

The Best of Greyhawk Presents

Best of Greyhawk #2

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Revised August 28, 1999
pdf'd October 24, 2000 by Tal Meta



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Originally posted on the AOL/TSR Greyhawk Message Board, folder #2.

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POSTED MESSAGES FROM TSR'S ROGER MOORE

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-03-30 15:58:08 EDT
Re: A loooong Roger Message, Pt 1

Hi, there! I am working on an update for the GREYHAWK(R) index file posted here earlier. I have a few new GREYHAWK campaign references that I missed the first time around, and I would like to collect anything else that anyone here has discovered since the index was posted. Do you have anything you can add? Here are a few extra references that I've found:

2128 DMGR4 <Monster Mythology>: GH references appear throughout, but especially on pages 7, 14, 128. Many nonhuman deities first known from Oerth appear here, such as Lolth, the Elder Elemental God, and Blipdoolpoolp; other demon princes from the AD&D(R) 1st Edition <Monster Manual> and later referenced in Gygax's Gord novels appear here as well (now elevated to deity status), such as Juiblex, Demogorgon, and Yeenoghu. 2133 DMGR5 <Creative Campaigning>: General and brief overview of GH campaign on page 111. 2141-2152-2157-2161 ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA(TM) set, volumes I-IV: (Slade Henson/Doug Stewart, some volumes in press) Virtually every magical item and artifact ever created for AD&D(R) game, many specifically from Oerth or easily placed there. 9220 D&D(R) <Book of Wondrous Inventions>: (Bruce A. Heard) Many humorous inventions tied to GH, others to "Known world" (now the MYSTARA(R) campaign). 9297 FORGOTTEN REALMS(R) <Draconomicon>: On page 69, the steel dragon of the Realms is said to be closely related to the Greyhawk dragon of Oerth (which was first described in <GREYHAWK Adventures>. DUNGEON(R) issue #53 (May/June 1995): "A Serenade Before Supper" (Andrew Veen) Short GH adventure set near Verbobonc, pages 32-36.

GATES: Was any of the GHGATE01 download useful? It may be esoteric, but the use of gates is fundamental to many published GREYHAWK(R) modules, and it is useful to look at the possibilities. Module WG5 (Mordy's Excellent Adventure), for instance, includes an unfinished eight-way gate system in Maure Castle; where will it lead if and when it is completed? I like integrating SPELLJAMMER(R) material into the accepted lore of Oerth, since it greatly enriches the mix from which adventures and campaigns can be drawn. I have another file percolating at home on my computer.

ZYGAG: By the way, I did find the reference about Zygag leaving Oerth forever; it was at the end of module EX2, <The Land Beyond the Magic Mirror>. The same passage, though, can be read to mean that Zygag was just leaving behind Castle Greyhawk or the Flanaess, not all of Oerth. Interpret it as you like. I'd still love to see his leftover lairs (about which more in my next "gates" posting).

KarenN7293 (3-21): I liked your version of "Future Oerth," with the Great Kingdom civil war. What changes did you make in the western nations, 50 years hence?

QSamantha et al. (3-26+): For what it may be worth, here are my (stupid) thoughts on this. Everyone should feel free to beat on me at length.

Anyone with a set of DRAGON(R) Magazines can thumb through them and see that I once wrote an article (in issue #45) outlining ways to set up an evil-PC campaign for the AD&D(R) game--though with many restrictions. I brought the topic up again in an editorial about two years ago. An anti-gaming religious group had uncovered my earlier article and culled a few quotes from it to make it seem that TSR supported using evil PCs, which TSR does NOT. In the more recent editorial, I still said that an evil-PC group was possible to run, but only within strict guidelines.

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-03-30 15:58:45 EDT
Re: A loooong Roger Message, Pt 2

Looking back on the issue now, I confess that I have no taste for evil-PC campaigns at all, if they are played to be _serious_. I've had my own characters mugged and killed by other PCs, and I didn't like it. I've done it to other PCs, and their players didn't like it. There are entirely too many gamers who take the label "evil" at face value, which means that their characters will violate any and all social contracts when it best suits their purposes. (*I* certainly would.) An evil PC may be nice to your PC right now, but you know darn well that the player will have that PC place his own self interests over everything else, and one day the niceness will vanish. If things get ugly, group cohesion collapses, and the group collapses. I had one group break up within five minutes of the start of an adventure as a result of an evil character assassinating another PC, and I mean the group was _gone_. ("Why did you kill my paladin?!" "Hey, I'm just playing my character! He's an assassin! It's just a game!") Most people can't handle the idea that having their characters killed by their own party is just part of the game, and I don't blame them. What the heck kind of fun is this? what ever happened to working together?

I've seen far too few people who can play an evil character with a likable panache; most evil PCs, played seriously, come off as unlikable treacherous bastards or snotty selfish jerks who start to look awfully good stuck on the end of a sword blade. Using the "evil" label is just too great a temptation to trot out "proper role-playing" as an excuse for screwing up the game. I simply don't trust most other players to play evil PCs acceptably.

Now, I do sometimes like to play obnoxious, sleazy neutral characters who lie outrageously, filch items from their companions, and call everyone creatively vile names. (My favorite example was a Monty-Pythonesque character called Cyragnome de Bergerac.) It's fun, other people are amused, and I take it well when everyone good-heartedly beats my character senseless with big sticks. But I can't get into thinking that my character is being evil. Morally challenged, perhaps--socially repugnant, maybe--disgusting, yeah--but I dislike putting "evil" down on the alignment line.

I did recently play a chaotic-evil insane psychopathic necromancer king in a playtest of the BIRTHRIGHT(TM) campaign (Colin will vouch for this), and everyone enjoyed his performance greatly, especially after his kingdom was invaded by six armies at once and practically plowed into the ground, all because my poor chaotic-evil insane psychopathic necromancer king burned down a few good-aligned temples when they wouldn't cough up protection money. The role was strictly tongue-in-cheek, with lots of made-up posters declaring war for trivial reasons, patriotic speeches to undead troops, and pronouncements of moral purity and good-will mixed with the kind of rabid psychotic xenophobia commonly associated with your typical spittle-emitting dictator. It turned out fine because the playtest needed some warmongering to check out the rules. No one was expected to cooperate with anyone else, though the alliance against my poor necro-guy worked just dandy through all three of the Undead Wars that he started.

In short, I might play an evil character ONLY if the character is totally bogus and silly, and the sillier the better. I'd still prefer to use the label "neutral," though, and keep the character's behaviors within certain boundaries. Everyone would KNOW my character cannot be trusted, and the atmosphere is kept light and free.

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-03-30 15:59:13 EDT
Re: A loooong Roger Message, Pt 3

In a GREYHAWK campaign, for example, I could easily see myself playing a neutral goblin thief (Complete Book of Humanoids) who has run away from the army of Iuz after being caught creatively balancing the payroll scrolls. My goblin would try to get himself hired by the other PCs as a scout and guide to the lands of Iuz, of which he knows little but will claim much. Borrowing a little character from Gollum and a lot from Peter Lorre, my goblin (with some evocative name like Phlegmme) would be ingratiating, disgusting, vile, and creepy--but not dangerous to the party, whom he would fear but also love to torment. ("Eh-heh, eh-heh, Mister Paladin, eh-heh, would you like to see my pet RAT?")

LAST NOTE to QSamantha: Sorry, but there are connections between the Forgotten Realms and Oerth. Elminster has visited Oerth several times, Realms flora and fauna has been transplanted by spelljammers onto some outer Greyspace planets, and at least one dragon species (the Greyhawk dragon) appears to be closely related to a Realms dragon (the steel dragon), as per the <Draconomicon>. True gates, even teleport spells, can bypass Crystal Spheres. Oh, well!

Ulfgrim (3-15), again: I thumbed through my home copy of Gygax's Gord novel, <Sea of Death> (published in 1987), and found some interesting and useful bits. For instance, Iggwily, referenced in my GHGATE01 download, is the mother of Iuz. Anyone with a copy of this book should pay close attention to Chapter 8 (pages 129-134), in which a fascinating ecology is described for the Sea of Dust. This adds a lot of material to the random-encounter tables given in the GH boxed sets. In the same chapter (page 133) are the names of nations bordering Sea of Dust that were not previously described, as they lie in southern and western Oerik. These "fabled states" include Changol, Jahind, and Mulwar (southern Oerik; Mogul Empire? Competing Indian-style states?) and Sa'han, Behow, and Chomur (western Oerik; Chinese? Japanese? Korean? Tibetan?).

Malebranch (3-27): I stand by my earlier statement that GREYHAWK campaign DMs will find all of their gaming needs met by this folder, though of course I was assuming that people would use this place to post their creations, additions, commentary, suggestions, and so forth on their own GH set-ups. To address the specific points in your message, speaking to everyone as "YOU":

1) What profitability? You (the DM, the consumer) get to download bunches of stuff for only regular on-line costs. Why worry about TSR's profitability? True, the authors won't get paid, but they can bask in the love and adulation of everyone else. (It works for me! Everyone loves being appreciated.)

2) With only a few exceptions (e.g., the magazines), TSR long ago stopped publishing new GREYHAWK material, and current players already are fashioning new on-line materials. The deed is done!

3) Can't help this. I can't speak for the company as a whole, but it is my perception that TSR does not

have the resources to support every game line it's ever created. This happens with every game company there is; everyone moves on to new things. At least here, however limited you think this AOL forum is, some gamers have a good shot at building up their campaigns with a rich infusion of new material. ***_You've got to get used to going it on your own.*** (Read that phrase again! Now! AND PAY ATTENTION!) Otherwise, why bother to produce the Oerth Journal? (I am dying to see it, by the way. How do I get it?)

4) I have no doubt that there are many people logged in to this folder right now who are perfectly capable of adding valuable and exciting new material to many other GH campaigns, and their work could equal or possibly exceed the best that TSR has ever done. You simply have to ** start writing. ** Jot down some interesting things in a little notebook, build on them, then WRITE THEM UP AND POST THEM! Some of the original material on this board is brilliant, and it pleases me enormously to read it! KEEP IT UP!!! DO IT!!!

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-03-30 15:59:46 EDT
Re: A loooong Roger Message, Pt 4

You've _got_ to get used to going it on your own. You're out of the nest. You've left the lair. You can't be coddled with pretty modules. WAKE UP! __YOU ARE NOW THE CREATORS!__ WHY SHOULD YOU BE DEPRESSED ABOUT ANYTHING, NOW THAT [deep cosmic voice over] **__YOU HAVE THE POWER?!?!?!?__**

[Sorry--too much Mountain Dew again. Ahem.]

Look--here are samples of NEW material that YOU (every single one of you reading this message, and I do mean YOU) can create for the GREYHAWK campaign--anyone's GREYHAWK campaign, and maybe bunches of separate GREYHAWK campaigns all at once: kingdoms, greater deities, lesser deities, demigods, hero deities, quasi-deities, major NPC movers & shakers, cities, towns, villages, PC races, PC kits, PC classes, Oriental GREYHAWK material, priest spells, cleric spells, bard spells, paladin spells, magical items, Rogue's Gallery chance-encounter NPCs, plots, schemes, rumors in the City of Greyhawk, businesses and guilds in the City of Greyhawk, street encounters in any town, political skullduggery, important major and minor villains, new gates to elsewhere, psionic powers, psionic devices, monsters (of a million bajillion types), weird plants, taverns & inns, artifacts & relics, legends & tales told by bards, new weapons, new tools, new armor, new polearms (just kidding), detailed yearly calendars, specialty priests, strange cults, strongholds & castles, ecological/environmental detail on selected areas, geographic "travelogue" descriptions, random encounter tables for every region on land or sea, thieves' guilds, assassins' guilds, wizard colleges, alchemical laboratories, sages, army lists, one-page mapless minimodules, interesting lairs, secret organizations, unusual events, bizarre sightings, transplanar crossovers, natural and artificial wonders of Oerth, unexplored underground regions, more Vault of the Drow details, spies and espionage groups, nonweapon and weapon proficiencies, criminal gangs, worlds and societies to explore in Greyspace, spelljammer types from Oerth, adventure hooks, old retired PCs for use as NPCs in other campaign, short tales of campaign events to spark other creative minds--gods, the list goes on and on and on and on!

This stuff doesn't have to fit _every_ campaign, since every DM's campaign is different. That's what the GREYHAWK campaign was meant to be--tailored to each GM's needs. But surely more than one GM out there will be able to get an idea from your idea, or use whole what you've created, even if some DMs cannot!

Please, please, please, stop thinking that TSR has to do everything for you! Stand up and take charge! Get up! Do it to it! Thank you.

This has been "One Man's Stupid Opinion," brought to you by ROGAR(R) brand Spittle Emissions. We now return you to a less hysterical broadcast, already in progress. :)

A VISION OF CELENE

From: QSamantha
Date: 95-03-30 20:34:46 EDT
Re: Celene, Pt. 1

ChrisAye, here is my version of Celene, circa FtA.

Celene has been described as the ultimate elven state and I have always thought of it that way. FtA has Queen Yolande becoming a proponent of isolationism and speculates that this is due to 1) bad advice, 2) a long view or 3) "cowardice, even treachery." Apparently, the situation is beginning to verge on civil war as veterans of the Battle of the Pass of Celene declare themselves to no longer revere the Great Court and the Knights of Luna act in secret against Queen Yolande's wishes. The Queen's own cousin, Melf, is one of the inner counsel of the Knights and some of his order would depose Yolande and declare him king. For his part, Melf seeks no such honors.

Located within Celene's sphere of influence is the Moonbow of Sehanine, which leads to a demi-plane of testing for elves of non-evil alignment. Elves that have survived the tests have formed a secret society that is spread across the Flaneass, the People of the Testing or Firthe e Borall.

Also located within Celene's sphere of influence is the Fading Land known as the Court of Rings. The Court may be entered from within the Welkwood. Here, avatars of the Seelie Court hunt and the Cat Lord lairs.

Queen Yolande is also known as Lady Rhalta of All Elvenkind. She sees herself as the protector, if not sovereign, of all elvenkind. She care nothing for humans, humanoids or other demi-humans, though she would not intentionally see them harmed. Her chief concern is the well being of the elvish race. Never a numerous race, the elves are now sorely pressed throughout the Flaneass. Queen Yolande has resolved to save them.

To this end, she is in the process of making all of Celene a Fading Land, where elves will have a safe haven. The spells that will accomplish this are quite arcane with a high probability of error, so she proceeds cautiously, frequently meeting with the avatars of the Seelie Court in the Court of Rings for advice. Once Celene is safe, she may act to aid the cause of good more fully.

From: QSamantha
Date: 95-03-30 20:38:39 EDT
Re: Celene, Pt. 2

Queen Yolande relies heavily for advice and assistance on two trusted allies, the Fey Lady Sethrine and Keelin Thwieth.

Sethrine Morin Quaesse, Fey Lady of Celene, is the daughter of one of Celene's most noted households. She is politically powerful, extremely savvy and a loyal supporter of Queen Yolande's policies. She is aware of Yolande's plan to make Celene a Fading Land and supports her fully.

Secretly, the Lady Sethrine is also a Yellow Priestess of Lolth. The Yellow Priestesses are half-drow that appear little different from grey elves and can operate without penalty in full sunlight. They foolishly believe that their service to Lolth will win them favor equal to that of full drow. There is much antagonism between the Yellow Priestesses and Lolth's drowish priestesses. Acting on Lolth's behalf, Sethrine fully intends for Celene to become a demi-plane, but one ruled by the Yellow Priestesses. Thus, she betrays Yolande and corrupts her spells. In turn, she will be betrayed by Lolth when the deed is done.

A high priest of Sehanine Moonbow, Keelin Thwieth is called the Firewalker for his fanatic xenophobia. He too knows and supports Yolande's endeavor but for his own reasons. Keelin believes that humanity is no better than the humanoids with which they quarrel so endlessly. He and his followers pray the elves may withdraw from the Flaneass and return when the humans and humanoids have beaten themselves down into barbarism. Then will the elves take their place as masters of the Flaneass.

Sethrine and Keelin mistrust one another but work together. Both urge Yolande to crush the Knights of Luna as a threat to the throne, and their plans. Melf knows Keelin for the fanatic he is but does not suspect Sethrine. The Cat Lord, who is a frequent visitor to Enstad, has begun to sense that Sethrine is not as she appears. A friend of Yolande, the Cat Lord has also begun to suspect Melf's ties to the Knights of Luna.

LOST GODS OF GREYHAWK

From: Iquander
Date: 95-04-01 03:05:12 EDT
Re: "Lost" gods of Greyhawk

It just so happens that deities of Oerth have been a subject of interest for me. As has been stated earlier, both guides to Greyhawk (the original boxed set as well as FTA) include nearly comprehensive lists of Greyhawk's gods and goddesses. Here are some more that I've found along the way.

* * * *

Greater Powers

Tezcatlipoca: Olman god of the sun, disorder, war and wealth, Tezcat' is CE. His stats are found in the old Deities and Demigods book. A sworn enemy of Kukulcan, Tezcatlipoca often assumes the form of a jaguar to mix with the Olmans. He is a Greater power.

Kukulcan: Olman creator god, Kukulcan presides over the air, arts and metallurgy. Also known as Quetzalcoatl (sp), he can be found in the Deities and Demigods tome. He is LN and a Greater power.

* * * *

Lesser Powers

Apocatequil: The neutral Olman god of the moon and Lightning, Apocatequil held great sway in the Olman Empire. He is a Lesser power.

Dalt: "The forgotten lesser god of portals and enclosures," Dalt is LN and favors Mordenkainen, to whom he had led to the Silver Key of Portals.

Graz'zt: The Demon Prince of Lamias and evil scheming, Graz'zt has great interest in the current events of the Flanaess. Father to Iuz through the archmagess Iggwilv, Graz'zt is heavily involved in the plots of his cambion son. As a Demon Prince, Graz'zt holds the powers of a lesser god.

Hurkakan: Olman lesser god of floods, ancient Olman rituals honored this deity for providing regular flooding in the lands of the Empire. He is LG.

Landron: God of Order, Winds and the Seasons, Landron has fallen out of favor with the people of the Flanaess and now enjoys worship in only large centers of religion, such as Innspa. He is a lesser power and LN. (For more information regarding Landron, see "Quag Keep," by Andre Norton)

Lolth: Demon Queen of Spiders, Lady of the Drow. (I'm pretty sure you all know about her.)

Om: A little known lesser power devoted to patterns and totality of action, the followers of Om preach a form of predestination in that all mortals enact the plans of the gods. Therefore, free will is not honored by this deity or his ascetic followers. In my campaign, Om is N. (For more, though not much more, see "Quag Keep")

Yeenoghu: CE lord of Gnolls, Yeenoghu enjoys worship on Oerth. Statistics can be found in "Monster Mythology."

Zotzilaha: The celebrated CE bat god of the Olman underworld (Mictlan), Zotz is at ends with most of the Olman pantheon.

Zuggtmoy: Consort of Iuz, Lady of Fungi. More information on this demon princess may be found in "The Temple of Elemental Evil."

* * * *

Demi-Powers

Chitza-Atlan: The Olman demigod guardian of the underworld, Chitza-Atlan appears as a mummified centaur and signifies death with his coming. He is NE, and frequently works with Zotzilaha. (On a side note, in my campaign, Chitza-Atlan was one of the nine demigods captured and imprisoned by Zagig Yragerne)

Merikka: Oeridian demigoddess of Agriculture, Merikka holds a relatively small flock within some farming communities on the Flanaess. She is CG. (Again, in my campaign, Merikka fell to the traps of Zagig. She's better now, though).

Stern Alia: Demigoddess of Law and Truth (the Correct and Unalterable Way), Alia is heavily worshipped in Medegia, where she is seen as the mother-figure for Hextor and Heironeous. She is LN (And, coincidentally, was one of Zagig's prisoners in my campaign).

Tlazoteotl: The Olman Mother Goddess of Earth (meaning soil). She is LG. (And also, for me, a prisoner)

Xilonen: The Olman Hairy Mother Goddess of Corn, Xilonen is NG. (Again a prisoner of Zagig).

That pretty much does it. Some of these powers are pretty obscure, but they all come from established TSR works (save for Landron and Om, who come from Quag Keep). Though I don't have my bibliography with me, most of them can be found in The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan. Others are in T1-4, GDQ, N1, the novels, and a few other places.

I suppose, in the interest of completion, I should make mention of the demon Maelfesh from the Rose Estes novels, but it really seems much too painful.

Erik

PS: Including the beings from my last post and the nonhuman deities worshipped on Oerth (see the last few pages of the FTA Atlas book), the Flanaess and the northern tip of the Olman Empire have captured the interest of _106_ deities. Seeing as how the Flanaess is only one part of one of four continents and scores of islands, I'd say there's something important about Oerth that normal humans like us just can't understand.

KEOLAND

From: Thane13
Date: 95-04-06 03:59:04 EDT
Re: Keoland

What are people's thoughts on Keoland? I have two ideas on what this nation would be like for players to visit.

I don't have the From the Ashes set--so going by the old World of Greyhawk Gazetteer, it seems that this nation has had much success following a peaceful course, and has had some disasters when pursuing warlike courses. So, the first image of what Keoland is like, is a great center of culture--art, trade, prose&poetry, etc. Since Keoland is a nation, and not just a city, its cultural breadth and depth would probably be greater than that of Greyhawk (city) and Waterdeep (FR). Given the Keoish bad experiences with war, I would also expect a lot of "counter-culture" :) for all that implies, in this nation.

The second image of Keoland that I had was taken after reading the Greyhawk Wars boxed set. Keoland is once again at war--this time with the Scarlet Brotherhood. I see Keoland as a military "sleeping giant", akin to the USA in World Wars I and II. With plenty of money and resources, a large land area and population, intelligent and educated nobility (at least--see previous paragraph), I think the Scarlet Brotherhood may have bitten off more than they can chew. This image predicts Keoland as being the next superpower on Oerik.

So--what do you guys think? Are these "realistic"? Aesthetically correct?

Before I finally go and let you all ruminate on this post--let me thank all the contributors for making this board the best board in all of AOL. I've thoroughly enjoyed the great intelligence, debates, insights, and thoughtfulness here. Give yourselves a pat on the back.

From: Hrsnash
Date: 95-04-06 12:16:45 EDT
Re: Re:Keoland

I have approached Keoland as an insular realm, with a fairly optimistic mix of humans and demihumans. The western part of the realm, in my version, looks to the mountain regions for trade and adventure. Trade with dwarves and gnomes occurs on a grand scale in the town of Cryllor, which I have designed as a sort of frontier town, near the edge of the wilderness.

The big trouble spot in my version of Keoland is the Dreadwood, which is full of elves and petty barons who are none too happy with Keoish rule. Rebellion in my campaign is often financed by the Sea Princes or the Yeomanry.

Pholtus is much revered by the rulers of Keoland as I have worked with it (although the current king is a ranger follower of Tritherion who hopes to quell the discontent in the Dreadwood, and unite the fragments of the early Keoish Kingdom--the Ulek states, elves of the Oytwood, the Yeomanry, etc. He is opposed by the more lawful of the aristocracy).

My version of Keoland, then, establishes an idealizing blend of human and demihuman, a general conflict of

interests among the rulers along the lines LG/LN vs. N, CN, CG, and some opportunistic evil elements that are ready to use any dissent among the nobility for their own ends.

I am intrigued by your idea of Keoland's conflict with the Scarlet Brotherhood; one thing I have not yet been able to resolve is Keoland's status as a sea power (or another thing--what interest other elements of the world would have in Keoland, which seems to have been left pretty much alone--still waters run deep, and provide ideal hiding spots for all sorts of horrid creatures....)

From: KJNewquist
Date: 95-04-06 12:59:32 EDT
Re: Keoland

In my campaigns, Keoland has continued its slow, peaceful decline from a superpower to a stable one. I see the nation as a peaceful version of Russian after the break-up of the Soviet Union. Instead of trying to dominate its former lands, it has established amicable and profitable trading alliances.

My Keoland is a comfortable place, secluded from much of the world's problems. I liked the sleeping giant description someone used earlier - that's exactly how I view Keoland. The question in my campaign is, could the giant wake up in time?

From: Hadrada
Date: 95-04-08 11:30:57 EDT
Re: Re: Keoland

Keoland in my humble opinion, is very much like the sleeping giant. It is peopled by a Suel/Oerid mixture. The Oeridians being a conciliatory people, willing to work with others. The two Sueloite tribes that settled there, Rhola and Neheli, were not the typical lying, cheating, enslaving, types like the other Suel Tribes were. The noble families are for the most part noble. They see the rest of the sheldomar valley as being people that need their protection and guidance. Not unlike England's view of the world for some time. When their feeding hand was bitten, they chose to withdraw it and opened cordial relations with former territories. After all, it's much easier to sway with gold, than with a sword. Less energy as well.

So you're left with a great country, with no Imperial aspirations. So instead, they let Sterich fall, while squabbling over fealty issues. With a Ranger for King? What was his motivation for that? I see powerful Noble families, and a large bureaucracy at work. Still a good nation at heart, notice their dislike for the Sea Princes (before FTA), and their concern with the Pomarj (again, pre-FTA) I think you have a King, with Romantic aspirations, for a unified army that can smite any evil foe. Especially, an Army led by himself. As far as a sea power, yes, Keoland's navy is strong. So is the Principality of Ulek's navy. Nyrond still floats a sizable group of ships, and Irongate's navy is nothing to dismiss. That is why the Scarlet Brotherhood began assaulting Keoland. The Brotherhood wants all sea trade to be theirs to control or regulate. A very intelligent evil if you ask me. I do not believe King Skotti to be a great proponent of his navy however, as he is not a sailor. It will take one of the other Countries to convince him of it's importance. Now that the Wars are over, and everything has settled, I do believe that Keoland will "Rise from the ashes" and become a great power once again. It has the resources and man power, it only needs a direction. What first, the Navy? Sea Princes? Sterich? Geoff? Threat of Ket? Turrosh Mak? I think King Skotti should seek to free his neighbor's lands of it's Giant, Jebli, Euroz, etc. scourge first. There by securing those nations to it's side as willing participants in Keoland's moves against all the other threats.

From: Chaos28
Date: 95-04-09 04:40:43 EDT
Re: Re: Keoland

If I were King Skotti (which I am, I guess, at least in my own world), I would get my own house in order before seeking to aid or liberate foreign lands. Keoland's borders must be secured tightly and its own foes strongly met before Keoish lives are thrown at the problems of Geoff or Sterich. In fact, given his country's current position, Skotti might do well to leave well enough alone for the foreseeable future, accepting the current boundaries until new developments in the heartlands turn things around a bit. Fighting a holding battle against the Scarlet Brotherhood's puppet states seems more reasonable than tossing cannon fodder at giants. If Skotti spreads himself too thin, he gives the patient spider of the Scarlet Brotherhood inroads into his land which would almost certainly prove fatal, given the Brotherhood's success rate so far.

Perhaps a lightning raid or two against key giantish or goblinoid positions to boost morale among his

bruised troops, but no more. Goblinoids are rather easy opponents, at least compared to the intelligence of the Brotherhood's client states, and whipping some goblinoid butt now and then might keep morale high among Skotti's officers (and provide PCs with adventure hooks in the bargain). But a war of liberation? Baaad idea at this point. Besides, if I read the Wars book right, there's precious little left in Sterich to liberate.

From: Iquander
Date: 95-04-11 14:28:50 EDT
Re: Keoland

I actually explored updating the "U" modules as a starting point for a pre-FTA Greyhawk campaign. There really is a lot of interesting suggested information in there, as to who's actually behind the weapons shipments, who exactly the merchant is that orders the assassin against the party, that sort of thing. The campaign never really got off the ground, but I've doctored the information up enough so that I may be able to use it again.

Check out those old modules! I can't stress how important those are. Several of them contain useful campaign information all but ignored by the larger boxed sets. Iggwilv's dominion over Perrenland, for example, seems to be an often overlooked (even by the Savant Sage of Greyhawk) event of international importance.

Erik

PS: Am I the only one who noticed the omission of U1-3 in the Adventure Location section of the From the Ashes Atlas?

From: Hrsnash
Date: 95-04-11 20:18:21 EDT
Re: Keoish Policy

The more I think about it, the more likely it appears that the logical move in Keoland is to annex the area of southern Furyondy. I don't own either Greyhawk Wars or Ashes, but it seems to me that if either the Brotherhood or the Sea Princes is involved in a war with Keoland, it is a war they cannot win--they are essentially sea powers, and Keoland is largely a land locked nation. They could cut off the trade on which Keoland relies, but that would be self-defeating, as it would restrict their own access to the lucrative markets of the southwest. No, the Brotherhood and the Sea Princes will leave Keoland alone, harassing her at sea now and again.

Skotti will marry off his son, the anemic Prince Rolf, to Jolene of Veluna, and he will have the barons of southern Furyondy swear fealty. Meantime, he will work to solidify his relationship with the Highfolk and the demihumans of Ulek, as well as the Lord of Elvendom at Hocholve in Geoff (misidentified on the Greyhawk map as "Hochoch," an understandable error, but I would direct all skeptical parties to the module S3 Expedition to the Barrier Peaks for clarification).

If Prince Rolf will not have the lady, Skotti will be happy to marry her himself--after all, she's rich, she's beautiful, she's got huuuuuge--tracts of land....

POSTED MESSAGES FROM TSR'S ROGER MOORE, PART II

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-11 15:49:36 EDT
Re: Looong one from Roger Pt 1

Sorry for being away for a bit. I've gotten my usual download fix from this board from the always-reliable Rob Repp, and I have managed to put together a few thoughts here:

BOdw (4-3): You mentioned the good old days when gunpowder had no place in the AD&D(R) game. Gunpowder (well, smoke powder, really) does not work in the WORLD OF GREYHAWK(R) setting. Gygax wanted it that way, and Jeff Grubb respected and reinforced that position when creating information on Greyspace in the SPELLJAMMER(R) boxed set. I left a long post on fantasy firearms and the AD&D game in the folder on the RED STEEL(TM) campaign, pointing out how the creator of Oerth (Gygax) and the creator of the FORGOTTEN

REALMS(R) setting (Ed Greenwood) directed their respective worlds along two different courses with respect to guns. (Still, Gygax did allow guns to creep into the Flanaess--witness Murlynd's "hoglegs," or the blasters from module S3.)

NiteScreed (4-3): Given the size of this folder, I hardly think that Oerth is moldering in an electronic corner. It seems to be growing rapidly, spreading creative and stimulating conflict all over the place. Plus, assuming that writers' deadlines are kept (I'm speaking as a former editor here), there's the Oerth Journal and all of its goodies, plus informative postings here, plus e-mail, etc. I think Oerth is exploding in all directions now--in a good way, of course.

Besides, not having things here be "official" can be a powerful benefit. No two GREYHAWK campaigns will look alike, and not everything one DM/writer creates will be useful for everyone else. But the exchange of ideas is invaluable for adding variety and depth to gaming, and you could even argue that every GREYHAWK campaign ever run is actually official--sort of. Want proof? Take out your copy of DRAGON(R) issue #1 (I'm sure everyone has one) and read the opening paragraphs of Gygax's "Gnome Cache" tale. See? I rest my case. (For those of you who, like me, lack a copy of issue #1, Gygax noted that there are an infinite number of Oerths on parallel planes, each different from every other one, and his story was about a character on one of those Oerths. Interestingly, the Oerth he described looks rather like our own Earth, with modifications. It's a fun read--and it implies that YOUR campaign is just as valid as anyone else's, and might even be considered a parallel plane like all the rest. Those of you who like SPELLJAMMER cosmology can say there are loads of other Greyspace spheres, each different from the rest but widely scattered in the multiverse.)

Hrsnash (4-3): I strongly believe that a comic treatment of evil among player characters is indeed the best way to go, if evil PCs are allowed at all, and for exactly the reasons you mention. This was the tactic used by Bruce Heard in designing the D&D(R) game Gazetteer on the Orcs of Thar, and it received generally positive reaction from gamers, though of course some wanted a much more serious view. I also think you nailed the manner in which evil is treated in the GREYHAWK campaign; that was very well put. The Flanaess is jammed with rogues; Gygax put the thief class as the second most popular one in that area, in a section on demographics in his WORLD OF GREYHAWK boxed set. But PC rogues tend to be likable or helpful rascals, if not always pleasant ones, and so contribute to group cohesion and long campaign life.

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-11 15:50:53 EDT
Re: Loong one from Roger Pt 2

I adopt the viewpoint that there are some things that role-playing scenarios do NOT need: child abuse, rape, detailed torture, wanton cruelty to animals, etc. These should be excluded from scenarios out of pure common decency and respect. Most players are repelled by these things and do not find them intriguing or useful in any allegedly recreational activity. I think this point of view is very well put in chapter 1 of "Writing Mysteries: A Handbook by the Mystery Writers of America" (ed. Sue Grafton, 1992, Writers Digest Books). This is a blue hardbound book you can find in any Waldenbooks or B. Dalton's in the Reference section. Chapter 1, "The Rules and How to Bend Them," was written by Jeremiah Healy and includes an unbendable rule on page 12 that "Certain Violence Is Prohibited." Anyone who is at all interested in the topic of evil PCs in role-playing should read this section; it is very short and very much to the point.

On a related note, I can't say much--nothing positive, anyway--about PC courtesans. I saw the class years ago in an old White Dwarf magazine (the houri magic-user subclass, as someone else mentioned) as well as in the Arduin stuff, and I wasn't fond of it then or now. It's just plain stupid. As editor of DRAGON Magazine, I would get submissions on prostitute character classes about once every two weeks (truth!), and all were rejected. One was brought to my desk by an executive secretary who was laughing so hard at the text that tears ran from her eyes. Another even came with illustrations, one of which caused me to fling the manuscript on the floor, use the Lord's name in vain, and almost run to the bathroom to throw up. I'm not a prude, but--REALLY! Prostitution IS demeaning, it doesn't deserve its own class, and I cover my face to think of it being played out in a serious campaign, especially a GREYHAWK campaign. This calls for my Mister Ick face: >8P

Finally, hey--I'm a Marxist, too! I loved all of their movies, especially "A Night at the Opera" and that other one in which Groucho is in charge of that little foreign country, I forget the name. It was great. 8)

Nuke281527 (4-3): Your comment about Kender was very interesting. One of the role-playing elements that appeals very strongly to dedicated DRAGONLANCE(R) campaign players is the presence of demihuman races with easily grasped personality quirks. (I was going to say "personality disorders," but you get my drift.) Kender, gully dwarves, minotaurs, tinker gnomes, and even certain human types like the Knights of Solamnia, all have their own personality characteristics that makes role-playing them highly enjoyable for their fans. Other AD&D campaign worlds seem to lack such role-playing stereotypes, which strikes me as a pity sometimes. I like the freedom to play

most characters without feeling constrained to take certain actions, but I admit that having role-playing hooks really gets me into a role. Perhaps this is worth considering for GREYHAWK campaigns everywhere.

For instance, a DM could make a note that gnomes from the Flinty Hills (where they have held out for years against vicious humanoid groups) tend to have a siege mentality, an edge of global paranoia, or an apocalyptic or crisis-driven life philosophy. Those gnomes might also not take crap from anyone, being vengeful, easy to offend, and difficult to calm down once they get angry. They might collect weaponry (particularly knives) and travel heavily armed. PC gnomes from this region don't have to share any of these traits, but the push in that direction might be gleefully seized upon and appreciated by some. Comic twists could be granted to some races, especially if the Complete Book of Humanoids is used. (Look at mongrelmen, for instance, or pixies.) Do any of you out there use fantasy racial/cultural role-playing characteristics, specific or vague, in your GREYHAWK campaigns?

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-11 15:52:07 EDT
Re: Looong one from Roger Pt 3

Hrsnash (4-4): I like hammer dulcimer music, being a Kentuckian, and have a collection of tapes like "The Flowers of Edinburgh" (Laura Riley et al.), "Carolan's Cottage" and "Carolan's Cup" (Jeomy Wilson), "Strayaway Child" (Smith/Fellenbaum), and various tapes by the Gypsy Guerrilla Band ("Ernie's Journey," "Ernie Rides Again!" etc.). These are nice for envisioning a rustic countryside with lots of farmers, light woods, grain fields, wandering bards, farm wagons, hidden orcish archers, etc. For elven/Celtic areas, like Celene, I would use Enya's "Watermark" or "Shepherd Moons." For a light wilderness, Mannheim Steamroller's "Yellowstone: The Music of Nature." For lively village/town settings and parties and fairs, "Olde English Madrigals and Folk Songs at Ely Cathedral," by John Ritter and the Cambridge Singers. And Erelhei-Cinlu . . . Tangerine Dream.

Speaking of animal training, what sorts of pets and domestic animals would the Flanaess have? Pit bulettes? I wonder if anyone has trained camp rats or other GH-only critters. What special dog breeds are sold in the City of Greyhawk? I agree with Socrates1, though, that pets are good only for low-level campaigns (levels 1-4); after that, the magic and beasts are too tough. Horses become a liability beyond 6th level, thanks to fireballs and lightning and griffon flocks.

ZorroBlade (4-5): Elemental vortices...where did you see mention of them? There was mention somewhere (I saw it long ago but can't find it now) that gates to elemental planes can open in areas such as volcanoes, ocean depths, deep underground, and so forth. I'll also look up some PLANESCAPE(TM) material on this--good point. My long second post on gates was dropped thanks to all the horror last week. It will pick up eventually.

Hrsnash (4-5): I read that part of the "Inferno" in high school. My Humanities class loved it. But I don't see how it works for GREYHAWK games!

Hadrada (4-6): A "Woggie"...never heard of it being put that way. It would be a great name if it weren't for the phone call I received from Carl Sargent a few years ago regarding an article in DRAGON Magazine, in which the word "wog" was used. He was rather embarrassed for us here in the Colonies that we didn't know that the word was a crude racial slur in Great Britain, which I confirmed to my horror by consulting my much-used orange paperback copy of "Slang and Euphemism," by Richard Spears (page 437). Worse, it appears that my own name (Roger) is also obscene (page 344). Perhaps we could call ourselves "WoGHies" ("World of GreyHawk"). Whatever.

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-11 15:53:00 EDT
Re: Looong one from Roger Pt 4

Chaos28 (4-6): Skip Williams helped redesign the dragons for the AD&D 2nd Edition game. I thought the revision was excellent, long overdue for keeping dragons respectable.

Malebranch (4-6): Put GH adventures in Oerth Journal, maybe. Download the guidelines for submissions for DRAGON and DUNGEON(R) Magazines, follow them (creating shorter adventures up to 3,000 words), and have at it. Again, I don't think the adventures have to interlock, since everyone runs a different GH campaign; the modules just have to be GH oriented, and the customer can pick and choose and modify.

Ulfgrim (4-6): Thank you! Please go ahead and post whatever you like about GHGATES01; I'd like to see what you have down for gates & planes in GREYHAWK campaigns.

DonWhan2 (4-7): I might (if things permit) be able to upload the rules for Dragonchess, the "game of Greyhawk," to a file library around here. There were some corrections to the original article in DRAGON issue #100, as per the index I posted. An on-line game would boggle the mind.

Psychlops (2-8): Darlene started out as Darlene Pekul, but changed her name to simply Darlene. She did the

GH maps. No idea where she is now. Lots of long-ago TSR people have vanished (like David Trampier--funny you should mention him). Dave Sutherland is still with us, in the Graphics department.

From: TSR Inc
Date: 95-04-11 15:53:35 EDT
Re: Looong one from Roger Pt 5

Also, DRAGON issue #118 had an article on using Hero Points in the AD&D game. I'd be very careful about passing out too many points--game balance goes away. People here at TSR who have used Hero Points like the system, though.

CHURCH X (4-9): I am abashed.

Thane13 (4-9): I don't know what naval/ship rules anyone here uses, but the ones published in DRAGON issue #116 (I think they were by Margaret Foy) were pretty good. She did a later article on Oriental ships, but I don't have the issue number.

Pals of King Skotti (4-9): Did you ever imagine the king having a bad dream one night, sitting bolt upright in bed, and saying, "The engines canna take much more o' this, captain!"?

Chaos28 (4-9): Brom did indeed leave TSR some time ago, last year. He is missed, but we have lots of great artists, and there is always free-lance.

NightScreed (4-9): I mulled over the idea of Franz Kafka as a GREYHAWK campaign DM: "Okay, you guys, you wake up in the dungeon and find you've just been turned into giant cockroaches. Yeah, even your courtesan. And you can't seem to find the way out of the dungeon again; the orcs say you have to fill out some paperwork before they can send your case along for an exit visa."

This posting was much longer than I'd intended, and I stayed up too late to finish it. I guess I needed the break.

Cheers!....Roger

***** End of Best of Greyhawk #2 *****