situations presented
in the game often allow young adults to sample life hazards and learn to deal with them intelligently. All of us make judgment errors in our youth. D&D and AD&D games allow those judgments to be made safely. When several players are involved, it teaches valuable lessons in teamwork. But most of all, it is fun.

My son has grown to young manhood, and I have become perhaps a better parent because of these games. I feel genuinely sorry for those parents who have so near at hand the means to bridge the gap between themselves and their children, yet fail to use it.

Geri Balyard
Canton OH

This is the first letter that I have submitted to you. I hope it is published. I have been playing role-playing games for over six years now, and am nineteen years of age. I play AD&D, FASA's BATTLETECH®, and the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ games mostly, but have played almost every role-playing system out. I also am a Christian and go to church. The above information is necessary to understand the comments and statements that I am about to make.

I have come under attack from Christians in my church and others at my public school about my interest in AD&D games and other role-playing games in general. I have listened to their comments. They range from "Oh, no! You play that game? Why, you're a Satan worshiper!" to "What good are role-playing games anyway?"

Well, frankly, I'm fed up with it!

First of all, just because someone plays a game that involves make-believe creatures such as spirits or ghouls doesn't make one a Satan worshiper. I consider myself to be a good Christian in general and think that the accusation is totally biased. Many Christians tend to shut out anything that has even a hint of "evil" in it. They never examine something, scrutinize it, try to find good in something. As a church-goer, I am told always to find the good in everything and to try and look at both sides of an issue, to not be biased, but this is what's happening to AD&D games in the church community.

Second: "What good are they?" The AD&D game and the MARVEL SUPER HEROES game (the latter in particular) teach good morals such as mercy, bravery, intelligence, and teamwork. What is wrong with that? In AD&D games, a character of lawful-good alignment, such as a cavalier, would set a good example as an honest and brave person. There is more to AD&D games than dice, books, and killing weird-looking monsters. There's character interaction and the main plot of the quest, in which players must act good; that makes a good game. I think the church people have passed over those facts.

In closing, I'd like to say that it's the DM who sets the tone of the game. As DM, I usually take out "questionable" material such as demon lords, false gods, etc. It's the DM's campaign that should be questioned, not the AD&D game itself. The responsibility lies there. And to all who read this, always find the good in things, look at both viewpoints of everything, and don't shut your minds to new things. After all, was not Jesus himself killed because of his viewpoints?

Dan Pryor
Phillipsville CA
Play Raistlin’s Game!

MageStones™
GAME

MAGE STONES™ is an exciting new game from TSR that is filled with fast-action and fun! This new game is said to have been created by Raistlin, one of the most famous wizards of the DRAGONLANCE® Saga.

When you play MAGE STONES, you’ll use your strategic abilities and intrigue to force other players’ stones off the board. It’s a quick, exciting game that’s easy to learn for two to six friends of all ages!

Available NOW at your local hobby shop! Pick up your copy today.
CONVENTION CALENDAR

Convention Calendar Policies

This column is a service to our readers worldwide. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines must be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on standard manuscript paper. The contents of each listing must be short and succinct.

The information given in the listing must include the following, in this order:
1. Convention title and dates held;
2. Site and location;
3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
4. Special events offered;
5. Registration fees or attendance requirements; and,
6. Address(es) and telephone number(s) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.

Convention flyers, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements will not be considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Unless stated otherwise, all dollar values given for U.S. and Canadian conventions are in U.S. currency.

WARNING: We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that over a quarter of a million readers worldwide see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility.

Copy deadlines are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. Thus, the copy deadline for the December issue is the last Monday of October. Announcements for mass-mailed announcements will not be considered. All announcements for Europe must be posted an additional month before the deadline to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Limited, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom.

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to the magazine editors at TSR, Inc., (414) 248-3625 (U.S.A.); Questions or changes concerning European conventions should be directed to TSR Limited, (0223) 212517 (U.K.).

* indicates a European convention.
* indicates a Canadian convention.
* indicates a U.S. convention.

They column is a service to our readers worldwide. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines must be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on standard manuscript paper. The contents of each listing must be short and succinct.

The information given in the listing must include the following, in this order:
1. Convention title and dates held;
2. Site and location;
3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
4. Special events offered;
5. Registration fees or attendance requirements; and,
6. Address(es) and telephone number(s) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.

Convention flyers, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements will not be considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Unless stated otherwise, all dollar values given for U.S. and Canadian conventions are in U.S. currency.

WARNING: We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that over a quarter of a million readers worldwide see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility.

Copy deadlines are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. Thus, the copy deadline for the December issue is the last Monday of October. Announcements for mass-mailed announcements will not be considered. All announcements for Europe must be posted an additional month before the deadline to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Limited, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom.

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to the magazine editors at TSR, Inc., (414) 248-3625 (U.S.A.); Questions or changes concerning European conventions should be directed to TSR Limited, (0223) 212517 (U.K.).

* indicates an Australian convention.
* indicates a Canadian convention.
* indicates a European convention.

Registration: $10 pre-registered; $20 at the door. Write to: Dave Machin, 719 Juniper Rd., Valparaiso IN 46383; or call: (219) 759-2530.

COLONIAL CITY GAMEFEST '90
September 15-16
CCG '90 will be held (again) at the Knox County Memorial Building in Mount Vernon, Ohio. Tournaments and events include AD&D®, GLADIATORS®, WARRIHM FANTASY® and 40,000®, and other miniatures, board, and role-playing games, as well as a miniatures-painting contest. Registration: $5 for the weekend pre-registered; $3/day at the door. Write to: CCG '90, c/o Mount Vernon Gamers' Assoc., P.O. Box 1184, Mount Vernon OH 43050.

CALGARY GAMING CONVENTION '90
September 21-23
This third annual convention will be held in Calgary, Alberta. Events will include WORLD IN FLAMES® ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER®, SUPREMACY®, CIVILIZATION®, KREMLIN®, SOKOLOSS, FORTRESS AMERICA®, TALISMAN®, WARRIHM FANTASY® 40,000®, CAR WARS®, SYSTEM 7®, BATTLECHE®, and CIRCUS MAXIMUS® games, and a game auction. Registration: $9 Canadian; plus a small event fee. Write to: CWG Convention '90, 207 Bernard Drive NW, Calgary AB, CANADA T3K 2B6.

LEHICON III, September 21-23
The Lehigh Valley Gamers Assoc. is sponsoring this convention at the Easton Sheraton Inn in Easton, Pa. Events include AD&D® 1st and 2nd Ed. games, RPGA® AD&D® Open and Members Only tournaments, and CAR WARS®, BATTLECHE®, ROLEMASTER®, and HAR-POON® games. Door prizes and a dealers' room round out the weekend's activities. Registration: $10/day or $15/weekend in advance, with at-the-door rates slightly higher. Ask about special hotel room rates and under-17 discounts by calling the Sheraton at (215) 253-9131. Write to: LEHICON III, c/o Lehigh Valley Gamers' Assoc., P.O. Box 1864, Bethlehem PA 18016-1864.

AUTUMN CAMPAIGNS '90, September 22-23
This gaming convention will be held at the Dominion Inn & Conference Center in Lexington, Ky. Events include RPGs, board games, fantasy and historical war games, and tournaments for AD&D® and BATTLECHE® games. Other activities include a miniatures painting contest, a costume contest, a used-game auction, and a dealers' room. Door prizes will also be awarded. Registration: $6/day or $10/weekend. Write to: The Rusty Scabbard, Inc., 188 Woodland Ave., Lexington KY 40502; or call: (606) 255-3514.

BORDER WARS II, September 28-30
Sponsored by the Heart of America Historical Miniature Gaming Society, this convention will be held at the Sports Complex Holiday Inn in Kansas City, Mo. Activities include historical miniatures gaming, plus board and role-playing games. Registration: $10 before Sept. 15; $15 thereafter. There is a $2 discount to members of the Historical Miniatures Gaming Society. Write to: HAHMGSC, c/o Borderland Game & Hobby, 2550 W. 47 St., Kansas City KS 66103; or call: (913) 384-2519.

CONTACT 8, September 28-30
This convention will be held at the Ramada Inn in Evansville, Ind. Guests include Gary Robe...
Look out...

ChILL
It's Here

a scary game for scary people

Mayfair Games Inc. • P.O. Box 48539 • Niles IL 60648
The superior quality of TSR’s fantasy art is unrivaled in the industry. Each year, we are proud to publish 13 of the year’s best art pieces. The 1991 calendar features popular DRAGONLANCE® book and game covers by Clyde Caldwell, Jeff Easley, Larry Elmore and Fred Fields.

Our calendars are the most popular collector’s item in our product line. Don’t wait . . . be sure to pick up your copy today at your local book or hobby store.
and Dr. Bill Breuer. Activities include seminars, a 24-hour video channel, and a hawkers’ room. Registration: $20. Write to: CONTACT 8, P.O. Box 3894, Evansville IN 47737; or call: (812) 428-0549 before 10 P.M. CDT.

GEORGIA FANTASY CON ’90
September 28-30
This celebration of fantasy and horror will be held at the Atlanta International Hotel and Convention Center, Atlanta, Ga. The guest of honor is Michael Moorcock. Events include four tracks of panels and workshops, a masquerade, an art show and print shop, video rooms, art, and consignment auctions. Write to: GEORGIA FANTASY CON, Box 148, Clarkson GA 30021.

NOVACON VI, September 28-30
This gaming convention will be held at Texas A&M University’s Memorial Student Center. Events include RPGs, board games, demos, a dealers’ room, movies, and Japanimation. Registration: $4 at the door. Write to: NOVACON VI, c/o MSC NOVA, Box J-1, Texas A&M University, College Station TX 77841; or call: (409) 845-1515.

SATELLITE I, September 28-30
This SF convention will be held at the Hotel Bentley in Alexandria, La. Guests include Richard Chaves, Barry Morse, and Robert Asprin. Gaming events are being planned. This is also the official Space: 1999 International convention, and the Alliance has given this convention its full support. Write to: SATELLITE I, P.O. Box 13135, Alexandria LA 71315.

WHITESTONE SF/FANTASY FESTIVAL I
September 28-29
Whitestone’s first gaming convention will be held in the new Campus Activities Center at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. Events include: an AD&D® tournament; BATTLE-TECH®, CAR WARS®, PALLADIUM®, CALL OF CHITLHIU®, MEGATRAVEILR®, AXIS & ALIENS®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, V&V®, and ASL® games; open gaming; a dealers’ room; and a movie room. Registration: $5/day at the door. Judges and dealers are welcome! Write to: Whitestone Gaming Assoc., c/o Robert Wadsworth, 523-B South Gault St., Whitewater WI 53190; or call: (414) 473-2192.

SKELETON ‘90
September 29-October 1
The Engadine and Heathcote Gaming Group is again hosting this convention on the grounds of Otley Public School in Otley, Sydney, Australia. Events include AD&D® 1st and 2nd Ed., BATTLE-TECH®, CALL OF CHITLHIU®, CITHULII NOW®, and CYBERPUNK® games. Prizes will be awarded, and demos will also be presented. Registration: $11 (Australian) plus $4 to $6 per event. Write to: SKELETON ‘90, c/o 79 Thurlgona Rd., Engadine NSW 2233, AUSTRALIA; or call Paul at: (02) 979-9993.

COUNCIL OF FIVE NATIONS 16
October 5-7
Hosted by the Schenectady Wargamers Assoc., this convention will be held at the Albany Thruway House and Convention Center in Albany, N.Y. Guests include Jean Rabe, the RPG™ Network Coordinator. Events include over 100 AD&D® events (including RPG™ Grand Masters and Masters), with BATTLE-TECH®, 1830®, DIPLOMACIA®, and miniatures, and an RPG™ network breakfast, an auction, a miniatures-painting contest, a costume contest, and the Gamers’ Olympics. Registration: $12 for the weekend preregistered; $18 at the door. Write to: Schenectady Wargamers’ Assoc., Attn: Role-playing Director, P.O. Box 9429, Schenectady NY 12309.

ROVACON XV, October 5-7
This convention will be held at the Salem Civic Center in Salem, Va. Guests of honor include Forrest Ackerman, John (007) Gardner, Hal Clement, George Alec Effinger, and Allen Wold. Events include a huge open gaming area, a masquerade, an art show, panels and workshops, films, a banquet, Japanimation, and an over-100-table dealers’ area. Registration: $8 for the weekend, preregistered. GMs are welcome! Write to: ROVACON, P.O. Box 117, Salem VA 24153; or call: (703) 389-9400 after 5 P.M. EDT.

VALLEYCON 15, October 5-7
This SF/gaming convention will be held at the Regency Inn in Moorhead, Minn., and is sponsored by the non-profit Red River Science Fiction and Fantasy organization. Guests of honor include Phil Foglio, Robert Daniels, and John and Linda Ross-Mansfield. Other features are AD&D® games, panels and workshops, an art show and auction, three video rooms, filking, and costume contests. Registration: $5 for adults, $4 for teens, and $3 for children. Write to: VALLEYCON XV, POB 2702, Fargo ND 58109; or call: Tom (701) 280-1400; Steve (701) 280-1445; or Tony (218) 236-8357.

TOLEDO GAMING CONVENTION 8
October 6-7
This convention will be held at the University of Toledo’s Scott Park campus in Toledo, Ohio. Events include AD&D® 1st and 2nd Ed., ALIENS®, ASL®, BATTLE-TECH®, CAR WARS®, CALL OF CHITLHIU®, CYBERPUNK®, GURPS®, MBT®, PARANOIA®, ROLEMASTER®, SHADOWRUN®, SPACE HULK®, SPACE MARINES®, SPACE 1889®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, STAR WARS®, UP FRONT®, and WARHAMMER 4000® and FANTASY BATTLE® games, as well as an auction, a painting contest, videos, an open gaming area, and a dealers’ room. GMs are welcome! Send an SASE to: TOLEDO GAMING CONVENTION, 3001 N. Reynolds, Toledo OH 43615.

ENBICON ’90, October 12-14
This gaming convention will be held in the Student Union Building of the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B. Events include BATTLE-TECH®, WARHAMMER®, AD&D®, SHADOWRUN®, CALL OF CHITLHIU®, TORC®, and SPACE HULK® games, with a miniatures painting contest and contemporary war games. Registration: $8 (Canadian)/weekend. Write to: ENBICON ’90, c/o UNB Student Union, POB 4400, Fredericton NB, CANADA E3B 5A3.

QUAD CON ’90, October 12-14
Sponsored by the Riverbend Gamers Club and the Game Emporium staff, this fifth-annual convention will be held once again at the Palmer Auditorium in Davenport, Iowa. Events include AD&D®, CALL OF CHITLHIU®, BATTLE-TECH®, CHAMPIONS®, MARVEL SUPER HEROES®, and SHADOWRUN® games. Other activities include historical and computer games, a silent auction, a dealers’ room, a miniatures-painting contest, and a banquet/social. Registration: $4/day and $7 for the weekend through Sept. 30; $5/day and $10 for the weekend at the door. Send an SASE to: The Game Emporium, 3213 23rd Ave., Moline IL 61265; or call: (309) 762-5577 (no collect calls).

RUDICON VI, October 19-21
Held on the campus of the Rochester Institute of Technology, this convention is sponsored by the Rochester Wargamers Assoc. and the RIT Student Directorate. Events include a large variety of RPG and war gaming tournaments, miniatures-painting and art contests, SCA demos, a large dealers’ room, historical miniatures, an auction, and a con party complete with costume contest. Registration: $5 for the weekend. Dealers are welcome. Write to: RUDICON VI, c/o Student Directorate, 1 Lomb Memorial Dr., Rochester NY 14623.

GAMEMASTER ’90, October 20
This gaming convention will again be held in the Student Union Building of Boise State University in Boise, Idaho. The guest of honor is Gary Thomas. Events include AD&D®, MEGA-TRAVELLER®, CAR WARS®, WARHAMMER®, BATTLE-TECH®, GURPS®, STAR TREK RPG®, STAR FLEET BATTLES®, MARVEL SUPER HEROES™, CHAMPIONS®, and STAR WARS®. Other features are an original tournament adventure based on the film Total Recall, strategy gaming, open gaming, miniatures contests, and an auction. Registration: $3 before Oct. 10, and $4.50 at the door. Write to: Gamemasters’ Guild, 1511 Bergeson, Boise ID 83706.

NECRONOMICON ’90, October 26-28
This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn-Ashley Plaza in Tampa, Fla. The guests of honor are Jack C. Haldeman II and Lawrence Watt-Evans. Other guests include Timothy Zahn, Richard Lee Byers, Richard Louis Newman, and Prudy Taylor Board. Activities include artist and author panels, a masquerade, a trivia contest, a fun cabaret, gaming, an art show and auction, the Creatures of Night Pageant, and a charity auction to benefit Wildlife Rescue, Inc. There’ll also be a dealers’ room, a Friday night banquet, a 24-hour hospitality suite, and a 1ygar party. Registration: $15/weekend until Sept. 15; $20 for the weekend or $8/day. Write to: NECRONOMICON ’90, P.O. Box 2076, Riverview FL 33569; or call: (813) 677-6347.

STAR CON ’90, October 26-28
This convention is sponsored by Star Base Alpha and will be held in Menasha, Wis. Events include a wide variety of games and tournaments, as well as other activities. Write to: Star Base Alpha, 1112 R. Lake St., Neenah WI 54956.

COMMAND CON TOO, October 27
The convention will be held at the St. Louis Community College in the Forest Park Cafeteria. Events include: RPG™/AD&D® games; a plenitude of miniatures, board, and role-playing games; and the SAGA game auction. Registration: $5. Write to: COMMAND CON TOO, PO. Box 9107, St. Louis MO 63117; or call: (314) 727-1508 or (314) 721-1155 before 10 p.m. CDT (no collect calls).

GAMESCON ’90, October 27
This convention will be held at the Laindon Community Centre on High Road in Basildon, Essex. Activities include a RPG™ AD&D® tournament, a painting competition, demonstration and participation games, and traders. Clubs, DMs, and players are welcome! Write to: Chris Baylis, 67 Mynchens, Lee Chapel North, Basildon, Essex, England, SS15 5EG; or call: 0268-419933.

HALLOWEEN TOURNAMENT XI
October 27
This convention will be held at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church in Tucson, Ariz. Events include an AD&D® tournament, a raffle, and a costume contest. Prizes will be awarded.
Food and accommodations will be available on or near the site. Registration: $5 at Things for Thinkers. Call: (602) 326-7679. For hotel information, call David Orahood at: (602) 887-3983.

CONTRARY '90, November 2-4
This gaming convention will be held at the Quality Inn & Conference Center in Chicopee, Mass. An honored guest is Michael Gray. Events include six RPG™ tournaments, plus other RPGs, board games, miniatures, and painting and costume contests. Registration: $15 preregistered. Write to: CONTRARY '90, 933 Belmont Ave., Springfield MA 01108; or call: (413) 731-7237.

GENERICON '90, November 2-4
This gaming convention will be held in the Coffman Memorial Union of the University of Minnesota–Minneapolis campus. Role-playing, board and war games will be featured, plus movies, an art show, costume contests, and tournaments. Registration: $10 before Oct. 1; $15 at the door. $2 discount from at the door admission with the donation of nonperishable food items for Minnesota Food Shelves. Write to: GENERICON '90, 2835 Rice St. #817, St. Paul MN 55113.

CON CARNE '90, November 2-4
This convention will be held at the Days Inn in Meriden, Conn. Events include: AD&D®, GURPS®, BATTLETECH®, CHAMPIONS®, PALLADIUM®, CAR WARS®, PARANOIA®, and CALL OF CTHULHU® games—a live-action RPG (extra charge); a human chess game; speakers; workshops; a masquerade; a dealers’ room; filming; an art show/auction; interactive literature; demos; and miniatures competitions. Registration: $25/per person, or $20 per person in a group of 10 or more before Sept. 15; fees will be higher thereafter. Special hotel rates available through address below. Send two 1st-class stamps to: Games and Stuff, 501 Main St., Middletown CT 06457; or call: (203) 344-8895.

SCI CON XII, November 2-4
This convention will be held at the Holiday Executive Center in Virginia Beach, Va. The guest of honor is Kim Stanley Robinson, and the artist guest of honor is Bob Eggleton. This SF convention features panels, readings, videos, a costume contest, an art show, a hospitality suite, and gaming. Registration: $20 until Sept. 21, and $25 thereafter. Write to: SCI CON XII, Dept. DR, P.O. Box 9434, Hampton VA 23670.

SOONERCON 6, November 2-4
This convention will be held at the Central Plaza Hotel in Oklahoma City, Okla. Guests of honor include Lois McMaster Bujold, Dr. William F. Wu, Alicia Austin, and Susan Satterfield. Events include open gaming, an art show, a video room, British TV, a masque and a masque dance, an art auction, and a contest for the “Worst-Dressed Sentient Being.” Registration: $10 until October 10. Write to: P.O. Box 4229, Tulsa OK 74159.

GAME-FEST ’90, November 3
This convention will be held at Kaspar’s Ark, north of Lebanon, Pa. Events include AD&D®, CHAMPIONS®, SHADOWRUN®, ASL®, AXIS & ALLIES®, and BATTLETECH® games. Registration: $5 preregistered; $7.50 at the door. Write to: Lebanon Area Gamers, 806 Cumberland St., Lebanon PA 17042; or call: (717) 274-8706.

ROCK-CON XVII, November 3-4
This convention will be held at Rockford Lutheran High School in Rockford, Ill. Guests of honor are Jim Ward, Tom Wham, and Lou Zocchi. Activities include over 100 gaming events, with RPG™ tournaments, the annual auction, a dealers’ room, and the Don Snow Memorial AD&D® tournament, sponsored by the RPG™ and Black Hawk Distributors. Judges are needed! Registration: $5 for one or both days. Write to: ROCK-CON XVII Game Fair, 14225 Hanesberry Rd., Rockton IL 61072.

UMF-CON ’90, November 3-4
Beat the snow to the University of Maine-Farmington Student Center for this convention. Events include AD&D®, GAMMA WORLD®, TOP SECRET/S.I., miniatures, war, and board games. Registration: $3/day or $5 for the weekend preregistered; $4/day or $8 for the weekend at the door. All games have an additional $2 table fee. Write to: Table Gaming Club, Student Center, 5 South St., Farmington ME 04938.

PROVOCATION, November 10-11
Organized by the Quebec Gamers’ Assoc. (AQG), this convention will be held at Pierredupuy High School in Montreal, Quebec. Activities include 33 hours of nonstop gaming, plus an auction, open gaming, an art show, and a figurine contest. Registration: $21 U.S./weekend and $13 U.S./day. Write to: PROVOCATION, Box 63, St Hubert, Quebec, PQ, CANADA H1V 3L6, or call Christine: (514) 596-0115, or Daniel: (514) 252-3032.

CONTEX 8, November 23-25
This convention will be held at the Hilton Southwest in Houston, Tex. Guests include Robert E. Vardeman, Sherlock, and Willie Sirus. Activities include gaming, workshops, an art show, costuming, writers’ workshops, film, film videos, and plus the Contex Cross-Tavern Cosmic Tour. Dealers are welcome! Write to: Friends of Fandom, P.O. Box 26696, Houston TX 77207-6996, or call: (713) 729-6733.

1990 EUROPEAN GEN CON® GAMES FAIR
November 30-December 2
Europe’s largest residential gaming convention will be held in Cambod Sands, Rye, Sussex. Guests of honor include TSR’s Blake Mobeley, Jim Ward, Jeff Easley, Harold Johnson, and Jean Rabe, and free-lancers Larry Elmore and Tom Wham. Tournaments include AD&D® European Open, BUCK ROGERS®, STAR WARS®, 2300 AD®, SPELLJAMMER™, CALL OF CTHULHU®, BATTLESYSTEM™, and BATTLETECH® games. Registration: $39/25 including accommodation. Write to: 1990 EUROPEAN GEN CON Games Fair, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cam bridge, CB1 3LB ENGLAND.

TROPICON 9, November 30-December 2
This convention will be held at the Ft. Lauderdale Airport Hilton hotel. Guests include Hal Clement and Bruce Pez. Events include programming, filing, an art show, a video room, a dealers’ room, a banquet, a trivia contest, a masquerade, and gaming. Registration: $20 until Nov. 1; fees will be higher at the door. Write to: TROPICON 9, c/o South Florida Science Fiction Society, P.O. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale FL 33307; or call Tony Parker at: (407) 391-4380.

SYNDICON III, December 8
This convention will be held at the Interna tional Inn in Orlando, Florida. The guest of honor is Rembert N. Parker, RPG™ Regional Director. Events include one- and two-round RPG® AD&D® tournaments, with BATTLETECH®, ILLUMINAT®, CAR WARS®, CALL OF CTHULHU®, SHADOWRUN®, SPELLJAMMER™, DIPLOMACY®, and DRAGONQUEST® games. Registration: $8; $6 for RPG® Network members; $10 at the door (all prices include four free events). Write to: SYNDICON III, 11324 Porto Court, Orlando FL 32821; or call: (407) 857-1896, or (407) 788-3014.

How effective was your convention listing? If you are a convention organizer, please write to the editors and let us know if our “Convention Calendar” served your needs. Your comments are always welcome.

Free Catalog!
Write for your free catalog of games and gaming supplies! In the United States and Canada, write to: TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: TSR Mail Order Catalogue, TSR Ltd, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. Our catalog is free—send for it today!
NEW PRODUCTS FOR SEPTEMBER

LNR1 Wonders of Lankhmar
AD&D® 2nd Edition game accessory
by Dale Henson
Based on the famous novels written by Fritz Leiber, Wonders of Lankhmar will bring many hours of high fantasy adventure to your campaign. This booklet is filled with easy-to-play one- and two-page adventures.
Suggested Retail Price: $9.95/£6.50
Product No.: 9295

The Horde
AD&D® boxed set
by David "Zeb" Cook
Rising from a number of insignificant tribes into a powerful empire, the Horde, with its vast army of barbarian horsemen, becomes bent on conquest in the Realms. This new boxed set draws on the background, characters, and events of the Empires novels and The Horde module trilogy.
Suggested Retail Price: $18.00/£11.95
Product No.: 1055

DDA2 Legions of Thyatis
D&D® module
by John Nephew
After your PCs have survived the rigors of DDA1 Arena of Thyatis, they must face even more devious plans spawned by a corrupt Thyatian senator. From the challenge of the arena and the terrors of the catacombs, the heroes must be clever and persuasive in order to escape the snares of Thyatian intrigue.
Suggested Retail Price: $5.95/£3.95
Product No.: 9296

MLA2 Night Moves
MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ module
TSR Staff
Innocent people are being caught between bouts of gunfire on the war-torn streets of New York City. The gangs are warring. The police need help—superpowered help. They need you! Can you bring the gang wars to an end?
Suggested Retail Price: $8.95/£5.50
Product No.: 6895

Battle of Britain
World War II simulation game
by Richard Borg
This new game is an historical simulation that deals with the air war over Britain in World War II. Using miniature planes and full color cards on a colorful board of Great Britain, the game details the numerous attacks by German air squadrons on the British Isles. Never surrender!
Suggested Retail Price: $29.95/£22.50 + VAT
Product No.: 3030

The Gates of Thorbardin
DRAGONLANCE® Saga Heroes II Trilogy, Volume Two
by Dan Parkinson
Beneath Skullcap are the remains of the dark wizard Fistandantilus and the path to the gates of Thorbardin. Buried along that perilous path is the magical helm of Grallen, son of King Duncan, tragic hero of the final battle of the Dwarfgate War. The finder of Grallen’s helm will be rewarded by a united Thorbardin, but he will also open the gates of the realm to fresh horror and chaos.
Suggested Retail Price: $4.95
Product No.: 8335

Homeland
FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Dark Elf Trilogy
by R. A. Salvatore
Strange and exotic Menzoberranzan is the

Photograph by S. Wass

Raven Armoury

There can be only one

Raven Armoury was founded by dedicated English Craftsmen to keep alive the ancient traditional skills of the bladesmith, armourer, bowyer and fletcher.

Send NOW for your copy of our superbly illustrated full colour catalogue, only $10.00 inc p. & p. (Refundable with first order.)

From Raven Armoury,
Belmont House, Newport, Essex, ENGLAND
Tel: 037184 486 U.K.
vast city of the drow. Imagine the world of the dark elves, where families battle families and fantastic monsters rush up from the lightless depths. Possessing a sense of honor beyond the scope offered him by his unprincipled kinsman, young Drizzt finds himself faced with a dilemma: Can he live in an honorless society?  

Suggested Retail Price: $4.95  
Product No.: 8481

NEW PRODUCTS FOR OCTOBER

RA1 Feast of Goblyns  
AD&D® RAVENLOFT™ module  
by Blake Moyley

A dose of horror arrives just in time for Halloween! Will your PCs survive in the domains of Ravenloft? Find out in Feast of Goblyns, the first AD&D® adventure based on the RAVENLOFT™ boxed set! The module includes a RAVENLOFT™ DM's screen, player record sheet, and full-color poster!  

Suggested Retail Price: $10.95/£6.95  
Product No.: 9298

DRAGONLANCE® saga Classics, Vol 1.  
AD&D® DRAGONLANCE module reprints  
by TSR staff

The first four classic DRAGONLANCE® modules (DL1-4) originally introduced three years ago have been updated for use with the AD&D® 2nd Edition game. All of the maps, characters, and information from the four modules has been brought together into one package.  

Suggested Retail Price: $15.00/£9.95  
Product No.: 9291

FOR1 Draconomicon  
AD&D® FORGOTTEN REALMS™ accessory  
by Lots O'People

Everything you ever wanted to know about the great Wyrmns of the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ setting is here. Written by adventurers who have gone before, this tome supplies new information about dragons: their homes, their magic, their treasures, and lots more! This material can easily be used in any fantasy campaign.  

Suggested Retail Price: $15.00/£9.95  
Product No.: 9297

SJA3 Crystal Spheres  
AD&D® SPELLJAMMER™ module  
by J. Paul LaFountain

This adventure takes your SPELLJAMMER campaign PCs to four new crystal spheres in an effort to save a prince and his entire sphere from the dark influence of an evil being. Explore new worlds and make your mark in this interplanetary adventure!  

Suggested Retail Price: $8.95/£5.95  
Product No.: 9299

25CA2 N.E.O. in the 25th Century  
XXVc™ module  
by Troy Denning

There's something rotten in Coprates. A professor from Mars University hires your band of shady vagabonds to explore Jupiter's moons
for legendary alien artifacts. There’s more to this adventure than meets the eye though, including a sultry someone called Matahari!

**Suggested Retail Price:** $9.95/£6.50
**Product No.:** 3566

**X-Men Boxed Set**
**MARVEL SUPER HEROES™** boxed set by Jeff Grubb

Many marvelous mutants make their mark in this boxed set. This set covers the powers and abilities of the X-Men and the other major mutants while presenting several adventures for the X-Men or your own PCs to X-perience.

**Suggested Retail Price:** $18.00/£11.96
**Product No.:** 6996

---

**Quest**

ANNOUNCES THE OPENING OF A NEW GAMING STORE LOCATED AT:
35 Montgomery St., Clifton, NJ 07011 • (201) 365-4019

- **DISCOUNTS ON NEW GAMES FROM:** TSR, GDW, GAMES WORKSHOP, STEVE JACKSON, CHAOSIUM, COLUMBIA, FANTASY GAMES, FASA, HERO, IRON CROWN, LEADING EDGE, MAYFAIR, NOVA, PALADUM, TASK FORCE, AVALON HILL, VICTORY, WEST END AND MORE.
- **WE HAVE OUT-OF-PRINT GAMES FROM:** S.P.I., G.D.W., O.S.G., BATTLELINE, YAQUINTO, INTERNATIONAL TEAM, AVALON HILL, WEST END MORE.
- **SPORTS GAMES AND GENERAL INTEREST GAMES**
- **MAGAZINES DRAGON®, DUNGEON®, WHITE WOLF, GATEWAYS, SPACE GAMER, CHALLENGE, BATTLETECH, ANIMAG, WHITE DWARF & AUTO DUEL QUARTERLY NEW AND OUT-OF-PRINT**
- **MINATURES FROM:** CITADEL, RAL PARRHA & GRENADIER.
- **WE SPECIALIZE IN OVERSEAS SHIPMENTS** FOR HISTORICAL GAMES ASK FOR A CATALOG FROM OUR AFFILIATE:

SEND FOR A FREE CATALOG

---

**BATTLEMATS™, MEGAMATS™, & CRYSTALMATSTM™**

The Ideal Surfaces for Mapping Out Your Adventures.

- **BATTLEMATS™:** 23-1/2"x26" $10.00 ea.
- **MEGAMATS™:** 34-1/2"x48" $23.00 ea.
- **CRYSTALMATS™:** (Battle-size) 23-1/2"x26" $8.00 ea.
- **CRYSTALMATS™:** (Mega-size) 34-1/2"x48" $18.00 ea.
- **PEN SETS (4 Colors):** $5.29 ea.
- **PENS (Black):** $1.29 ea.
FORGOTTEN REALMS™

setting

Which of TSR’s modules are set in the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting?

Only products with the FORGOTTEN REALMS banner on the front cover are actually intended for use in this setting. A complete product bibliography (good up to March 1990) appears on page 154 of the AD&D 2nd Edition hardbound volume FORGOTTEN REALMS Adventures. Of course, a clever DM could place almost any adventure in one of the many unexplored corners of the Realms.

Where is the game information on the magical book, *The Tome of the Unicorn*, described? The table at the back of FR4 *The Magister* says information is given on page 41 of the DM’s Sourcebook of the Realms, but the information given there is pretty spotty.

Full details on *The Tome of the Unicorn* are given in the DM’s Sourcebook of the Realms, pages 92-93.

Where can I find a full description of the greenstone amulets worn by the Flaming Fist mercenary company? I understand these items can recharge themselves; how often can they do this?

A description of the greenstone amulet is included in FR4 *The Magister* (TSR product #9229). A greenstone amulet automatically begins recharging itself whenever its charges drop to zero. The amulet spends 1d4 x 11 turns recharging itself, gaining one charge each turn. It remains nonfunctional during recharging.

There are several wands and staves described in FR4 that can explode if broken accidentally. Will they also explode if broken deliberately, even by nonwizards?

These items are extremely unstable and will indeed explode if broken deliberately, even by nonwizards. Note that this is not the case with normal items. Most wands and staves do not explode when broken in any fashion. The more powerful items, such as the staff of the magi, explode only when held and broken by a wizard who deliberately calls for a retributive strike.

Volume 1 of the *Kara-Tur* boxed set mentions a new scholar character class (on page 18). Where can I find information on this class?

The “class” mentioned on page 18 is that of the mandarins, which is a social class in Shou Lung, not a character class. Check out the section on the mandarinate on page 7 for details.

There is at least one character in the FORGOTTEN REALMS novels who fights with a scimitar in each hand. How is this possible, since a scimitar is a size M weapon?

The character you are thinking of is Drizzt, from the Icewind Dale trilogy. In this particular case, there is a game rule that covers the use of a medium-size weapon in each hand. See the notes on the two-weapon style in the fighting styles section of the *Complete Fighter’s Handbook*, pages 61-64.

Will there be a FORGOTTEN REALMS atlas?

Yes. The FORGOTTEN REALMS Atlas (TSR product #8442) is due for release this August and will cost $15.95/£10.95.

We all know that Elminster does a lot of traveling. Has he ever been to Oerth or Krynn?

Perhaps, but he’s not saying.

When reading the sourcebook in FR1 *Waterdeep and the North*, I had trouble finding some of the features mentioned in chapter one on the maps provided with the boxed set.

Check out TM4 City of Waterdeep Trail Map (TSR Product #9401) or the map showing Waterdeep in FR5 *The Savage Frontier* (TSR Product #9233). Also see “Welcome to Waterdeep,” in DRAGON issue #128, which has a map and other materials that were dropped from FR1.

Exactly what kind of landscape is indicated by “clear” terrain areas on the various Realms maps?

Clear terrain is rolling and open, and generally free from major obstacles such as impenetrable forests, mountains, etc. Most clear terrain is plains or farmland, but there also can be low hills, solitary trees, clumps of woodland, and gullies.

To what scale are the various city maps found in the *Cyclopedia of the Realms* (from the FORGOTTEN REALMS boxed set) drawn?

The scales vary from map to map because cities of different sizes were presented in the same-size spaces. You can get a rough idea of the scale for each map by looking at the narrow sides of the buildings shown; most are about 20’ long.

What are the scales of the various FORGOTTEN REALMS maps supposed to be? I have them all, and some of the scales seem to be at odds with the others.

The two continental maps in the boxed campaign set are drawn at 1” = 90 miles. The area detail maps in the boxed set and in the modules are 1” = 30 miles. The keys on the trail maps show the scale as 1” = 90 miles, but this is a misprint. The scale-of-miles bar at the upper right-hand corner indicates that 1” = about 142 miles, a scale that works quite well when you compare distances between major landmarks shown on both the trail maps and the continental maps.

When will the replacement maps for the boxed campaign set be available?

New maps are already available. However, the only difference between them and the maps in the early print runs of the boxed set are the colors. The current maps have colors that match the map colors in the modules and in the *Kara-Tur* boxed set. If you have older maps (ones with pale blue oceans and light beige clear areas), you can get color-corrected maps.
Can PCs who travel from Faerun to Kara-Tur learn martial arts or other Oriental proficiencies? Can western races adopt Oriental classes? For example, can there be elven samurai?

Western (gajin) characters can learn Oriental proficiencies if they can find Oriental masters to teach them. Finding such masters should require lots of good fortune, skillful role-playing or both. Since there are spirit folk samurai, I see no reason why elves couldn’t also become samurai (maximum level 12) with proper sponsorship. However, the samurai are a social class as well as a character class, and first-generation gajin samurai of any race would be rare indeed.

The maps to module N5 Under Illefarn have many numbered rooms that aren’t described anywhere in the text. Is there dropped text, or are these rooms simply empty? Where do the stairways on maps 14 and 15 (areas G and H) lead?

The undocumented areas have no fixed contents. There can be random encounters, such as patrols, in these rooms, or individual DMs can populate them as they see fit. The westernmost stairway in map 14 (room 113) leads up to map 16, room 121. The north stairway (off the central corridor) leads up to map 15, room 114. The south stairway leads up to map 17, room 124. The central stairway on map 15 leads down to map 14, as already described. The eastern stairway leads up to map 16, room 118.

What lies on the other side of The Spine of the World mountains? A friend told me it’s the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting.

All of what lies to the north of The Spine of the World is unrevealed, though the City of Waterdeep Trail Map indicates that the southern edge of the Endless Ice Sea begins there. However, the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting lies on another planet, Oerth. The SPELLJAMMER™ supplement contains rules for traveling between Oerth, Abeir-Toril, and other fantasy worlds. Of course, DMs are free to construct their campaigns as they see fit, and there’s nothing wrong with lumping the two settings together on one world.

I remember seeing something about flying ships in the Realms. Are these spelljammers?

No, they are not, though many of the rules governing spelljammers also would apply to them. The only details ever revealed about these ships were published in the article “Sailors on the Sea of Air,” in DRAGON issue #124.

It seems to me that there are no libraries in the Realms. Candlekeep charges an outrageous fee just to browse, but shouldn’t there be some place where a character can go to improve his knowledge?

Modern-style libraries where visitors have free access to the books are unknown in the Realms. There are, however, plenty of libraries. Sages, guilds, and governments keep extensive collections of books and scrolls, but access to them is on a need-to-know basis (or pay-as-you-go, in the case of sages). For example, any large and prosperous shipwright’s guild would have a library with volumes on ship design and construction, carpentry, forestry, logging, blacksmithing, rope making, weaving, sewing, and a host of other subjects, both practical and esoteric, related to shipbuilding. Members would use the library as a resource for training new members and for answering difficult or unforeseen questions that might come up during day-to-day business. The guild also would jealously guard its library to prevent competitors in other cities from learning its professional secrets and to prevent those people who are not guild members—like adventurers—from learning how to build their own ships and putting dues-paying guild members out of work. Though literacy is more common in the Realms than it was in the historical medieval world, the people of the Realms understand that knowledge is power and they do not share it readily.

I would like to use the rental villas in Waterdeep (as described in the City System boxed set) in my campaign. How big are they and how much do they cost to rent?

According to Jeff Grubb, each villa has 9 to 12 rooms on two or three floors, plus a basement. The cost to rent one depends on the building’s size and condition; 400-600 gp per month is a good range.

Some of the Street Scenes tables in the City System set are missing the numbers 81-88. Other tables have two entries numbered 105. How do you get around those flaws when using the tables in play? Also, each table goes up to number 120. This is fine, but the instructions on page 15 say to roll percentile dice and add or subtract one or more modifiers also given on page 15. The highest total modifier is +6, so how can you get a total of 120? What do you do if a negative modifier gives you a result of less than one?

The missing and duplicated numbers are probably typos. Treat a result of 81-88 as either an 80 or an 89, as you wish. Likewise, just pick one of the two listed entries on a result of 105. The text on page 15 says to add +20 to the roll for all encounters that take place after dark, though this is not shown on the table. (The correct modifier for Night scenes is +20. The modifier for Witching Hour scenes is +19). Treat any negative result as a 1 and treat a result of 121 or more as 120.
THE ECOLOGY OF THE GRIFFON
The size of an adult griffon is on the order of the largest of lions and tigers, being of similar proportions though with an especially heavy chest and with the shoulders to accommodate wings and flight muscles. While standing on all fours, the overall length from beak to rump measures 7-10'. An adult male may weigh up to 1,100 lbs., with females averaging one-third less.

The origins of the griffon are unclear. Some scholars have speculated that it was the result of magical experimentation by sages as a ferocious avian carnivore, and it is probably the most successful large flying predator, being more common and voracious than any sort of dragon. It is the true king of the air.

Anatomy

In appearance, griffons resemble great lionlike cats with the taloned forelimbs, wings, and heads of great eagles, but with prominent tufted ears. Their body fur colors range from golden bronze to dark brown, the colors darkening with age. Males have touches of red on their breast feathers, females have duller coloration than males.

The eyes of the griffon have been said to resemble living flames, usually being ruby red, burning yellow, or icy blue. Griffons have the same keen vision that giant eagles have, being able to see a horse from two miles away in the air. It is said that if a griffon could read, it could see normal print clearly from 100'. It lacks infravision but can see clearly in the dark as its eyes gather the faintest of light. Its sense of smell is only average for a predatory animal, still much better than that of humans but inferior to that of dogs. It might be possible for a griffon to track quarry by scent alone, and one would certainly be able to detect most enemies approaching from upwind, but not as readily as could many of its prey. A griffon’s sense of hearing, on the other hand, is very sharp. It can hear hoofbeats on packed earth from at least a mile altitude, and a trainer’s call will reach it from the same distance.

Flying

Eagles can roll completely over in midair and griffons can do likewise, but not without some difficulty. Due to their great size, it would take longer to correct an error or regain height, making aerobatics dangerous. Midair loops and somersaults may be possible under good conditions but probably not with a rider. Nevertheless, the griffon is a nimble and powerful flyer, though less so than the Pegasus, which is both faster and more agile in flight. The griffon is built to catch moderately quick prey and carry it back to a high nest.

Griffons can fly in almost any weather, having an elemental feel for the sky and its conditions. They can sense changes in the weather and can detect downdrafts and thermals. Griffon riders need at least as much training to learn how griffons fly as their griffons need to learn how to carry their riders. Griffons can be intratable at times and simply may not want to fly, much less convey a rider, though usually not without good reason; they are quite sure of themselves in the air.

Hunting

Very few carnivores are as superbly capable of hunting as is the griffon. With its combination of speed and agility, as well as its natural armament, the griffon is a tenacious predator. Although a griffon can strike large prey out of the air, it favors hunting ground-dwelling animals, especially herd animals and most especially horses, which it craves. The variety of potential prey is very large, as griffons are opportunistic hunters; they feed on almost anything from the size of a rabbit to a buffalo—including, at times, humans. Unlike lions, griffons are not scavengers and will usually ignore food that isn’t fresh. A griffon can locate prey in near total darkness, but it normally hunts during the day as it is easier to fly on sun-heated thermals and many herd animals are up and about during this time. Open plains, savannahs, and rolling grasslands are its preferred hunting grounds.

If it is injured, a griffon can function as a land predator as well as an aerial one, though it will be slow and is then most likely to become a man-eater. When acting as a land hunter, it will behave much as a big cat, though it shows some flexibility in adjusting its hunting techniques. It may stalk and pounce like a leopard, or stalk...
and charge like a tiger; if there are two or more griffons, a group charge, as per the lion, might be used. If the griffon’s wings are partially functioning, it is then able to drop onto its prey from a tree or cliff. Although griffons can and do hunt a large variety of prey, equine flesh is their obsession. Griffons wing their ways at once toward any horses they see, selecting the group that offers the best feeding with the least danger. Young griffons pay no heed to warriors who may be riding or leading horses, attacking with no regard for swords or arrows. An older griffon, however, devotes a few moments to consider such an attack in advance. An unprotected wild horse is an immediate target, however, devotes a few moments to consider such an attack in advance. An unprotected wild horse is an immediate target, but a column of cavalry may be given up as too much trouble unless the griffon is extremely hungry, stupid, arrogant, or has never fought warriors before.

Griffons are not often clever, but experienced ones have learned a few tricks. Adventurers tell tales of griffons that bide gone. The less-intelligent lion is well air and an immediate escape will ensure their time until after dark when a large mounted party is bedded down, then their time until after dark when a large mounted party is bedded down, then approach on the ground from upwind to spook the horses into bolting from the camp. The griffons then follow the horses for a safe distance before making the kill to minimize the hazards from the party. If horses are tied down, a quick kill from the air and an immediate escape will ensure something worth eating after the party is gone. The less-intelligent lion is well known for similar tactics.

**Family matters**

The griffon’s range is extremely wide, from the tropics to the subarctic, and from coastal areas to high mountains. Because of the wide variety of prey it can hunt, and its ability to fly long distances for food or water; the griffon is the dominant predator in most areas unsuitable for other large hunters.

A griffon’s preferred nesting place is in the most remote and inaccessible part of its territory. High places commanding a wide view of the surrounding countryside are typical, including cliffs, mountaintops, mountainous caves, and large ruins. Even some great trees can support the weight of a griffon’s nest. These nests are normally far apart, but if prey is plentiful griffons can be gregarious and live among a small cluster of nests within earshot of each other. With eagles, griffons are monogamous and mate for life. They are devoted parents and will defend mate and young unto death. The young are fed first from any family kill. It is the male that hunts while the female guards the nest, again much as with eagles. Typically, two agate-colored eggs are laid at a time, hatching in four weeks. The hatchlings are ravenous and eat at least their weight in food a day for the first three months of life. At four months, the fledglings are the sizes of large dogs and can climb and move about on the ground. The parents now begin to teach their young hunting methods without using wings. At six months, the young begin flight training and aerial hunting, which lasts at least six more months. The nest is moved if necessary until the young can fend for themselves. Leaving the parents after two years, the young travel great distances before establishing their own home ranges.

On occasion, two or more griffons (usually males, typically brothers) team up and hunt together. This may last for a short time, a lifetime, or until one finds a mate. Lessthan cautious than mated pairs, these bachelor groups are more likely to be seen than others and are the basis on which most people form their impressions of griffons. Intensely loyal to each other, these griffons will back each other up in almost any situation.

Griffons rarely fight among themselves in the way many other predators do. The males are very protective of females, even if they are not mates. It is the instinctive sense of loyalty and discipline that makes a griffon a much more dependable battle mount than a horse or most other flying steeds. Griffons are naturally combative and fear almost nothing, yet neither will they fight for no apparent reason.

**Treasure**

Suspicious and bold, griffons may investigate anything that interests them despite possible danger. Attracted to shiny objects to decorate their nests, some griffons collect assorted treasures solely for their looks and will fight strenuously to protect what is theirs, but may trade precious items for something more interesting.

The treasure types to be found in a griffon’s nest are those that have survived examination and rough handling. Potions are likely to be broken because the griffons like to toss colorful things about and try to catch them in their beaks, or drop them to hear how they sound upon hitting the rocks. Furs, clothes, and leather goods are apt to be employed in tugging matches or claw sharpening. Scrolls similarly suffer unless well protected. Only durable metal objects will last.

An exceedingly rare species of griffon is known to have a peculiar sense that allows it to detect gold up to 10’ away. Since gold is of little value to griffons except as nest decorations, they do not often exercise this ability. Even so, this species can tell a fake piece of gold at a glance. A narrow strip of dark fur over the middle of the chest seems to grant this ability. It is possible to use this fur to enchant an item to locate gold. The difficulty in this is that the fur must come from a live griffon, and few if any are willing to part with their fur. If fur is removed from a live donor (which is necessary in order for this power to be transferred), the griffon’s gold-detecting ability fades for a year while the fur grows back on its chest.

Being both possessive and curious, even a trained griffon will not take kindly to being completely left out of the division of the adventure’s spoils, especially if the griffon’s sense for gold helped to locate the treasure. On the other hand, a restless griffon is likely to quickly tire of its valuable “toys” and will soon discard them.

**Training**

Griffons can be trained to be companions and mounts with striking loyalty, though not without unique problems. Horses are tamed and trained with ease by comparison; domesticated horses find the company of other horses or herbivores often makes them feel secure. Griffons are more solitary and dislike crowds. They do poorly in captivity, needing open spaces to exercise. Most would eventually refuse to eat if caged, making it difficult to hold them against their will.

Gaining a griffon is difficult at best. Griffon eggs and fledglings command a high price—$200 and 5,000 gold pieces each respectively on the open market. Raising the young is often more trouble than most adventurers expect. Fledglings must be captured before their first feathers grow in at three months of age in order to bond with an owner. If taken later, the griffon will not readily accept its new “family” and has a 10% per month chance of deserting (if mistreated, 20% per month; confinement is considered mistreatment).

Training the young must include hunting in order to make the fullest use of the griffon’s abilities and to maintain a balanced mind. Here, the outdoor skills of the trainer become the common ground between rider and griffon. Although flying is instinctive, the fledgling must be coaxed into flight. During the training, a trainer may teach the griffon special skills to be used on an adventure, such as dropping bombs or grabbing ground-based objects from the air.

Unlike the griffon, any adventurer will find learning how to fly competently very difficult. The time required is usually about 11-16 weeks. Use of speak with animals spells or the like will lessen the time by another 2-5 weeks. Those with less than normal agility and dexterity cannot fly with any competency, but they may be tied on and carried about as baggage. Characters with low endurance will not be able to fly without becoming helplessly ill from motion sickness. Griffons bob up and down a great deal in their flight, unlike pegasi, making riding one rather like being a jockey in a steeplechase. A large part of riding one lies not merely in being strapped in, but in hanging on, resisting the wind and moving with the animal to make it easier on both parties.

On occasion, adventurers may earn the gratitude of a griffon by releasing it from a trap or saving it from some illness or injury. If made to feel a part of the “family,” such a griffon is more likely to stay with a group indefinitely. Since only adult griffons are likely to be encountered in this
way, there will be no need for flight or hunting training. The griffon will be most likely to bond to an adventurer to whom loyalty is an important virtue.

One cannot subject griffons to the indignities commonly placed upon horses, like corolling, hobbles, and branding. Bit and bridle would, at best, interfere with their hunting training. The griffon will be most loyal to an adventurer to whom loyalty is an important virtue.

A saddle should be able to do anything that can generally be done 'in a high wind while bobbing up and down strapped between the flapping wings of a large predator that will probably object if the rider sits up and create drag. If properly buckled in, the rider will have at least one free hand much of the time and be able to fight or grasp objects. Flight clothing should take into consideration wind chill, weather, weight load, etc.

As mounts, griffons should not be counted on to travel overland even though they can handle rough terrain easily. If you are going to fly, Griffons may be more argumentative and uncooperative than horses, but they don't spook at rabbits, birds, or shadows. On the other hand, horses are not known to hungrily chase rabbits, deer, or other horses, and they don't eat riders who've been abusive to them. Griffons are fearless if aggressive and loyal if moody. Griffon males usually make better mounts, being not only larger and stronger than females but also calmer and more patient.

Unfortunately, there are other problems involved in owning a griffon mount. For example, griffons may Communally fly. A rider may walk upward of someone's horse; what will the horse do upon smelling its worst enemy? After an adventure, heroes may want to relax in town for a while—and so might their loyal griffons, whether or not the townspeople agree.

Naturally, the disappearance of any horses will be blamed on the griffons. And if a character is eating steak, his griffon will not easily tolerate left-over iron rations.

Abilities

Just how strong griffons are is a matter of measurement. Griffons can fly carrying loads as great as their own body weight, though not for long periods. With their taloned forelimbs, griffons can grasp objects and hold them, probably damaging anything fragile. If so trained, they have a 40% chance to bend bars or lift gates. With the same basic strength as a lion, a griffon will be far stronger than any normal humanoid. On the ground, a griffon should be able to do the same sort of feats that a huge lion or tiger can manage.

A griffon's appetite is remarkable. Even if not flying, a griffon will eat more than a similarly sized lion, typically on the order of at least 25-30 lbs. of fresh meat a day. If flying, it will eat half again to twice as much when possible, depending on whether or not a load is being carried. When hungry, a griffon becomes very irritable and aggressive. Although a person to whom the griffon is loyal is in no danger of being eaten, anything else is considered fair game.

Without proper food, the griffon will be a poor flier and very uncooperative. When food is available, griffons sometimes consume tremendous amounts and may be too gorged to fly well, but won't require another feeding for some time. Riders should make sure that their griffons don't overindulge themselves between adventures and become lethargic.

Friends and foes

Being choosy, griffons will not serve as mounts or companions for humanoids prone to mistreat animals. These are such beings as the griffon would consider dirty, disgusting, and incapable of returning trust, such as orcs, gnomes, and kobolds. A griffon will also not hunt other griffons. A griffon has very few natural enemies, and none count its as regular prey. Only humanoids with significant names and reputations will present any threat. Some creatures will nevertheless always be enemies with griffons. Hippogriffs and pegasi are no match in a fight and will normally be chased if rarely caught. Manticores are slower if more difficult prey. Harpies will always be attacked at the first opportunity. The hypnotic song of the harpy does not affect the griffon as it does a human, but if such a song is heard, it will enrage the griffon and bring it winging in to attack. Perytons are another natural adversary; although invulnerable to most nonmagical attacks, they are subject to the inevitably powerful griffons. Thus griffons help clear the skies of certain hazards that threaten humanity.

Having as few natural allies as they have enemies, griffons are compatible with giant eagles, for example, and are generally on good terms with them. Those races and classes more attuned to nature, such as elves and druids, are best apt to understand and be compatible with griffons.

Centaurs, on the other hand, and other quasi-equine species (even if they don't taste like horses) will be in perpetual strife with griffons.

Sacred to Apollo, griffons are said to draw this gods chariot home from his winter retreat. Several other deities have held griffons sacred and may have had something to do with their creation, but whatever their origins, the griffon is such a successful predator that it needs no guiding force to sustain it. There are even reports of sentient griffons which may represent a separate species largely indistinguishable from the familiar one and which may wish to remain unrecognized.

Miscellaneous

Griffons have a language that sounds like a collection of squawks and growls to other creatures. It is composed mostly of words relating to flying, hunting, weather, and the visual appearance of things. It is not suited to abstract concepts.

Like tigers, griffons can swim, but if their feathers are wet they must dry off before flying. By nature compulsively neat and tidy, enjoying baths and frequently preening for hours, griffons are not likely to accept filthy would-be riders or accommodations.

The lifespan of a griffon is very long, some serving several generations of a family. Actual lifespan is dependent on many factors but may extend as long as several centuries. One hundred and fifty years is considered average in the wild.

A griffon is a magnificent creature to be treasured by all humanity. Dangerous it is, but marvelous, too. As long as it wings through the skies, we can look up at it and know the meaning of courage.

Game information

In combat, griffons prefer to use their beak and talon attacks first. If diving onto a victim from a greater height (at least 60') or a victim that is flying more slowly (MV fly 24 or less), the griffon will double its claw damage and gain a +2 to hit, but not be able to employ its beak in the same round. If a griffon can strike an enemy on the ground with both of its foreclaws, it can employ its rear claws for an additional 1-4 hp damage, but at a -2 to hit because they are not accustomed to doing so unless so trained. A griffon can use the rake attack on a victim in midair, but it loses altitude rapidly when it is used. Griffins have a language that sounds like a collection of squawks and growls, but they are not likely to accept filthy would-be riders or accommodations. If a griffon snatches someone from the ground (requiring one to-hit roll), it causes 1-6 hp damage per wing because the wings are feathered and soft. If a flying griffon snatches someone from the ground (requiring one to-hit roll), it causes 1-6 hp damage from roughness even if it does not mean any harm. Training the griffon in this snatch can lessen the damage to 1-4 hp.

For more information on flying, see "Flying the Friendly(? Skies," in DRAGON® Magazine #124.

Ω
Somehow, Andy was again volunteered for "decoy duty."

"It's a +1 sword of obviousness."
"We are quite capable of imagining a white dragon breathing on our characters."

"Ha! Who says you can't fight city hall?!!"
WITH THE HELP OF FINELLA GIRL, ROB DEFEATED THE THIEVES WHO ATTACKED HIM.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP SHOPPING.

YOU WERE LUCKY ONCE... BUT TO STAY ALIVE YOU NEEDED BETTER EQUIPMENT.

IS THE LEATHER ARMOR REALLY NECESSARY?

YOU'RE HANDY WITH A SWORD, ROBIN, BUT EVERYBODY SLIPS SOMETIMES.

LATER WE'LL FIND YOU SOME LIGHTCHAIN.

WHEN A JENRAT SWORD THRUSTS LONGSIDE YOUR RIBS, YOU'LL BE GLAD FOR IT.

THIS'LL DO UNTIL YOUR TEMPLE ADJUSTS.

EXCUSE ME A SEC.

SEC + OD SAID HE'LL HELP IF HE CAN, I GOT US ROOMS FOR TONIGHT.

AND YOU DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING?
WHERE'D YOU GET THIS?

LEEGO.

SORRY, IT USED TO BELONG TO ME AND...
LOOK, I'LL BUY IT BACK FROM YOU.

YOU SAYIN' I STOLE THIS??

No, No, It's Just...

I THINK YOU BOYS SHOULD TAKE THE MAN'S GENEROUS OFFER.

WE DON'T GIVE A F**K WHAT ELVEN SLUTS THINK.

...HAW! HAW...

NICE MOVE.
WELL SOMEONE HAD
TO DEFEND MY HONOR

HEAD FOR THE DOOR!

GERONIMO!!

HALT!

OH... CRUD!

BY THE
ORDER OF HORTON,
MASTER OF MIDIAN

...YOU ARE ALL
UNDER ARREST!

NEXT: A TIGHT SPOT
the role playing system perfect for
tolkien enthusiasts and experienced gamers!

Middle-earth Role Playing

Boxed Edition
US $18.00
UK £10.99

Rulesbook
US $12.00
UK £7.49

Gorgoroth

US $18.00
UK £10.99

Coming this Christmas . . .

Angus McBride's
characters of middle-earth™

At last the long wait is over. Enthusiasts and collectors alike now have access to the incomparable art and characters created by Angus McBride for the Middle-earth Role Playing game over the past ten years. This glossy 64 page supplement measures 8.5" x 11" and features dozens of examples of Angus McBride's best work. Each color plate is accompanied by a one page brief fantasy description of the action and full game statistics for the characters involved.

An ideal Christmas gift for all fantasy gamers, especially Tolkien fans and connoisseurs of fantasy art.

Price
US $14.95
UK £8.99

Virgin Games Centres
100 Oxford Street LONDON • 18 Merchant Street BRISTOL • And in the Virgin Megastores at: Virgin at Marble Arch, 527 Oxford Street LONDON • 157-161 Western Road BRIGHTON • 98 Corporation Street BIRMINGHAM • 14-216 Aston Quay DUBLIN • 131 Princes Street EDINBURGH • 28-32 Union Street & Lewis's Building Argyle Street GLASGOW • 94-96 The Briggate LEEDS 6-8 Wheelergate NOTTINGHAM
that it is difficult to make out the shapes of nearby coasts and mountains. What we observed of the lands below was completely alien to us. Visibility was limited to the zenith of the sky, anywhere one looks. No matter how far the Princess travels, she always seems to remain at the bottom of a circular bowl of clouds.

But the oddest part remains over our heads. The red sun stands still at the zenith. Dark shapes slowly cross the red sun’s face and block sunlight at various intervals, just as the moon sometimes eclipses the light of the sun on our world. These celestial bodies seem to be of various sizes and move at different speeds. We need, once again, to defeat the skyshield and see for ourselves where we are.

Nyxmir 24, 1965: Again, the trusty Princess Ark vanquished the skyshield. In truth, it was much easier than the last time. This skyshield is much weaker than that of our world. With a decent breeze, full sails pushed the Princess through the skyshield. That was a relief for everyone on board, given our last experience with this maneuver.

What we discovered beyond was just as incredible as our first journey into the void. It appears that we are within a gigantic globe, perhaps the size of our homeworld. A small sun shines in the hollow globe’s center, while clouds swirl and stretch across the lands below. From this high up in the airless void, we could finally observe new continents and vast oceans. A continuous chain of mountains girdles the globe, separating the sphere almost perfectly into two hemispheres; we are at the top (or bottom) of one. A huge continent occupies almost all of one side of this inside-out world, nearly reaching to what I assume are the world’s poles.

The poles are the great clues to the identity of this new world. At the “poles,” two large openings, each over a thousand miles across, lead out of this globe. Through them I can see the starry constellations so common to our homeworld.

This world is none other than the bowels of our own Known World! It seems our world is not a gigantic sphere filled with stone and fire. Our celestial orb is hollow! And probably inhabited! The inner surface has its own sun, although not hot enough to scorch all life from the lands underneath.

The world inside also has floating continents, much like our flying cities of Ar. They orbit the central sun, some within the airless void, others as low as the cloud cover within the globe’s skyshield. The shadows of these flying continents provide regular nocturnal periods to those lands underneath their paths, though the rest of the lands remain in permanent daylight. The lands below, as well as some of the flying continents, have air, clouds, storms, and endless new mysteries to be unveiled to the Greatest of the Empires.

Nyxmir 25, 1965: It is now clear to me how we got here. The openings—what shall we call it—the Hollow World produce a mirage that shield them from the view of those vessels flying outside, in the void above the outer-world. When we pursued Herr Rolf, we simply could not see the southern pole opening. That ignorance almost caused our doom.

The polar region where outside gravity curves into the Hollow World remains totally dark because neither the Hollow Worlds sun, nor the sun of the outer-world can bring light. Moreover, it remains conveniently covered with clouds and is the scene of constant blizzards. This region is the one producing the anti-magic effect that forced the Princess to land.

This also means that Herr Rolf knew where he was flying, and I suspect he also knew of the Hollow World. This is a most annoying thought. More than ever, the Heldanner must be found and returned to Myoshima.

To be continued... . . .

As always, if you have any comments regarding this column or the D&D game’s Known World as designed in the Gazeteers, please send your inquiries to: Bruce A. Heard, D&D Game Column, TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. A number of your letters have been coming in and are finally answered at the end of this adventure. We cannot guarantee that all letters will get answers, but they always get our attention.

One question needs to be addressed by the readers of this series. The outcome of this saga will be affected accordingly. The question is: Would you rather...

A. Continue exploring the Known World? (If so, what regions would you prefer?)
B. Begin a series of adventures in space (a la the AD&D® SPELLJAMMER™ set), such as the one presented in the last episode?
C. Dive back as soon as possible into the new Hollow World setting?

Please understand that these episodes are written four to five months before publication, so be patient. In the meantime, the Hollow World boxed set should have reached your favorite hobby shop by the time this episode sees print, should you need to learn more about this strange new world.

Vulcanian Sloth

| Armor Class | 6 |
| Hit Dice    | 45 |
| Move        | 120 (40') |
| Attacks     | 2 claws, 1 bite |
| Damage      | 2-12/2-12/3-36 |

The Vulcanian sloth is a gargantuan monster living in the region that stretches from the southernmost coastline of Vulcarnia in the Outer-World to the area south of the White Peninsula in the Hollow World. Although rare, it is more likely to be found in the Dark Lands at the southern entrance of the Hollow World. Unlike other sloths, this one is carnivorous.

The sloth grows to be 60’ long. Its front paws have very sharp claws useful in combat or to grip the ice, and their width allows it to walk on thick snow. The sloths thick white fur provides excellent protection against antarctic temperatures.

Though semi-intelligent, the sloth is capable of limited reasoning. It has the ability to communicate its feelings and to read other beings’ minds by empathy, a nonmagical and natural ability the sloth uses when it meets another creature acting in a friendly or unexpected fashion. Particular individuals and events affecting the sloths life are usually remembered.

The Vulcanian sloth can live to be 150 years old. Once every 10 years, it digs a large burrow in the ice and finds a mate. No more than two adult sloths will be found in the lair, in addition to 1-2 pups (10% chance).

Sloths normally hunt alone, digging through ice to dive for whales, seals, walruses, and large fish. They occasionally surprise surface dwellers by swimming under ice, then suddenly smashing through the ice to attack.

Letters

I am very pleased to see the inclusion of a regular D&D game column within the pages of DRAGON® Magazine. With this feature, I am now a regular purchaser. . . . Unfortunately, I think I have spotted an error in the first installment of Prince Haldemar’s journal. In DRAGON issue #153, under the entry for Nyxmir 11, 1964 AY, it reads: “These strange messengers . . . seemed to make quite an impression on local Karamikian barons.” However, the Grand Duchy of Karamianos did not come into being until 1970 AY, as described in GAZI!

Oh, you had to check, didn’t you! Yes, that wizard was mistaken; the Grand Duchy wasn’t in existence at that time. Haldemar was referring to the land owners in the area that would become Karamianos four years later. These would be ethnic Traldar owing fealty to the Empire of Thyatis. The Empire moved in around 1900 AY. Several readers caught that one (I hate historical sticklers). Thanks.
I am glad that you started writing D&D game articles like “The Voyage of the Princess Ark,” but that isn’t enough for gamers who play the original RPG. It’s kind of frustrating when a new issue of DRAGON Magazine comes in the mail and all the wonderful articles are written for the AD&D game.

I agree! When will readers of this series send in some wonderful articles for the D&D game? DUNGEON® Adventures would love some D&D modules, too. [Editor’s note: Send for our writer’s guidelines first! And D&D game players should be aware that some of our articles can be used with almost any fantasy role-playing system, not just the AD&D game.]

I am incensed by the way the Thyatian Empire and those within were treated in “The Voyage of the Princess Ark,” part one (issue #153). I am also angry that after all these years, you would allow someone to come along and upset the game universes of so many of your loyal D&D players. Many players have taken for granted that the map printed on the inside cover of the Master DM’s Book was accurate. Now we are told that we are in fact using areas that really don’t exist in the form in which we were led to believe they did. Finally, to let the article come from an Alphatian explorer who is biased against the Thyatians is unacceptable. I have built a Thyatian empire using the map as a guide. Please inform the Alphatians that any time they wish to take on my army of 8,000,000 men and my navy of 16,000 ships (half of which are iron and carry advanced weaponry), I’ll oblige them.

The Thyatian Empire is treated as it should be, according to the Alphathian point of view. That’s part of role-playing. It doesn’t mean that I or TSR, Inc. have a particular preference for any of these cultures. You are welcome to introduce a Thyatian point of view in this magazine. Of course, Thyatis will be just as biased against everyone else as is Alphatia, as imperialist powers should be!

It has been clear for some time that the Masters Set map didn’t make much sense. Many of our customers did question it. As it stands, the map shows Thyatis covering the entire known world. That isn’t correct. Why play in an erroneous setting? (By the way 8,000,000 soldiers, plus an estimated 960,000 sailors, is more than the total population of metropolitan Thyatis.) What is provided in this series’ upcoming episodes are only suggestions, new approaches to the D&D game world for you to use or ignore. No one is forcing you either way.

What other Gazettiers are coming out in the future, and when?

GAZ13 The Shadow Elves saw print this June, while GAZ14 The Atruaghin Clans was due out in spring 1991. Both of these settings have direct links with the Hollow World. PC3 The Sea People qualifies as a full-fledged Gazettier. More might come later on: Sind, the Heldann Freeholds, or Wendar. In what order would you prefer to see them?

Why did the AD&D 2nd Edition BATTLESYSTEM rules leave out guidelines for the D&D game?

The new BATTLESYSTEM rules were redesigned to cover the AD&D 2nd Edition rules in more detail; there wasn’t room for D&D game material. An upcoming update of the D&D game rules will include a complete set of guidelines on how to convert your rules and favorite modules into and from the AD&D game, including the BATTLESYSTEM rules.

Why is the area where Cestian gobblers grow unpopulated?

Because gobblers grow there! Natives in neighboring regions consider the region taboo. The land is also very poor for farming; the soil allows rainwater to seep down rapidly and accumulate in large underground lakes, from which it flows away. All it may really take is a community of courageous farmers and hunters to destroy the gobblers, dig wells, irrigate the land, and build towns to support a viable economy. Sounds like Thyatian stuff.

Are any more BLACKMOOR™ modules planned for the future?

No. The Known and Hollow Worlds are keeping us busy enough as it is. DAS City of Blackmoor was never published.

Brief reference is made in the Dawn of the Emperors boxed set to the “Knights of the Air.” Are these connected to the “Knights of the White Drakes” mentioned in module B3?

Yes; these are the same people. The Knights of the White Drakes is the name of a single unit among the larger Knights of the Air.

The scale used in the city map of GAZ3 The Principalities of Glantri does not make sense. For example, the City Library ends up measuring 15-20’ in diameter. Is this correct?

No. Here’s a better set of scales:

City map: 1” = 80 yards

Inside cover maps: 1” = 50 yards

Geographical map: 1 hex = 8 miles

This should bring the overall length of the Great School of Magic up to 900’ and the diameter of the library tower to 120’—not huge by any standards, but now you may breathe normally without fear of causing entire bookshelves to fall over. Note that the boats on the canal were added essentially for illustration purposes—their scale is a bit off to keep from reducing the larger ships to mere spots on the canals.

Why did TSR switch from the usual 24-mile-per-hex scale to the 8-mile-per-hex scale?

The 8-mile-per-hex scale was chosen when we created the Gazetteer line in order to make the larger countries fill as much of the surface on a large fold-up map sheet as possible without changing the actual size of each printed hex itself. The 24-mile hex would have been too big and would have limited the amount of detail our current maps provide. Conversion between 24-mile and 8-mile hexes is easy (a 24-mile hex contains seven 8-mile hexes, three hexes across). A standardized hex size allows DMs to overlap two Gazetteer maps of neighboring nations with little difficulty. The current map of the Known World is now available, with all nations assembled, in TM1 and TM2, the two Known World Trail Maps.

How is it possible that highly developed civilizations discovered during the voyage of the Princess Ark aren’t aware of existence of Thyatis, Alphatia, or (for that matter) the Known World?

The Known World does not always make perfect sense. It never did, ever since its creation some 10 years ago. It just happened that way. The various climatic and weather patterns of the individual nations and cultures within the Gazetteer-covered region are not compatible with each other; for example, we have an Arabic desert bordering a Viking region. Better yet, how about a major river starting 24 miles from a pseudo-ford, then flowing away to the sea on the opposite side of the Known World?

Come on. After all, this is fantasy, remember? Everything does not necessarily need to be logical. We are dealing more with fun and role-playing rather than hard science.

So what if we have another highly developed civilization elsewhere? Perhaps it did discover the Known World, but kept the discovery secret for political, economic, or religious reasons. Perhaps it hasn’t developed reliable sailing skills, and so treats news about the Known World as rumors and fairy tales. Immortals could have prevented the discovery, too. It could really go in any direction.

What happened to the names of the halfling clans in GAZ8 The Five Shires? We planned to publish them, but there, wasn’t any room for them in GAZ8! Author Ed Greenwood plans to release that material in an upcoming issue of RPGA™ Network’s POLYHEDRON™ Newszine. Thanks for your input.
The Dragon Highlord holds tightly the reins of a Red Dragon. Both rider and mount perpetually strive for dominance over the other yet they still work to a common end, to serve the Queen of Darkness in her effort to subjugate the World of Krynn. Dragon and dark knight soar through the thickness of rain-laden clouds, moisture clinging to their scale armor, in search of the devout worshippers of Paladine, defiers of their evil purpose. The Highlord spots his mortal enemy and levels his lance. Plunging through the cloud deck below, he attacks!

Huma, Knight of Solamnia, wielder of the Dragonlance and blessed of Paladine, looks to the sky in search of the enemies of Krynn. A minion of the Dark Queen astride a Red Dragon emerges from the fold of a black cloud. Huma raises his fist in challenge screaming his outrage for the scourge of his beloved world then beckons his friends and mounts, the Silver Dragon, to rise up into the heavens and carry them to battle. Shrieking like a thousand hawks, the Silver Dragon leaps skyward, anxious to test its talons against the armor and lance of its foe.

Only you can determine the outcome of this epic struggle. Collect these finely sculpted pieces as well as the other AD&D® DRAGONLANCE™ miniatures presented by Ral Partha, and do battle across the breadth of Krynn in the fight against the Dark Queen and her minions. Look also for Ral Partha's extensive line of TSR ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® figures including heroes and monsters from the FORGOTTEN REALMS™ Campaign Setting.

To place an order call toll-free 1(800)543-0272 or send $3.00 for our complete photo catalog to:
Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
5938 Carthage Court,
Cincinnati, OH 45212

RAL PARTHA miniatures are also available from:
MINIFIGS: 1/5 Graham Road, Southampton, England S02 OAX
RAFM: 20 Park Hill Road East, Cambridge,
Ontario, Canada N9T1P2
JEUX DESCARTES: 5, Rue De LaBaume, 75008, Paris, France

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, AD&D, DRAGONLANCE and FORGOTTEN REALMS are trademarks owned by and used under license from TSR, Inc.
In DRAGON® issue #144, this column presented a miniatures battle taken from a campaign based on FASA’s BATTLETECH® game, run by the Gamemaster’s Guild of Waukegan. The battle was well received by the readers, and many people requested copies of the rules we used to set up that campaign. As it turned out, the campaign died shortly thereafter due to bookkeeping problems. Since then, our club has worked hard to produce viable BATTLETECH campaign rules for long-term play.

The breakthrough came through the efforts of one of our members, Jay Clenndenny, with the assistance of fellow member Ralph Cooper and with the rest of the club offering suggestions and playing devils advocates. Jay has had long experience in smoothing out gaming problems, as he heads the club’s playtesting efforts for different game companies and is a long-time board and miniatures game player. He has also won the National STAR FLEET BATTLES Patrol Ship Tournament for the past two years, and he co-authored the PANZERTRUPPEN 1990 modern-armor miniatures rules.

This article begins a two-part series giving you the full set of BATTLETECH campaign rules that we now use. Changes may be freely made to these rules, though all changes should use common sense. The following BATTLETECH materials are required for campaign play: the second-edition BATTLETECH boxed game, The BATTLETECH Manual: The Rules of Warfare, and BATTLETECH Battle Maps. Supplemental rules to be used as needed include the MECHWARRIOR® game, the AEROTECH™ and CITYTECH™ boxed sets, DropShips and JumpShips, The Mercenary’s Handbook, BATTLETECH Technical Readout 3025, BATTLETECH Technical Readout 3026, and the five Successor States books on the Houses involved. Other materials used (such as articles from gaming magazines) must be agreed upon by all players and the judge at the start of the game.

A few hints might help your campaign:
1. See if you can get a copy of FASA’s old Successor Wars poster through your local hobby shop (or assemble a map using the maps in the backs of the Successor States books), and mount it in your gaming area. This poster can help you plan strategy in the campaign. If you mount the poster on corkboard, you can use color-coded pins to show which House’s forces own which planets. The poster’s map scale is 1” = 16 parsecs.
2. Make sure that each House has a minimum of two players, and that at least one person from each House is available for playing at each meeting time. Players who wish to play specific Houses should be allowed to do so. The other players should choose the remaining Houses by drawing slips of paper from an opaque container; players who chose randomly may trade Houses, but all House vacancies must be filled. Don’t allow gamers to take the roles of mercenaries until this is done. This allows for smooth-flowing games with quick-playing turns and battles.
3. Pick a judge who will have final veto power when game disputes take place. The judge must have complete knowledge of the game rules and (if he plays) should play a mercenary force so that his rulings are as unbiased as possible. A judge should intervene only if the Houses cannot come to a decision while using the game rules.
4. House Liao may be given a few extra benefits when the game is being set up (such as two or three extra turns of production), as it may be so easily attacked by other Houses.

These rules assume that the players will show good judgment with their unit productions and deployments. If players go out of their way to abuse the rules in certain areas (particularly with regards to vehicles), then the judge reserves the right to make corrections and changes with the approval of the five heads of Houses and the mercenary representative. The bottom line is to have fun and not abuse the rules.

Questions on these campaign rules may be directed to: Gamemaster’s Guild of Waukegan, c/o Friends’ Hobby; 1411 Washington Street, Waukegan IL 60085, U.S.A. Please enclose an SASE for a reply.
BATTLETECH® Campaign

Introduction
These rules offer House-specific guidelines for many aspects of the campaign game, but the production rules are generic and apply to all Houses. Generic rules are outlined first; House specifics are covered later. The campaign can be expanded to include FASA's AEROTECH game for fighter combat, and production can be modified to represent the actual production abilities of each House, as noted in the Successor States books and other sources.

All references to weights are rounded up to the nearest half ton. Note that production costs are given in terms of the tonnage that must be processed by a production facility.

Production
Each House has several production facilities located throughout its space, as noted in the BATTLETECH Campaign Planetary Directory herein. Each production facility is subject to the following rules:

1. 'Mech facilities have the following capacity limitations per turn:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>100 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy</td>
<td>100 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>120 tons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>100 tons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The light 'Mech facility may not turn out more than two of the same 'Mech model in one turn (e.g., it cannot build three Locusts in a single turn).

2. Vehicle facilities can handle all vehicle sizes, each building up to five vehicles with a total weight of up to 125 tons per turn. (Houses must also buy infantry out of this fund.) Each vehicle facility can produce only one vehicle for every 25 tons or fraction thereof of capacity. Also, each facility may allot a maximum of 40% of its total production capacity to fusion-engine vehicles, hovercraft, and VTOLs. Vehicle facilities may also produce weapons for fixed defenses, but these must be made in 25-ton lots.

3. DropShip facilities can handle all ship sizes, up to 1,000 tons total per turn. All facilities may carry over the construction of units from turn to turn. (DropShip facilities must do this anyway.)

Expansion: A facility may expand its size by applying up to 10% of its current capacity for five turns. The facility then increases by the amount invested per turn (e.g., a heavy 'Mech facility of 100-tons capacity that invests 10 tons of its capacity for 5 turns becomes a 110-ton 'Mech facility.)

New facilities: A facility may also build a completely new type of facility using the rules in the previous paragraph; after five turns of construction, the new facility's capacity will equal only half the investment per turn. (In the above example, the heavy 'Mech facility applying 10 tons of its capacity to construction could create a new facility for light 'Mechs with a five-ton capacity.) Facilities may also be started on planets that do not have such facilities. The cost is the same as above, but construction requires 10 turns to complete, as well as control of local starports for shipping the parts.

New pilots: A House's production must also cover the cost of all new pilots needed for 'Mechs and vehicles. Each new pilot starts as a 4-4 (in pilot and gunnery skills). Houses may lower each number by one for every five tons spent in production (it is assumed that money that would have been spent on a factory instead goes for pilot training). Houses may also knock off one point from one of the two skill scores if the unit being piloted is represented by an actual miniature. (This was a club rule designed to encourage miniatures use!) In no case may new pilots go below 2-2, and each House is allowed only one 2-2 per turn; other pilots may lowered to 3-3.

Replacement parts: Production is also used to create replacement parts. When a House fails to repair something, it must be replaced with an exact duplicate. The cost of any nonweapon replacement item is equal to the item's weight in tons.

The replacement weight of a weapon is found by taking the number of critical spaces destroyed divided by the original number of critical spaces. The result is the percent of the weapon's original weight that must be replaced (e.g., a PPC has one critical space left out of three, so it must pay 66% of seven tons to be replaced).

The replacement weight of infantry equals the squads post-combat size divided by its original size, then multiplied by the original cost in tons (see "Infantry Costs" in next months column). An infantry squad may be put together from several damaged squads, but the infantry involved must be of the same type.

Any leftover production space may be used for replacement ammunition and parts. The only exception is that specific and unique equipment for a unit (e.g., lifters for a hovercraft or an arm from an Atlas) must come from the specific pool of production. Houses must also use specific production for the pilots and initial ammunition for the unit in question.

Resources: Each facility needs resources in order to operate every turn. Resources are measured in tons and come from resource planets. Each turn, a House must assign as many tons of resources as are available to the production plants of its choice. The total resources for each House will equal the number of planets and their resource values that are controlled within that House's sphere of influence. A House must be in control of the spaceport of a resource planet in order to ship resources. A production turn may go like this:

TOTAL RESOURCES: 1000 tons
Assault: 100 tons for an Atlas
Heavy: 70 tons for a Grasshopper, 5 tons for pilot modification
Medium: 45 tons for a Phoenix Hawk, 55 tons for a Shadow Hawk
Light: 40 tons for two Locusts, 30 tons for a Panther, 10 tons to expand (1st turn)
Vehicles: 60 tons for an LRM carrier
DropShips: 520 tons for a Leopard
Other: 20 tons for ammunition, 20 tons for parts
**Stockpiles:** Any resources not used in production are stockpiled at the facility of the House's choice. All stockpiles must be documented to avoid confusion and loss.

**Legality:** Only units from official BATTLETECH publications and articles may be used in the campaign. The only exception is that up to 10% of each facility's capacity may be used to work on modified 'Mechs or vehicles, which must be built from scratch and must be approved by the judge before they can be used.

Statistics on each House's units and production must be checked by players of two other Houses for accuracy. The location of a House's units need not be disclosed. Detailed espionage is assumed to provide such information in game terms.

Ensuring the legality of mercenary construction is the responsibility of the House employing the unit. Illegal units will be removed from the game by the judge.

**DropShips & JumpShips**

As AeroSpace Fighters are not used in these campaign rules, DropShips can land safely on planets and can participate in battle as noted in The Rules of Warfare. DropShips can carry the number of 'Mechs listed for them in FASA's DropShips and JumpShips manual or else can carry one vehicle of up to 100 tons (or two vehicles, each of 50 tons or less) per 'Mech cubicle. VTOLs may be carried in place of the listed AeroSpace Fighters on each DropShip (one VTOL per AeroSpace Fighter cubicle). Each DropShip can carry only one set of units per turn; Houses can drop off and pick up vehicles, 'Mechs, and troops after each move (e.g., a House can’t carry 50 units in one Leopard). All troops must debark from a DropShip at the end of its movement phase.

Each House is assumed to have enough JumpShips each turn to move its DropShips. Mercenaries are assumed to have enough transports to move their units, but their DropShips and JumpShips are not represented in the game.

JumpShips move 48 parsecs per turn (5" on the old Successor Wars map) when making regular attacks. Each House's JumpShip movement is unlimited within its own territory, but unlimited movement may not be combined with making attacks during the same turn; attack movement is limited because it involves crossing into hostile territory, careful maneuvering, etc. JumpShip and DropShip movements change when making raids (see "Raid").

**Planets**

For game purposes, three types of planets exist:

1. **Resource planets:** Each has resource centers from which resources may be shipped to production facilities on other planets.
2. **Production planets:** Each has one or more production facilities and might have resources as well.
3. **Strategic planets:** These have no resources or production facilities, but they are located in strategically important stellar positions.

Each planet can have several types of installations on it. These installations include:

1. **Cities:** Cities are always found adjacent to any of the following four types of installations. More than one installation may be present with any one city.

2. **Resource centers:** These are found only on resource planets and on a few production planets. Control of the city adjacent to a controlled resource center is not required in order for a House to acquire resources from that center.

3. **Production facilities:** Resources are turned into manufactured items (like 'Mechs) at these installations. In order for a House to produce items in a production facility, it must control the city adjacent to the facility as well as the facility itself.

4. **Spaceport facilities:** These are the only places from which a planet can move resources off-world. Without control of a spaceport, a House cannot ship resources off-world, and such resources will accumulate instead at the local resource stockpile.

5. **Resource stockpiles:** These accumulate as noted, either adjacent to starports or adjacent to resource centers.

**Facilities and combat:** Resource centers, production facilities, and spaceports may not be shot at; they are considered too valuable by all sides involved. (If a "scorched earth" campaign is allowed, in which the defensive side destroys its own facilities to prevent their capture or in which the attacker wants to knock out facilities it cannot capture, this rule is suspended.) Military units wishing to capture one of these installations must cross one gaming board (as defined in "Terrain & Maps" in the section on "Battles") to reach the installation. However, two boards must be crossed to reach a production facility, the first being the facility's perimeter. Fixed defenses prohibit attacking forces from landing closer to or on top of these installations. This rule also allows for battles to be fought across a variety of environments.

Captured production facilities and resource centers need one turn to begin working for their new owners. New owners might also need to control adjacent spaceports and cities. All partially completed units captured in their installations become the property of the new owner and may be finished as usual, subject to these guidelines.

If a partially completed unit exists at a facility that is under attack, the defender may use that unit with all of its attacks and defenses at half strength. The incomplete unit gains a 4-4 pilot (he hasn’t finished his training).

**Battles**

Each battle uses The BATTLETECH Manual: The Rules of Warfare as a guide, and initiative is used. Each battle continues until one side has no active units remaining on the playing area.

**Terrain & Maps:** For game purposes, a "board" is a 5 x 5 square of 25 BATTLETECH game maps, each marked off in hexes for movement purposes. Terrain for each battle is randomly determined using the Terrain Generation Tables (see "Terrain Generation" in next months column). Once terrain is generated, a rough map of the
playing area must be made and kept so that future battles in this area may use this same map for setup. Wind direction must be rolled each time the area is used for battle (see “Terrain Generation” in next months column).

Stacking: A House may have at most 24 'Mechs and vehicles on a single board, though with appropriate off-board support for its force (but no more than two artillery units and two other units, such as LRMs). If one side’s force is larger than 24 'Mechs, it is assumed to occupy more than one board, and both attacker and defender must commit forces to each of the two boards (each battle is then played out on sequential order). Home Guard units do not count for stacking purposes.

Installations: For assaults against an installation, the fixed defenses placed at the beginning of the campaign are free for stacking purposes. If they are destroyed, the owning House may replace them (such replacements also do not count for stacking purposes). The defender is allowed to place up to 24 units (including additional fixed defenses, with every 25 tons or fraction thereof counting as a unit) in the city next to the installation. Each side may then bring in up to 24 units more (plus support) per board side that it currently controls. Thus the attacker must capture the territory around the installation in order to cut the defender off, and the defender must protect more than the installation alone or else face the prospect of being attacked from all directions.

Disengaging: Any unit may disengage from a battle and leave the game maps; once it leaves, it cannot return to that battle. In an installation perimeter battle, the defender must designate which edge of the playing area is closest to the installation he is defending. If the defender’s units do not disengage in that direction, they may not participate if the battle continues at the installation itself.

Time: Time has no meaning from one battle to the next. While this seems unrealistic, it is too hard to keep track of multi-board battles turn by turn and still keep everything straight. All perimeter battles take place first, followed by installation battles. Damage or wounds may not be repaired or healed while a unit moves from one board to the next, unless the House wishes to regroup and declare his intent not to pursue any further battles for that turn. Ammunition, however, can be replaced.

Artillery: Off-board artillery can be assigned to a particular battle and board, and regular rules governing its use are applied. Off-board LRMs are stationed at a specific point along a board side. Ranges are calculated by figuring the distance from the edge to the target in question, then adding three hexes to the range. Off-board LRMs may not be shot at and are always considered to be shooting by indirect fire. The owning House may change an off-board artillery unit’s location at the unit’s normal movement rate, or at half movement if the unit has no turret. Additional movement modifiers are added at whatever rate was used (cruise or flank).

Salvage
The winner of a battle may salvage the enemy’s equipment, subject to the following guidelines:

1. An ammunition explosion that destroys a unit or three engine hits against a unit will make that unit worthless for salvage.
2. A House may scrap one or more of its units. Spare armor may be collected, with 50% of the remaining armor added to the House’s spare-parts stockpile at no charge. Engines and weapons may be salvaged, going to the spare-parts stockpile to await usage (when used, the House may make a free roll to replace an engine with an exact duplicate). All remaining ammunition is added to the House’s stockpiles.
3. If a House decides to salvage an enemy unit for its own use, and the salvaged unit is not unique to a particular House (see “House-Specific Units”), then the House has two options: a) It may repair the unit and use it in its own forces, except that it must pay a 20% fee for its initial use and an extra 10% fee for any parts required to repair the unit; or b) It may send the unit to an appropriate construction facility for study and research. In the latter case, the House must pay 10% of the captured unit’s weight out of its production tonnage for that facility, paid each turn for five turns, to study the unit. After that time, it may attempt a die roll on the Weapons and Equipment Availability and Cost tables on page 66 in the MECHWARIOR rules, selecting the most difficult availability roll appropriate to the unit captured. If the roll fails, the House may continue to pay 10% of that unit’s weight each turn for a new roll (to a total of three such rolls). Once the roll succeeds, the House may build that unit as one of its own. Captured units of the same type as the unit studied will not then require the extra 10% for repairs.

Repairs
Each House and mercenary unit must repair its units at the end of each turn. This is accomplished in the following manner:

1. For every piece of equipment destroyed, a roll on the appropriate Weapons and Equipment Availability and Cost tables, on page 66 in the MECHWARIOR rules, is used to check for a repair attempt. If the roll succeeds, the equipment is fixed. If the roll fails, the equipment must be replaced. A House must always pay to replace armor.
2. If the repair is not made, the House may either use battlefield salvage or pay (in tons) to replace the part in question (see “Production” and “Salvage” for details).

House-Specific Units
Each House starts the game with particular units (and their variants) that it alone can produce. Other Houses have trouble using these specific units if these units are captured, and those Houses must spend more to operate those units as their own. Mercenary units may use these units with no restrictions but cannot pass informa-
tion to other Houses on how to use these units. House-specific units include:
1. Davion: Enforcer, Valkyrie
2. Kurita: Dragon, Panther
3. Steiner: Zeus, Wolfhound, Hatchetman, Commando
4. Marik: Hermes II, Orion
5. Liao: Vindicator, Cataphract, Ravin

A House may trade information on the operation of its own House-specific units with other Houses. How such agreements and payments are reached is left up to the Houses involved (but such agreements should be made in writing to aid record keeping). Any House receiving this information may now build and operate that specific unit as if it were that House’s own.

**Initial House Forces**
Each House gets 15 turns worth of initial construction. No expansion of existing facilities may take place; only units may be built. Pilots are created as per the usual rules, except that each House gains one each of the following types of pilots for free: 0-0, 1-1, 2-2. These are the House’s combat leaders and the cream of its military. In addition, each House receives one

---

**Raid Success Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1d6</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Attackers are caught just before the raid; roll on Combat Subtable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5</td>
<td>Continue with raid as planned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Attackers have 50% chance to be caught after the raid (roll 1d6: 1-3, all escape; 4-6, roll on Combat Subtable).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Combat Subtable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1d6</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>DropShips are caught while trying to escape and are destroyed. Raiding House loses half its force (including pilots) and half of all booty, if any.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>DropShips are caught and surrender while trying to escape. Raiding House loses half its force (including pilots): all booty is recaptured. Captured pilots may be ransomed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BATTLECH® Campaign Planetary Directory**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Davion</th>
<th>Kurita</th>
<th>Steiner</th>
<th>Marik</th>
<th>Liao</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assault 'Mech-DropShip/500</td>
<td>New Avalon</td>
<td>Luthien</td>
<td>Tharkad</td>
<td>Atreus</td>
<td>Sian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy 'Mech/150</td>
<td>Robinson</td>
<td>Benjamin</td>
<td>Skye</td>
<td>Regulas</td>
<td>Capella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium 'Mech/100</td>
<td>New Sytris</td>
<td>Dieron</td>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>Marik</td>
<td>Sarina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light 'Mech/50</td>
<td>Montcoal</td>
<td>Rasalhague</td>
<td>Tamar</td>
<td>Escobas</td>
<td>Tikonov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle/50</td>
<td>Delphos</td>
<td>Pesht</td>
<td>Turinge</td>
<td>Oriente</td>
<td>St. Ives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>Kentares IV</td>
<td>Ilijma</td>
<td>Bountiful Harvest</td>
<td>New Delos</td>
<td>Glasgow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Pattonsburg</td>
<td>Soverzene</td>
<td>Hesperus II</td>
<td>Rasalas</td>
<td>Shensi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>New Ivaersen</td>
<td>Alya</td>
<td>Carstairs</td>
<td>Amity</td>
<td>Dilon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stein’s Folly</td>
<td>Junction</td>
<td>Halfway</td>
<td>Ibstock</td>
<td>Menke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aucara</td>
<td>Beta Mensau V</td>
<td>Borghese</td>
<td>Loongana</td>
<td>Capolla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Damevang</td>
<td>Caldrea</td>
<td>Vulcan</td>
<td>Preston</td>
<td>Heligoland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ulam Bator</td>
<td>Gunzburg</td>
<td>Zwenkau</td>
<td>Talitha</td>
<td>Tantara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** These are merely the worlds used in the Gamemaster’s Guild of Waukegan campaign; other campaigns may use other worlds. Mercenaries are assumed to come from Terra.
Pilot Swaps

Switching a pilot from one unit to the same type of unit is allowed without penalty (e.g., an Atlas pilot can run any Atlas). When a pilot goes to a similar but different unit—e.g., to a 'Mech in the same weight class as the original 'Mechs (light, medium, etc.), or to a vehicle or other unit having the same mode of movement as the original (track, hover, etc.)—he loses one skill level each from both pilot and gunnery skills. If a pilot is transferred to any other 'Mech or vehicle in the same type of unit—e.g., from a Wasp to a Griffin (different weight classes), or from a hover vehicle to a tracked vehicle—he loses two skill levels each from both pilot and gunnery skills. A pilot sent from 'Mechs to vehicles or vice versa loses three skill levels each from both pilot and gunnery skills.

Mercenary Units

Mercenary units are available for purchase in the game. Each such unit is about two companies in strength, with supporting vehicles. Each contract should be written out and must contain the following information:

1. Payment in tons (but see following section);
2. Length of contract (in turns); and
3. Maintenance terms. If the House allows the mercenary unit to use that House's own maintenance facilities, then the mercenary unit may roll on the appropriate Weapons and Equipment Availability and Cost tables on page 66 of the MECHWARRIOR rules, under the appropriate House. If the use of House maintenance is not permitted, then the mercenary unit must roll under the Periphery headings of those tables.

A House may pay mercenaries with new 'Mechs and 'Mechs, but these must come from that House's production. Mercenaries may use any unit, even House-specific units, with no additional costs. Other aspects of the contract (e.g., no attacking the former employer) are left to be decided between the mercenary and House. Each mercenary's goal is to keep his unit alive and growing in reputation and size, while having a good time.

Starting out: A mercenary unit may start the campaign with 1,600 tons for building its initial units. Each mercenary unit must complete its construction projects as if it were a House with 1,600 tons of resources to be used over four turns. Drop Ships are provided for free at the game's start, as are a 1-1 pilot and a 2-2 pilot (the leaders of the mercenary unit). The unit may build one each modified assault, heavy, and medium 'Mech, and two each modified light 'Mechs and vehicles.

Raids

Each House may conduct hit-and-run raids against another House to gain resources and equipment parts.

To gain resources, a House's forces must get to the storage area for a House's resource production area or a stockpile at a House's unit production area. Each attacking unit may carry off resources at the rate given for picking up things in The BATTLETECH Manual: The Rules of Warfare (page 41). The raided House gets to keep the difference between what it produced and what the raiders took.

To gain equipment parts, the procedure is the same as for gaining resources except that parts are found only at a House's production facility. Partially completed units may be carried off and completed at the raiding House's own production facilities. Special JumpShip movement must be used on deep raids (raids extending over 48 parses to a limit of 128 parses from a friendly planet). Drop Ships used on a raid may each have a maximum of only 12 'Mech cubicles (Overlord Drop Ships cannot be used). The whole DropShip raiding force must have a total of at least 24 'Mech cubicles of space to make the raid (e.g., if using only Leopards, each having four 'Mech cubicles, a House must use at least six Leopards on a raid).

To conduct a raid, the attacking House announces that a raid is taking place, then rolls on the Raid Success Table to make sure that its forces got there.

Look for part 2 of our BATTLETECH campaign rules next month!
Free Crusaders

Crusader, noun. Single-minded rebel, defiler, unbeliever; specifically applied to the former members of the Ranger Corps, now under the Common Ban and the Ban of Prejudice.

Templar, noun. Terrorist, assassin, ambusher, spy, fanatic; member of the anti-democratic movement based around the former Ranger Corps.

Commonwealth Dictionary of Truth

Codes

Free Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FC1</td>
<td>Free Company Crusaders</td>
<td>x 4</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC2</td>
<td>Free Company Crusaders II</td>
<td>x 4</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC3</td>
<td>Free Company Crusaders III</td>
<td>x 4</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC4</td>
<td>Free Company Templars</td>
<td>x 3</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shia Khan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SK1</td>
<td>Shia Khan Warriors</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Orcish Horde

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OH1</td>
<td>Nibogs Band (6 Goblins)</td>
<td>x 4</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH2</td>
<td>Hobgoblin Raiders</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH3</td>
<td>Cro's Orc Raiders</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH4</td>
<td>Orc Spearmen</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH5</td>
<td>Wolf Cavalry</td>
<td>x 2</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH6</td>
<td>Dog Soldiers</td>
<td>x 4</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH7</td>
<td>Wolf Cavalry II</td>
<td>x 2</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fell Lords

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FL1</td>
<td>The Doomgarde</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL2</td>
<td>Doomgarde Command</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL3</td>
<td>Berserkers</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FL4</td>
<td>Lore Lords</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dwarfish Hosts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DH1</td>
<td>Dwarfs</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DH2</td>
<td>Gnome Legion (4 Haflings, 4 Gnomes)</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DH3</td>
<td>Flagg the Big 'Un Giant</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crystal Elves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CE1</td>
<td>Wood Elves</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Celtic Myth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CM1</td>
<td>Sidhe (Celtic Elves)</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM2</td>
<td>Sidhe Heroes</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM3</td>
<td>Sidhe Clan Warriors</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM4</td>
<td>Sidhe Sea Demons</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Various Nasty Things

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VNT1</td>
<td>The Eternal Guard</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNT2</td>
<td>Wraith on Pierdagon</td>
<td>x 2</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNT3</td>
<td>Crypt Goblins</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNT4</td>
<td>The Risen Dead</td>
<td>x 5</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNT5</td>
<td>Tree Demon</td>
<td>x 2</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VNT6</td>
<td>Harpy, Deamon &amp; Werewolf</td>
<td>x 4</td>
<td>£2.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alternative Armies Figures are now available at:


Tel: (0602) 287809 Fax: (0602) 287480
LIVING LEGENDS

Explore the secrets of the hunter and the hunted. Menacing dragons—the creatures of myth, destruction and mystery—held the secrets of their ancient surrounding worlds. Fierce warriors—defenders of the realms—left clues for future dragon hunters to slay these creatures of havoc.

 Alone, DRACONOMICAN contains the secrets of these dragons and their existence.

And alone DRACONOMICAN chronicles the life long adventures of these courageous dragon hunters.

Capture the spirit of these heroes. Learn their secrets. And use your new-found knowledge in all of your adventures in the AD&D® 2nd Edition game worlds.
Closer and closer the two fliers came, and more and more Bobbin had to admit that it DID look like a dragon. A huge red, flying dragon, coming directly toward him and his soarwagon.

Fear washed up and down the gnome's spine. Then a voice spoke to him. "Who are you?" it asked, seeming to be right beside him.

Whether it was Bobbin's numb, trembling hands, or a current of air that was the cause, the soarwagon slipped right, stalled, and went into a nosedive. As he saw the mountaintops straight ahead, the air behind him crackled with fire.

The voice said, "I can't let you live, you know."

"Why not?" cried Bobbin.

"Because you have seen me," the calm dragon voice said. "That is your misfortune. None who see me will live to tell of it ... that could spoil the Highlord's plan."

The GATES OF THORBADIN is Volume Two in the DRAGONLANCE® Saga Heroes II Trilogy. Volume One, KAZ, the MINOTAUR, available now, and Volume Three, GALEN BEKNIGHTED, available in December 1990, can be found at fine hobby and book stores.
DRAGON STRIKE
The FIRST-EVER dragon combat simulator!

Available for:
IBM

Coming this summer:
C-64/128
AMIGA

Feel the raw power of the mighty dragon surging beneath you as the wind beats against your face. Your hand trembles, not from the heft of your dragonlance, but from anticipation of the battle that is to come. The air screams with the fury of enemy dragons and creatures — even flying citadels!

This is DRAGON STRIKE, where the deadly skies above the AD&D® DRAGONLANCE® game world of Krynn explode before your very eyes. The realistic first-person viewpoint propels you into a detailed, fully animated, 3-dimensional world of incredible action and excitement!

Learn to fly dragons and master over 20 different missions. Receive magic items along the way — you’re going to need them! Dragon fangs, talons and deadly breath weapons are just a few of the dangers you’ll face in the fierce heat of dragon combat!

To the skies brave knight — and victory!

To order: visit your retailer or call: 1-800-245-4525 to charge on VISA or MasterCard.

To receive SSI's complete product catalog, send $1.00 to: SSI, 675 Almanor Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.
The new RAVENLOFT Boxed Set brings a new dimension to the world of gothic horror and supernatural suspense! You'll get more powerful creatures and complete details on their lairs. The vampires will be able to resist the light of day and the mummies will not be frightened by the touch of fire.

This new boxed set is the first of an entire line of AD&D 2nd Edition horror products to delight and enhance your AD&D role-playing experience.

Look for this new Ravenloft boxed set, available this summer at a hobby shop near you!
Freaks of nature, children of the atom, the next stage of man's evolution. Mutants. Six have their futures altered by genetic mutation. Feared by the very populace they are sworn to protect. They are the X-MEN™.

Born a blessing and a curse, these super heroes have powers beyond the imagination. They can be anywhere at any time—and unknown powers result in them becoming champions of good or evil. They are the mutants, and they are everywhere!

X-MEN, this new Marvel Super Heroes™ campaign setting is the largest and most complete Mutant project ever; it combines a full roster of new and old Marvel mutants. The set includes a 96-page compendium book, a 64-page campaign setting, a 32-page adventure, and complete maps and blueprints of the major mutants hang-outs.

The mighty mutants of the MARVEL UNIVERSE™ are waiting....