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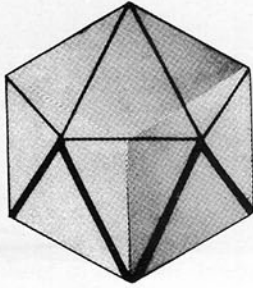


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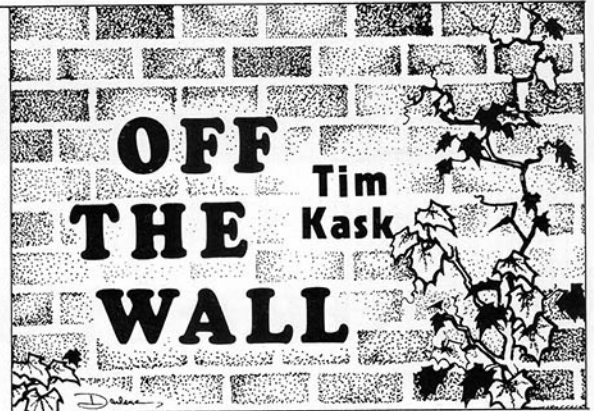
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This issue is dedicated to the
 Great Khan.

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Welcome to the pages of the first issue of *ADVENTURE GAMING*.

First question: Why that particular title? As some of you are probably aware, our hobby has become quite organized in the past two years--remarkably organized when compared to the preceding years. The gaming industry is booming, and the industry is doing its level best to keep it that way. In keeping with that effort, there was a new division of the Hobby Industry of America formed within the past two years, called, curiously enough, the Adventure Gaming Division. For too many years, we were relegated to the closet. There was a stigma attached to the word "wargaming" that the industry wished to shed. Therefore, all of the companies involved in the industry put their heads together in search of a better handle, without social stigma. They chose Adventure Gaming. As it is our avowed mission to deal with the entire spectrum of the hobby, what better title?

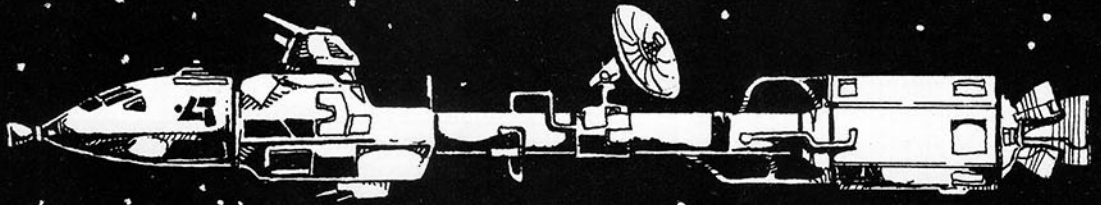
Next question: Do you really plan to cover it all? You betcha, Buffalo Bob! The lines that used to separate the types of gamers are becoming more and more blurred. The amount of cross-over interest and participation has never been greater. There can be no disputing that the fantasy phenomenon erased a number of those lines, as well as gave the industry an incredible boost in interest and sales. Fantasy remains the dominant force in the industry today, but all areas are showing increased interest and sales. We plan to accurately reflect the hobby whatever direction it may take.

Last question: What can we expect from a column with a name like *Off the Wall*? Anything! The name was selected with two considerations in mind. First, I covered the walls of my office with cork, kind of a giant wrap-around bulletin board. Whenever I get an idea I take some notes and stick it on the wall. Also, I occasionally get a wild hair about some aspect of the hobby that bugs/interests me. So the contents of this column really do start on a wall, even if it is occasionally the left field wall, figuratively speaking.

Bonus question: What can we expect in upcoming months? Lots of good, useful information on all aspects of the hobby, and occasionally a serious discussion or two of the hobby, its successes, failures, joys, benefits, shortcomings, trends and new directions.

Within the next two issues, we will be starting a figure photo section, painting advice, and how-to articles on conversions and do-it-yourself projects, a game review section, convention news, commentary-by/interviews-with people in the industry, as well as long-time hobbyists, a consumer oriented computer column, software reviews, miniatures articles, designers' notes, boardgame articles, RPG articles, even a feature devoted to digging those old games out of the attic. And, last, but certainly not least, a certain world-reknonned cartoon character will be taking up his new residence with us.

continued on 31



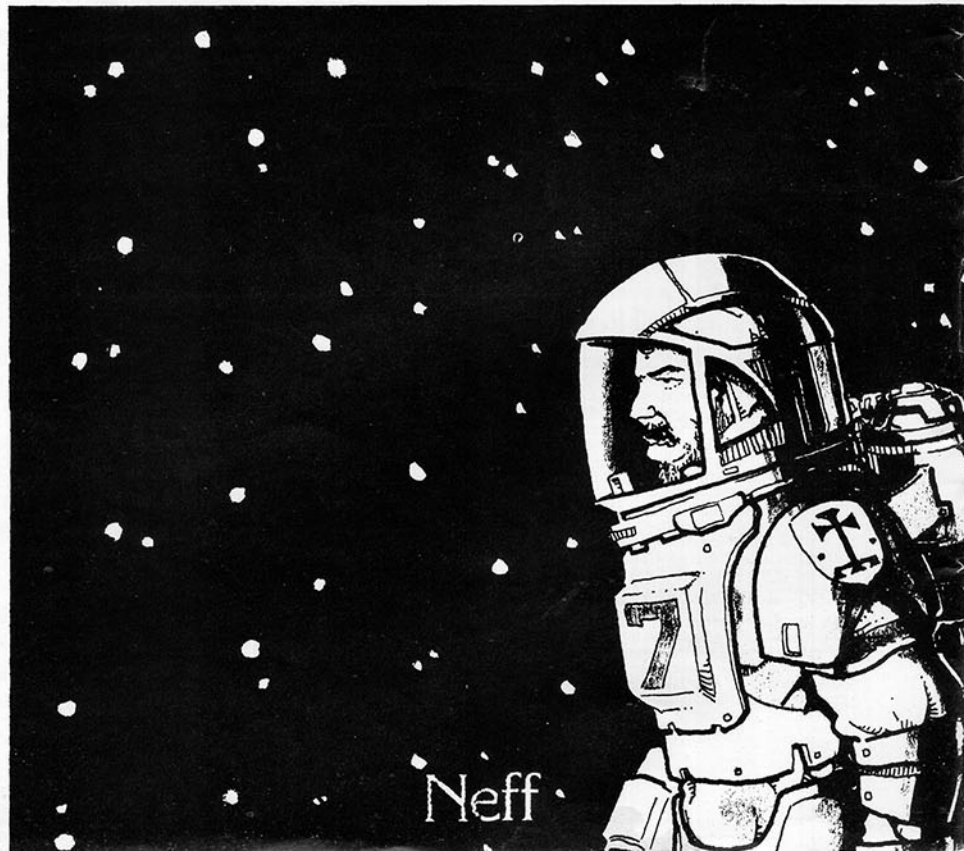
SCEPTER & STARSHIP

A TRAVELLER Variant

Charles Ahner & Rick Stuart

On 8 December 1978, Rick Stuart and I and a few friends started a *Traveller* campaign that lasted sixteen months and developed a story line equal to any novel or movie currently on the market. It was an experiment for us, mainly because of the rules available then from GDW. To make the game more playable, *Mercenary* was a bright ray of sunshine and showed us a format for RPG character generation that gave us our first playable characters. As our campaign grew, our need for new character classes brought about variants, many of which are still unpublished, which we think have helped to improve the game.

As our campaign went along, we (Rick Stuart and I) realized that *Traveller* had the potential to be every bit as popular and developed as *AD & D*. Moreover, *Traveller* rules in the beginning were in the same vein as the original *Dungeon and Dragons*; a basic framework to run the game, the direction of the game determined by the



players for the most part, spaceship financing (by the rules) and it's attendant complications. Face it, unless the character found a platinum asteroid, or got a string of rich shipments, you were going to default on your ship mortgage and we need not go into what happens next.

An earlier version of *Starship and Scepter* was published in another magazine (under the title: *Robe and Blaster*), apparently unable to switch the newer version in. This variant is relatively unchanged in format although new positions and upgraded monetary values have been inserted. The major change is a list of benefits which can be awarded for meritorious service to the Imperium.

I also wish to thank Rick Stuart, once again, for that wonderful campaign, as outrageous as it was, and the chance to create and help make a good game better. Thanks guy, and be happy that the chain reaction is still going strong.

Nobility Variant

One of the interesting features of GDW's *Traveller* game system is the idea of an interstellar aristocracy (an ever-present theme in some sci-fi stories) as represented by the characters social level rating. Regretably this is also one area where the designers have failed to elaborate upon, leaving players with titles and no privileges to back them up, making their characters toothless when traditionally nobles are the most powerful (next to multistellar corporate magnates and politicians) and very dangerous when crossed. Likewise, a lack of incentive to upgrade their nobility status through various activities, dealings, etc., takes additional flavor out of the game. The following is offered in the hope of redressing this deficiency and adding a more realistic noble class to the campaign.

One immediate difference between standard *Traveller* nobility and those allowed by this variant is the addition of several new titles beyond those of the fifteenth level, Dukes and Duchesses. Moreover, nobles have privileges and rights conferred upon them specific to their station with the accumulation of benefits as one rises in status.

Another interesting feature of this variant is the right of *patronage*. Patronage can be dispensed in one of two

manners. First off, any noble having acquired a specific privilege or benefit as given on the chart more than once has the option of *bestowing* that specific privilege on another PC or NPC. The recipient can be a non-noble but must have a current social level of at least eight or better, and the bequest must be ratified by a dice roll of 7+ (2d.6). Secondly, nobles use their patronage to sponsor non-noble characters (all) into the aristocracy by the following method:

A required dice roll of 9+ (2d.6) is needed with the following modifiers:

-Sponsor's current bribery skill (if any) as a positive DM.

-Sponsor's court influence (if any) as a positive DM.

-Social level of character being sponsored, subtracted from ten and used as a negative modifier (10-SL= -DM(SL)).
Formula: Brib DM + Court Influence DM + Social level DM=Patronage DM.
Patronage in the last option cannot be

allowed to be abused or misused. To that end, any noble failing to have his client's nobility status created must suffer the loss of a nobility privilege, PC's choice. Note that this procedure applies to individuals originally of non-noble status being raised to the SL of 11, and may *not* be used to upgrade nobles from one SL to another.

Included in this variant are benefits of merit which are used to reward PC's for successful missions when elevation in nobility is not warranted, yet the PC deserves recognition (including honorary nobility status).

In this manner nobles are now more of a three-dimensional character than before. And, unlike the definition of nobles in *Citizens of the Imperium*, nobles are rich, powerful and have *duties and responsibilities*. Ref's should take note that being a noble is not all milk and honey and should spend a minimum amount of time working up tasks and problems to let your



player's nobles prove their worth and gain merit thus making them more worthy of additional titles. In conclusion, also note that these tables can be used with the standard nobility generation system found in the *Citizens of the Imperium* quite easily, giving characters so generated, additional capacities (and capabilities) as befits their rank. Note:

*The full title is: Prince/Princess Designate of the Realm.

**Court Influence may be used as a modifier towards additional benefits/privilege rolls.

***The *Right of Decree* may be used to issue certain other nobility benefits to other PC's or NPC's, actually all may be issued under that particular privilege. If the *Right of Decree* is used to award additional rights/benefits above and beyond those by current rank of nobility (maximum possible benefit), PC must immediately roll, on issuance, for Imperial reprisal. To save against it, the PC must roll a 15+ (2d.6) using a bribery skill and/or court influence as a positive DM. The nature of the reprisal is at the referee's discretion, "let the punishment fit the crime."

Definition of Nobility Benefits

Pension: Same as a standard service pension. Roll 1d.6 x 10,000lc per year.

Merchant House Holdings: Stock/bond portfolios yielding 1d.6+3 x 10,000lc per year in dividends. May be sold at market value.

Space Lane Carrier Holdings: As per Merchant House Holdings, except player rolls 2d.6 x 100,000lc per year dividends.

Court Influence: Used as a DM on Reaction rolls as allowed by the referee. May also be used as a DM in dispensing patronage.

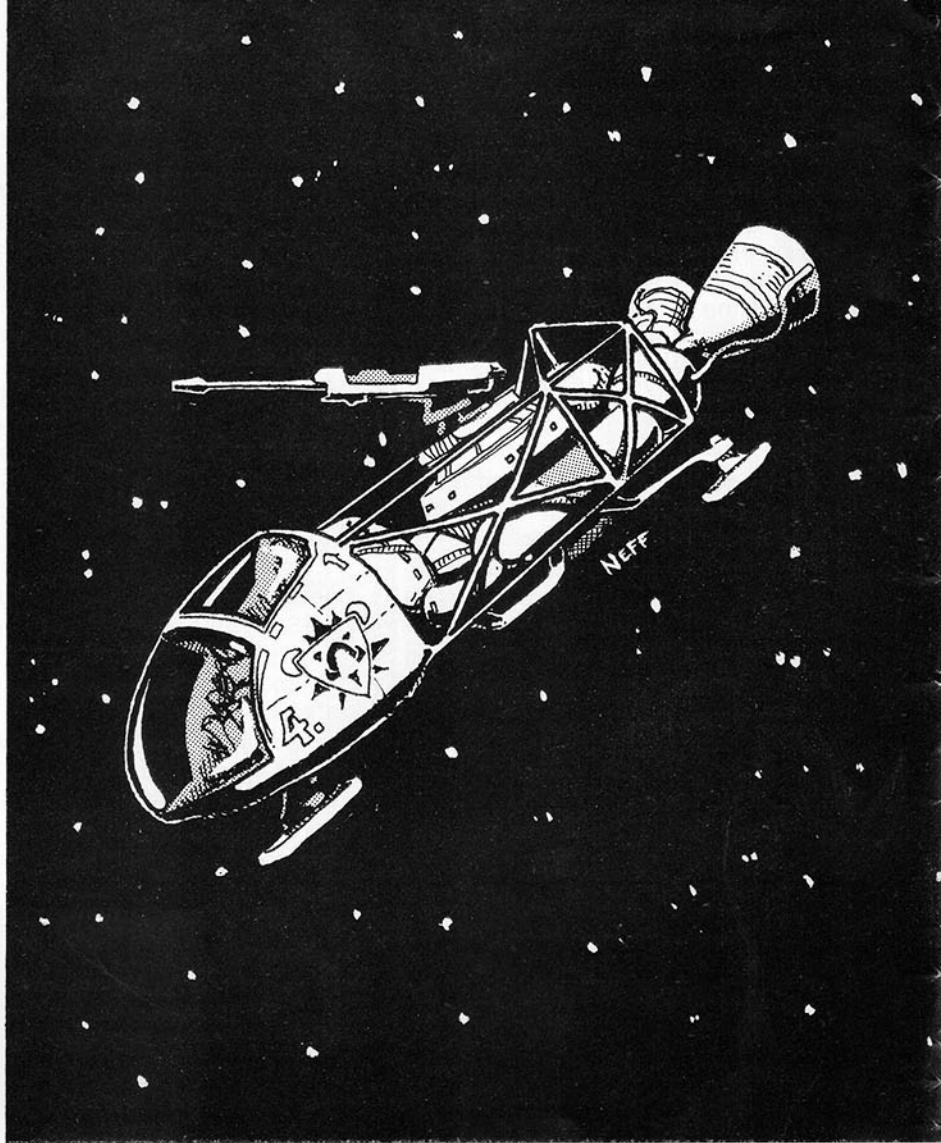
Ancestral Lands: Planetary holdings held by the player in perpetuity. Roll 3d.6 x 100,000lc for value. Lands yield 10-60% total value (1d.6) annually in revenue and 10-60% maintenance cost once every four years.

Immediate Inheritance: As per ancestral lands but player rolls 3d.6 x 100,000lc for immediate cash.

Right of Free Passage: Free transportation (High Passage) on any common carrier even to the exclusion of other passengers.

Cash Grant: Imperial largess for meritorious service(s) rendered. Roll 1d.100 x 100,000lc.

Fiefdom: This entails the granting of a planetary system by the Emperor/



Empress to an individual and/or family to be administered with local autonomy, in exchange for mandatory military/political service to the awardee by those descendants as long as the system in question is held as a fief.

Right of Escort: Right of personal bodyguard (2d.6) armed in contravention of local law levels.

Right to Bear Arms: Right to personal sidearms in contravention of local law levels, excluding high energy weapons at the referee's option.

Right of Commission: The awardee receives a military commission and raises a military unit in the defense of the Imperium; either a ground force or an interplanetary force. This includes the right to commission and charter exploratory missions to promote the welfare and expansion of the Imperium.

Estates: Accumulation of personal properties. Roll as per ancestral lands with value of 5d.6 x 100,000lc. Revenue is 10-60% per year and maintenance is 6-25% (Roll 1d.10+15) per year.

Governorship: Administrator of a given planetary system. Use Booklet #2 to determine the number and the type of worlds available. Responsibilities determined at the referee's discretion. Player receives an annual revenue at the following rate per starport class: 1,000,000lc per class 'A', 750,000lc per class 'B', 500,000lc per class 'C', 250,000lc per class 'D'. Roll 8+ every four years to renew (Bribery level + DM).

Imperial Senatorial Appointment: The Imperial Senate confers upon the player the right to advise the Emperor/Empress at any time on any matter concerning the Senate's areas of interest as well as gaining a seat in the Imperial Senate. In addition, an Imperial Senator may, in any given quadrant, oversee and review the actions of local system governors (Note: Ref's should point out obvious potential risks in "overadvising" the Emperor.).

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Library Data

Traveller Supplement 8

Michicon X—Oakland University—Rochester, MI—June 12,13,14

Pacific Origins—Dunfey Hotel—San Mateo, CA—July 2,3,4,5

CWA-CON '81—Northlake Hotel—Northlake, IL—July 16,17,18,19

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Viceroyship: Administrator of several planetary systems (2d.6). Rules through system governors. Pay is double the scale of governors, determined in the same manner. Need not be renewed.

Quadrant Leadership: Administrator of several viceroyships (1d.6). Pay scale same as above, triple standard rate for governorship. In addition, on a roll of 10+ (court influence may be used as a modifier) will also maintain complete control of all military forces within jurisdiction. Need not be renewed.

Offer of Imperial Consort: This is a pledge of an Imperial son or daughter to be the PC's consort (and technically the PC's superior); if accepted, the PC takes the member as his/her spouse and as a dowry, the PC receives five additional rolls on the benefit table with a max. of 10d6.

Right of Lawful Desent: The right to, under special circumstances, circumvent (with limited authority, ref's discretion) local authority (any level) if the best interests of the Imperium are served. This right also includes an automatic (or mandatory, if you will) audience with any member of the nobility above the PC's station to advise same on matters of state importance, not *withstanding* the fact that such views might run contrary to standard Imperium policy. (Note: Circumvention of authority *must* be justified to the Ref after the fact, to the Ref's satisfaction.)

Right of Decree: Power to enact into law Imperial legislation, conferred upon by the Imperial Senate.

Nobility Creation: Right of conferring noble rank (*any level*) without necessary ratification by the Senate to any individual, any prior rank.

Right of Pardon: Right to grant full and complete pardon for any and all crimes committed.

Right of Taxation: Right of imposition of planetary tax rates and exemptions. This includes control of Imperial revenue sources.

Benefits by Virtue of Merit

Promotion: Elevation in rank, not necessarily one level.

Honorary Nobility Status: There are three separate levels

Knight of the Imperium: +1 SL if non-noble (not to exceed 10), roll 10+ (2d.6) for +1 SL if noble (*No DM's* on throw). Includes an additional stipend of 10,000-60,000lc per year for life.

Knight of the Imperial Star: +1 SL if non-noble (not to exceed 10), roll 9+

(2d.6, no DM's). Includes an additional stipend of 10,000-40,000lc per year for life.

Knight Defender of the Realm: automatic social level of 10 for non-nobles, plus a 100,000lc per year stipend for life. Benefits for those of the aristocracy at Ref's discretion.

Use of Imperial Court Courtesan: Upon acceptance, roll 2d.6, if roll is 7+, PC gains a +1 SL. If first roll is successful, roll again, 7+ (2d.6) gains a +1 court influence. Ref controls the NPC and the loan lasts one year.

Use of Imperial Concubine: Upon acceptance, auto +1-3 court influence (1/2d.6). Roll again, 6+ (2d.6) gains a +1

Nobility Variant Tables

Table I.

| Nobility SL | Title | # of Dice (d.6) Rolled |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 10 | UMC | 0 |
| 11 | Knight/Dame | 1 |
| 12 | Baron/Baroness | 2 |
| 13 | Marquis/Marquise | 3 |
| 14 | Count(Earl)/Countess | 4 |
| 15 | Duke/Duchess | 5 |
| 16 | Archduke/Archduchess | 6 |
| 17 | Vicount/Vicountess | 7 |
| 18 | Prefect/Prefectress | 8 |
| 19 | Viceroy | 9 |
| 20 | Lord/Lady | 10 |
| 21 | Protector/Protectress | 11 |
| 22 | Prince/Princess* | 12 |
| 23 | King/Queen | 13 |
| 24 | Emperor/Empress | 14 |

Table II.

| Dice Roll | Result |
|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Pension |
| 2-4 | Merchant House Holdings |
| 5-7 | Space Lane Carrier Holdings |
| 8-9 | Court Influence (1d.6)** |
| 10-13 | Ancestral Lands |
| 14-16 | Immediate Inheritance |
| 17-20 | Right of Free Passage |
| 21 | Cash Grant |
| 22-23 | Right of Commission |
| 24-26 | Estates |
| 27-28 | Governorship |
| 29-32 | Right of Escourt |
| 33-36 | Right to Bear Arms |
| 37-38 | Cash Grant (Doubled) |
| 39-43 | Right of Commission |
| 44-49 | Fiefdom |
| 50-53 | Court Influence (2d.6)** |
| 54-56 | Imperial Senatorial Appointment |
| 57-60 | Viceroyship |
| 61-65 | Quadrant Leadership |
| 66 | Offer of Imperial Consort |
| 67-69 | Right of Lawful Desent |
| 70-74 | Right of Decree*** |
| 75-76 | Nobility Creation |
| 77 | Offer of Imperial Consort |
| 78-80 | Right of Pardon |
| 81-84 | Right of Taxation |



SL if non-noble. Ref controls the NPC and the loan lasts one year.

Imperial Trade Charter: This allows the PC the right to establish a monopoly with *one trade item on any one planet* with 25% of the profits deducted as gifts to the Emperor and/or Empress. Note that the Charter Company pays *no taxes*.

Right to Transport: This gives the PC the right to ship, for a period of 1-8 quarters (three months per quarter), to ship at Imperium expense, 200 persons and their equipment, plus 100 metric tons of cargo for *non-trade* purposes.

Imperial Mercenary Charter: The PC receives a mercenary charter directly from the Emperor and/or Empress. The PC gets to re-arm his unit from Imperium weapons stocks at no cost, *one time only*, with a discount on any addi-

tional purchases of weapons, equipment or ammo (50% off on ammo purchases). The mercenary unit drawing the equipment has the responsibility of transporting itself to the desired imperium arsenal. Current weapons (as per TL) can be purchased at 30% off, surplus weapons (wpns two TL's below current world level) at 60% off. Any unit accepting this charter must commit themselves to *at least* one Imperial contract per year for 1-6 years (1d.6). They are also subject to recall in times of Imperium-wide emergencies and (or the ref's discretion) and need not post a Repatriation Bond. All officers hold a brevet Imperial rank and the unit may train with Imperial units at Imperial cost for equipment and ammo, personnel costs are absorbed by the merc unit.

Imperium Scientific Award: This is a meritorious award to a member of the scientific community (any 4+ skill level) for a scientific breakthrough or project proposal of high merit. The benefits are:

- Automatic noble status (SL11) with a 500,000lc stipend per year.
- Imperium-wide recognition for activities (unless otherwise requested).
- Facilities to pursue research, either a ground installation or a research ship (suppl. #4) for stated project with the Imperium absorbing 80% of the building costs if a new facility is needed.
- Right to Bear Arms and Right of Escort.

Some suggestions for separate awards are:

- Chemistry
- Physics
- Biology
- Genetics
- Biochemistry
- Computers
- Electronics
- Ship Architecture
- Weaponry
- Psychology

Note: Ref's should feel free to add awards and categories to this list when necessary.

Grant of Extraordinary Commission: Presupposing a "crisis" of some sort, or an otherwise threatening situation, at the ref's discretion, this commission is conferred upon a single PC of any class permitting that PC carte blanche to Imperial resources to deal with the situation. If, in the opinion of the ref, said PC successfully completes the terms of his/her commission (ie-solves crisis), that PC receives the following benefits: Auto SL of 11 (if non-noble) or a +1 SL, one additional meritorious benefit (at the ref's discretion), auto court influence (2d.6), plus the Right to Bear Arms (taking effect immediately upon accepting the commission).

Note: The referee should alter any of the above benefits at need.

Referee and player alike should feel free to add new benefits of merit if the need arises or if they are taken by a fit of imagination.

Starting Over - Some Points to Consider Concerning New FRP Campaigns

by Timothy Kask

Has the appeal and challenge gone out of your adventure gaming? Do you find yourself bashing trolls and getting bored with the ease with which your super-character dispatches them? Have the esoteric mysteries of eighth level spells lost their fascination? Grown tired of always making your saving throw versus breath weapons?

If you answered yes to any of the above, you, or your campaign may be suffering from inflation. Not necessarily the monetary kind, although that is

all, there are only so many challenges worthy of, or challenging to, a group of player characters in the high teens and low twenties. One must keep in mind that a good many of the FRP games were never designed with these super-characters in mind, and are much more slanted to be challenging to lower level PC's.

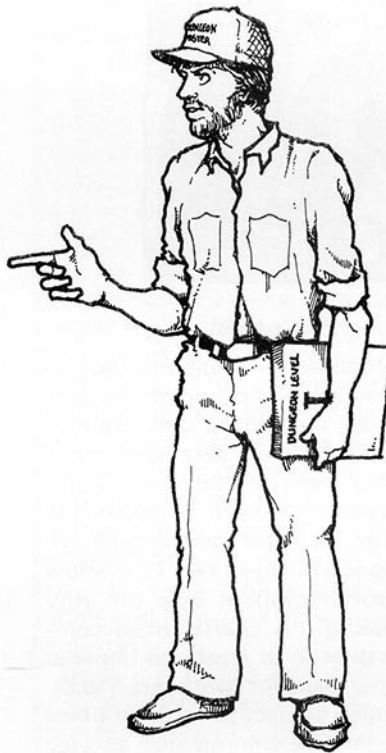
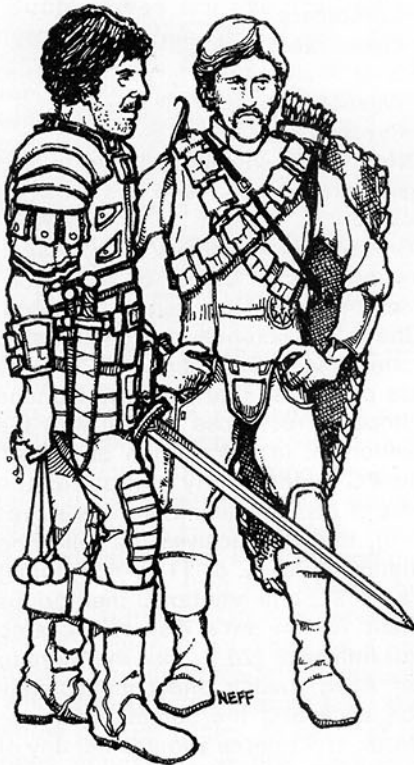
So what's a player, or DM, to do? Start a new campaign.

Sounds easy, you say? Well, in some respects it is easy. But more than like-

the game, and have a fairly good grasp of the rules and mechanics. For the DM, their grasp may be too good.

In the first campaign that players are involved in the wonder and newness of the game lends itself well to the premise that all of the PC's are essentially green as grass and ignorant of the ways of the world. They truly learn by doing and experience. Each time they encounter a different monster it is a learning experience.

In second and subsequent cam-



also another symptom of the malaise, but inflation of character level average. Other symptoms include vast amounts of stockpiled wealth and treasures, and a total disregard for the hazards of everyday living that beset the not-so-well-to-do.

The moderator (DM) of such a campaign can stave off the inevitable for only so long. How long is a measure of his inventiveness and creativity. After

ly, there will be problems that the DM must deal with, and it's always wise to be prepared, and try to anticipate some of them before they rear their ugly heads.

The fact that the players are really humans, and subject to human failings, should not be overlooked. By the time that the preceding campaign reaches this state, one can logically assume that the players are fairly proficient in

campaigns, the players must consciously "un-learn" all of the experience that they have accumulated. This is, in my opinion, the single biggest obstacle in the path of the DM. While Joe Figamo may know what a bugbear is, as well as its strengths and weaknesses, his PC Ragnar the Rowdy, Ftr. 1st, certainly does not, especially on first encounter. The DM must be especially careful to keep this fact in mind. He must con-

sciously keep in mind that these PC are dumber than rocks in the beginning.

Every suggested action by the player for his PC must be measured against the question "Does this PC know this?"

Often, the DM must disallow or disregard courses of action or suggestions that are based on knowledge that the PC does not possess. Every suggestion and action/reaction must be viewed with a jaundiced eye in this regard. If a green PC has a logical reason to try something that is not entirely based on previous PC's' experiences, let him. If, however, there is no logical justification, the action must be prohibited.

There is a way to deal with this phenomenon before it becomes a serious problem: simply tell them what they know at the outset. If it is not in the initial briefing, and hasn't occurred in the campaign yet, then they don't know it, *g.e.d.*

The easiest way to accomplish this is to give the players everything you want them to know on a sheet(s) at the beginning of the very first adventure. Writing all of this down can also be very beneficial to the DM, in that it will enable him to organize his thoughts and schemes, and lay the groundwork for many future adventures through bits and pieces of knowledge and rumors, as well as a little Legend Lore.

Having a prepared sheet can also facilitate the entry of new players after the first couple of adventures have already taken place. It also enables the players to choose the course they wish to steer. By enabling them to make these initial decisions, they can't feel that they were steered into any adventure that goes badly.

As an example of what I mean, the remainder of this article consists of just such a handout that I prepared some years ago and was prevailed upon to start a new sub-campaign for the Lake Geneva bunch. I was using some

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JUDGES' GUILD maps and supplements, so some of the placenames may be familiar to you. The map you choose to use is up to you, it can be one of your own devising, or can be a pre-prepared one from commercial sources.

Welcome to Kontiva

You find yourself in Thelamie, a growing, prosperous market hamlet of about 540 souls. When asking for information as to how you find yourself here, you are told the following, by Ranion, the village hetman.

"Last fall, long after a wise captain would have greased his ship and pulled it high unto a beach, a strange craft was sighted rounding Druid's Point, the northwest extent of the beach of Druid's Bay. Thelamie is located about 8 miles due SE across Druid's Bay from the point. The ship was similar in design to the Sea Dragons' vessels of the south, tho much larger and differing in small details. About four miles off the beach, the strange vessel was seen to capsize and break up. Of all the bodies that washed onto the sands of Druid's Bay, only yours held the spark of life. You survivors are all that have lived. Enough goods and salvageable materials were washed ashore to outfit you as you now find yourselves. Of course, it was the Druid of the Grove that pointed this out to the villagers. The Druid is held in high esteem hereabouts as a man of great learning with only one worldly fault; an awesome temper. When he proclaimed that you were to be cared for until this day, remembrance of that temper hastened our agreement."

During the course of the winter, around the fires of your various hosts, the following information was imparted.

- Kontiva is the name of this area of the continent.

- Thelamie is on the north coast of Kontiva.

• Thelamie is scrupulously Neutral, to the point of not caring what others secretly adhere to. Because of this, you all only know Common.

• Seahill is another village, larger than Thelamie, across the mountains to the east & south - LG.

• Karn is a town to the south, on the slope of the mountains with an unsavory (in the minds of the Thelamiens) reputation - CG.

• Warwick is even bigger - cultured - N-along the bay to the NW.

• The Druid of the Grove - until 12-15 years ago, the Druid was well known throughout Kontiva as a powerful and wise man. Hundreds of pilgrims journeyed to his grove each year, bringing gifts and seeking advice. The Druid never denied anyone of good intent, but was able to single out of a crowd those that come seeking their own ends in the name of greed, ignorance or cupidity. Each year, on the celebration of the Winter Solstice, it was the Druids' habit to go alone to a secret place, where he would meditate and refresh his soul and mind. These trips often lasted the better part of a lunar cycle.

Three years passed before the Druid returned. He never told anyone where he was or what he was doing. He seemed relieved to find that the pilgrims stopped coming. He remained friendly with the locals, and continued to give advice when asked. If the local legends are correct, he's somewhere over 100 years old.

• There are some ruins in the Démon's Tongue - a pass through the mountains to the south.

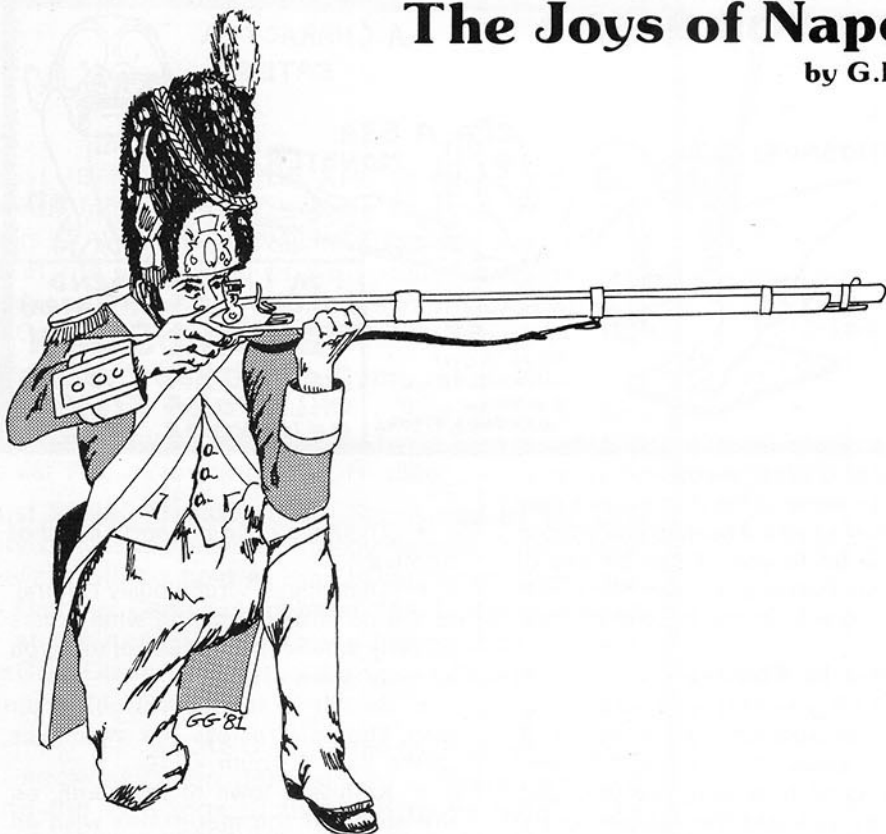
• Idyllic Isles - collective name for



"HEY FRIAR. HAVE YOU SEEN MY MAGIC WILLIAM TELL APPLE?"

The Joys of Napoleonic Wargaming

by G.F. Nafziger



The spectrum of wargaming and adventure gaming available to the gamer today is truly enough to boggle the mind. It covers time's spectrum from Xenophon and Thucydides to Dieppe, Verdun, Kursk, and Hue. It transcends fact, leaping into man's most ancient fears and desires, black magic and evil, to the fantastic encounters with alien cultures described by Heinlein, Herbert, and Pohl.

With so much to delight the mind's passion for adventure, why should one settle for the seemingly dry and dusty relics of the late 18th and early 19th century? A weighty question indeed!

The Napoleonic wars are generally considered to have begun in 1800 with Napoleon's victory at Marengo, but one can build a case for 1796, Napoleon's first Italian campaign, or 1804, when he donned the imperial purple. Which ever date one chooses, this period of change began in 1789 and stretched 25 years to 1815. This was a period of evolution and change, of the subtle genius of Beethoven and the explosion of nationalistic fervor.

This was a period of political and economic flux. The industrial and French revolutions formed the prelude to a period of economic struggles that caused political upheaval and, as Claus-

witz so aptly put it, the ultimate political act: war.

War had evolved from the graceless blunderings of the early 18th century to a hard technical tool in the hands of Frederick the Great. When he laid down his tool of genius it was taken up by an even greater genius who would use it as the world had never dreamt possible.

There was glory and adventure in this period for those that sought it. Imagine Joachim Murat leading a charge of thousands of horsemen armed only with a riding crop and dressed in the latest Parisian fashion. It was a period when each army's pickets would warn the others to find cover for an attack was about to come or thirsty men from both armies could pause in the middle of a battle to slake their thirst from their respective sides of a stream and not try to shoot each other.

This period offers the wargamer a spectacle of color that can only be appreciated as one scans a table spread with the myriad of troops and their multicolored uniforms. It offers every individual the opportunity to express his personal national pride and participate on which ever side he might wish, as the Napoleonic wars represented the first true world war. These wars

involved every nation in the western world and sent Russian troops to southern Italy, Portuguese troops to Russia, Spaniards to Denmark and Dutch to Spain. The adherents to the various alliances changed faster than those in a lively game of Kingmaker and the battles stretched from Detroit to Jamaica to Finland and to Turkey. This period offers an almost endless spectrum of opportunities for those who enjoy the geo-political game, the hard core wargamer who loves pushing lead or paper counters, and the role playing adventure gamer as well.

For the roleplayer this period offers several fine examples of individuals who rose from the lowest portions of society to be placed amongst the highest princes in Europe. Allow me to mention just one, Marshal Ney, Bravest of the Brave, the Prince of Moscow.

Marshal Ney, one of Napoleon's finest generals, started out his military career as a common grenadier in a French infantry regiment. His rise to *Marechal de l'Empire* gave rise to the common belief that every soldier had a Marshal's baton in his knapsack. What more opportunity does a role player need than that?

Probably the best aspect of the Napoleonic wars is the heavy documentation. Unlike those individuals who are ardent fans of, say Tolkien fantasy and confined to the material provided by less than a dozen works, the Napoleonic gamer finds himself facing an almost endless supply of documentation in which he can virtually lose himself. There are over 6,000 books on Napoleon alone and that doesn't begin to touch the technical military works like drill manuals, the multitude of personal memoirs by those who participated, the various regimental histories, or the multitude of works of art by masters such as David or common illustrators like Faber du Four.

Imagine the pleasure you will have springing something like a regiment of Swiss cuirassiers or Polish Guard Grenadiers on your opponent and then with delight showing him your latest bit of research to justify their existence! Or, executing a tidy bit of table top maneuvering like the "passage of lines" and, as your opponent cries in dis-



belief, quoting the French drill manual, page and verse. In contrast, if Tolkien didn't put it in his books it doesn't exist, and there is no surprise to spring on your opponent if he has read the books.

Even if you are not the sort who enjoys such research, but merely revels in the trouncing of a friend on the other side of the field of honor, this period offers an endless selection of combinations. As I implied earlier, at one time or another everybody was either allied or fighting with everyone else, except France and Britain who were almost always at each other's throats. You can mix and match your armies almost with impunity and still not violate too extremely historical fact. It allows long campaign games with several players with any degree of skill or expertise for there were five major powers and a dozen smaller ones.

So what more could a gamer desire? Here's a period where everyone can indulge in his personal nationalistic fantasy, role play, create or recreate battles that are factual or fanciful, campaign for 25 years, change alliances faster than you change TV channels, out-research your enemies, out-paint your enemies, or try to out-general one of history's greatest generals: Napoleon Bonaparte. Are you up to the challenge?



REFLECTIONS

by Liam O'Reilly
by Liam O'Reilly

REFLECTIONS

Last week, while participating in my usual Saturday afternoon gaming get-together, I had my usual share of consternation over the usual disagreements (fights). As usual, the game was somehow not as fun as I thought it should have been, so after the game, I started to reflect on my twenty-one years in the hobby and had this observation to make: The dilemma of this hobby is its competitive aspect versus its socializing aspect.

Some of us play games to engage in a common interest or to have some fun, while others play only to win. By definition, most games have a winner, but the people who play to win are inclined to overdo it -- their goal is to win at all costs. In doing this, they lose sight of a valuable facet of this hobby: fun. I'm not saying people shouldn't play to win; however, when fate has turned its head and you see that you might not win, why not try to lose with dignity? I've witnessed far too many gamers looking for a loophole in the rules to stave off the inevitable. Furthermore, they will often attempt character assassinations or regress to some juvenile tactic to make their loss seem less significant. After all, they know they're the best, and if they lose, it must be because they were cheated or the rules were wrong. When I started in this hobby, I was guilty of these offenses -- when I lost I felt awful, since I thought I should be the best, and losing a game somehow affected my entire life.

It was not until I met James that I realized there was a flaw in my perception of gaming. There's probably no better gamer in the hobby than James. Whenever I opposed him, we tended to have even-splits in wins, but with one difference -- James didn't get too upset over losing. For him, there was always another day, perhaps victory. At first, his carefree attitude towards gaming went unnoticed by me; however, my subconscious must have been taking notes for I started to enjoy gaming. I looked forward to playing with or against James. The most important outcome of our games was that we had a good time. I was beginning to appre-

ciate the fun you could have if you put your mind at ease and enjoyed the game.

Jack was a friend of James' and mine; he went to the school that taught winning is the only thing that counts. Jack was a good gamer although not as good as James, and although he could defeat most opponents; he had a few distasteful peculiarities, the first being that when things started to go against him, he would become very loud and obnoxious. He would start to challenge every rule, bend selected ones, or complain about the unevenness of the game. One trait of his I found particularly reprehensible was his giving up. I'm not saying he surrendered; what he did was make the most ridiculous moves to get his force annihilated, and he did it in such a way as to show he was committing hara-kiri. You were not winning; he was intentionally losing, thereby taking the thunder out of your victory. Poor Jack! He had such a bad disposition and attitude that he was unable to take this lumps like a man!

And then, there was Claude. Good ole Claude. Claude was a good gamer -- as good as Jack, but he lacked confidence in himself. He had no faith in his ability to defeat James or myself, and although he was capable of beating lesser players, when he played in the big leagues, he choked. He knew he couldn't win the big one, and he never did. Claude had other problems: He tried to tell everyone in the game how to play. For example: Every turn he would say, "This moves 5"... "That's only worth half in the woods"... "You can't rally this turn"... on and on. The jangle of decibels he produced alone could rout the stout at heart. In retrospect, I believe Claude's goal was to insure that there was no silence during a game. Have you ever moved one unit six spaces and one minute later someone said: "You know...that man can only move six." Claude does this to anyone and everyone in the game -- every turn, every move, every time. I've written the majority of the rules we use,

but good ole Claude will tell me my own rules. I guess he assumes I've become a mental cripple and my mind is no longer fit for gaming. Also, never change a rule if Claude is playing a game. He will not remember in what chronological order the rules were changed. I've played many games where, in Claude's eyes, someone committed an apparent blunder. When we explain to him that we've changed the rules, he sulks and says: "Why don't you ever tell us?" Of course, everyone at the table is aware of the change, and they usually reply: "Claude, that rule was changed last month."

Last on my list is Terry. Terry is a satisfactory gamer, not the best, but above average, and he never makes waves. He dutifully marches to his fate with a smile on his face and no complaints other than: "Jesus, this beer is warm" or "If I roll another 'friggin' one, I'm going to wet my drawers." I'm always astonished by his even temper. I've seen him roll four 1's in a row (this caused over half his army to stampede to the nearest edge of the table), but Terry never faltered other than to look in disbelief and utter some vague curse at the dice. Why can't more people be like Terry? If I do a game, he is one of the first people I invite -- you never have a problem with him as long as you keep plenty of beer on hand.

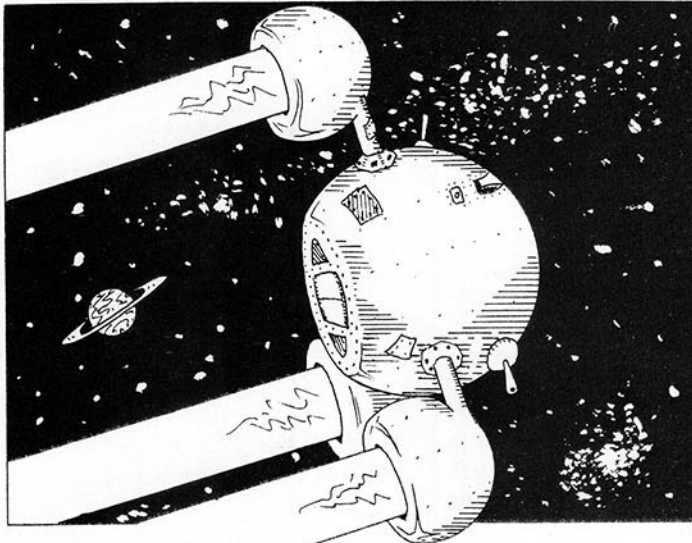
I've often wondered why more people can't behave while gaming. If there were more James' and Terry's around, the gaming world would be much better off. Gaming is a hobby by definition. Hobbies are supposed to be pursuits in which one takes absorbing interest, and they aren't "do or die" things; they should be fun.

If we are to have an enlightened vision of what Adventure Gaming is, then we should include enjoyment and exclude the anxiety caused by other player's ruthless personalities. The stress that is generated in a game should come from the situation itself and not from the temper of the participants.

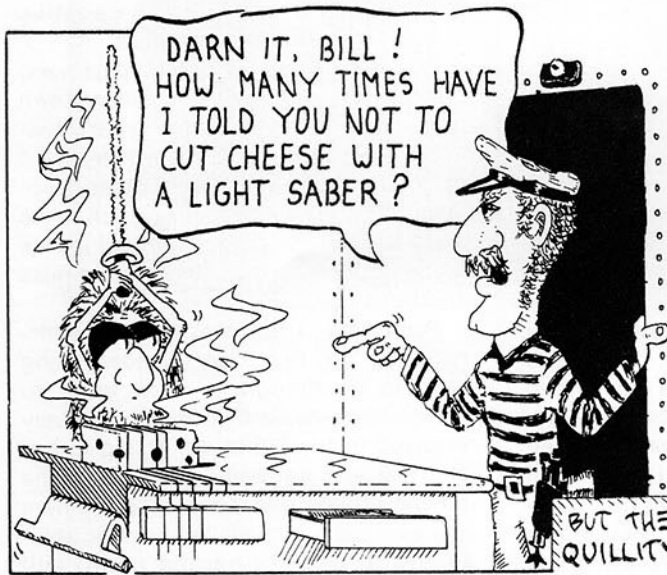
The Adventures of Space Trader Vic

#1

SPACE TRADER VIC AND HIS TRUSTY SIDE KICK, THREE DOLLAR BILL, HAVE FINISHED SHREWD NEGOTIATIONS ON NEW NU DELI FOR A CARGO OF VALUABLE SPICES. THEY NOW BLAST THROUGH SPACE IN THE SEEMINGLY DILAPIDATED WOODEN NICKLE, SHIP OF A THOUSAND FACES, IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURE AND PROFIT!



MOST BEINGS MIGHT FIND AN INTER-STELLAR TRIP ADVENTUROUS ENOUGH BUT TO OUR DYNAMIC DUO IT'S JUST ANOTHER BORING DAY IN SPACE!



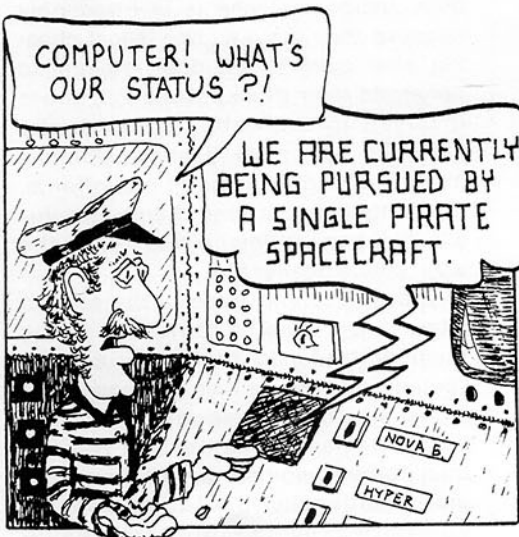
DARN IT, BILL! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO CUT CHEESE WITH A LIGHT SABER?



OMIGOSH! IT'S THE PIRATE ALARM!

QUICKLY OUR HEROES RUSH TO CONSULT WITH HAL, THE AMAZING COMPUTER THE SHREWD TRADER HAD SALVAGED FROM A DERELICT SHIP FOUND ORBITING A GIANT GAS PLANET....

BUT THE DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY IS SHORT LIVED



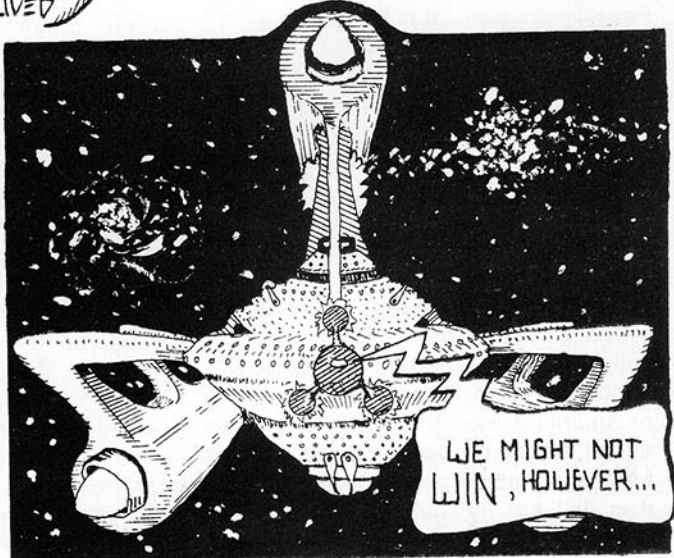
COMPUTER! WHAT'S OUR STATUS?!

WE ARE CURRENTLY BEING PURSUED BY A SINGLE PIRATE SPACECRAFT.



JUST ONE? CAN WE FIGHT HIM?

WHY CERTAINLY WE CAN FIGHT HIM....



WE MIGHT NOT WIN, HOWEVER...



GAMING

KATHLEEN T. PETTIGREW

Welcome to the Campanile (the Bell-tower) - a column I probably should have called "Bits & Pieces" because that's all you're going to get for awhile. My slave-driving editor insisted on an article for the first issue despite the fact I'm in the middle of the whirlwind mess of moving from West Virginia to Ohio - so bear with me please.

After much pondering (while unloading boxes) I decided to begin this sometimes column by talking about something that has bothered me for a few years now - why aren't there more women involved in the adventure gaming hobby? Last year I started to write an article entitled "How to Get Women Involved in Gaming" with a subtitle of "Or How to Keep from Sleeping on the Couch". It never got finished and I've lost the notes for it somewhere while moving, so I'll just skim over one area of it that I remember and feel is important. In some following issues I plan to make some specific suggestions on ways for women to get involved in the hobby, review a game or two and keep you up to date on the convention scene. For now though, I'll just go over what I believe to be a major contributing factor to the lack of women in this hobby.

First off, leaving out all the socialization and upbringing stuff, the main problem women wanting to become active in this hobby encounter is the cliquish, "club" attitude held by a majority of gamers (i.e. men). Granted, there's been some improvement since I attended my first con at *Origins II*, but overall the majority of gamers (men) still react with at least hostility and/or contempt when they have to play with or against a woman. Even though this might never be openly stated, their feelings come across very clearly - and it is just not any fun to sit down and play a game when the people you're playing with resent you.

Though I can think of many examples of this attitude in action, I'll limit myself to just two that have occurred to me personally in the past year. The first was when I entered the *Richt-hofens's War* tourney (as the only woman player) at a major con. The jostling among the other players to avoid being partnered with me was almost comical. People in the other groups were asking each other how long they had played, what their favorite planes were, etc. My two partners immediately just told me to follow what they did and then turned away and began discussing strategy. Neither one bothered to find out anything about how I played or if I had any suggestions on strategy. When I tried to get them talking by asking how long they had been playing, they just mumbled something about "a few years or so" and turned back away. To quickly sum up the event, I was the only one to progress to the next round (after making two kills). Both my partners and opponents chalked it up to luck and left disgusted. None of them had bothered to find out (as my next round opponent did) that I'd been playing this game for over six years and had often played with a fellow club member who just happened to be the 1978 *Origins* champ.

The second instance occurred when I was DMing an *AD & D* tourney at another major con. When the all-male team assigned to me the whispered comments and exchanged looks among them were very revealing and expressive (unfavorably so). The older members of the group spent the first half hour testing me on the rules - something they wouldn't have dreamed of doing with a male DM unless his refereeing revealed him as possibly incompetent. Though they should have taken me on face value (or at least given the tourney director credit for choosing competent

personnel) if they had bothered to ask I would have given them my qualifications - six years playing, four years refereeing, two tourney designs, and a member of the '78 *Origins* winning team. Though several of the team members came up after the round and expressed (with surprise) how much they had enjoyed my running of the session, it didn't quite alleviate the negative feelings created at the outset.

Women gamers (or potential gamers) have three ways with which we can deal with this attitude and these situations: 1) ignore it and them (very hard to do and it often results in other problems); 2) fight it and them (which takes away a lot of the enjoyment and leaves a bad impression); or, 3) quit (and miss all the fun).

Personally, I feel that the first alternative is the best one. Besides being hard to do though, it often leads to more problems. If a woman is actively involved in the hobby (or trying to be) and just acts naturally and ignores the hostility (hoping that the other gamers will eventually accept her for her abilities) a number of people (men) will then decide that she is involved only because they are, i.e., she is just chasing after men. It just doesn't seem to penetrate their (thick) skulls that she is involved in the hobby because she likes *the hobby*. In dealing with this attitude, the only advice I can offer is, again, to ignore it (and them). Eventually the gamers (men) will realize the way things really are.

The pitfalls and traps of the second alternative should be obvious. Fighting them or trying to prove you are the "better" gamers can be nothing but a losing situation. Somewhere there will be a male gamer who will beat you and thus "prove" women are inferior gamers. Additionally, until this happens, you have bruised egos and created

CIVILIZATION - A Game Review

by Gerry Ball



Civilization is a relatively new board game from England manufactured by Hartland Trefoil of Northampton - the same people that produced the rail-roading game *1829*. Although warring plays an important role in the game, *Civilization* is not actually a war game in the standard sense. Playable by 2-7 people, its level of difficulty is characterized more by its sophistication rather than its complexity.

The board is supplied in three pieces and illustrates ancient Italy, Illyria, Thrace, Asia, Assyria, Africa, Babylon, Egypt and Crete - each of which represents the starting point for each player's nomadic tribe. The time span of the game covers the period from 8000 BC to 250 BC, with the object of the game to be the first player to reach the end of the Archeological Succession Table. This occurs when a player becomes "civilized" by obtaining certain goals and accumulating over 1000 points.

The main elements of the game are growth, accumulation of wealth and the acquisition of culture. Each of these is interdependent on the other

two, and it is the understanding of the relationship among them which is more likely to help a player win than the ability to wage a successful war against another player (although this also has its value).

Points are accumulated initially by the construction of cities. This in turn leads to the acquisition of trade cards which, after a period of exchange with the other players, may be bartered directly for civilization cards. The civilization cards not only represent the largest source of points for a player, they also aid in other beneficial ways, i.e. reducing the effects of famine and natural disasters.

At the outset, each player represents a nomadic tribe faced with the dual problems of survival and expansion. Since the total board will only support a limited population, conflict occurs between tribes as each attempts to establish its borders. Population growth is so rapid that players are forced to enlarge their own territories in order to survive. Population growth can also be accommodated by the construction of

cities; but once this level of development is attained, taxation rears its ugly head. Cities will also increase a player's wealth which then can be traded for such civilization cards as Agriculture, Medicine, Astronomy, Mysticism, Metalworking, Pottery and Cloth Making. Each of these cards are valuable not only for their point value and achieving the objective of the game, but also for aiding each society in appropriate ways. Astronomy, for example, permits the holder to voyage across open sea and is invaluable in times of warfare. Agriculture allows the player to increase his/her population limit by one in any zones he/she occupies, while Pottery will reduce the effect of famine if it is combined with a grain card. Primary skill and craft cards tend to be cheaper than the more advanced science cards, and Philosophy, Law and Architecture cards cost so much that only an advanced society can afford these attributes; only one of *Civilization's* many tributes to realism.

As the game progresses, the need for balance in your society becomes

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apparent. Placing too much emphasis on rapid expansion without foundation and wealth is just as dangerous as becoming a highly urbanized, but slow growing society. Also, it is almost inevitable that at least two players will become involved in a lengthy conflict, which naturally hinders any development of civilization.

There are so many natural subtleties to the game that it is difficult to comprehend them all, let alone describe all of them. An example of one, though, would be that a player engaging in too rapid a rate of urbanization will accumulate an excess of revenue over resources, which will inevitably lead to stagnation. While cities are essential in providing the wealth required for an advancing civilization, unless the wealth is augmented by trade, the nation will be out-run by others with a more energetic outlook.

Another ingenious twist is the "trading period" - a free-for-all time during which players sell and/or exchange commodity cards with each other with the idea being to acquire several of the same kind for a higher point value. There is nothing quite like the sight (and sound) of seven people frantically waving cards and screaming at each other - and the likelihood of going deaf is high during a lengthy trading session. In order to prolong life and reduce blood pressure, we placed a time constraint on this phase although this is not called for in the rules.

Repeated playings of the game have revealed few glaring faults - a tribute to the thought and effort put into the game design. There appears to be few superfluous details, and so far only very occasional arguments over the interpretation of the rules have occurred (something I wish was a little more common in gaming).

As there appears to be no short-cuts to success, the players' interest level is maintained throughout the game. It is difficult to become bored unless, of course, you habitually lose! *Civilization's* complexity level is difficult to rate as by just reading through the rules it would seem to be near a seven (on a one to ten scale), while its playability makes it no more than a five. Once again, it is the game's sophistication and not its complexity which count - and for this no point value can be ascribed. All I can say is that some fairly hard-core gamers have been deeply impressed both by *Civilization's* ease of play and its subtleties.

continued on 37

WHAT MAKES A PLAYER GOOD?

A DM's view

by Mark Rastogi

A great deal has been written by players and DMs about effective gamesmastering and avoiding the Monty Haul syndrome. I would like to outline what I think makes players effective and "good." I believe most DMs will agree with my major points.

The most important asset of a good player is his or her ability to *role-play effectively*. I far prefer guiding Tarnor, Karssit, and Eltharss through their adventures than spoon-feeding John, Harry and Mary. Good role-playing doesn't require living the character in real life, though I have heard of groups that play in costume to get into the spirit of the action. Role-playing doesn't require brilliant acting, either; but it does require a sense of who and what your character is. People who are playing their roles well don't need to be reminded of their alignment ("Uh, paladins can't pillage and burn, Sherman") or their background ("The King hasn't seen anyone in a week. Why is he going to grant an audience to some carpenter's son?"). Sure, role-playing is a chance to do a lot of things you can't do in real life, but if you don't act within the constraints of your character, all your alter egos will be homogenous--dull and lifeless. A chaotic evil thief has to act, move, and even think differently from a lawful good priest; and he has to do it without prompting from the DM. In the chain of events leading to a good game, a DM has a responsibility to provide a detailed, interesting environment for the players: he does not have an obligation to make the players maintain their roles. Because players really need to play their roles for a good game, it's in a DM's best interests to see that players are happy with their characters as overall types. It's not a good idea to let someone scrap a character because he's a point off from being a ranger, or if she's "just nothing--not a single good attribute,"--but if someone has their heart set on being nasty and evil, and they wind up with a mild-mannered goodly priest, there will be frustration all around. If the player is strong with

roles, he or she will be frustrated at not being able to do what he or she wants; and if the player is not strong on roles, the DM will go up the wall from continually stopping or correcting the errant character.

A couple of final notes on role-playing, before the next topic: first, it helps, as a player, if you make up a quick character sketch of your *persona*. Make it noticeably different from yourself, but not too extremely so. Decide: What is your temperament? Do you explode as soon as provoked, or have all the emotions of a rock, or somewhere in between? How do you feel towards strangers? What scares you? What do you like? Whom do you trust? What are your general feelings toward the opposite sex? When you have this sketch, abide by it. Enlarge it or amend it as you choose in the course of your adventures, but in the main stick close to it. Second, be careful with playing characters of the opposite sex. I have met very few people who could play both sexes convincingly--most tend to lapse into stereotypes, which makes for dull play.

Although there is usually room in a campaign for a limited number of bored or cowardly characters, in general the other two vital assets of a good player are *curiosity* and a *willingness to adventure*. Both are generally problems only with old, well-established characters, who have settled into a pattern that the players are unwilling to break.

Curiosity, far from killing the cat, can often breathe new life into a cam-

aign. Do strange things happen in your world? As a player, demand to know *why*. Although persistent questions or unexpected explorations may fluster the DM or cause him to recess the session so that he can think of an answer, the questioning should be worth it in the end. Ultraprepared DMs will love you for taking advantage of all the detail work they've put in. I vastly prefer having to come up with an answer/adventure for a possibility I hadn't thought of to dangling carrots of adventure in front of a party and having them rejected or ignored. "We're doing OK..."

When a party is doing OK or well, there is less motivation for striking out on new adventures. The DM can prod the characters into doing something besides babysitting, but life is much easier if the character retains enough spirit of adventure to seek out trouble, even with a secure home and/or family...the intricate, complex adventures possible with high-level characters, especially involving families, mean that for me it's never a good idea to retire a character because he's too successful/old.

RCA--Role-playing, Curiosity, Adventure-seeking--these are the qualities a good player has that makes refereeing a game with him or her fun and interesting.



HEROIC COMBAT IN DIVINE RIGHT

A variant from the designers

by Glenn Rahman

From the inception, the designers of *Divine Right* considered the possibility of allowing individual combat between opposing leaders. Alas, it was not feasible to incorporate such a variant into the original rule booklet. Even so, individual combat between military leaders is an earmark of both heroic and medieval ages -- in other words, of the current stage of Minarian development. Therefore, for those fans of *Divine Right* who wish to add another level of drama to their games, we offer the following variant:

Establishing Basic Heroic Competency (BHC)

As soon as he enters play, a monarch should be given a Basic Heroic Competency of 1-6. This number is determined randomly by die roll, and is recorded on a sheet of paper. If a monarch is slain, his successor is given a new BHC.

The BHC's of the four Special Mercenary leaders are not random. Juulute Wolfheart, Schardenzar the Sorcerer, the Black Knight and the Bilge Rat all possess a BHC of "6".

A monarch's BHC may be modified:

- If the monarch is a Goblin or a Troll, add +1 to his BHC. These are two fierce, rugged races, well-suited for man-to-man combat.

- If the monarch is female, subtract 1 from her BHC. Normally, the strongest females are not so strong as their strongest male counterparts.

- Certain personalities diminish a monarch's potential for heroics. These unfortunate Personality cards are #2 (the coward), #4 (the lazy Wastrel), and #6 (the unmilitary monarch). If one of these cards are matched with a monarch, reduce his or her BHC by 2. Additionally, Personality card #17 (the invalid) prevents its corresponding monarch from ever engaging in heroic combat.

Establishing Heroic Arms Competency (HAC)

Historically, a great variety of arms have been utilized in dueling. However, for simplicity's sake, this variant shall

restrict the traditional Minarian dueling weapons to three: the sword, the mace and the lance.

A player determines a friendly leader's HAC for each type of weapon by rolling a six-sided die (for a result of 1-6). A leader may therefore have up to three different HAC ratings at once. A side note must be maintained to preserve this information. Even if a monarch should change alliances, his BHC and HAC remain the same.

The four Special Mercenary leaders have a standard HAC of "6" for all three types of dueling weapons.

The Challenge to Duel

Dueling is conducted in a subphase prior to the normal army/fleet combat phase. After an army/fleet attack is announced, but prior to carrying it out, a leader in one force may put a challenge to a leader in another.

Any leader may challenge any other leader, but the defender has the privilege of making the first challenge in each combat situation. After him, the challenging privilege goes to the attacker. After the attacker, it is the defender's opportunity to challenge once more, and so on, until all desirable challenges have been made. However, a leader who has challenged another leader may not be counter-challenged by a third leader for the remainder of that player-turn.

A challenge may be accepted or refused. If the challenger has a lesser BHC than the challenged leader, the challenged leader's alliance loses three victory points. This loss represents the loss of prestige which the refusal incurs. An alliance's victory point total will not drop below zero, however.

The three victory point penalty is *not* enacted under certain conditions:

- If the challenged leader is still carrying the effects of a wound from an earlier duel.
- If this leader has challenged this same leader earlier in the game and was refused.
- If the challenging leader is one of the four Special Mercenary leaders.

There is no limit to the number of

challenges that may be made per game turn, contingent upon the number of leaders involved in army/fleet combat situations.

Conducting Duels

The challenged leader may choose the weapon of the duel, and his opponent must use the same weapon. Usually the challenged leader will select a weapon that will give him a relative superiority over the challenger.

The ratings for a leader's BHC and HAC are added together to derive the leader's *Standard Dueling Ability (SDA)*. For example, if King Boarhort of Hothior has a BHC of "3" and is using a sword -- in which he has a competency of "6" -- his SDA equals "9".

To conduct a duel, each dueling player rolls two 6-sided dice and adds the result (2-12) to the dueling leader's SDA. The results are compared and the leader with the smaller total is considered to have been hit by his opponent. To determine the results of the hit, a die is rolled and the following table is consulted:

- Slain
- Disabled--further dueling prohibited
- Serious wound--duel may continue with 3 subtracted from the wounded leader's SDA
- Secondary wound--duel may continue with 2 subtracted from the wounded leader's SDA
- Minor wound--duel may continue with 1 subtracted from the wounded leader's SDA
- Scratch--duel may continue with no adverse effect on the leader.

If a leader's SDA is reduced to less than "1", he is considered Disabled and loses the duel. A leader may yield in a duel before being Disabled, but is still considered the loser of the duel. A leader who makes a challenge, but backs out of it when it is accepted, is also considered the loser of the duel.

The winner of the duel receives five victory points. Slaying a monarch in a duel does *not* gain the slayer the normal victory point award for a monarch's death.

continued on 37



The forest, now in shadow, would soon be black with night. The wanderer, weary from her plight, anxiously searched for a resting ground, unaware that the "CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT" lurked nearby. The unexplained screams of doom and dread came upon her, without warning. The terror of the night was unfolding . . .

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 13-001 Small Cold Drake | 13-009 Voodoo Man Set |
| 13-002 Hill Giant | 13-010 Insect Men Warriors |
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The "Children of the Night" have been turned loose on the world. They're lurking at your local adventure gaming store.

REAL FANTASY

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AWAY TO THE WARS!

A Foreign War Variant for Knights of Camelot

by Glenn Rahman

In TSR's *Knights of Camelot*, a Player Knight is given the opportunity to live the life of a heroic knight-errant, rescue ladies, vanquish knaves, search for the Holy Grail and do a myriad of other activities. About the only thing he does not have a chance to do is to show his mettle in regular warfare. This variant provides a foreign campaign supplement for those players who crave the glory and prizes that only a big war can provide.

There are three means by which a Player Knight (PK) can be introduced into a Foreign War (which for the sake of simplicity, we may assume to be somewhere in central France).

First, the PK may volunteer to go abroad. To do so, the PK travels to the Lord that he serves and Requests permission to embark for the wars. If per-

mission is given (via a successful Luck Roll), the PK gains 6 VP.

Secondly, we shall assume that if a PK is Summoned by his Lord (via a Message), there is a chance that the Lord is mustering his Knights for war. Upon arriving at the Lord's Castle, the PK rolls a die. On the result of 1-3, he is required to accompany his Lord to war. On the result of 4-6, the Summons is treated as per the standard rules.

Thirdly, if a PK is defeated in combat by a second PK, the victor may charge the vanquished to embark for a Foreign War. If the PK is defeated by a non-player Knight, and that Knight gives him the Knight's Fate "Charges with Adventure", a die is rolled. On a roll of 1-3, the PK is charged to go off to a Foreign War; on a 4-6, the PK is charged with an ordinary Adventure.

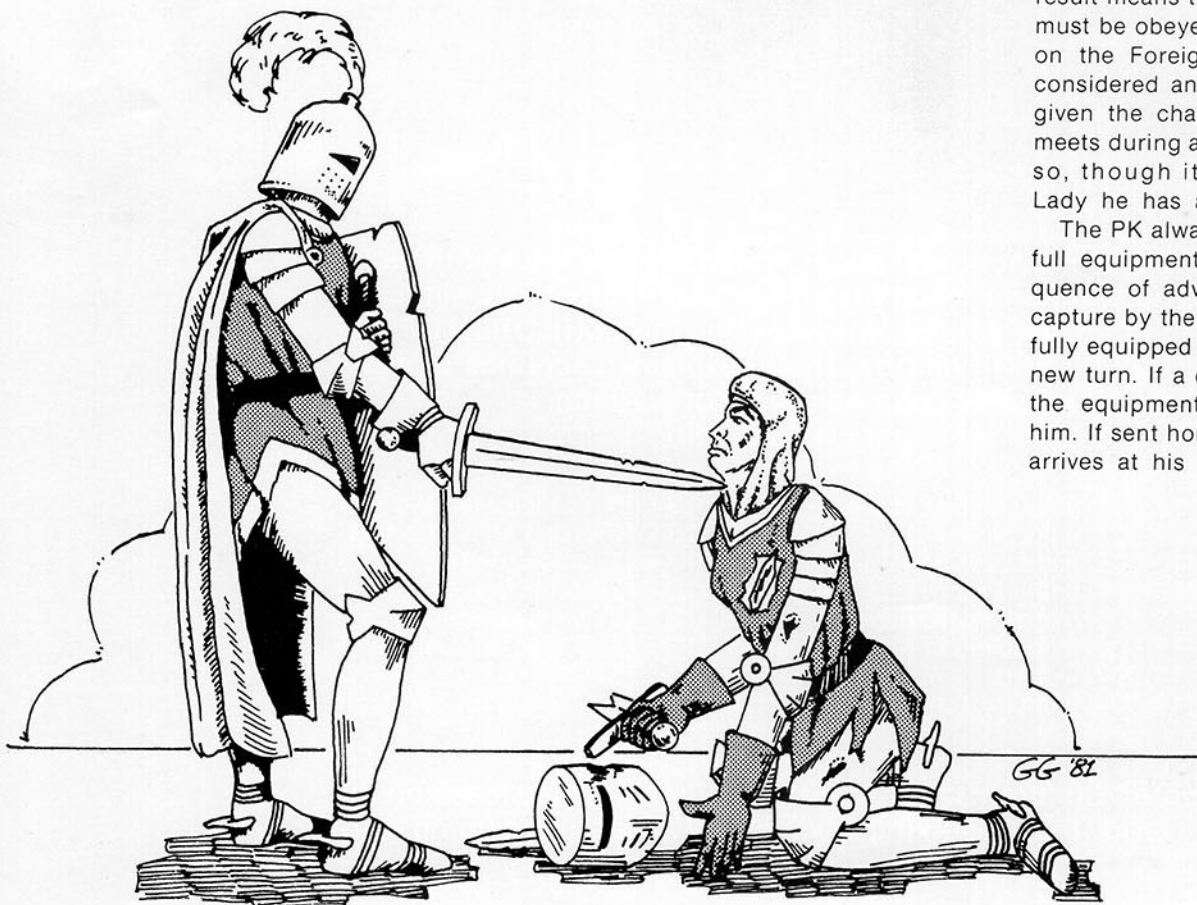
Ignoring this type of Knight's Fate will cost the PK 12 VP's.

When enabled or charged to go off to the wars, the PK's counter is immediately removed and any companions are lost. One turn is lost to represent the time spent in travel. On the subsequent turn, the player reads Line A on the Foreign War Adventure table and follows the directions.

Usually the performance of one line on the table represents one turn in game terms. The exception to this are those lines (or parts of lines) that end in an asterisk (*). This indicates that the PK should go on to the indicated line immediately. Once the PK has had his Foreign War turn, the turn passes back to the players on the map.

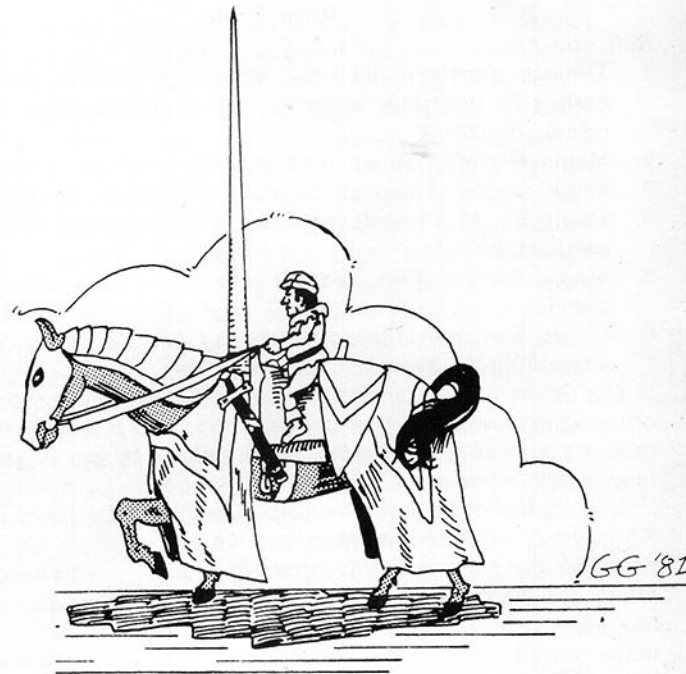
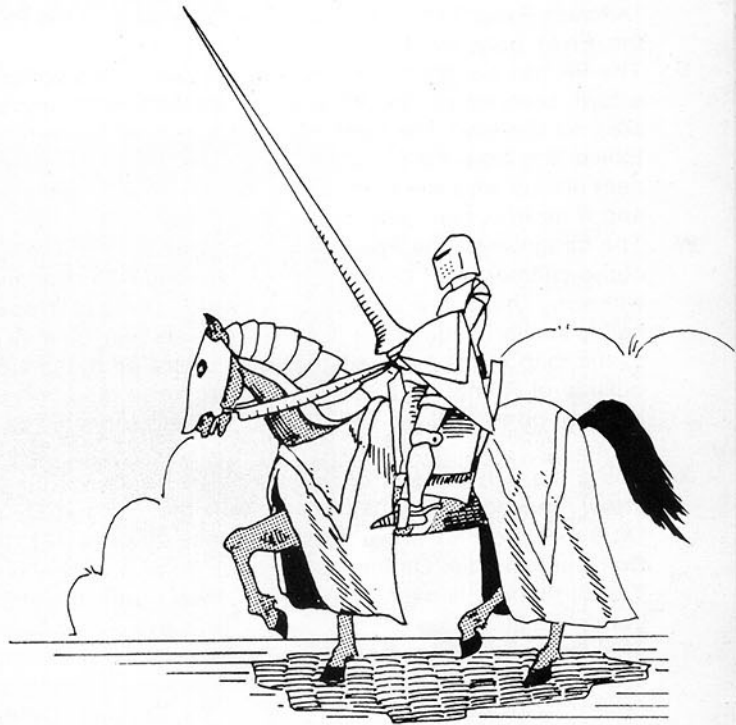
While involved in Foreign War, the PK can suffer no Knight's Fate at the hands of those that defeat him other than "Slay". Any different Knight's Fate result means that the written directions must be obeyed. No Lady encountered on the Foreign War table should be considered an Enchantress. If a PK is given the chance to serve a Lady he meets during a Foreign War, he may do so, though it means abandoning a Lady he has at home.

The PK always arrives at Line A with full equipment. Unless he is in a sequence of adventures stemming from capture by the enemy, the PK is always fully equipped at the beginning of each new turn. If a captive, the PK has only the equipment the instructions allow him. If sent home from the war, the PK arrives at his home Castle.



Foreign War Adventure

- A. The war rages. If the PK seeks glory in battle, go to *B*. If he would avoid danger for as long as possible, go to *C*.
- B. The PK finds himself at the heart of a mighty battle. Roll a die. On a result of 1-3, go to *D**; on 4, go to *X*; on 5, go to *Y*; on 6, go to *E**.
- C. The PK has passed a week without seeing an enemy. Roll a die. On a result of 1 or 2, go to *F*; on a 3 or 4, go to *G*; on a 5, go to *H*; on a 6, go to *I*.
- D. The PK encounters 1-3 enemy Knights (drawn randomly). Defeat them and go to *J**; be defeated and go to *K*.
- E. The PK sees a friendly King beleaguered by 1-6 enemy Knights (drawn randomly). Flee and go to *F*; fight side by side with the King, defeat the enemy and go to *L*; be defeated and go alone to *K*.
- F. A Knight has observed the PK's behavior and calls him a coward. Unless the PK can defeat the Knight (randomly drawn), he will lose 12 VP's. After the combat, go to *A*.
- G. While riding along a supposedly safe road, the PK is surprised by 1-3 enemy Knights (drawn randomly). Defeat them and go to *A*; be defeated and go to *K*.
- H. The PK manages to avoid fighting until his Lord leads him home. Lose a turn, then return to the map at the PK's home Castle.
- I. While keeping close to camp, the PK notices a Lady, a princess come to visit her kingly father. Draw one Lady card and examine it. If the PK wishes to meet the Lady, roll a die. On a 1-3, go to *M**; on a 4-6, go to *N**.
- J. The PK is victorious over his foes. Roll a die. On a result of 1 or 2, go to *O*; on a 3 or 4, go to *P**; on a 5 or 6, go to *Q*.
- K. The PK is a prisoner of the enemy. Roll a die. On a result of 1 or 2, go to *R*; on a 3 or 4, go to *S*; on a 5, go to *T*; on a 6, go to *W*.
- L. The PK has won the permanent friendship of the King. Roll a die. On the result of 1-3, go to *A*; on a roll of 4-6, go to *U*.
- M. She spurns the PK, thinking him a poltroon. She asks her father why this brave-talking Knight is wearing unscarred armor. The King wonders why too. Go to *B*.
- N. The Lady falls in love with the PK. He may enter her Service, if he wishes. If he enters her Service, roll a die. On the result of 1-3, go to *H*; on a 4-6, go to *A*. If he does not enter her Service, the Lady becomes angry. Roll a die. On the result of 1-3, go to *M*; on a 4-6, go to *A*.
- O. The PK has done only what his Lord expects of him. Go to *A*.
- P. The PK takes an item of great value from his beaten foe. Roll once on the "Prize" table to determine its nature*. Then go to *A*.
- Q. The PK's stout arm has helped to put the enemy to flight. His Lord offers him a Prize. Roll once on the "Prize" table. Then lose a turn and return to the PK's home Castle on the map.
- R. The PK is thrown into the enemy's prison. Bad food and treatment cause him to lose 2-12 (roll two dice) CP's. If the PK's Wound Level sinks beneath "1", he dies. Now return to *K*.
- S. The PK is offered freedom if he betrays his Lord. If he refuses, go to *R*; if he agrees, go to *V*; if he pretends to agree in hopes of a chance to escape, go to *Z*.
- T. The PK's Lord pays his ransom. Roll a die. On a result of 1-3, go to *A*; on a result of 4-6, lose a turn, then return the PK to his home Castle on the map.
- U. The King shows the PK his gratitude. The PK is offered his choice of a Prize (one roll on the Prize table*) or service with the King and passage to his Royal Castle (after the loss of one



turn of travel time). NOTE: A PK cannot enter Arthur's service this way. Instead, the PK receives the permanent gift of "Arthur's Favor" and one roll on the Prize table. If the PK takes the Prize only, go to A.

- V. The PK has bought his freedom at the cost of his honor. Lose a turn, then return the PK with full equipment to any coastal area on the map. His Lord has cast him from his service and Exiled him from his kingdom. Moreover, the King is a permanent enemy who will never allow the PK into his Service again and if he ever must give him a Knight's Fate, it will be "Slay".
- W. The daughter of the PK's captor has seen the PK and has become enamored of him. If the PK will enter her Service, she will bring the key, a shield and a sword. The guard down the hall is similarly equipped; if the PK defeats him, he may return to the map at his new Lady's Castle -- located in the area just outside of Rome. If defeated by the guard (a randomly-drawn Knight), go to R. If the PK does not want to serve the Lady, go to K.
- X. Roll a die. On a result of 1-3, the PK is struck with a poison arrow. The sickness it causes weakens the PK by 20 CP's loss. On a 4-6, the PK's brave deeds earn him 20 CP's and 10 VP's. Roll a second die. On the result of 1-4, go to A; on the result of 5 or 6, the war is over. Lose a turn, then return the PK to his Lord's Castle.
- Y. The PK bursts into the enemy camp leading 1-6 randomly drawn Knights. They encounter the enemy commander (a randomly-drawn King) and 1-6 enemy Knights. Defeat the enemy and go to Q; be defeated and go to K.
- Z. The PK has deceived his captors, but he must flee before they suspect the truth. He recovers his equipment and races from camp pursued by enemy riders. Roll a die. On a result of 1-4, that is the number of enemy riders (randomly-drawn Knights) which the PK must combat. On a result of 5 or 6 (or if the Knights are defeated by the PK), the PK wins free and returns to A. If defeated by the Knights, the PK is slain.

Prize Table

Roll one die.

1. Tireless warhorse: Its rider receives a combat add of +1; it carries its rider four areas per turn if ridden singly, or three if ridden double.
2. Magic Girdle: The wearer's Wound Level is increased by 5.
3. Magic Lance: The weapon does not break in combat.
4. Magic Shield: In each combat round, the user's hits taken are reduced by 2.
5. Magic Sword: The weapon is worth 2 dice and 4 adds in combat.
6. Magic Talisman: The wearer may add +2 to his dice when attempting to avoid enchantment.

The Prizes are in some cases subject to breaking in combat. Like other equipment, they may be stolen and lost permanently. If a PK receives a Prize from a different PK (either by gift or robbery) he may use it normally.

This variant may also be used as a *Knights of Camelot* mini-game, in which all the players are Knights gone off to the wars. When the last Knight has been slain or has returned to the map, the PK with the most accumulated CP's is the winner.

Understood? Now you noble knights, don your armor. Glory in the name of king and country awaits you!

continued from 11

a number of small islands scattered off of the north & east coasts of Kontiva.

...deserted city...

...sorceress...

...pirates...

...Isles of Thousands - haven for rebels, outlaws, etc....

...Isle of the Dead - whole island is cemetery - very rich...

...corpses...

...Ebony Isle - priceless ebony statues...

...Isle of the Gods - many statues of gods guarding huge treasure...

- The dead sailors on the craft you were on were described as "...magnificent specimens of perfectly developed, very large men". These men, if men they were, were between 7 & 8 ft. tall, with blue hair and yellow eyes, all heavily muscled. An old crone in the village, Meggon, babbled that they were "protoviks".

- Protoviks are thought to be myth and the stuff you frighten children with. Meggon was the oldest inhabitant of Thelamie, living there even before the Druid of the Grove took up residence. She had claimed that as a child she had been saved from drowning by a "long ship full of Protoviks". As she had been swept out to sea by an unusual wave, and should have drowned, the villagers assumed that she had been extraordinarily lucky, and the "Protovik nonsense" was dismissed as hallucination by a panicked child. Meggon stuck to her story and the villagers soon came to think that the near-drowning had addled the child's wits. She claimed that someday the Protoviks would return for her, before she died. She became known as "Muddled Meggon", though never to her face. The village tolerated her, and began to accept her for what she was - "addled". Soon thereafter, she began to show a great skill with herbs and healing. Only once did she ever discuss this new found skill; she claimed that the Protoviks had taught her while she slept in "...a cloud bed, where I floated in the air." People soon quit caring about the 'how', and began to appreciate her for her skill.

- Sadly, Meggon died, a broken woman, a few days after you were washed ashore. She sunk into a deep depression upon seeing the dead men, saying only one thing. "They tried, now I'll never see them again..."

After discussion amongst yourselves, you all notice that you have no memories of substance prior to your awak-

Cangames 81 and Canadian Gaming

By John Hill



As can be seen, the facilities of Carlton University at Ottawa were ideal for a gaming convention, and despite good attendance there was no overcrowding.

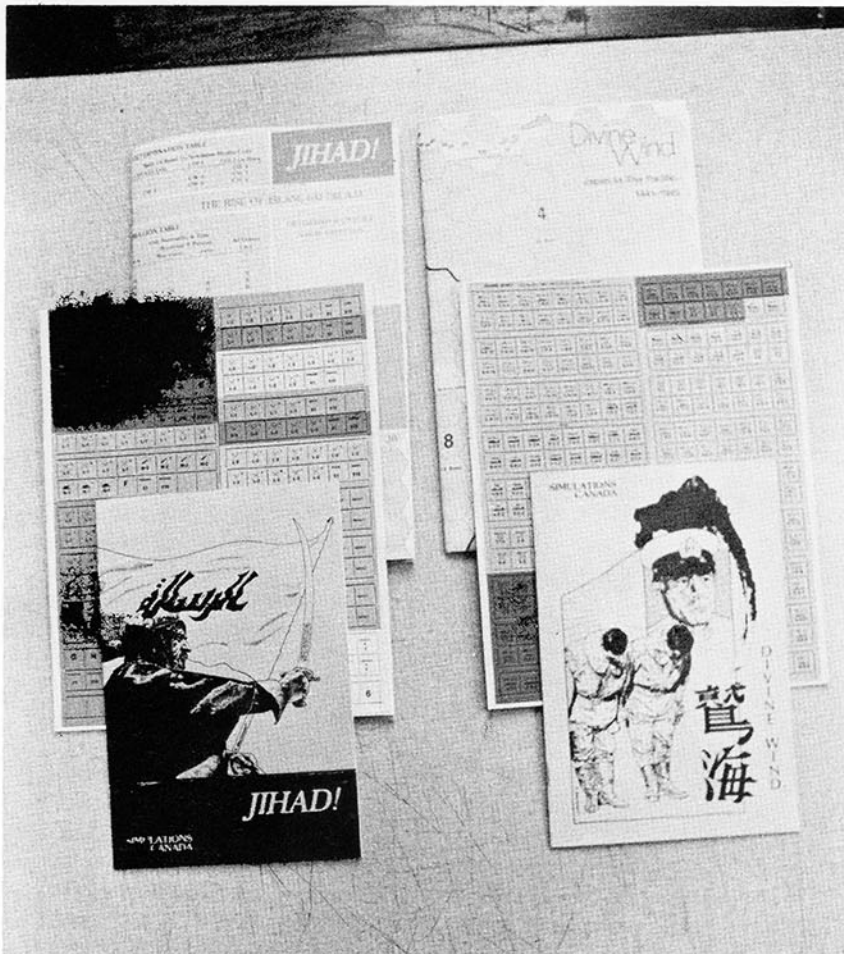
On May 15 through 18 at Carlton University of Ottawa, the Canadians held what is probably best described as the Canadian "Origins". This was the annual *Cangames*, and as previous years was exceptionally well run. To the Americans that went, it was an excellent chance to see the nature of the Adventure Gaming hobby north of the border. In size comparisons, the convention was very similar to the more popular American regional ones, with approximately 700 paid attendees. As with similar type of expositions, this had a "Guest of Honor". This year it was myself, who gave seemingly endless seminars. And as was expected there was a good selection of miniature games, the obligatory *Dungeons and Dragons* contest and the more popular board game tournaments. But there were subtle differences that marked

this convention, and along with it, gaming in Canada, as being on a slightly different tack than back in the "lower 48".

First of all, there was the obvious smaller number of dealers and exhibitors. And this, in itself is no great surprise, since Canada only has two real gaming companies, *RAFM* and *Simulations Canada*. This, combined with the displays of the three local dealers, made for a very pleasant and tidy dealer area. Needless to say, since this was the "Canadian Origins" both of these companies had new releases to exhibit, and being local Canadian products they sold generally better than the imported American ones. The reason is all too blatant, and that is the incredible price markup that seems to plague American products selling in Canada. As an example, the retail price of *Squad*

Leader in Canada is \$25.00. Nevertheless, the Canadians were enthusiastic buyers and had more been available, at a reasonable price, they would have bought more. Seeing this problem, and its effect first hand, one feels that American companies should investigate further the alternate licensing techniques that would enable the American products to be sold at something less than outrageous. It seems it could be done as *RAFM* was able to sell their *Ral Partha* figures at prices very close to the American price point of about \$4.00 per standard pack.

This also created another interesting effect. Since the mainstream of board games are so much more expensive in Canada than in America, the percent of the hobby that is into miniatures rather than boardgames is much higher there than in America. Hence "monster



Simulations Canada used this convention to release two new titles; "Jihad" on the Islamic expansion, and "Divine Wind" on the whole Pacific war.

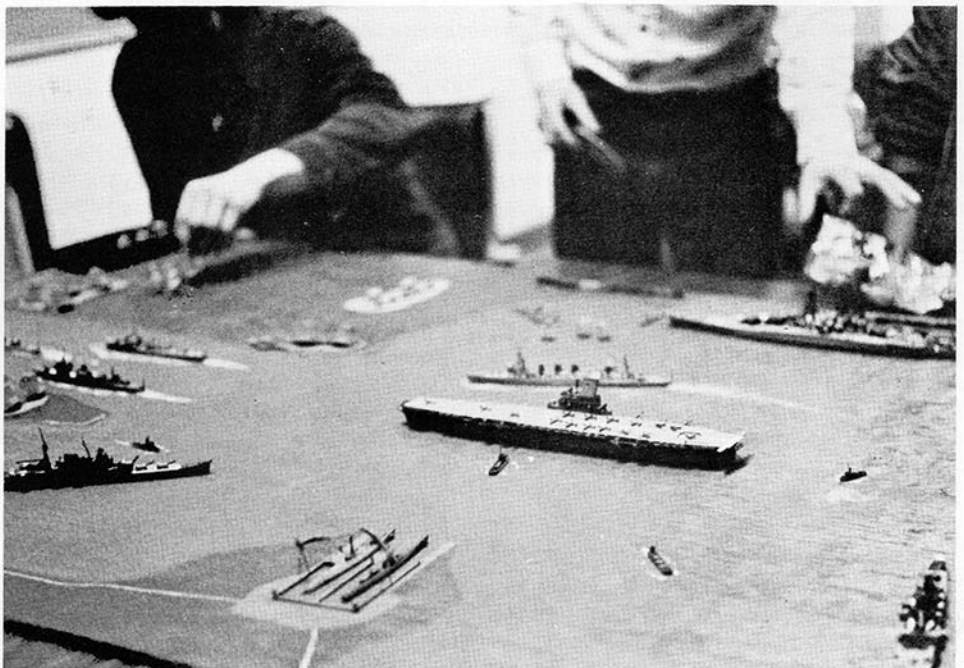
board" games are quite weak in total sales, to the point of almost being non-existent at this convention.

Another point in "marketing awareness" was the mix of games at this convention. In general, it seemed that the organizers emphasized the need for basic beginner games, much heavier than I have seen at American conventions. As an example, one of the more played "tournaments" was *Panzerforce*, which is best described as "Kiddie Panzer-Blitz". It uses only "Tigers" and "Shermans" in a Plasticville Town but absolutely anybody, of any reasonable age, could sit down and instantly begin to play. Other popular games were a very specific "Beginner's *D&D*" official tournament, a very basic Chariot Race, and a *Monopoly* elimination tournament. This "Beginner's Buffet" of games was so evident that I would estimate that a full third of the games were so directed. This concept of having a large number of different games directed to the person

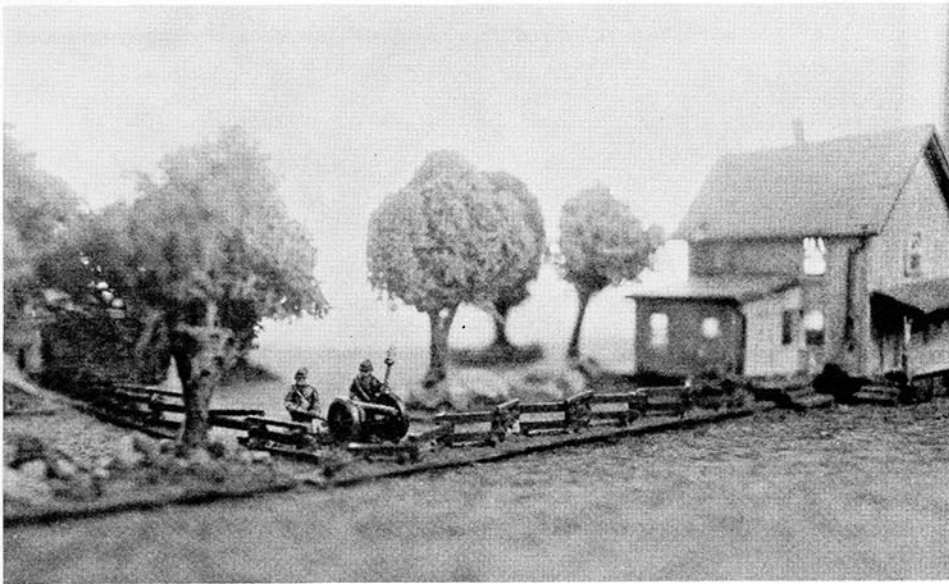
that walks in off the street shows a very correct awareness of where the cornerstone of the hobby lies. Having a focus on beginners is highly commendable and should be copied, as they, not the "Old Grognards" are the life blood of a hobby.

As far as convention operations, having both the sleeping accommodations and the main gaming area all in the same building was a wonderful convenience. In terms of attitude, the convention was obviously being run for the pleasure of the gamers rather than the needs of the exhibitors, or the ease of the organizers. This, as I said, was not a matter of policy, but of attitude. As an example, a nice touch of "gamer chrome" was the establishment of a large video tape library of popular movies such as "Star Trek" and the "Monty Pythons" in a room specifically set-up for continuous 24 hour movies. And, at any hour, they did have people watching the movies.

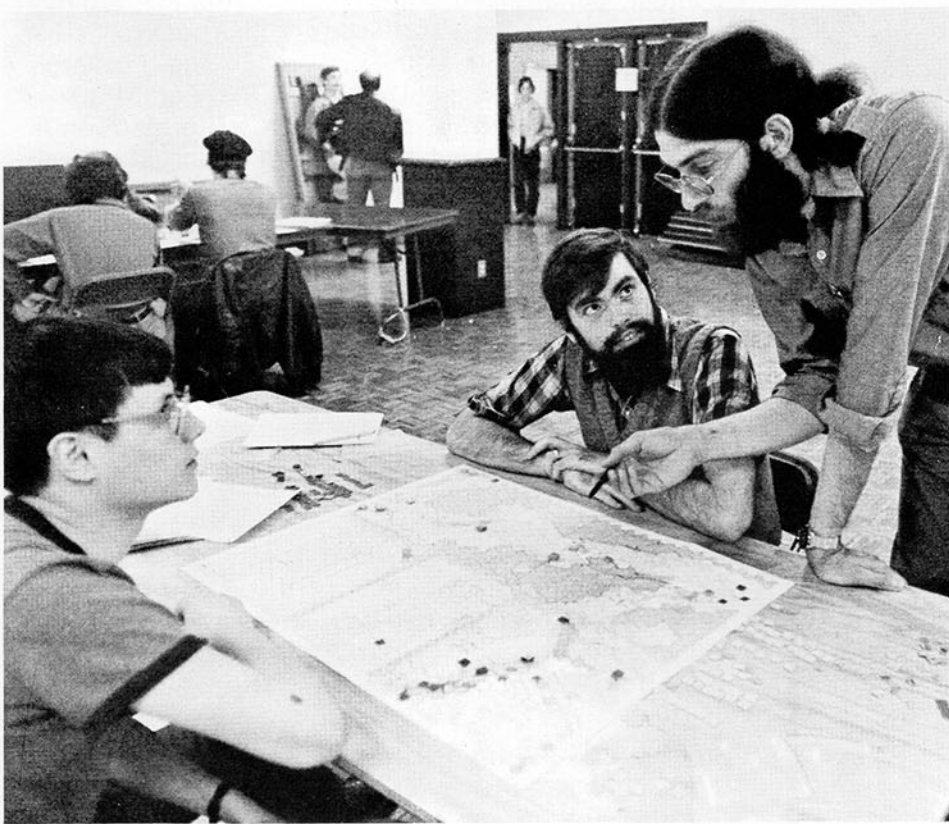
Another small, but relevant touch, was that the games actually started at the designated time, rather than the posted time being when the "set-up" begins. It was not perfect, but it was better than I have seen at some conventions. It should be mentioned, that other recent conventions, such as those run by CWA in Chicago have also been working very hard on this "punctuality problem."



One of the more interesting games was this "anybody can play" attack on a Japanese naval base using the Tamiya waterline ship models.



Exhibited for the first time were the new Martian Metal 10mm Civil War figures. These will be used in a new set of Civil War miniature rules, designed by John Hill, and tentatively titled, "Lee's Lieutenants".



Steve Newberg of Simulations Canada directed a number of playtest sessions of his latest design, "Rockets Red Glare" about the war of 1812.

However, while the games were generally very well run, most of the miniature events tended to have amateurish scenery as compared with the "state of the art" I have seen elsewhere. Since good looking "game" scenery for miniatures has been long and hard coming at the American conventions it is not surprising that the Canadians are somewhat behind having started the whole convention concept later. One exception, was an excellent grouping of micro-armor scaled scenery modules that was used in a World War II Normandy game.

Another area that appeared to be weak was that of quality game figure painting. Though the figure competition had some exhibits of fine individual talent, the overall quality was not as good as is the norm in America. However, it should be pointed out that unlike in America where there is a vast number of conventions where the gamers and the hobbyists can be exposed to "better" things *Cangames* is really the only relevant convention the entire year. And very simply, the fine points of wargame scenery and figure painting only become the norm by having lots of people given many opportunities to see how many different techniques and methods are implemented. But this is not the problem of *Cangames* so much as the problem of Canada as a whole. Simply due to the nagging hassle of long distances and low population density the entire Canadian adventure gaming spectrum has been forced to develop at a slower pace than in the States.

Overall, if *Cangames 81* is a representative view of the state of the hobby in Canada then a few general observations could be made. First, one must be constantly aware that the Ottawa group, at this time, is the *only* game organization in Canada that has both the creativity and discipline to organize and run a show of this quality. And in many points of planning and forethought it showed greater creativity than even the best American conventions. Any points of downfall, if they can be called that, are basically due to the overall handicap of Canadian gaming; and that is the generally long distances between population centers coupled with the overall low people density. Wargaming is a social hobby and its greatest growth, in all categories, has occurred where large numbers of people, gamers, manufacturers, publishers, and the like can congregate regularly for the general betterment of the hobby.

NPC's Are People, Too!

by Glenn Rahman

In the course of their role-playing adventures, players encounter innumerable non-player characters. Sometimes these are friends, sometimes foes, and sometimes just incidental to the scenario being played. It is the mark of an ingenious Gamemaster that he can inject life and personality into these characters -- many of which pop into his story via random encounter tables, without any pre-planning on his part. More usually, the beleaguered GM, with a whole world to organize and run, swamped by details and players' arguments, has no time to give even his most important NPC's the life and color they deserve.

This is unfortunate. As any author can tell you, a story almost writes itself if the writer understands his characters, has some idea of their foibles, emotions and points of view. This same magic works in role-playing scenarios too. In order to help out a GM who is put on the spot to operate and motivate his NPC's, the following table has been devised.

Assume that each NPC that enters the scenario without an established personality has a random number of personality traits (we usually use 1-4). To use the table, roll two dice, one at a time. Read the results as a two-digit number. Find this number on the table and read a description of a personality trait and its opposite. Another die is rolled; on a result of 1-3, read the first trait on the line as belonging to the character; on a 4-6, read the second. If the NPC has more than just this one trait, repeat the process. If the same trait comes up more than once, that trait is *very* pronounced in the character -- sometimes becoming his principle flaw.

The Non-Player Personality Generating Table

- 11: Miser/Spendthrift
- 12: Cowardly/Courageous
- 13: Religious/Materialist
- 14: Excitable/Pacific
- 15: Wanton/Chaste

Adventure Venue

July 9-12 **1981 International Plastic Modeler Society National Convention.** This event will be held at the Sheraton Centre, 52nd Street and 7th Avenue, New York City, NY. Speakers will include Julie Cobt, lead bombardier of "12 O'Clock High" fame, and Col. Francis Gabreski, America's highest-scoring living ace. Admission charges for visitors to the show are \$5 per day for adults, \$2 for children 12-18, with children under 12 admitted free. For complete convention registration information send a SASE to Ed Cameron, treasurer of the Long Island Scale Model Society, 29 Mathew St., South Farmingdale, NY 11735.

July 10-12 **Archon 5.** An s-f/fantasy convention to be held at the Chase Park Plaza, 212 North Kings Highway, St. Louis, MO 63108. Special guests include: George Alec Effinger; Joe Haldeman, Wilson "Bob" Tucker; and, Guest of Honor fantasy writer Tanith Lee. There will be an art show, auction, a masquerade contest, panel discussions, film screenings, a game room, a video room, and a dealer and huckster area. Rooms are available at the convention site. For information about rooms call Chase Park Plaza at (314) 361-2500; for convention information write: Archon 5, P.O. Box 15852, Overland, MO 63114.

July 11-12 **Minnesota Campaign V.** The site is the Earle Brown Continuing Education Center on the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota. Guests of honor will be Prof. M.A.R. Barker and Dave Arneson. Preregistration is \$5 for both days if postmarked by June 30; at-the-door admission is \$8 for both days. For more information contact Jeff Berry, 343 E. 19th St., Minneapolis, MN 55404.

July 16-19 **CWA Con '81.** Over 200 events are scheduled including wargaming, adventure gaming, role-playing, miniatures and boardgaming. There will be two auctions, a dealers' area, seminars and special guests. Pre-registration for the 3½ days is \$9; at-the-door admission \$12. Single-day passes are available for \$7. For more information, send a SASE to: CWA CON '81, P.O. Box 10397, Ft. Dearborn Station, Chicago, IL 60610.

July 17-20 **Flying Buffalo 9.** From the *Tunnels & Trolls* people, a 3½-day con to be held at Phoenix, AZ. For more information contact: Flying Buffalo, P.O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252.

July 17-19 **Odyssey '81.** Sponsored by the University of New Hampshire Simulations Games Club, the con is being held at the university in Durham, NH. Events include miniatures, boardgames, role-playing games;

Adventure Venue

there will be dealers' area also. Dormitory accommodations are available. For more information write: UNH Simulations Games Club, Memorial Union Building, UNH, Durham, NH 03824.

July 18-23 **Game Master's Workshop/Seminar.** Sponsored by the Maine Wargamers Association, to be held in Portland, Maine. Guests include Len Lakofka, a *Dragon* magazine columnist and John Wheeler of Companions Publishing, Inc. The number of participants is limited. For more information contact: Maine Wargamers Association, 102 Front St., Bath, ME 04530. Phone (207) 443-3711.

July 23-26 **Gen Con East.** A 4-day con sponsored by the Eastern Gaming Association, in cooperation with TSR Hobbies, Inc. This gaming con and trade show will be held at Cherry Hill Inn, Cherry Hill, NJ. For more information write: Gen Con East, P.O. Box 139, Middletown, NJ 07748.

July 25 **NAWA Mini-Con.** Sponsored by the North American Wargamers Association, this one-day event will feature boardgames, s-f and fantasy role-playing, and miniatures. Event site is the National Guard Armory in Paducah, KY. For more information contact: Charles Sagui, Route 1, Boaz, KY 42027.

July 31-August 2 **NanCon 88-IV.** Featured at this is a 100-person, in-costume Nuclear War contest. Also scheduled are *D & D* events, *Runequest*, *DragonQuest*, *Afrika Korps*, s-f games, miniatures, a dealer area, seminars and demos. Pre-registration before July 18 is \$10, after \$15. For more information or to pre-register send a SASE to: Nan's Game Headquarters, 118 Briar-grove Center, 6100 Westheimer, Houston, TX 77057.

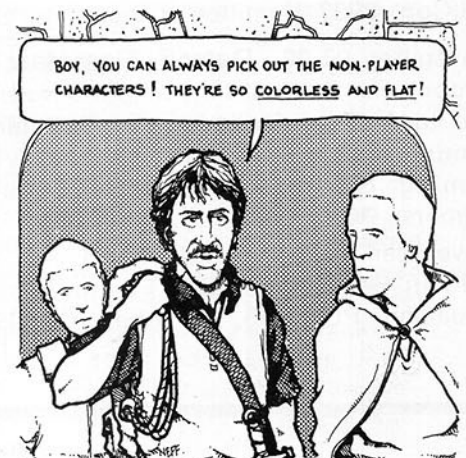
July 31-August 2 **MaineCon.** Over 100 gaming events are scheduled, including miniatures, *D&D*, other role-playing, boardgames and seminars. The con is sponsored by the Maine War Gaming Association and will be held at the Eastland Hotel in Portland, Maine. For details contact: John Wheeler, MaineCon Director, 102 Front St., Bath, ME 04530.

August 7-9 **AugustCon.** A 2½-day con to be held in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. For more information write: Mike Girard, RR #1, South Woodslee, ONT Canada, NOR 1V0.

August 8-9 **5th Annual Bangor Area Wargamers Convention.** A 2-day event to be held in the Student Union of the University of Maine campus, Orono, Maine. Dorm lodging is available on campus. For more information contact: Edward F. Stevens, Jr., 83 N. Main St., Rockland, ME 04841.

- 16: Reckless/Cautious
- 21: Hot-headed/Easy-going
- 22: Deceitful/Honest
- 23: Fussy/Sloppy
- 24: Snobbish/Democratic
- 25: Vindictive/Forgiving
- 26: Cruel/Kind
- 31: Witty/Humorless
- 32: Scholarly/Unschoolied
- 33: Optimistic/Pessimistic
- 34: Loyal/Treacherous
- 35: Dominating/Dependent
- 36: Romantic/Pragmatic
- 41: Industrious/Lazy
- 42: Drunken/Abstentious
- 43: Wise/Foolish
- 44: Proud/Modest
- 45: Skeptical/Credulous
- 46: Determined/Lackadaisical
- 51: Cunning/Guileless
- 52: Refined/Vulgar
- 53: Decisive/Vacillating
- 54: Honorable/Dishonorable
- 55: Ambitious/Complacent
- 56: Overbearing/Meek
- 61: Secretive/Loquacious
- 62: Observant/Unobservant
- 63: Polite/Rude
- 64: Superstitious/Rational
- 65: Adaptable/Unadaptable
- 66: Larcenous/Scrupulous

Once the GM has used this table, he will know if the peasant who agrees to lead the party of player-characters up to the dragon den is chaste, polite and honest (and thus likely to deal straightforwardly with the party) or excitable, complacent and foolish -- and thus has no interest in bettering himself, while spooking at the sound of a rabbit in the leaves and running across the mouth of the dragon den shouting loud warnings. The memory he will leave with the party in either case is likely to be rather different.



On Being A Gamemaster

by Mike Bartnikowski

and Bill Somers

All right, here you are - a game-master. You have prepared your troops, scenarios, dungeons or whatever and are all set up at your club meeting or convention. You are probably more familiar with the actual rules than many of the designers in this hobby.

What you may be about to find out is that thorough preparation and knowledge of the game makes you an expert in that game but, unfortunately, not a gamemaster of that game. You are about to encounter players who: are nowhere near as knowledgeable in the game as you are; who have no appreciation of the finer points of the design and play balance; who will cajole, argue and even cheat at the game; and make themselves an utter nuisance, both to you and to the other players who are avid gamers or really interested in what you have to offer them. You have taken one step further than just running a good game at home for enjoyment - you are now in "show business". The players in your game, if at a con, have paid for that privilege. You will be obliged to entertain them. Even if your game is not a tournament, but one run as a weekly event, at your club meeting, it still demands that you make it enjoyable for those who are participating in it. And that is exactly what you must be prepared to do. You will succeed if you can maintain total control of the action. Below, we present a short list of common problems and mistakes that we have found are common when running an event and that you should try to avoid.

The single, most damaging mistake any GM can make, especially when running a tournament, is to show favoritism to his or her pals who happen to be in the game. Even joking around and ignoring the other players can make it look like you are showing favoritism. This not only hurts your own reputation but detracts from the efforts of the several hundred other workers

August 13-16 **Gen Con XIV**. Sponsored by TSR Hobbies, Inc., and the Parkside Association of War-gamers (PAW). The 4-day con and trade show will be held at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside near Racine and Kenosha, WI. For more information write to: Gen Con XIV, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

August 14-16 **Napoleonic Symposium**. Featuring David Chandler, this 2-day event will be held in Columbus, OH. For more information write: Jim Getz, 546 Colonial Ave., Worthington, OH 43085.

August 22-23 **MassCon '81**. Sponsored by the University of Massachusetts Strategy Games Club, this 2-day event will be held at the University of Massachusetts Campus Center in Amherst, MA. Lodging is available at the con site. For more information contact: MassCon Director Dennis Wang, 11 Dickinson St., Amherst, MA 01002.

September 4-7 **GLASC VI**. Game tournaments, seminars, auctions, open gaming and a dealer area are among the offerings of this con to be held at the Student Union of California State University in Northridge, CA. Pre-registration is \$6, at-the-door is \$8. For more details contact: GLASC Secretary L. Daniel, 20550 Wyandotte St., Canoga Park, CA 91306.

September 4-7 **DunDraClone**. The site for this re-scheduled (from last February) con is the Oakland Airport Hyatt. Featured are game tournaments of all types, films, seminars, demos, a large dealer area, and all-night open gaming. For further details write: DunDraCon, Inc., 386 Alcatraz Ave., Oakland, CA 94618.

September 11-13 **DragonFlight**. A 2½-day con to be held in Seattle, WA. For more information contact: The Brass Dragon Society, POB 33872, Seattle, WA 98133.

October 9-11 **FallCon**. To be held in Cincinnati, OH; for more information about this 2½-day event write: FallCon, 5923 Hamilton, Cincinnati, OH 45224.

November 20-22 **Detroit Gamefest** (formerly *Wintercon*). For the first time at Cobo Hall, this 2½-day con and trade show features game tournaments, contests, seminars, demos, a large dealers' area and open gaming. For more information write: Metro Detroit Gamers, POB 787, Troy, MI 48099.

November 27-29 **AguaCon '81**. A 2½-day con to be held in San Mateo, CA. For more details contact: AguaCon, POB 485, Campbell, CA 95008.

(when at a con) who help make the event a success. The GM must be fair and impartial to all players or he/she is not worthy of being called a Game-master.

You should strive to make all your players feel welcome. Whether at a con or club meeting, if you have spectators, take time to briefly explain to them what is going on. They are there to learn and perhaps they can learn something from you.

In a tournament situation, there are several things which will minimize problems and maximize you and your players' enjoyment. Below are several.

1) Set up an elimination roster (if it is an elimination-type game) at the very start and make it available to all players. This not only saves you and the players time, it also eliminates the chore of "arranging" match-ups.

2) Set and enforce time limits on turns. Some players will drag the round out so much that any hope of keeping to a schedule is completely destroyed.

3) If the players will be choosing one of several possible games, pair them off by their preference rather than arbitrarily. This makes everyone happy.

4) Make extra certain that all winners know where and when the following rounds will be played. The reason for this is obvious.

5) Be sure to keep control of the game at all times. It is no fun for you or for the other players if one or two people are "bullying" you and distorting the play of the game.

6) Follow the sequence of play, all across the board, religiously. This avoids most cheating and favoritism complaints.

7) Avoid extra-long or over-ambitious scenarios. The players usually have attended the convention to do more than play in one event.

8) Do not take in too many players. If you are in doubt, opt for less players. You will find your game will take up just as much time and the lesser number of players will get more enjoyment.

9) Above all, do not let any players argue and/or disrupt the game. Besides being time consuming, arguments detract from the other players' enjoyment.

10) Start your game on time. If you don't, you mess up everyone's schedule and penalize the players who were considerate enough to show up on time. In the same line, do not let any-

one play for free when others have had to pay.

11) If your tournament is designed for experienced players, don't let inexperienced ones in. The other people have come to be challenged and nothing is more aggravating or boring than to have to teach someone the game when you (the player) should be taking part in an enjoyable competition.

The above in no way covers all the problems and mistakes that GMs run into or make but it does cover the most common ones. We hope that this article will work as a sort of "preventive medicine" for GMs so that all their games and tournaments are both enjoyable and successful.

(The authors are officers of Metro Detroit Gamers and have helped organize over twenty conventions, including Origins '78. - Ed.)

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In work, even as I write this, are articles on APBA baseball, perhaps the oldest and largest (excepting D&D) cult game; an extensive article by a practicing psychologist on role-playing and its benefits and potential drawbacks; an article on how to build a custom computer that will play all the games at a fraction of the cost of the conventional set-ups; we're working out an arrangement with Yaquinto games to publish previously unpublished tank and ironclad data cards. Further, Marc Miller of GDW is designing a *Traveller* module for us to print in the magazine, and we are making arrangements to print some of the official *D&D/AD&D* tournament modules being used this year. Next issue we have an article on the Charles Roberts and H.G. Wells awards, and the new academy set up to award them.

As always, I hope to establish a dynamic letters column to serve as a free forum of information and idea exchange. I urge anyone who has a beef, comment or question to avail themselves of it.

All in all, I'm very pleased and excited to be back in industry. I think we have some top quality material coming your way, and I think you'll agree with my assessment.



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ening in Thelamie. By pooling your bits and pieces you get the following:

Most of you have only fleeting memories of being on the ship. At the time, none of you knew you were even on a ship. A few remember "coming to", but all immediately went back to sleep. One or two can remember only hearing a few unrelated words or phrases, in a strangely pronounced form of Common.

Words heard

"...no delta pattern"...

"...this one can receive."

"...increase the dose."

"...drive system failing..."

"...erase the patterns..."

Whatever class you choose, you do so because it seems "right"; perhaps its what you once were.

There are two long swords, incredibly sharp, rather light for their size, but so long that one must use two hands. No one has ever seen metal of this type before. There are also 4 spiked balls, the size of a man's head, that look as though they are of the same metal. There is one light shield of this also, 6'8" tall. The motley collection of arms and armor you start with are what was gleaned from the wreckage. There is one smaller sword, matching exactly one of the largest, that is of this metal, and perfect in size for a man or elf. The leader shall get this.

From the preceding, you can easily see the potential for numerous adventures. The bits and pieces of conversation serve the same purpose as Legend Lore, as does the description of Protoviks. I had intended that the Protoviks would be in and out of the campaign story-line for some time-the faceless antagonist. Even the weapons described have enormous potential for future campaigning, as well learning.

Taken from this basis, the problems stemming from what the PC's know or don't know are greatly reduced. New PC's entering the campaign can, if the DM wishes, be given the handout if they have missed only one or two small adventures, and be allowed to get into the game at that point. Other new PC's must be assumed to have been met along the way, and what information the new ones are given is left to the discretion of the old players.

One final note of caution to the DM: be prepared for the players to choose any of the directions you open to them. I had to outline and begin to prepare eleven possible adventure scenarios, having no idea which way they would jump. However, I was able to coast for a long time thereafter.

Any News of the Questing Beast? Camelot Lives On ...

by Timothy Kask

In the past few years, there have been a few games published that fall into a particularly interesting category in that they can be enjoyed on two different levels. On the one side of the coin, the game can be played just for laughs and not demand a lot of intensity, thereby being more of a social exercise; they are often referred to as "Beer and Pretzels" (or soda and pretzels for the younger set) games. On the other side of the coin, the game can be played with a lot of intensity and strategy, if the players so wish.

Such games are exemplified by *Source of the Nile*, *War at Sea*, *Divine Right*, *Samurai*, *Circus Maximus* and even *The Awful Green Things from Outer Space*. To this list we should add TSR's *KNIGHTS OF CAMELOT*. It is no coincidence that this game shares the list with *Divine Right*; they are both the products of the same design team, Glenn and Kenneth Rahman. The Rahman brothers seem to have worked out quite a formula of game design, many features of which are shared by the two games.

On the first level, the game is a simple, fun game about becoming a knight of the Round Table, seeking the Holy Grail and just generally running around doing chivalrous, knightly deeds. There is a good deal of luck involved, and the game can easily turn into Monty Python-like silliness. On this level the game is eminently enjoyable as a social exercise with some fellow gamers.

What sets this game apart from the majority of "fun" games, as opposed to serious simulations, is that there is a lot of complexity lying beneath the surface for any who care to explore it. Obviously, there has been no attempt at serious simulation, as the game's focus is a highly speculative myth/folk tale. As there is none that can say what is right or wrong, the designers concentrated on a workable system for a fun game. With no "realism" to consider, the system is clean and smooth, with playability the prime consideration.

There are a number of game scenarios available, with additional information and suggestions for formulating new and different ones. The granddaddy of the scenarios is a campaign-like epic that has the players starting out a provincial, puny knights. They must achieve sufficient stature and ability to become Arthur Knights, then win permission from Arthur to seek the Holy Grail, locate and acquire it (no mean feat in any circumstances) and return with it to Camelot. This can take many, many hours of play. It simply cannot be done in one or two playings, unless the sessions are at least eight to ten hours long, and the player has extreme fortune on his side. This might pose a problem if the game were real complicated or intense. As it is, it can be suspended at any time, and is extremely easy to jump back into.

One of the strongest things going for it is the fact that nearly everyone has probably seen at least one movie that has the proper feel to it to lend itself to the play of *KofC* (not the Knights of Columbus). This year's fantasy epic *EXCALIBRE* should be on every fantasy gamer's list of films to see, and will certainly stimulate inspired play of *KofC*. This being the case, it is ideal for getting into a limited roleplaying--really identifying with one's knight. You can soon find yourself "smiting varlets and knaves" and rescuing ladies in distress.

While it is touted as a game for two to six players, it can really be dull with only two. When only two play, it is much more fun to let each player run two knights, alternating turns.

The entire game system revolves around seeking adventures and carrying them out to a successful conclusion. The authors have supplied thirty-six different formal adventures, with a number of other events and happenings that yield similar rewards.

There are lots of built-in pitfalls, just waiting to entrap the naive or unsuspecting that give the game a lot of its unique flavor. For one thing, the big

city can be just as strange and hazardous to a provincial knight as any of our modern big cities is to a simple farm boy from the sticks. The favor of a Lady can be very helpful to a knight, but those same Ladies can get a simple lad into a pile of trouble and woe.

KNIGHTS of CAMELOT lends itself quite well to tinkering and optional rules. There are also a few areas that can stand some clarification. Many of the clarifications can be made using common sense and with the consensus of the players. The following clarifications and options are presented in the spirit of making a fun game more fun.

Luck Rolls can make or break you in *KofC*. From reading the rules, you find that to acquire a spare weapon or horse during combat requires a successful luck roll. It does not specify how many times you may try. To remedy this, try the following formula: knights having 40-100 Chivalry Points may attempt a luck roll every three rounds; knights having 101-220 CP may attempt it every other round, while knights with 221 or more CP may attempt it on every round.

As mentioned earlier, **Ladies** play a large role in the game. Successfully entering the service of a Lady gains extra CP for the knight, as his ardor is seen to drive him to perform more heroically. Ladies can also be the undoing of the virtuous knight, in more ways than one. To clarify a few points of play in the spirit of the game, try the following: Ladies of Virtue Level 5 or less will never be "wanton" in a town encounter. If drawn, simply draw again until a more likely prospect presents herself; when encountered on board a ship, the Lady's home castle will be in either the province of embarkation (odd) or the province to which the knight is headed (even); when a Lady takes a second suitor, the first should be allowed to leave her service without penalty if he wishes. Further, Morgan LeFey's seduction adjustment should be at least equal to the worst of the rest of the *Ladies* (+6).

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Men-at-arms are indispensable in the early stages of any scenario in which the Player Knights start out weak. They are also a fickle and stiff-necked lot, leaving service on almost any bad thing that happens to a PK. Being attacked by Pirates or a Sea Monster are horrible encounters in themselves. With the provision that the PK must always fight first, those two encounters often go against the PK individually, but more often than not the ship and men-at-arms manage to save the day. In recognition of the extraordinary hazards that these two encounters pose, try the following modification; when the PK is defeated by pirates or a sea monster, but the crew and the men-at-arms are successful, the PK is not considered eaten by the monster, and the men-at-arms do not automatically leave his service upon debarking. Allow the PK to test his luck on each, individually, to see if they will remain.

The **Knights' Fate** is one of the more interesting aspects of the game. Three of them, though, could stand some adjustment/clarification. Numbers 10 and 11 are not what you could call very chivalrous behavior, if perpetrated on a knight that the PK challenged. Therefore, when a PK elects to rob a vanquished foe that he forced into fighting, he should get no Virtue Points (VP) for the fight. If the PK was attacked, however, there is no penalty imposed; after all, he asked for it. Number 7, accompanying the victor on an adventure, without reward, can be especially hazardous. To modify this, declare that the NPK (Non-Player Knight) must be the first to fight in any encounter; it's his adventure, after all. If the NPK is defeated, the PK has two options: he may flee, just as a man-at-arms does, or he may elect to help the NPK (the victor could also be another PK). If the PK saves the defeated knight's bacon, he is eligible to a normal share of the award for the adventure if he chooses to still undertake it, or he may part company with no penalty; if he chose to flee, he loses 6VP.

As originally designed, **Arthur Knights** (AK's) can end up doing some rather unchivalrous things. Therefore make it a rule that no AK with a Virtue Level (VL) of six or less will be a malefactor. Simply draw again if this happens. In Camelot, no non-AK will ever serve as a champion. Any time Arthur is encountered, at least two of the knights with him (if there are any) will be AK's. AK's generally tend to be so

tough that they seldom lose to any but the toughest PK's; no need for them to be doing essentially evil deeds.

Interacting with **Kings** is risky business, often ending in the PK having to fight one or more of the king's champions. When this happens in his castle, try the following option: allow the PK to roll one D6, if it equals or exceeds the king's VL, the PK has the option to fight on horseback, with unlimited lances available, as in a joust. Otherwise, all combat is on foot.

If there is any deficiency in the adventures available, it is in the fact that only a couple of them are truly heroic feats such as songs and poems are written about. Cities play almost no role in the game, except when visiting Camelot. Cities pose a lot of potential problems for the PK, and as the game stands there is no reason to visit one, except when going to see Arthur.

To remedy both of these problems, the following options are suggested.

Signal Honors: Anytime a PK wins a full tournament at Camelot (not the special three-turn version) against all Superior Knights, he may be awarded a signal honor.

- Roll a D6: 1, 2 or 3--Ambassador-at-large
4--Lord Admiral
5--War Duke
6--Sorry, no openings--
take 25 VP instead

Ambassador-at-large:

May be any number at one time; +3 on castle reaction, +2 on king reaction. Any unfriendly Arthur reaction forfeits title.

Lord Admiral:

May be only one at any time; must be AK; take 20 VP if either of two conditions not met. You have your own personal ship as long you hold the title. It has a crew value of 35, and may move two areas per turn--checking for encounters in only one, PK's choice. If you encounter pirates in the first area, they may be avoided automatically, by either continuing the move or ducking into port; if encountered in second area, see below. If a sea monster is encountered, or a ship wreck occurs, the monster can be evaded on a "1" or a "6", or the ship beached on a "1" or a "6". If the ship is beached, you will automatically retain your sword. All other equipment, and companions, must be diced for on luck of the day. All companions that fail luck roll are

considered drowned, and removed from play, their equipment also being lost. Pirates encountered in the second area may be avoided similarly, otherwise they must be fought. If sailed into a port, your ship will wait there until you return. If you go instead to another port, your ship will meet you on a successful luck roll (each subsequent attempt after initial failure is at -1, cumulative). If you land on a coast, it will not remain, nor will it pick you up from a coast. Being shipwrecked forfeits the title, as does any unfriendly reaction from Arthur. (Sea encounter #5 reduces the following turn to one area, with -1 on evasion; #9, if exercised, calls for additional check, with evasion possible.)

War Duke:

May be only one at any time; must be AK; take 10VP/20CP if either condition not met. In recognition of your martial prowess, you are made War Duke. This honor entitles the holder to recruit extra men-at-arms, above and beyond some normal limits. You are never allowed more than six at any time. Roll D6: 1-3--one extra; 4-5--two extra; 6--three extra. Any unfriendly Arthur reaction forfeits the title. Having any Knight's Fate imposed by anyone but Arthur also cause forfeiture of title.

To make cities more of a factor in the game, and to provide more adventures about which songs and poems might be written, the following **Optional Adventures** are suggested. Substitute a D8 for the first D6.

7:1 or 2 **Pict Revolt**--Travel to Sur-luise and encounter six Brigands led by a renegade knight (non-AK) drawn at random. Defeat Picts, then renegade. Return renegade to King Galahut (determine castle reaction normally) for his friendship and 24 VP plus CP equal to Brigands' and renegade's WL.

7:3 or 4 **Journey to London**--You must deliver an item to London from the person giving you this adventure. Once there, you must deliver it. To do so, make a successful luck roll; two failures will guarantee success on the third attempt. Town encounters are checked for normally. Loss of the item, i.e., robbed, shipwrecked, etc., will completely negate the adventure; no awards. Willingly fore-

going the adventure will cause the sender to become unfriendly. Successful delivery will earn you 18VP and 10 CP, plus any encounter awards along the way.

7:5 or 6 *Journey to York*--same as *Journey to London*

8:1 or 2 *Barbarian Raiders*--threaten the Isle of Wight (1) or Avalon (2). Go to N. Wales, or Logres-1. Spend one turn crossing over (no ship necessary) then automatically encounter seven Brigands. Defeat them for 10 VP and CP equal to the WL.

8:3 *Wander in Wilderness*--Seek spiritual guidance in the Wastelands by traversing it alone, on foot, with only a sword. Any encounter while on this adventure can be avoided on any roll except "1" or "2". Upon exiting the Wastelands, a successful luck roll indicates that the PK has been met by one man-at-arms with the PK's gear. The man-at-arms will leave the PK at the first town or castle entered. Treat encounters #5,8,9 and 12 as no encounter; divide #'s 6 and 7 by two. Successful completion, regardless of the condition of the PK, earns 20 VP and 25 CP.

8:4 *Scour the Wastelands*--A band of seven Brigands (leader has WL of 10) is pillaging the countryside from their base in the Wastelands, and you must expunge them. In the first segment you explore, you will find them on a roll of "1" or "2"; the second "1-4"; the third automatically. Any normal encounter with Brigands will be with them. Treat encounters #'s 5,6, 7,8,9, and 12 as above. Successful eradication of these base varlets earns the PK 20 VP and either 25 CP or CP equal to the WL's, whichever is greater.

8:5 or 6 *Treason Afoot*--Two renegade Knights (Non-AK, drawn at random, are meeting with three barbarian chieftains (Brigands) in Benwick ("1" or "2"), Gaul ("3" or "4") or Brittany ("5" or "6"). Slay the chieftains and deliver either the renegades' persons or their heads to Arthur for his friendship and 25 VP plus 30CP or CP equal to the renegades' WL's, whichever is greater. (Note: this adventure may only be assigned by Arthur. Re-roll both dice if assigned by someone else.)

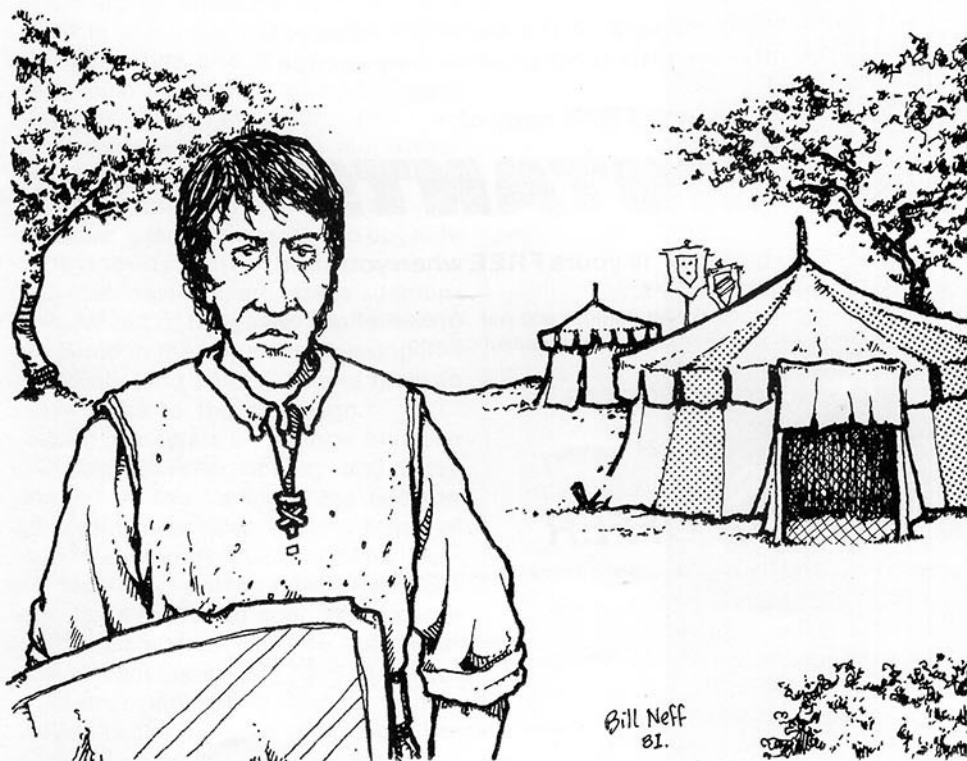
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enemies. The most serious pitfall of this method though is that it is just a plain waste of energy and detracts from your enjoyment of the game.

This then leaves us women with the third alternative - quitting. Unfortunately, it is the one that most women (after having been ridiculed or worse during their first attempts at gaming) have chosen. To all those who have quit or never even started because of this attitude problem, all I can do is ask that you give gaming another chance - it's worth it. By just ignoring the attitudes held by some of the gamers (men) and participating in the one or more areas of the hobby that interest you, you will find that most of them will eventually treat you as a person and a "fellow" gamer. The richness and plain old fun that involvement with the adventure gaming hobby provides is worth putting up with the Neanderthal attitudes held by some of its adherents. Whether your interests are in history, science fiction, fantasy, math, design, painting, computers, writing or a dozen other areas, adventure gaming offers a tremendous, creative outlet for them (this being true whether you're female or male).

So to end my first stab at column writing, I issue an invitation to everyone - but especially to the women - to become actively involved in what is a very enjoyable and unique expression of the overall Game.

Till next time... Kathy



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The Effects of Wounds

A wounded leader may not lead troops nor lend a combat bonus until his wounds are healed. He may fight duels, but the effects of his unhealed wounds work against him in the new dueling situation.

At the end of each game turn subsequent to the game turn in which the wound was received, the wound becomes a wound of a lesser degree. For example, after one turn a Disabled result becomes a Serious Wound; a Minor Wound completely heals; etc.

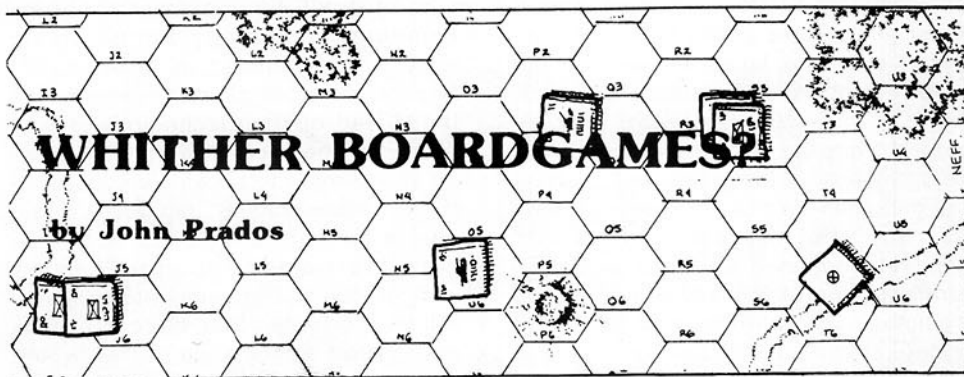
To make full use of this variant, players must use their leaders actively upon the field of battle. Unfortunately, despite rules encouraging the active use of monarchs, some players tend to keep them away from the battlefield for fear of their death or capture. This is an injustice to these tough soldier-kings, so we offer this suggestion to conservative players: while this variant is in use, suspend all awards resulting from the death or capture of monarchs.

With this obstacle removed, the Achilles, Launcelots and Rolands of Minaria should write new pages of glory.

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The graphics unfortunately, leave something to be desired. Although the board is plastic-coated, and hence cannot be ruined by the rogue beer bottle which is inevitably spilt on it, the artwork is not especially well done. While this is only a minor fault, the counters are made out of plain, stamped cardboard sheets, and as such look remarkably unattractive. This is doubtless done as a means of reducing the overall cost, but it is still a shame that such an economy had to be made. I am sure though, that few people would begrudge an extra guinea or two once they have had the chance to play the game a couple of times.

Now for the disappointing part - *Civilization* is unfortunately virtually unobtainable in the States, and is not even widely available in England. However, such a good game as this cannot be kept quiet for long and it can only be a matter of time until someone stocks it over here. *Civilization* is badly needed in the States. There are few board games I have played that have been such a joy to play and also as technically brilliant. These attributes rarely go hand-in-hand together.



By its very content, this magazine shows the tremendous explosion that has occurred in the game field. There are now burgeoning numbers of every imaginable type of game in existence: technological, historical, psychological. The gamut runs from computer games of dexterity to boardgames in the middle and role-playing designs on the opposite end. The games are so popular that, last year at least, they represented the largest single component in the earnings of the American toy industry. Among the gamut of games, *BOARDGAME TALK* will cover the field of wargames. This column will feature interviews and opinions of hobby personalities, commentaries on gaming events and issues, profiles of game publishers, and discussions of interesting design topics. *BOARDGAME TALK* will try to keep the reader informed about the rapidly changing hobby of gaming, from the standpoint of the historical gamer.

Whenever there is a major innovation in terms of game type or presentation style there seems to follow a chorus of talk among gamers as to whether the new development will spell the end of the "traditional" wargame. Many gamers are in doubt as to how to respond to such assertions. After all, game innovation is glamorous to achieve and stimulating to think about. Today two versions of the "are simulations dead?" question are current. One argument is that fantasy role-playing games will spell the end of wargames. The other version has it that the advent of the computerized simulation will achieve the same end. Both of these views have certain merits but must be seen in a proper perspective.

First, let's look at fantasy and role-playing games. These have been responsible for a great deal of the recent expansion of the gaming hobby. It is said that fully half of all persons who have ever been gamers took up this hobby during the last year. Clearly much of this increase is related to the popularity and national availability of role-playing designs, most notably *Dungeons and Dragons*. There is an unstated assumption with this statistic that many boardgamers, too, are switching over to "FRP", as it is called by acronym, and thus that boardgaming is on the way out.

What about it? Certainly some boardgamers have indeed taken up role-playing games. It does not follow, however, that no new hobbyists are becoming interested in boardgaming or that no gamers from the FRP crowd are also taking up board wargames. Measured by the demand for and excitement recently generated by wargames, in fact there has been no slackening of appeal. Innovation also proceeds apace in the area of wargames. Most interesting among recent innovations has been the World War I air combat game *Ace of Aces*, which dispenses altogether with the movement plotting so common to air games and indeed with the mapboard as well.

As for cross-over between FRP and wargames, the story of an Atlanta gamer recently encountered is very instructive. This young man first got into gaming about eighteen months ago when he found that all the co-workers in his office were getting into *D&D*. For awhile, everything was fine but then the hobbyist got left behind when he remained interested in *D&D* while the

others in the office took up, and became enthralled with, the boardgame *Squad Leader*. This gamer ended up in the Compleat Strategist (a New York-based game store chain) looking for a simple wargame he could use as an introduction to this genre. Clearly, some cross-over is taking place. Judged from the circulation figures of major media in the game field, what has happened is not that boardgames are "out", but that the demand for these has remained solid and constant during a period that has seen a rise to prominence by a whole new genre of game.

At the same time, the FRP side of the hobby is taking on some of the same problematical aspects that the wargame side has. With the wide array of different game designs available from different publishers, wargamers sometimes complain of the "glut" of material on the market and how difficult it is to keep track of just which new games merit attention. This has now also become true for the science fiction game, a strong component of the FRP market. Moreover, every publisher in the field is striving to put out additional specifically role-playing games, with the result that "glut" will very soon pervade the FRP genre as much as wargames. From the standpoint of problems encountered, FRP begins to look very much like the game hobby did before its advent.

Today, computer games are also the subject of much boosterism. A number of these are now available ranging from plain games to some that purport to be true simulations. Computer games offer certain advantages. For one thing they can provide a surrogate opponent for the gamer without a human opponent for his game. Another advantage is that computers can eliminate much of the drudgery and book-keeping necessary in the play of a game. The idea of the computer game has seemed so attractive that Avalon Hill, one of the largest game publishers, hastened to bring out its first titles in a computer game line during 1980. There are several additional companies who specialize in game software packages for home computers.

Currently, there are two glaring problems with the computer game genre. The most obvious is the very high opportunity cost for the gamer. The games are useless without the proper home computer hardware, in-

cluding console, disc drives, and, sometimes, printers. The entry price may be in the thousands of dollars. For this reason it will be years before home computer technology will be widely enough disseminated in America (not to mention other game markets where the spread of such technology is anticipated to be even slower) for a computer wargame to be widely successful in the "mass market". Moreover, again due to the high entry price, access to computers among younger gamers without jobs or large amounts of money will be even less. (This, of course, does not include arcade-style games, which are a special case. Here we are speaking of gaming at home).

A second problem with the computer genre is the inherent limitations of the technology. Basic console/central processing unit components on the market do not have sufficient memory to handle the number and complexity of variables modeled in a sophisticated boardgame. Use of a disc drive serves to alleviate this problem but then complicates the problem of loading the game rules into the computer's memory. Moreover, in play the gamer must sit around waiting for his machine to mechanically scan its instructions prior to formulating countermoves or giving the results of game interactions. The inherent memory problem is only a technological one and is susceptible to technical solutions. This writer suspects that it will be only a year or so before console units of 64K and especially 128K varieties begin to make possible the reduction of a relatively sophisticated game system to a usable computer program. However, there is a substantial difference between standing at the brink of the technology for good computer games and having that same sophisticated technology widely available in American homes. The computer age is fast arriving, but it is not yet here.

In fact, currently and for the foreseeable future, manual boardgames have considerable advantages over the computer variety. In the first place, the computer games are more limited in the number of actors, pieces and capabilities they can handle. To take a single example, merely coding all the hexes and terrain types that appear on a conventional game map would, today, absorb most or all of the memory available in a home computer unit. When one adds in numbers of other variables, such as wide arrays of unit

or weapon types, detailed subsystem mechanics such as are present in many games, and multi-faceted processes of combat resolution with which conflict simulation games abound, an idea of the dimensions of the computer programming problem for a complex simulation begins to form. Handling design facets by analog rather than digital methods, as is done in board gaming, still has considerably more capacity for modeling complex interactions than present-day computer hardware or software.

None of this should be taken to mean that either computer games or FRP ones have no merit or value. Nor should it be maintained that any or all of these categories are mutually exclusive. Indeed, all of the genres can benefit from each other by the cross-fertilization of ideas and technology. One good example is *Commando*, a role-playing combat game published by Simulations Publications of New York. This game successfully melded many of the exciting elements of both the wargame and the "conventional" D&D-type FRP game. Another good example is the issue of computer software packages for the "monster" boardgames which otherwise would have substantial book-keeping requirements. Clearly, computer software could be of great utility in eliminating such drudgery and keeping track of game logistics. Some "monster" games, like SPI's *Campaign for North Africa*, stand sorely in need of such features. Thus none of these gaming genres need be inimical to any other.

In the early and mid-1970s, just to put the current discussion in better perspective, there were recurrent arguments over whether the "traditional" wargame of moderate complexity and size would be driven out of existence. Then the wave of the future was identified as the "monster" games of great complexity that we have just been discussing or the very small so-called "folio" game. Later there was the "mini-game" about which the same questions were asked. The hobby has constantly expanded with the new-type games but boardgames are still with us today and are as strong as ever. The presumption that boardgames are dead is fallacious. *BOARDGAME TALK* will be there to help the reader keep up with developments in the hobby. Stay with us!

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TRAVELLER REPORT

Information sources for this journal have disclosed that ships and combat vehicles for use in the TRAVELLER Imperium will be released soon. Some of the ground vehicles designed for use in the Imperium army have been under wartime production capacity for a short period. However, none of these vehicles are ready for complete disclosure to the public. It was further revealed that several of the Adventuring Class ships have been com-

pleted and should be shown soon. The source states that the ground vehicles include hover tanks, Apc's, scout vehicles and numerous types of support and combat vehicles, all manufactured in 15mm scale so as to be compatible with the ever-popular TRAVELLER Miniatures. The spaceships on the other hand are being made in 1/1200 scale. Look for these items to appear in you favorite hobby or game shop during the summer of 1981.

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