

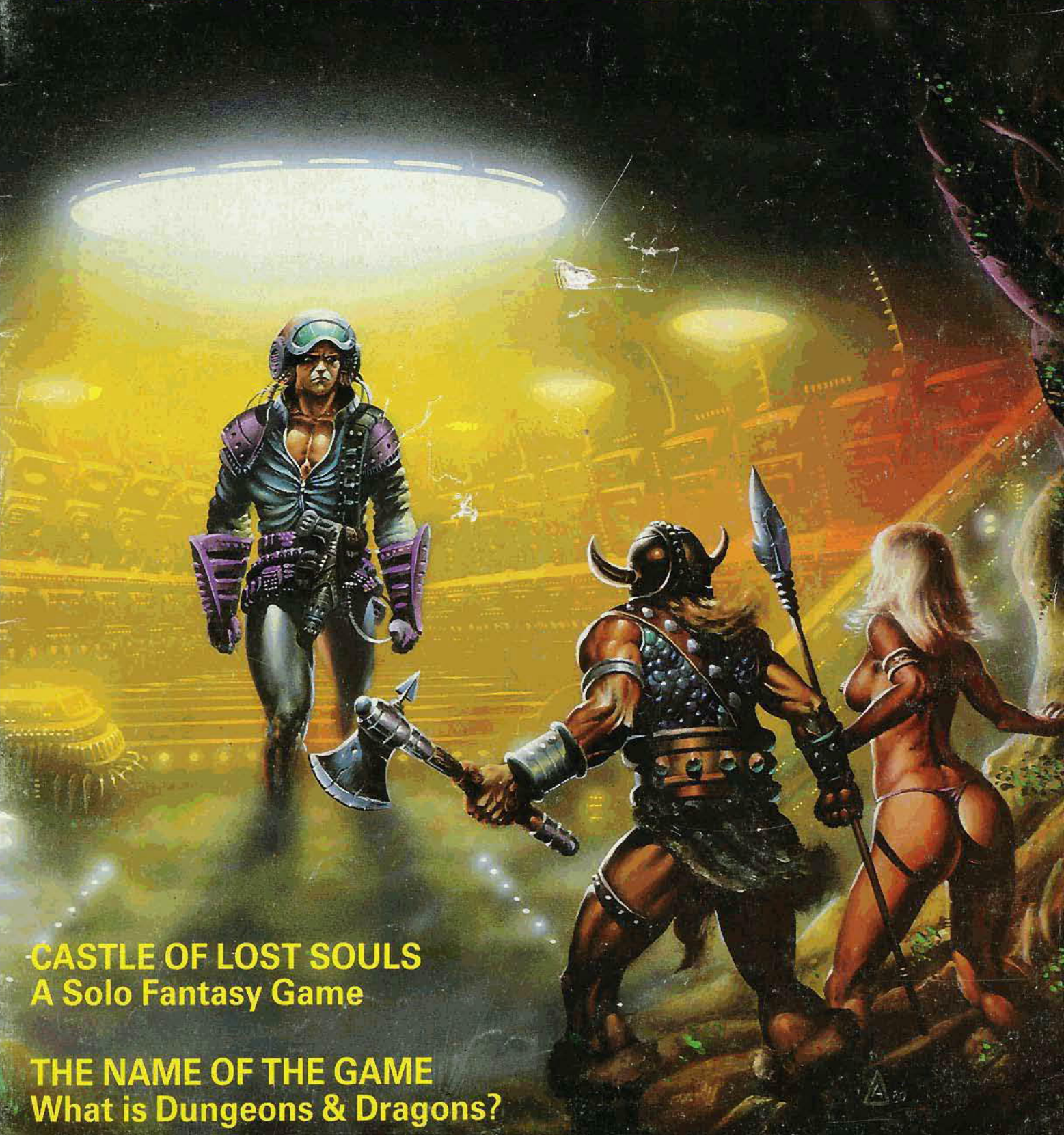
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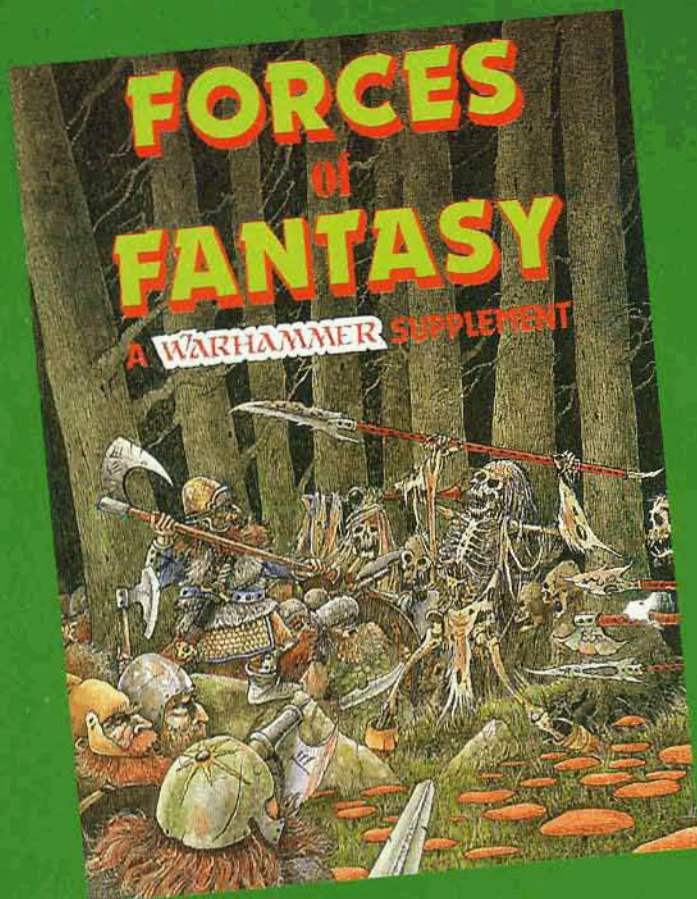
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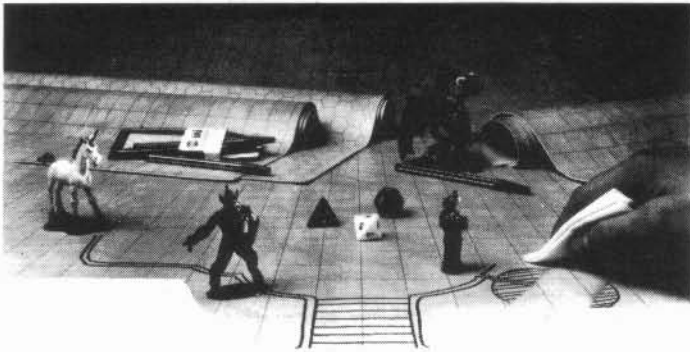
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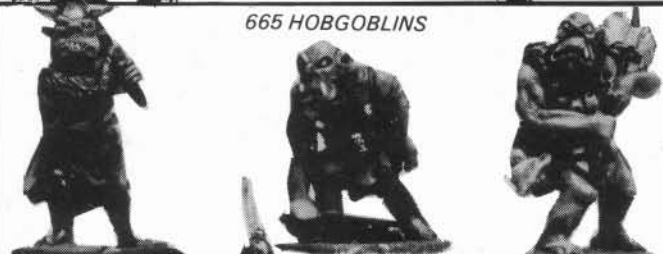
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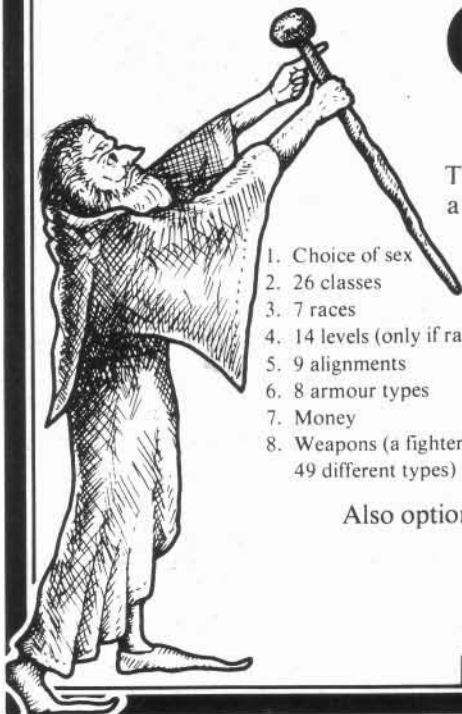
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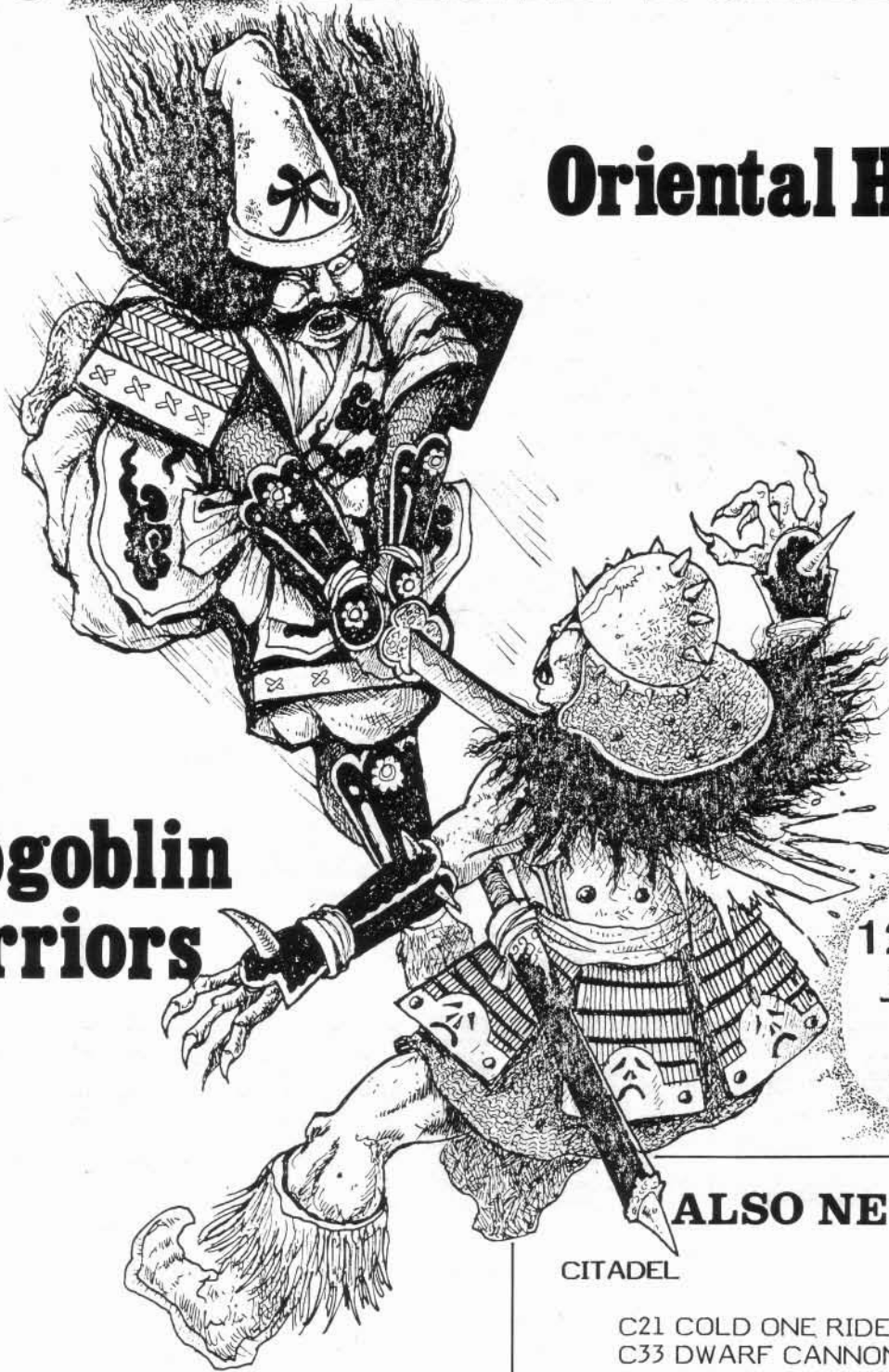
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For many of you, this issue of *White Dwarf* will be your first. For others, it may be your 52nd. I hope our faithful followers will bear with me as I explain our hobby to the newcomers. *White Dwarf* is the voice of British adventure gamers, people who play games such as *Dungeons & Dragons*. If you have never heard of this game, then you should kick off by reading *The Name of the Game* on page 12. Each issue we feature articles and scenarios, reviews and news, and throw in a bit of light relief with our three comic strips. If the idea of fantasy gaming as a hobby is appealing to you, then *White Dwarf* will keep you up-to-date about what's going on.

To new and old readers alike, I hope you enjoy what we have to offer. And let us know. If you don't - we'll send the Orcs round...

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The Name of the Game

A Beginner's Guide to Role-Playing Games by Marcus L Rowland

Part 1 of a series explaining what role-playing games are about and how to get started.

Bored with *Ludo*? Tired of *Monopoly* and *Scrabble*? Then Role-Playing Games (usually called RPGs) may be for you. Originating from sources as diverse as wargaming, method acting, and psychotherapy, they let you do anything from fighting a dragon to vaulting tall buildings at a single bound.

Normal wargames deal with combat on a relatively impersonal level – army against army, or even planet against planet. RPGs operate at a more personal level, and may sometimes involve no violence at all.

In RPGs each player controls a Player Character (PC), who continues from one game to another. They must deal with events in a world beyond normal experiences which can be anything from fantasy and horror, through science fiction, to historical events and modern spy and crime adventures. It's common to think of them as stories with their outcome determined by the players. Negotiation, persuasion, or a character's ability to play the violin might easily be more decisive than brute force.

Each character is described by a series of numbers representing real or abstract qualities like Strength, Endurance, or Charisma. These values are generally called prime requisites or characteristics, usually produced by rolling dice. (A variety of shapes; 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 20 sided dice are commonly used.)

Depending on the game there may be six, nine, or several dozen characteristics – most have less than ten. Characteristics vary from game to game, but in general each characteristic will make some form of activity easier or harder. Strength, for example, is generally related to the amount of damage inflicted in hand-to-hand combat, and the ability to lift weights, bend bars, force doors, etc.

There are several other attributes which may be important in a character. The most common is the possession of skills which make various types of action possible or easier. The number and type varies with the game. In the science fiction game *Traveller*, for example, characters are veterans of military or commercial organisations, and have acquired appropriate spacefaring skills during their service. Most games incorporating skills include some way of improving them.

The game universe is controlled and usually designed by a Referee, the person who runs the game and makes decisions on rules. The Referee will have a pre-written plot together with a map and notes of the contents of the location. He knows what's happening, and controls any situations, monsters, or Non-Player Characters (NPCs) met by the PCs in accordance with the plot. This sounds like a game which can only be won by

the Referee, but it's more like a film directed by the Referee and featuring a cast of characters who have to improvise their lines. The referee doesn't win or lose anything, but gets the fun of seeing the players react to the situation he has devised. The PCs usually cooperate to combat the referees' ploys, but may sometimes decide to attack each other regardless of the situation.

During a typical game each player controls one or more PCs, who have to perform some sort of task in the game universe. Depending on the game, an adventure or *scenario* might involve killing a dragon, rescuing a kidnapped diplomat, or carving out an interstellar commercial empire.

As an example, consider a science fiction game in which four player characters in a small scout ship are about to board an (apparently) deserted space station. First the referee sets the scene, then the players ask questions and explain their characters intentions. The referee will use dice or consult a table to determine the result of their actions:

Referee: 'The station seems to be intact. There are no obvious signs of trouble. However, there has been no answer to any of your signals.'

Player 1: 'Are there any signs of life?'

Referee: 'You can see lights behind two portholes.'

Player 2: 'Can we fly the ship close enough to look in?'

Player 3: 'I don't want to risk that. I don't think any of us are good enough pilots.'

Player 4: 'OK, I'll suit up and try to get over there with a jet pack, then I'll look through the ports.'

Player 2: 'Good move. It might be a good idea if you rig a line between our air lock and the station too.'

(The other players agree.)

Referee: *(Checks the spacesuit skill of player four's character.)* 'Roll two dice, if you get 5 or more you get there safely.'

Player 4: *(Rolls 9.)* 'OK, there's no problem. I'll look at the first porthole, and tell the others what I observe by radio. What do I see?'

Referee: 'You see a typical space station lounge and dining area. There is no-one there, and a table is upset.'

Player 2: 'Does he see anything to indicate that there is still air in the station?'

Referee: 'How could he tell?'

Player 1: 'If there was any inflatable furniture it would be swollen or burst.'

Player 4: 'Can I see any inflatables?'

Referee: 'No, all the furniture is made of hard plastic.'

Player 4: 'Can I see a ventilator?'

Referee: 'Yes. There are two ribbons tied to the grille in front of it, apparently moving in a breeze.'

Player 3: 'OK, then there is air.'

In this example the referee was looking at a plan of the station and notes on its compartments. The notes didn't mention a ventilator or ribbon, but since the referee knew that there was air, and that it wasn't important to the scenario, he decided to save time by adding this detail. Normally a referee will only describe the main features visible to characters, leaving the players to ask questions about less obvious details.

The common elements found in nearly all RPGs are the player character, the referee, and large quantities of paper and dice. Optional extras are lead or plastic figures to represent the characters in the scenario, gridded paper to scale movement and determine lines of fire in combat, and a lot of time and energy. Beyond these elements each game is different.

Dungeons & Dragons – The Big One

The first and most famous RPG is *Dungeons & Dragons*, usually called *D&D*, released by *Tactical Studies Rules [TSR]* in 1974. At first *D&D* was almost unknown in Britain, but it gradually developed a cult following among SF and fantasy fans who played it, liked it, and introduced it to their friends. If *D&D* had not been invented it is probable that the RPG hobby would not exist, since it paved the way for the many games currently available, for specialised game shops, and for magazines like *White Dwarf*. Many outsiders have never heard of any other game, and assume that *D&D* represents the entire hobby.

The setting for *D&D* is a pseudo-medieval heroic fantasy landscape populated by Halflings (Hobbits), Elves, Dwarves, and Humans, with frequent appearance by Orcs, Trolls, and (of course) Dragons. The *D&D* Referee is called the Dungeon Master (DM), and does most of the work of preparing and running a game. There are hundreds of ready-made scenarios ranging from easy beginner's material to extremely complex adventures designed for experienced players and DMs. The sheer volume of material produced for *D&D* is overwhelming – probably more than for all other RPGs combined. This wealth of material, advertising, and the accessibility of other players and referees, makes *D&D* the favourite game for beginners. There are currently (in December 1983) four *D&D* games – *Basic D&D* is designed for beginning players and referees, *Expert D&D* is an extension of *Basic D&D*, and *Advanced D&D* is a more complex version of the same game covering material for beginners and experienced players in greater depth. The fourth version, *Original D&D*, is a re-issue of the first printing of the *D&D* rules for collectors and those who don't

like any of the later versions. Two additional versions are on the way, both extensions to the Basic/Expert game. There are also official *D&D* figures, comics, books, video games, and even dolls. A *D&D* film is forthcoming, and American television already runs a *D&D* cartoon programme.

D&D character generation is quick and easy. There are six prime requisites (Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma), all rolled randomly as the total of three six-sided dice (3d6). The character is then assigned a race (options being human, dwarf, elf, gnome, half-elf, halfling, or half-orc), alignment (Lawful, Neutral, or Chaotic combined with Good, Neutral, or Evil, a typical example being Lawful-Good), and Character Class.

All the forms of *D&D* (and most other TSR RPGs) assume that each character will act in a semi-specialised role, in *D&D*, called a Character Class. Some of the typical *D&D* classes are the Fighter,

the Magic-User, the Cleric, and the Thief. Each class is restricted in its use of weapons and magical equipment and has different attack probabilities in combat. Some classes are closed to members of some races, or to characters of certain alignments.

The character receives some money to purchase equipment and supplies, and then starts adventuring. At this stage the beginning character is a novice adventurer, and is a first level member of one (or sometimes two) character classes.

Levels are another important concept affecting a *D&D* PC. They control the amount of injury the character can survive, the chance of hitting an opponent, the number of spells available to magic-using classes, resistance to magic, and other skills and secondary capabilities. All characters begin at Level 1 (L1) and accumulate experience points towards a level rise. Points are awarded for killing monsters, finding treasure, rescuing fair

maidens, and anything else the DM feels like rewarding.

D&D combat is fairly simple. Briefly, each character or creature has a number of hit points (HP), indicating the damage that can be absorbed before the character is killed, and an Armour Class rating (AC); the higher the number the worse the armour. AC10 is bare skin, for example, while AC3 is plate mail. The opponent's AC determines the number the attacker must roll on a 20-sided dice to score a hit. If the number rolled is high enough (adding applicable bonuses such as from magical weapons or great strength), the blow connects, and the victim takes damage, rolled on another die according to the weapon type. A successful hit does not damage the victim's armour and usually causes no immediate reduction in the victim's ability to fight back. This is often criticised as an unrealistic system, but it is fast and works reasonably well.

D&D magic is related to the level of the character, to class, and to Intelligence or Wisdom. Most spell-using classes start at Level 1 with one fairly basic spell per day.

All *D&D* character classes can use magical equipment, but some equipment is only usable by certain classes. There is a huge variety of magical equipment in *D&D*, and most scenarios seem to introduce a few new items. It's rarely possible to buy magical equipment – usually characters have to find it in the course of their adventuring. The amount of treasure found on an expedition is usually related to the danger involved, so that a large dragon's hoard might include several items such as magically improved armour, powerful magic weapons, rings and potions.

The emphasis on experience and treasure tends to make most players fairly greedy, and inclined to kill or loot first and ask questions later. Most referees try to combat this tendency by adding traps, cursed magical equipment, and variant monsters which are far more lethal than they look. *D&D* publications support this tendency by adding new monster and treasures, and twists and variations on old themes.

Start-Up Materials: for *D&D the Basic Set*, rules, dice; *Expert Set*, rules, dice, adventure and for *Advanced D&D the AD&D Players Handbook*, *AD&D Dungeon Masters Guide*, *AD&D Monster Manual*.

Optional Extras: *TSR Scenarios*, *World of Greyhawk*, *AD&D Character Record Sheets* (TSR), *AD&D Fiend Folio* (Monsters from *White Dwarf*), *AD&D Deities and Demigods*, *AD&D Monster Manual 2*. All of the above are TSR publications, and are available in the UK.

A number of independent publishers also supply *D&D* material, and most gaming magazines and fanzines frequently include *D&D* scenarios and articles. Sources include *Games Workshop*, *Iron Crown Enterprises*, and *Judges Guild*, but there are many other less prominent suppliers. The standard of *D&D* material ranges from excellent to awful, so it's sensible to ask for advice when buying independent products. □

Next Issue: The second most popular fantasy RPG, *RuneQuest*, and other fantasy role-playing games.



Following last issue's article, Gifts from the Gods, here are some new clerical spells, intended for improving the cleric's overall structure as a class in AD&D.

Last issue, in the article *Gifts from the Gods*, Thomas Mullen suggested rewriting the AD&D clerical system. He proposed to restrict clerics to use of only a subset of the clerical spells dependant upon the character of the deity worshipped. No specific spell lists were given so I have written up some that I have been using in my campaign (based in and around Irilian). Unfortunately, there isn't sufficient room to detail the new spells completely, but I have tried to give enough in the descriptions to make filling in the missing parts simple. The spells are divided by spell level and into those common to all clerics and those which are granted by deities with a particular area of control. Of course, as Thomas described, these lists are modified by the character of the deity granting the miracle.

Spell names in bold are new spells and are briefly described. Spells followed by *WD* and a number appeared in that issue of *White Dwarf*. Spells followed by *MU*, *D*, or *I* and a number are spells of that level from the magic user, druid, or illusionist spell lists in the *Players Handbook*.

Spells Common to all Religions

Level

I: *Bless*; *detect evil*; *light*; *protection from evil*; *sanctuary*.

II: *Aaron's rod* [WD21]; *augury*; *chant*; **convert** (gives a +10 bonus when using the clerical conversion system in *WD44*. Effective for one attempt); *detect spirit* [WD47]; *detect undead* [WD13]; *know alignment*; **minor chastisement** (allows the caster to direct a blast of divine power at one creature for 1d8 points damage. Followers of the cleric's deity get no saving throw but may not be reduced below 1 hit point. Non-followers of the deity save for 1/2 damage but may be killed. Range: touch); *silence*.

III: *create food and water*; **dispel clerical magic** (as *dispel magic* but is effective only on clerical magic); *glyph of warding*; *prayer*; *remove curse*; **summon minor servant** (allows the caster to summon 2d4 beings (the exact form of which depends upon the deity) which will serve for 2 rounds + 1 round/level. Each is AC5; HD1; Move: 9"; Attack for 1d8, Average Intelligence).

IV: *Divination*; *exorcise*; *possession* [WD48]; *protection from evil 10' radius*. V: *Atonement*; *commune*; *dispel evil*; *flame strike* (varies in form according to deity); **major chastisement** (as *minor chastisement* but damage is 5d8); *plane shift* (but will only shift to the deity's plane); *quest*; **summon major servant** (as *summon minor servant* but 1d3 servants, AC4; HD5; Move: 9"; 2 attacks for 1d8, vulnerable only to silver and magic weapons, very intelligent).

VI: *Blade barrier* (form varies with the deity); **conjure transport** (summons a vehicle AC2; 60HP; invulnerable to normal weapons, Move: 24"/48", capable of carrying up to 8 creatures of mansize. Duration 6 turns + 1 turn/level). VII: *Gate*; *holy word*; *messianic message* [WD27]; *symbol*.

Out of the Blue

Suggested Clerical Spell Lists for AD&D by Daniel Collerton



Deities of Death, Destruction, the Underworld

Level

III: *Animate dead*; *blind*; *cause disease*; **deafen** (effects one creature and lasts until cured). *feign death*; *speak with dead*.

V: *Death spell* [MU6]; *dread* [WD21]; *slay living*.

VI: *Harm*; *shield of disruption* [WD42].

VII: **Age** (ages any one creature touched by 50 + 5d10 years); *destruction*; *energy drain*; *wither*.

Deities of the Air, Atmosphere, Heavens

Level

I: *Feather fall* [MU1]; *predict weather* [D1].

II: *Levitation* [MU2].

III: *Call lightning* [D3]; *fly* [MU3]; *gust of wind* [MU3].

IV: **Ball lightning** (forms a ball of lightning which will discharge on contact for 4d12 damage and which may be moved as the caster wishes up to a distance of

12" and a duration of 4 rounds).

V: **Control winds** (D5); **gaseous form** (as the potion); **whirlwind** (the caster can turn into a whirlwind equivalent to an air elemental for 1 round/level).

VII: *Control weather*; *windwalk*.

Deities of Cold, the Winter

Level

I: *Frost fingers* [WD21]; *resist cold*.

II: *Chill metal* [D2]; **diamond dust** (fills a 2" cube for 2 rounds/level with scintillating motes of ice, effectively blinding anyone inside); **ice trap** (as the reverse of the druid spell *fire trap*).

III: **Protection from cold** (reverse of the druid spell *protection from fire*).

VI: *Control temperature 10' radius* [D4].

V: *Otiluke's freezing sphere* [MU6].

VI: **Cloud of cold** (reverse form of the MU spell *incendiary cloud*); *fire quench* [D7].

Deities of Earth, the Ground

Level

I: **Direction** (gives the direction and distance of a predetermined point);

identify minerals and gems (allows identification and valuation (+ or -20%) of any one gem or piece of mineral); **locate minerals** (as the wand. Duration 1 turn).

II: **Dust cloud** (as *diamond dust* but the cloud is formed of dust).

III: **Alter density** (alters the density of 1000ft³ of material by ± 10%/level for 1 turn/level); *dig* [MU3].

IV: **Collapse** (causes the ceiling of a room or roof of a tunnel to collapse for 4d8 damage, to all beneath).

V: **Chasm** (opens up a chasm under 1 being. If the creature fails its saving throw, it falls perpetually); *move earth* [MU6]; *stone shape* [MU5]; *transmute rock to mud* [D5]; *wall of stone* [MU5].

VI: *Reverse gravity* [MU7].

VII: *Animate rock* [D7]; *earthquake*.

Deities of Fire, Blacksmiths

Level

I: *Dancing lights* [MU]; *fairie fire* [D1]; *resist fire*.

II: *Fire trap* [D2]; *heat metal* [D2]; *produce flame* [D2]; *pyrotechnics* [D2].

III: *Fire charm* [MU4]; *fire shield* [MU4]; *protection from fire* [D3].

IV: *Control temperature 10' radius* [D4].

V: **Shooting stars** (as the ring).

VI: *Fire seed* [D6].

VII: *Incendiary cloud* [MU8].

Deities of Knowledge, Learning

Level

I: *Identify* [MU1].

II: *ESP* [MU2]; *plane source* [WD47]; *speak with animals*.

III: *Clairaudience* [MU3]; *clairvoyance* [MU3]; *know duration* [WD30]; *locate object*.

IV: *Detect lie*; *speak with plants*; *tongues*.

V: *Legend lore* [MU6]; *true seeing*.

VI: *Contact other plane* [MU5]; *find the path*; *speak with monsters*; *stone tell*.

Deities of Life, Healing

Level

I: *Cure light wounds*; *remove fear*.

II: **Cure paralysis** (removes *paralysis* due to magical attack, venom, or poison from 1 being. Not effective against spinal cord paralysis); *slow poison*.

III: **Cure blindness**; **cure deafness** (removes all but congenital deafness from 1 being); *cure disease*; **cure dumbness** (as cure deafness); *feign dead*; **lay minor undead** (will deanimate any undead up to the level of ghosts within a 2" radius circle. Range 6". No saving throw).

IV: **Cure insanity** (a mental *cure disease*); *cure serious wounds*; *neutralise poison*.

V: *Cure critical wounds*; *raise dead*.

VI: *Heal*.

VII: **Lay major undead** (as *lay minor undead* but all undead except *specials* are lain); *regenerate*; *restoration*; *resurrection*.

Deities of Love, Lust

Level

I: *Charm* [MU1]; *detect charm*; *friends* [MU1].

II: *Hold person*.

III: **Smite** (evokes uncontrollable love in one being for 6d6 turns).

IV: *Charm monster* [MU4]; *emotion* [IL4].

V: **Beguile** (causes all within 3" radius of the caster to be overcome with good feelings towards their fellow creatures).

VI: **Love** (as *beguile* but effects all beings within a 3" radius circle up to 10" from the caster).

VII: *Antipathy/sympathy* [MU8]; **rule** (as the rod but duration 1 turn + 1 turn/level).

Deities of Magic, Enchantment

Level

I: *Detect magic* [MU1]; *identify* [MU1]; *read magic* [MU1].

III: *Dispel magic*.

IV: **Negate spell** (negates all magic within 1" of the caster for 4 + 1/level rounds); **turn spell** (as the ring).

V: **Cancel** (as the rod).

VI: *Bestow magic resistance* [WD38]; *spell store* [WD13].

Deities of Space, Travel, the Planes

Level

I: *Detect portal* [WD48]; *hold portal* [MU1].

II: *Plane source* [WD47]; *knock* [MU2].

III: **Blink** (as the dog); *see other plane* [WD48].

V: *Contact other plane* [MU5]; *plane shift*.

VI: *Phase door* [MU7]; *word of recall*.

VII: *Astral spell*; *wind walk*.

Deities of War, Conflict, Battle

Level

I: **Absorb 1** (will absorb up to 1d8 + 1 points of damage for 2 + 1/level rounds); *enchant armour 1* (gives armour a +1 bonus for 5 + 1/level rounds); *enchant weapon 1* (as *enchant armour* but effects 1 weapon); *guard* [WD42].

II: **Blast** (a burst of power doing 2d8 points damage to 1 being within 10"); **fear** (as the wand but only effects 1 being); *strength* [MU2].

III: **Absorb 2** (as 1 but effective against 2d8 + points damage); **blaze** (causes any non-magic weapon to flame for 2 + 2 rounds/level); *enchant armour 2* (as before with a +2 bonus); *enchant weapon 2* (as before with a +2 bonus);

wound (wounds caused by a weapon will require twice the normal healing time or the services of a cleric of a deity of healing. Duration 2 + 2 round/level).

IV: **Displace** (as the cloak. Duration 3 + 3 rounds/level); **heroism** (as the potion. Duration 1 + 1 turn/2 levels); **panic** (as fear but effects all beings within a 2" radius circle within 10" of the caster).

V: **Absorb 3** (as before with 3d8 + 3 points absorbed); **enchant weapon 3** (as before with a +3 bonus); **enchant armour 3** (as before with +3 bonus).

VI: **Drain** (causes points damage done by a weapon to be temporarily added to the users. Duration 1 + 1/level turns).

VII: **Absorb 4** (as before with 4d8 + 4 points absorbed); **invulnerability** (as the potion); **superheroism** (as the potion).

Deities of Thieves, Stealth

Level

I: *Chameleon* [WD30]; **disarm trap** (will disarm 1 trap for 1 turn); *find traps*; *invisibility* [MU2]; *knock* [MU2]; **pickpocket** (allows one attempt at a pickpocket as a 10th level thief); *spider climb* [MU1].

II: **Dexterity** (as the MU spell strength but points are added to dexterity); *leomund's trap* [MU2]; **slipperiness** (as



the oil).

III: *Clairaudience* [MU3]; *clairvision* [MU3]; *invisibility 10' radius* [MU3]; **move silently** (up to 4 beings will move silently for 6 turns/level); **rope** (will animate 120' of rope).

IV: **Aid thief** (adds 5%/level of caster to 2 of a thief's abilities for 1 + 1/level turns); *improved invisibility* (I4); **microscope** (as the *Eyes of Minute Seeing*. Duration 1 + 1 turn/level); **x-ray vision** (as the ring. Duration 1 + 1 turn/level).

VI: **Appear** (causes all hidden objects within a 2" sphere to become visible).

Deities of Water, the Ocean, the Seas

Level

I: *Create water*; **locate water** (allows location of all large bodies of water [greater than 1ft³] within 10"/level); **purify water** (as *purify food and water* but effective only against water); **swim** (allows 1 being with an encumbrance of less than 300gp to swim for 2 turns/level in winds up to strong breeze. Every extra

50gp carried gives a cumulative 5% chance of drowning); **underwater vision** (allows 1 being vision to a distance of 150' regardless of depth for 2 turns/level); **walk on water** (as the ring of water walking).

II: **Anchor** (will anchor 4 hull points/level for 2 turns/level in up to strong gale winds. Storm force winds have a 1%/turn of negating the spell, hurricane force a 3% chance); **mist** (as *diamond dust* but the cloud is made up of water droplets); **rain** (causes torrential rain within a 4" radius circle within 6" of the caster which lasts for 1 turn/level); **resist pressure** (allows 1 being to resist the effects of pressure up to a depth of 5 miles for 6 turns/level); **water freedom** (allows a being to move and otherwise act physically as if on land).

III: **Summon wind** (will summon a wind of moderate breeze strength + 1 strength level/3 levels of caster. Duration 20 + 6/level turns); **wave** (causes a large wave to hit 1 water craft. The chance of the vessel not sinking is 4%/point hull value. Range 10"); *water breathing* [MU3].

IV: **Calm** (calms all winds and waves within 3" of the caster for 2/level turns); *lower water*; *airy water* [MU5].

V: **Dessicate** (will drain all the water from any 1 being or object); **squall** (causes an intense storm to hit a craft within 10". There is a 3%/hull value point that it will not sink. Creatures on deck have a 25% chance of being swept overboard. Sails and oars are 50% of the time damaged beyond repair, and there is a 10% chance that each mast will snap).

VI: *Part water*; **sink** (will reduce the hull value of any craft up to 30 hull points to zero causing it to sink within 1d4 + 2 rounds); **storm** (as *squall* but effects all craft within a 100" radius and lasts for 2 turns/levels).

VII: **Control maritime weather** (as the druid spell, *control weather* but only effects maritime weather); **tidal wave** (causes a 100' wide, 60' wide wave, which sinks all craft in its way, travelling at 150'/round for 600'. Anyone hit by the wave is stunned for 2d10 rounds and suffers 2d10 points damage. If directed against land, it does 4d10 points damage to any creature which it hits, stunning them for 10 + 2 d10 rounds, and 40 + 1d10 points structural damage against any building it hits. In this case, the wave needs a 200' run up in water and will only travel for 1/2 the normal distance on land. It may only be conjured from water larger than 150' x 1000' x 20'.

Saving Throws

In general, spells against objects and willing recipients have no saving throws, those causing damage are saved against for 1/2 damage, and all others are saved against for no effect.

Uses

These spell lists are only suggestions. Feel free to modify them if you wish – you may find some more deity categories or you may feel that there should be a few more spells – add them if you wish. The lists should be treated as a general guideline rather than a definitive work, but it should, hopefully, make it easier to set up individual clerical sects and give the cleric class some more colour and individualism. □

TALISMAN
 Games Workshop

£7.95

The *Talisman* game is aimed at the younger end of the game purchasing public rather than the seasoned gamer. It comes in an attractively illustrated 'bookcase' box, containing a satisfying number of components: playing-board, cardboard counters and rulesheet plus heaps of cards. The board, components and box cover are beautifully illustrated by the irrepressible Gary Chalk. At first sight the board seems a little confusing, because in places the artwork overflows the squares on which the playing pieces sit, but the players will soon get used to this quirk. The rules are short, well-written and will cause few arguments about interpretation.

The game attempts to sit upon the boundary between traditional board-games and role-playing games. In fact it is much more boardgame than RPG, although much depends on the spirit in which the game is played. There is scope for role-playing of a crude sort, as each player is given one of 14 specific characters (full-colour glossy cards) to play. You can be a Warrior, a Wizard, an Elf, a Monk or even a Ghoul! Each character starts with different Strength, Craft (for spells and psychic combat), Lives, Followers, Gold and Objects and so on, and also individual special abilities; for instance, the Thief may elect to steal Objects from characters he encounters.

The introductory legend tells us that whoever reaches the Crown of Command can become ruler of the land. Players seek to increase their Strength, Craft etc by travelling around the Outer and Middle Regions (the two outer 'tracks' on the board) so that the character can survive the rigours of the Inner Region, which must be crossed to reach the Crown. The Inner Region ends in the Valley of Fire, and you need a Talisman to enter it. On reaching the Crown of Command, you can have fun blasting the other players until you are the only one left!

On your turn you roll a die and must move your character exactly that number of squares either clockwise or anti-clockwise. On most squares you will draw an Adventure Card, and you will have to fight monsters, meet Strangers, and suffer random special effects, or pick up a useful Object, perhaps even a Talisman. The Middle Region is more dangerous than the Outer, and the Inner Region is most dangerous of all.

Talisman plays smoothly. Turns are not too long, so no player is left hanging around while somebody else has a go. Unfortunately our group of players found the game much too long for its simple nature. It can take many, many turns for a character to obtain a significant increase in power, and as movement relies so heavily on the dice, players have very little choice over where they are going. The Adventure Cards are a lottery, and after a few games their novelty wears off. The end result seems to depend entirely on luck. All my group of players came away with a feeling of frustration at the end of the games, largely caused, I think, by an inability to influence the result significantly.

Talisman is not a bad game. If it was shorter, it would make an enjoyable



Photograph: Handford Photography

OPEN BOX

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

family game. Players might want to try minor rule changes to do this; for instance, rolling two dice for movement and selecting the preferred result, and perhaps finishing when one player has reached the Crown of Command, rather than fighting on. The game does contain some colourful and entertaining ideas. How do you fancy being changed into a toad, half-way through your journey? Not just a toad, but a Slimy Little Toad! – with a specially illustrated card to replace your character card for the duration of your toadhood.

Rules:	8	Enjoyment:	5
Playability:	7	Complexity:	3
Skill:	1	Overall:	6

Alan E Paull

BATTLECARS
 Games Workshop

£6.95

Have you got what it takes to be a high-way warrior? Well, now's your chance to find out, for *Battlecars* – the game of deadly driving – has finally hit the streets.

The aim of the game is to drive your car round town, armed to the teeth, with the express intent of blasting all the opposition foolish enough to stand in your way. Sound familiar? Well... OK... so the subject matter is hardly original, but, thankfully, *Battlecars* is not just another *Car Wars*. Comparison is inevitable, but each is sufficiently different to stand on its own merit.

In its favour, *Battlecars* is quick and exciting to play. The battleground is soon designed from the terrain counters (grass, trees, building), and the car cards are speedily equipped by filling the weapon pods with an arsenal limited only by the size of each pod (only two rockets will fit into the same space as eight rounds of machine-gun fire, for example). Choosing the car's armoury can be crucial. Also, manoeuvring the car requires some forethought so that you can hide your weaknesses whilst exposing those of your target. Movement and firing are executed along a crossed network of lines with distance and range calculated by counting the number of points (intersections) traversed.

Each car has special features; it may be autosteer, which allows the safety limits for cornering to be exceeded; a gunnery computer, for an extra attack; or power brakes, useful for avoiding collisions with buildings or trees. The cars are nicely designed but the front wings are too weak. It does not take long for the armour block to be filled with red counters and from then on everything hits the internal components.

So after very little time the game is off and running. The ensuing action should be preceded by a very thorough reading of the rules if it is to *keep* running or constant reference to the rulebook can stall the action. There are several glitches. For instance, it is possible to see a car but be prevented from firing at it down a movement line and it is quite feasible for a pedestrian to be hit by two rockets, only to watch them bounce harmlessly away. But who wants 100% realism? We have the M1 for that.

Battlecars is abstract, yet this is to its advantage. If you want quick, simple and fluid action, take a look at *Battlecars*. The lack of clarity in the rules prevents the game from fully recreating the promise of Jim Burns' excellent cover art, but it created enough impression for me to look forward to the release of *Battlebikes* which will be the first expansion set.

Presentation: 9 **Enjoyment:** 8
Playability: 8 **Complexity:** 5
Skill: 7 **Rules:** 4
Overall: 8 **Ian Waddelow**

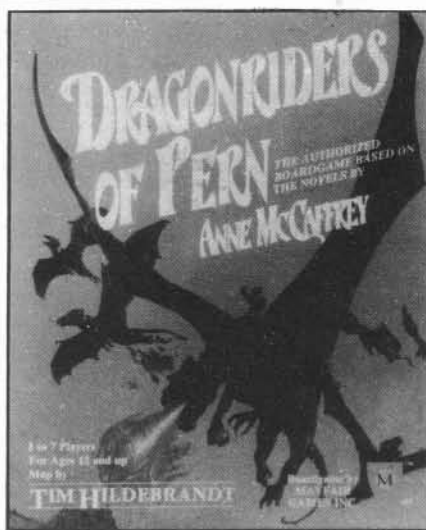
DRAGONRIDERS OF PERN
 Mayfair Games

£16.95

DragonRiders of Pern is a game for 1 to 7 players based on Anne McCaffrey's six books about the inhabitants of Pern – a planet which is periodically attacked by *Thread*, a deadly fungus from a neighbouring planet. It is, I'm afraid, classic proof that a good book does not always translate into a good game. For the not inconsiderable price you get an attractive mapboard in six sections, 108 playing pieces, three dice, two rulebooks (one basic, one advanced) and 112 cards in three packs; the first to determine where Thread falls each turn, the second for random events, and the third to show the personalities controlled by each player. These last, unfortunately, carry illustrations which fail to match with the way I, or anyone else I asked who is familiar with the books, visualised the characters depicted.

The rulebooks are not the clearest I've read, but some of the game systems are unusual and innovative; particularly the auction where one bids for the allegiance of the Lords Holder, which involves a lot of bluffing. The advanced rules add the possibility of allying the Master craftsmen of the planet, and some more complex random events.

Each game turn the players draw random event cards in rotation; some are played at once and others retained for later use. Players then move the personalities they control to the homes of unallied characters. Each personality has a bidding strength which determines the maximum amount of money which



can be spent to influence the Holder of Craftsmen to join your faction. The auction follows with the chance to ally going to the highest bidder.

The areas subject to threadfall are then determined and flights of 'Dragons' despatched to combat it. A highly abstracted combat system is used which misses a golden opportunity to recreate in more detail some of the most exciting parts of the books. If the Thread is destroyed, those involved receive money (presumably from a grateful population). If any Thread is not destroyed, then financial penalties follow and the thread burrows underground and is harder to eliminate. If burrowed Thread is not destroyed the following turn it then begins to spread across the continent with alarming rapidity.

If the planet is ravaged by Thread, then nobody wins, otherwise victory goes to the player with the most allied Lords and Craftsmen. It was clearly the designer's intent to create a tension between keeping Pern Thread free and empire building, since the two are to some extent mutually exclusive, but here I think he has failed. This is a game which lacks those crucial

ingredients – enjoyment and excitement. In a game which has these, almost anything else can be forgiven, eg rotten artwork, unclear rules, complex and unwieldy game mechanics, high price, or 'historical inaccuracy'. In their absence, even the most lavishly illustrated, innovative game is a failure to be played once and no more.

Presentation: 8 **Rules:** 4
Playability: 6 **Complexity:** 4
Enjoyment: 2 **Overall:** 4
Nic Grecas

LOST WORLDS
 Nova Games

£1.95 each

Four years ago, Alfred Leonardi emerged from behind a mountain of paper (and countless calculations) to reveal the best and most original game for decades. That game was *Ace of Aces*; the World War 1 dog-fight game that gave each pilot a stop-action picture book depicting different views of the enemy. *Ace of Aces* is quite brilliant.

Since then, however, Leonardi and *Nova Games* have been trying to recreate the success of the flying game by applying the same system to other themes. *Bounty Hunter* had a Lawman and Outlaw stalking each other around the town saloon but it never fulfilled its promise.

Now *Lost Worlds* has been released. The theme this time is fantasy swordplay with four books available in the initial batch; a Fighter, Dwarf, Skeleton and Giant Goblin.

The books are thin paperbacks containing 32 views of your character in a selection of fighting poses. There is a table of actions enclosed listing possible attacking and defensive moves; thrust, kick, shield, block etc. A move is chosen and cross-referenced, by number, with that selected by your adversary. The aim is to score enough hits to kill your opponent (the skeleton being the easiest to kill as it can take fewer hits).

The drawings are based on *Ral Partha* miniatures and though they are clear, they are disappointingly simplistic and crude. Any two books (even if the same) can fight; with multiplayer melees being possible (with enough books, players, time, dexterity, brains the size of planets etc). The system is simple and easy to learn, but moves should be written down as it soon becomes easy to guess the other person's move from the number called out. It is often hard to visualise what has transpired: you can even swing an axe but see a sword in the picture (ah well).

The game is easy and good fun but it has limited appeal. It would be fun to throw two books at a couple of players when running a RPG as a change from endless die-rolling, but it does not warrant a great deal of thought, nor does it allow for any real strategy. *Lost Worlds* is a good game for lunchtime or to take down to the pub. But be warned!... the giant goblin *never* buys a round...

Presentation: 5 **Enjoyment:** 6
Playability: 5 **Complexity:** 2
Skill: 6 **Overall:** 6
Ian Waddelow

Critical Mass is a regular book review column written by Dave Langford.

Machines and Magic

VONDA N. MCINTYRE
SUPERLUMINAL

a new novel by the author of
the Hugo and Nebula Award winning
DREAMSNAKE

fairly fresh one who hardly smells at all... Will Book 8 introduce Gay Lib, I wonder?

More enjoyable was Fred Saberhagen's *Empire of the East* [Futura 558pp £2.95], not merely thanks to my delighted laughter at the Larry Niven cover quote: 'Better than *Lords of the Rings*.' Niven plainly prefers this science-fantasy mix of magic and machines to books which say upsetting things about the moral effects of power. *Empire* appeared here in three volumes from *Tandem* (1973-4) but has been revised 'substantially' by some trimming of superfluous adjectives here and there. In the far future, magic works, the appalling East lords it over the nice West, and the Free Folk use white magic and dug-up technology to topple fine melodramatic baddies like the Satrap Ekuman, Som the Dead and the Demon Zapranoth. I liked the climaxes of the three volumes, with Ekuman being wasted in accordance with an earlier prophecy which we're left to recall *without* a nudge-nudge from Saberhagen (lesson for Anthony here); with deathproof Som getting it in the neck in properly logical-unexpected manner (ditto); with vile Demon Orcus discovering his true nature as a former atomic fireball, milliseconds before 'victory'. Swashbuckling fun, routine plot, boldly unsubtle characters, clever technology-based magic: my only quibble is that according to Book 3's revelations, the atomic dreadnought unearthed in book 1 ought not to have worked.

Contrast Vonda McIntyre's new book. *Superluminal* [Gollancz 298pp £8.95] has much that *Empire* lacks: nifty writing, real characters, 'villains' who are decent people acting for the best, moments of genuine, moving joy and tragedy. Alas, while able to take Saberhagen's science-fantasy on its own light-hearted terms, I couldn't suspend disbelief in McIntyre's SF plot devices. Firstly, pilots of superluminal (meaning faster-than-light, not better-than-Valium) spacecraft must swap their hearts for mechanical pumps to withstand the stresses – a good macabre notion, but the 'stresses' are unconvincingly vague, to do with biorhythms and relativity, making little sense. Secondly, de-hearted pilots, with their supreme powers of control, go all woozy when near, and especially when in bed with ordinary people. Why? It's glossed over with mutterings about out-of-phase biorhythms.

If you can swallow this lot, the book moves well, with lovers parted by the difficulty above, leading to lost-in-hyperspace melodrama for hero and heroine (both proving incredibly special, superpowered, telepathic...) and a satisfying climax. After this the plot runs down gently for 70 pages, tying up loose ends and leaving the original pair together in spirit alone – 'I have been faithful to thee, Cynara, in my fashion.' Minor characters are well handled, especially the sexy undersea-adapted

You start wondering if you've been reviewing too long when, brushing the cobwebs from your dim spectacled eyes and fumbling with arthritic fingers through the latest books, you find paperback editions of stuff you covered in hardback while still the fire of youth was in your veins.

In other words, here is Asimov's *Foundation's Edge* [Granada 432pp £1.95], reviewed last year. My complaint was that Asimov's famous fluency and egotism had run away with the book: he's done a nice job of recapturing the old rough-hewn style of the *Foundation* trilogy, but these 432 pages contain barely more plot – and on the whole less action – than each 40-page episode of *Foundation*. And even then, the real revelations are saved for a sequel! To quote Kenneth Tynan: 'The trouble with reviewing commodities like this is that you know in advance that, for all the effect it will have, you might as well fill your column with a relief map of Death Valley.' No SF enthusiast can miss this book; Asimov and *Granada* will make lots of money from it, and because they are lovable I wish them well, but...

Piers Anthony also prolongs his series too far. *Dragon on a Pedestal* [Del Rey 306pp \$2.95, to be distributed/reprinted by *Futura*], is the 7th 'Xanth' fantasy: my austere litcrit friends will gasp in horror when I confess to liking the first few. Despite a predilection for very didactic explanations and very stupid protagonists, Anthony is engagingly breezy and inventive, titivating each tired old quest plot with new varieties of 'magic'. Unfortunately he's invented so many magical talents, creatures and objects that Xanth is getting too full for comfort – high-powered characters have to be put out of action for the sake of the plot, as in old Justice League of America comics where the inconveniently powerful Superman tended to be away fighting a swarm of meteors while everyone else confronted the evil Thargs. GMs will sympathize.

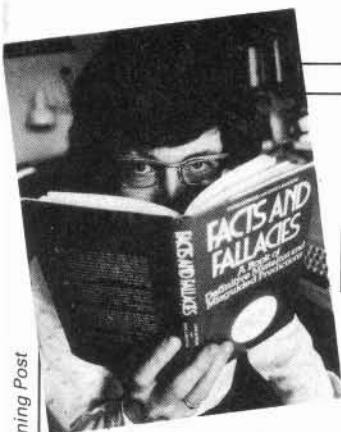
Dragon is annoying for its re-use of old stuff like the dread wiggles [Book 1], forget-spells [Book 3], goblin/harpy wars [Book 3], dragons (passim) and 'spell-reversal wood', the latter suggesting a deplorably obvious solution to the book's problem of someone being regressed to babyhood by a Fountain of Youth jag (see what I mean about Xanth being cluttered?). Instead Anthony cops out by arbitrarily introducing a person whose magic talent is: increasing people's age. Egalitarians will be delighted to find this book extending Xanthian civil rights (previously granted to centaurs, ogres, nightmares and even women) to a token zombie. Token, because the zombie in question is a

secondary heroine who is the book's best creation, and in whose arms... ah, you're ahead of me. A pleasant and gentle book which could have been triffic with a touch more SF plausibility.

Robertson Davies' *High Spirits* [Penguin 198pp £2.50] isn't plausible either, but doesn't need to be. It's the best collection since M R James in this narrow genre of donnish, tongue-in-cheek ghost stories. The 18 tales are set in the Canadian college of which Davies was Master (a quibble: some college in-jokes remain and should have been clarified or edited out) and include hilariously set-pieces. The ghost exorcised by PhD viva-voce; a horde of irate ex-saints defrocked by Pope Paul VI; the 'Ugly Spectre of Sexism'; the biophysicist Victor Frank Einstein who by unhal-lowed arts builds a monstrous new college cat. He: 'Cursed be the day, abhorred devil, in which you first saw the light! (etc, etc)' Cat: 'You mean you don't love your own dear little Pussikins best...' Buy this one.

But avoid Jack Chalker's *The Return of Nathan Brazil* [Penguin 289pp £1.95]. This is the 4th 'Well World' book. The first was a mildly interesting pulp space opera; the second and third were more of the same, laced with Chalker's distasteful relish for making his puppet characters suffer degrading changes of bodily form; *Return* consists of longwinded efforts to set up the background for the final *Twilight at the Well of Souls*, in which the universe appears likely to get blown up... but, alas, probably reconstituted. Personally I can do without an SF universe in which cardboard characters really do say, no kidding, 'We're tearing a hole in the fabric of space-time! ...Sustained nullification on a huge scale might be beyond nature's ability to counteract!' Yes, it's back to the old bad days of SF, without even E E Smith's boyish enthusiasm to make the nonsense work. Can *Penguin's* long-standing reputation for good taste in SF survive this brutal assault?

A Better Mantrap by Bob Shaw [Granada 238pp £1.50] is a 9-story SF collection featuring excellent tales of suspense/horror (*Conversion*), hilarity (*Kingdom of O'Ryan*, *Cottage of Eternity*) and mystery (the long *Frost Animals*), plus lesser stuff: Shaw's always a good entertainer. *Easy Travel to Other Planets* [Arena 278pp £2.95] is Ted Mooney's much-praised borderline fantasy – sex with dolphins, etc – which shamefully I haven't found time to read. Complaints about this vile dereliction may be personally delivered to me (accompanied by the traditional pint of beer) at the Easter SF Convention, *Seacon 84* at the Brighton Metropole Hotel. Ring 021-777-2777 quickly for details. □



THURD THE BARBARIAN

The Three Tasks of Thrud Chapter 1: Black Treachery

THE CASTLE OF TO-ME KU-PA
THE EVIL NECROMANCER...

OMAGIC POOL
OF YE I ASK...

...FIND THE MORTAL...
FOR THESE TASKS...

...TO BRING THE
WEAPON DOWN
THRU' TIME...

...TO MAKE
THE POWER OF
ALL THINGS MINE!

AHA! THERE'S THE ONE
WE SEEK! GO QUICKLY
AND BRING HIM TO ME!

WRITTEN & DRAWN BY KEVIN O'NEILL WITH THANKS TO JAMES BROWN © CARL O'NEILL '84

AT THAT MOMENT, IN
A NEARBY PUB...

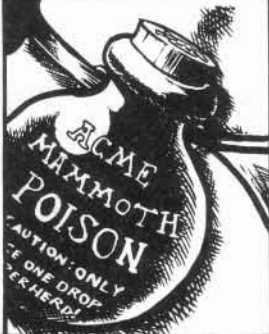
THURD IS BLISSFULLY
UNWARE OF TO-ME
KU-PA'S INTENTIONS.

BARMAN, GIVE
ME TWO FLAGONS
OF ALE

BUT THE WIZARD IS NOT
THE ONLY ONE INTERESTED
IN OUR HERO!

THE BEAUTIFUL
STRANGER IS, IN
FACT, LYMARATHA
SHE-WILDEBEESTE,
WHO IS SEEKING
REVENGE FOR
THURD KILLING
HER ENTIRE
FAMILY WHILST
ATTEMPTING TO
'REScue' HER
FROM THEM.

(SEE WHITE
DWARF 50.)



THE WIZARD'S HENCHMEN
ARRIVE OUTSIDE THE PUB...

SEND THIS OVER TO THAT
BIG GUY OVER THERE!

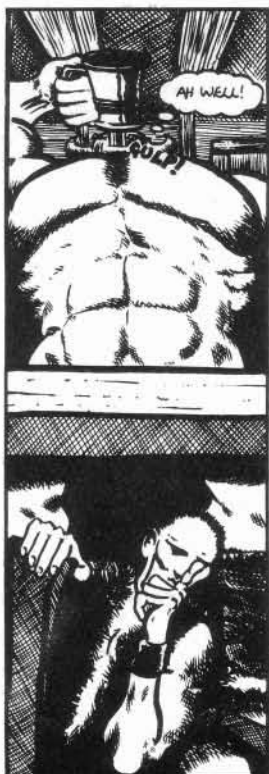
THAT'S OUR MAN!

YES, AND HE'S RIGHT
WHERE WE WANT HIM!
I KNOW THIS PLACE...

THE TABLE HE'S SITTING
AT IS DIRECTLY ABOVE A
TRAPDOOR THAT LEADS
OUTSIDE - FOLLOW ME!



'ERE YARE SIR!
COMPLIMENTS OF THE
LADY AT THE BAR.



AH WELL!



Fiend Factory is a regular department featuring readers' monsters for D&D/AD&D edited by Albie Fiore. This issue a special selection of low level creatures.

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FIRST KIND



SPIDER DRAGON by Ian Livingstone

No Appearing: 1
Armour Class: 3
Movement: 12"/24"
Hit Dice: 4d8+4
Treasure: H
Attack: Two claws for 1d4 each, bite for 2d6, plus breath weapon
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Intelligence: High

The small (2') spider dragon is typically found in dense undergrowth. They have a chameleon-like ability to blend in with their background. Thus they will only be noticed 5% of the time from a distance off more than 6' and only 20% when closer. They are never surprised.

Spider dragons are man-eaters and find human flesh a delicacy. Despite

their size, they will eat limbs whole, distending their jaws and gullet like a snake. The digestion process takes two days during which time they are unable to fly and can fight only with their breath weapon - acid, which it can spit in a 1/2" wide jet to a range of 6" in a straight line for 2d8 damage.

They cannot speak but are able to cast *fear* as a means of defence during the digestion period.

Their fondness for treasure is the same as most dragons, but they will eat any gems that they find, believing them to have great regenerative powers. A spider dragon's stomach will always contain 1-6 gems.

Comment: This creature is a little too heavy for 1st level characters. It should be encountered at the culmination of an adventure or a situation where the group have a clear avenue of escape.

WHIPPERSNAPPER by Phil Masters

No Appearing: 5-40
Armour Class: 6
Movement: 12"
Hit Dice: 1d8+3
Treasure: C
Attack: Two lashes for 1-4 each, bite for 2d6
Alignment: Chaotic evil
Intelligence: Semi-

Whippersnappers are vicious, cunning predators that inhabit jungle areas. These fast, agile and unpleasant creatures live for about 30 years and stand 4' tall. They resemble a cross between a deformed goblin and a hairless gibbon, but for two features: their large, long, powerful jaws full of needle-sharp teeth; and their long whip-like tentacles which they have in place of arms. If necessary, they can attack up to three opponents at once.

They make saving rolls as a 10th level thief due to their agility.

These beasts will attack any humanoid race on sight with the exception of goblins and hobgoblins who nevertheless regard them with justifiable apprehension.

The species cannot speak, though their staccato screeches appear to represent a limited form of communication.

A larger, tougher version is said to infest *The Abyss*, in partial servitude to the demon prince Demogorgon.



MARSH-WIGGLE by Fred Lee Cain

No Appearing: 1-4
Armour Class: 7-8
Movement: 12"
Hit Dice: 1-7d8
Treasure: J,K,L,M,N
Attack: By weapon type
Alignment: Lawful good (neutral tendencies)
Intelligence: Average to very
Psionic Ability: See below

These rare humanoids are tall (6'6" average) and extremely thin with an average lifespan of 80 years. They have gaunt, somewhat homely features; long pointed nose and chin, large ears and long, lank, greenish-grey hair - like tiny flat reeds. Their large webbed feet are duck-like and

horny, while their skin is a muddy dun-colour. They dwell in fens or marshy areas abundant with rushes, cat-tails, reeds and low stunted trees where their drab, homespun earth-colour garb (drab yellow/green in Spring) added to their natural appearance renders them almost invisible. They are still and silent (like halflings, marsh-wiggles are effectively invisible wherever there is vegetation and surprise on a roll of 1-4 on a d6).

Their habitual expression is one of quietly resigned, fatalistic melancholy for few beings have a more dismal view of life. Marsh-wiggles tend (at least outwardly) to a dolefully forlorn pessimism – not with whining or complaint but with a dimly philosophical acceptance: 'It's no use worrying; nothing's going to turn out right, anyway!'. (Some other races find this mildly amusing.) Despite this, wiggles are neither cowards nor quitters. In fact, this attitude may be more a preparation in case anything does go wrong. They might not be as sincerely mournful as they let on for they are not inclined to despair, even when the going gets rough.

This quietly fatalistic resolution and indomitability is coupled with a gentle decency and accommodating nature. They are neither inhospitable nor unconcerned over injustice or the hardships of others. As generally 'good' people, they can be charitable, courteous, obliging and brave.

A solitary race, they dwell in wigwams of bark, rushes or tanned hides; either alone (50%) or as a family unit - a married pair with 1-3 children. Sometimes, an entire clan is scattered over a wide area. They are 80% likely to be encountered in their settlement. Enjoying their privacy, they live quietly, fishing, fowl-netting, hunting and a farming a little. Their crafts and skills are rustic and plain but of good functional quality. In heavily 'settled' areas, there is a 2% chance of a marsh-wiggle skilled in working copper, pewter, and iron, but usually they trade for metal

goods with elves, gnomes or humans as they can speak elvish, gnomish and the common tongue. They also speak their own language, halfling, their alignment tongue and sometimes (50%) dwarven and (30%) orkish.

Though keeping mostly to themselves, on seasonal occasions (or in cases of emergency), clan leaders will gather for a 'thane-council' in a large, walled hall inside one of the log-palisade 'refuges' dotted sparsely around isolated island-bogs.

Marsh-wiggles are extremely reluctant to leave their quiet, peaceful, uneventful life to go adventuring. On the rare occasion that one

does, other wiggles consider it 'strange' and 'too full of high spirits'.

When going on long quests, they generally go as illusionists (25%), fighters (20%), or rangers (30%). Fighters, when armoured, tend to use leather, padded or studded, or ringmail. They can reach 4th level, or 7th as rangers. In combat, they rely mainly on sling, spear, (long) bow, and trident; but 20% use mace or flail and 30% a longsword (all with a round shield on occasion). As illusionists, they may reach 6th level. Magic users and thieves are very rare (rising only to 2nd level). They are unheard of as assassins; and are only 5% likely to be a cleric (they can be shamans or druids up to 4th level).

Their natural resistance to poison and magic causes them to save as though four levels higher. They can also generate a mental barrier to resist any attempted psionic attack or domination.

GREY DOMINATORS by Phil Masters

No Appearing: See below
Armour Class: Varies
Movement: 9" (Guards: as by monk level)
Hit Dice: Masters: 3d8; Guards: as by monk level; Servitors: 1d10
Treasure: B
Attack: By weapon type
Alignment: Lawful evil
Intelligence: Masters: High; Guards: Average; Servitors: Low

Grey dominators are a race of evil men, distinguished by the greyish tinge to their pallid skins. Their origins are mysterious: they allegedly dwell on an inhospitable arctic island, but it has never been found and no grey dominator has ever revealed its location, if indeed it does exist. In fact, they are noted for their self-control and psychic resilience: threats, magic, torture or psionics cannot elicit information from them and prolonged attempts to break this reserve triggers something in these beings that cause them to die.

What is known of them is what others have observed. Their philosophy seems to be one of strength and detachment, with a belief that they alone are fit to rule over men. Their strict, hierarchical society permits little superfluous communication between the three classes. Only males have ever been seen - their women are thought to be kept in serfdom, or even like animals, in their homeland. Their goal of conquest is restrained by their limited numbers. They have developed refined techniques of torture and mind control to overcome this. Their activities will *never* be perceptible as such - these devious creatures take over communities by dominating leaders and key figures, then manipulating others by fear. Such techniques work equally as well on orcs, goblins and the like, as they do on humans; but the ultimate grey dominator aim is to rule *all* races.

There are three grey dominator classes: **Servitors** are the manual workers: tough individuals with basic weapon training (as 1st level fighters). Their main function,

though, is work. Each has some manual skill (fishing, smithing, carpentry, etc), and total ignorance of other fields.

Guards are the combat specialists, trained monks of level 4-6 (d3+3) with appropriate weaponry (usually a two-handed axe and a crossbow).

Masters rule the others. Each usually has chainmail, a small shield and light mace, fighting and saving as a 6th level cleric (despite their 3 hit dice), but their powers lie in other areas. Each carries a set of lightweight silvered iron manacles, non-magical and unremarkable, but for a trailing iron chain. If any other being other than a master is wearing these, and a master is holding the chain, the latter can induce intolerable levels of pain in the wearer, incapacitating them for as long as the master chooses and 1-3 rounds afterwards. A master can control two sets of manacles simultaneously (but no more). Masters are immune to all forms of psionic attack, including disciplines, and can deflect such, one at a time, back upon the user. The great power of these beings, however, requires longer. Using their manacles, they can 'brainwash' any mortal being. After two days' work, the victim begins losing 1-2 points of wisdom per day. Once it falls to 2 or less, the victim will automatically follow any command from a master, even if *charmed* by another being. If the process is interrupted before this, the victim regains wisdom at the rate of 1 point per week, or on receiving a *remove curse* cast by another. Those completely dominated can only be restored to normality by the casting of *heal*, *remove curse* and *dispel evil* on successive rounds, or by some form of *wish*.

When grey dominators are encountered, roll 1d20 to discover the nature of the party: 1-3 indicates 2-4 guards on a minor mission; 4-10, a roving band seeking expendable slaves, with 1-2 masters, 3-6 guards, and 5-10 servitors in leather



armour with clubs; 11-17, a strong party on some specific mission, with 2-4 masters, 75% chance of 1-4 guards, and 25% chance of 1-8 servitors equipped as above; 18-19, a party travelling to or from some secret base with a 75% chance of 1-2 masters, 1-4 guards, and a 90% chance of 2-7 servitors, unarmoured but with clubs and hand-axes; 20 indicates a lair encounter (with treasure present) - a well-hidden temporary base with 1-8 masters, 2-7 guards, and 3-18 servitors, half in leather armour but all with clubs and hand-axes. □

Microview is a regular alternate-monthly column, reviewing new computer games and providing game-aid programs, edited by Russell Clarke. This issue, two new games are reviewed, and a short program to facilitate playing Starfleet Battles is presented.

ON IMPULSE

Game Reviews and a Game-Aid program for Starfleet Battles Movement



With this issue Microview goes into double figures (its the tenth one!) and also changes editor. My thanks to Mike Costello for the past nine Microviews – the King is dead, long live the Party Chairman (!?!)

You can send any articles/programs/ideas/suggestions etc you have to me at the WD editorial address – the more the merrier! We are still looking for programs as games-aids, eg RPG character generators, dungeon generators or aids to any other games (not necessarily RPGs – see this month's offering). Programs should try to be non-machine specific as far as possible and any notes for conversion to other machines would be gratefully received. Try and avoid any peeks or pokes, but if you must use them then please indicate clearly what they do. We are mainly interested in software for ZX81s, Spectrums, BBCs, and Commodore 64s, but don't let that stop you if you only own something else!

Onto the game reviews...

USURPER Assassin Software

This is a single or multi-player game for the 48K Spectrum, about replacing 'His Majesty' with 'Your Majesty'! The cassette has no marking to indicate which side the program is on and there are no specific loading instructions (LOAD "" works, however). Whilst loading a couple of rather good graphics keep you entertained until the first prompt appears. The moves are simple, being a list of locations you can respond with when prompted. There is, however, one missing – F for forest (quite useful!). It says near the bottom that if Spirit is reduced to zero the player becomes one of the undead and 'can take no further part in the game'. This is not quite true... although nothing more the player does is of any consequence to the end result, the computer still expects him to take his turn and waits for replies – very uncool if there are only two players from an original ten left active. Players have 100 days (or turns) to move from location to loca-

tion (either by choosing freely each turn or using an optional map with its attendant restrictions) with the aim of gathering 1000 or more followers and 10000 or more gold pieces. The King will then notice you and 'lead his army to fight you'.

Your character for the game is a simple spreadsheet display of *Strength* (ability to take damage in combat), *Spirit* (reduced each time you encounter an undead until, at zero, you become one yourself) – both of which start at 100, *Followers* and *Gold*. Your name and player number is also displayed along with the location you have chosen. The character display has a couple of flaws, the most important of which is that it doesn't update at the end of your turn so that you have to wait until the start of your next turn to see the results of your actions. The format could have been neater too, with the columns right justified.

When you input a location the computer takes over and resolves any encounters (killing monsters gains you gold) and hunting (gaining you provisions). Certain locations are special in that you don't hunt or meet monsters but can engage in other activities like hiring more followers, gambling, recovering from serious wounds or petitioning the local Baron for aid. Each follower and your illustrious self consume 1 provision per day and if you don't have enough then desertions will occur. At occasional, usually inopportune, moments random events will occur resulting in you being robbed (by Unge the Unwise Hippy), plagued (lose followers, gold and provisions) or even both!! It is also possible to attack other players (common under the free movement system, rare in the map game) with the result that the loser becomes weak (Strength reduces to 20) and virtually has to start again.

The combat system is the flawed strength of this game containing all the program's good points and a great many of its bad ones. The monster that you are locked in battle with is displayed in such ghastly colour combinations as to be almost unreadable – indeed the dragon is only recognisable due to it being the most illegible blur! However, there are some lovely sound effects during the fight (swords meeting and little yelp sounds!) coupled with 'whump' (if you wound the enemy) or 'ouch' (if they wound you) displayed on the screen. Each 'whump' reduces the enemies number by a random amount and each 'ouch' reduces your strength by a random amount (regardless of how many followers you have! – I have a vision of your character desperately parrying the enemies blows whilst your followers hack them down from behind!!!). If the enemy are reduced to zero before your strength reaches 20 then you win and gain the gold they were carrying (varies according to the opponent). If you lose then you have to start again, but with a starting strength of only 20. (A good gimmick of moving bands of colour in the border indicates whether you win or lose.) Your strength however will recover at about 2 per turn that you don't get 'ouched'. Alternatively, you can visit the inn to eat yourself better or visit the temple where the Priest may bless you (Strength immediately recovers to 100) or you may meet a ghoulish vampire that

will knock 10 or 20 off your spirit. The problem with this system is that you can meet large numbers of monsters that take nearly forever to kill (four or five screenfuls of 'whumps') which gets tedious after a while.

So finally you have amassed your men and gold - marched off to meet the King and... CRASH! The Usurper is defeated!!! The problem (which the instructions don't tell you about!) is that unless you have more than 2000 followers when the King comes to fight you, he will march over you without even noticing (I discovered this the hard way having just congratulated myself on being noticed!!). All well and good if the number of followers that were required varied with every game (simple RND function), but it doesn't so after the first game the novelty wears off.

That is the essence of the game if played properly and with no accidents. Unfortunately, due to an appalling lack of error trapping it is possible to win every time in just a few days! There are no checks on inputs so if you enter a negative number of men when hiring you gain gold and lose followers, but that's not the end of the story ... you can have negative numbers of followers!! I leave you to work out how to win!

The program itself is actually rather poorly written all round. I've mentioned the error trapping (or rather the lack of it); all entries are Inputs, even where inkey\$ would be better; large numbers 'wrap around' onto the line below; you actually get 101 days to accomplish your quest; gambling really pays - six to one on odds of just under one to one; but you 'loose' rather than lose and sandstorms occur in the temple as well as the desert (especially clever considering the temple is in the forest!). Despite all this *Usurper* could be quite good if it wasn't for the fact that there is a method to winning (and I mean a legal one!) which makes it tedious after a while. Marks given below are out of ten.

Graphics (not relevant in play):	7	Long term interest:	4
Instructions:	7	Value for money:	5
Playability:	8	Overall:	5

CARIBBEAN TRADER GMs

This game (for the 48K *Spectrum*) puts you in the role of Captain of a small cargo vessel plying between various islands. It is a single player game, but can be played comfortably by a committee. The cassette tells you to LOAD "" and a label marks which side the program is on. There were problems as the review copy proved difficult to load. Eventually though we were loaded up and ready to go. The first screen asks you at which difficulty level you wish to play and then you get three pages of detailed instructions which miss nothing out. A minor quibble here is that you cannot bypass them once you know them.

The object of the game is to amass a fortune (size depends on the difficulty level) whilst paying back a debt to Formoza (a 'lone' shark according to the instructions!). The debt increases with each turn and if it gets too large then Formoza will feed your gizzards to the sharks (...er... that means you loose -

sorry! - lose!!!)... You can borrow from Formoza as well - up to twice your debt - but be careful.

With your available cash you can buy any of 5 different items (you can hold sixty units of cargo - each item is costed per unit) ranging in cost and legality (slaves - very illegal, guns - illegal, rum - slightly illegal, spices and tobacco - safe). When loaded you choose a destination port and sail to it. A nice graphic and tune accompany you and it's during this portion that the hazards occur. You can meet pirates who try to steal your cargo (the more crew you buy, the better), the coast guard (who shoot you if you're slave or gun running or fine you if you're carrying rum), typhoons, becalming (interest on your debt mounts up), spice beetles, rebel leaders... When (if?) you get to your destination you can sell your cargo (if the price is right) and buy a new one. You carry on like this until you win... (or, as usually happens in the expert game, lose!).

This is a really enjoyable game and as there is no sure method of winning it has lasting interest value. The graphics are good (if simple) and most of the sounds are jolly (I'm dubious about the raspberry you get when selecting your cargo though!). The spreadsheet updates are fast and there are three skill levels available. There are some bad points however. For example in the instructions you are told not to worry if you break out of the program and that CONTINUE will recover you. This is rather annoying especially as it is not too hard to protect your inputs against problems like this and ensure good game flow. There are some other holes in the error trapping - under certain circumstances you can't give a legal input to repaying Formoza which means you have to break out and re-enter the program at another location (ie CONTINUE does *not* work). There is a routine that tells you how many units of an item you can afford, but which doesn't stop at the maximum capacity of your ship. An 'all' reply to the question of how much cargo you wish to sell would speed things up and, finally, if you mistakenly enter a request to SAIL instead of BUY or SELL then you cannot abort it. Despite all this CARIBBEAN TRADER is great fun and I highly recommend it!

Graphics (not relevant in play):	8	Long term interest:	9
Instructions:	9	Value for money:	9
Playability:	8	Overall:	7

This month's GAP (Game-Aid Program) is a program for the 16K *Spectrum* designed to help all players of *Starfleet Battles* who get cross-eyed looking across the Impulse movement charts (especially the large 32 impulse one!) or who after resolving an epic battle cannot remember which impulse they're on. You can enter any number of impulses (up to 32!) so you are not limited to any particular impulse format. The program lets you know which ships move on what impulse and tells you the impulse you are on. At the end of a turn you are asked to update the information on the ships still participating (unlike *Usurper* dead ships don't have to play on!) if another turn is required. Lines 5-10 set up the initial number of

ships and their ID's; 13-21 get the data for the turn; 26-30 ask if another turn is required and begin the update procedure; 32-42 is a Subroutine which calculates the impulse movement; 44-51 is a Subroutine which handles end of turn update. □

```

1 REM
2 REM Warp Speed! Captain
   © 1984 d7 Software
3 REM by MJM
4 REM
5 PRINT AT 0, 6; INK 1; "Warp Speed,
  Captain!"; INK 2; AT 1, 6; "_____";
  INK 0
6 PRINT AT 3, 6; "Number of ships = "; :
  INPUT NO: IF NO <= 0 OR NO <> INT NO
  THEN GO TO 6
7 PRINT NO
8 DIM S$(NO, 15): PRINT AT 5, 6; "Identifiers
  for ships?"
9 FOR A=1 TO NO: PRINT : PRINT INK 1;
  "Ship no. "; A; "; ": INPUT S$(A): PRINT
  INK 2; S$(A): NEXT A
10 IF INKEY$ <> "" THEN GO TO 10
11 PRINT #0; FLASH 1; PAPER 1; INK 6; "
  PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"
12 IF INKEY$ = "" THEN GO TO 12
13 LET TURN=1: DIM S (NO)
14 CLS : PRINT AT 0, 13; INK 1; "TURN ";
  TURN
15 PRINT : PRINT INK 1; "NUMBER OF
  IMPULSES REQUIRED = "; : INPUT IMP:
  IF IMP <= 0 OR IMP >= 33 OR IMP <> INT
  IMP THEN GO TO 15
16 PRINT IMP
17 PRINT : PRINT TAB 10; INK 2; "Ship
  speeds?"
18 FOR A=1 TO NO
19 PRINT : PRINT TAB 5; INK 1; S$(A); " = "; :
  INPUT S(A)
20 IF S(A) < 0 OR S(A) > IMP OR S(A) > 31 OR
  S(A) <> INT S(A) THEN GO TO 19
21 PRINT INK 2; S(A): NEXT A
22 IF INKEY$ <> "" THEN GO TO 22
23 PRINT #0; FLASH 1; PAPER 1; INK
  6; "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"
24 IF INKEY$ = "" THEN GO TO 24
25 GO SUB 32
26 PRINT : PRINT : PRINT TAB 10; "Next
  turn?": INPUT A$: IF LEN A$=0 THEN GO
  TO 26
27 IF A$(1) <> "y" AND A$(1) <> "Y"
  THEN STOP
28 CLS : PRINT INK 1; "Have any ships been
  destroyed, or disengaged?": PRINT
29 INPUT A$: IF A$(1) = "Y" OR A$(1) = "y"
  THEN GO TO 44
30 LET TURN=TURN+1: CLS : GO TO 14
31 REM IMPULSE ROUTINE
32 DIM I (NO): DIM T (NO)
33 FOR A=1 TO NO: LET I(A)=S(A)/(IMP-.001):
  NEXT A
34 FOR A=1 TO IMP
35 CLS : PRINT INK 2; "Impulse no. "; A; "
  Ships to move = "
36 FOR B=1 TO NO: LET T(B)=T(B)+I(B):
  IF T(B) >= 1 THEN LET T(B)=T(B)-1: PRINT
  : PRINT INK 1; S$(B)
37 NEXT B
38 IF IMP=32 THEN PRINT : PRINT INK
  1; "Plasma torps & speed 32 drones"
39 IF INKEY$ <> "" THEN GO TO 39
40 PRINT #0; FLASH 1; PAPER 1; INK
  6; "PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"
41 IF INKEY$ = "" THEN GO TO 41
42 NEXT A: RETURN
43 REM SHIP DESTROYED
44 LET A=1: PRINT "Answer 'y' if the ship
  named is no longer in the game; ": PRINT
45 PRINT S$(A): INPUT A$: IF A$(1) = "y" OR
  A$(1) = "Y" THEN GO TO 48
46 IF A > NO THEN GO TO 30
47 LET A=A+1: GO TO 45
48 FOR N=A+1 TO NO: LET S$(N-1)=S$(N):
  LET S(N-1)=S(N): LET T(N-1)=T(N): LET
  I(N-1)=I(N): NEXT N: LET NO=NO-1
49 IF NO=0 THEN STOP
50 IF A > NO THEN GO TO 30
51 GO TO 45

```


Players using other systems should find conversion easy enough. Prices, tech levels and effects given are rough guides; referees should feel free to modify anything they disagree with.



Immortality in Traveller by Andy Slack

METHODS

Drugs

TL15; Cr200,000 per month. A regular course of drug voids aging throws.

Rejuvenation. The drug may be rejuvenating or simply life-prolonging. Rejuvenating drugs actively reverse aging and the character gradually returns to his physical peak as the doses take effect; in most campaigns this does not happen, and would require someone to keep records of a character's history. Life-prolonging drugs may either keep the user perpetually at the age when treatment commenced with regard to appearance as well as characteristics, or the user may grow old in appearance but remain healthy.

Signs of Use. If it is rejuvenating, scars may disappear. If appearance is not conserved, the character will appear a hale and hearty 285. In any case, skin or eye colour might be affected, or some other sign might be visible. Similarly, the drug or process might make the user sterile — permanently, or while treatment continues.

Addiction. Most characters on anagathids will behave as if addicted, but withdrawal symptoms must be specified. Most likely the character will merely carry on aging from where he left off until treatment resumes. The character may be physically dependent on the drug, however, and may die, lose psionic powers or become ill if he stops. Most spectacular and unlikely is that all the 'cheated' aging rolls must be made at once, and the character ages the time his youth was maintained in mere minutes.

Age Limits. The drug may not work if the user is too old — or too young — when treatment commences. It is unlikely that anyone will want to start the drug before 30 in *Traveller* terms since there is no aging before then. If the drug arrests normal body development, the very young might not be allowed to start treatment.

Disease. As a side-effect, the drug may make a user more resistant to disease, or vice versa.

Source. The animal, plant or mineral the drug is manufactured from and where it is found must be specified. The process must be complex and expensive to preserve game balance; otherwise everyone will use the drugs and some player will start manufacturing them.

Medicine

In *WD40*, Sean Masterson suggested that for each tech level above 8, the aging rolls were delayed one term; this suggestion is a good way to handle the procedure.

Surgery

Organ Transplants. TL8; Cr-tens to hundreds of thousands per operation. This is already done with kidneys and hearts; in the future, once the rejection syn-

drome has been overcome, it will be possible to replace lungs, eyes, livers etc. A trained surgeon, assistants and a fully-equipped hospital are necessary; the recipient will be incapacitated for several months. In game terms, the recipient may gain DMs on his next aging rolls for Strength and Endurance; since central nervous tissue is unaffected, there is no effect on Dexterity or Intelligence rolls. The DM size should depend on operation costs. Operations should be repeated regularly, say every few years at first, getting more frequent and expensive as the character gets older.

A real problem would be getting hold of the parts. High law level worlds may retain the death penalty, condemned criminals being broken up for spare parts. Since everyone needs the parts, the death penalty is voted in for increasingly minor crimes. Organleggers may exist; criminals who kill people to sell their organs illegally to transplant surgeons. If the law level is low, desperate individuals (perhaps the travellers) may sell parts of their bodies or put them up as security on a loan.

At TL9 or so, regeneration therapy allows characters to regenerate lost

'What do you mean you discovered Skirrow's World. That was over 200 years ago!'

Mr Skirrow looked knowingly at Jamison, a wry smile on his face. 'That's right', he said.

limbs; soon after, growing synthetic organs (a kind of primitive cloning) is possible and the problem of obtaining spares lessens.

Bionics. TL8; Cr-hundreds of thousands to millions. Bionics are not the path to superhuman characteristics; they are still attached to a body which is at least partly flesh and blood. Again, Dexterity and Intelligence are not affected; however, bionic limbs might be used to restore a character's Strength and Endurance to former levels, or possibly a little beyond. Strength is the easier to raise since Endurance largely depends on the heart and lungs, but other bionic organs are possible at higher tech levels. The maximum benefit from a lengthy series of bionics operations should be +1 or +2 to a character's original (ie as first diced) Strength and/or Endurance. A hospital is needed for the operations.

Bionics are mainly prosthetic, and are likely to become redundant when tissue regeneration and cultured synthetic transplants are available. A bionic individual will be dependent on batteries, with a possible loss of dexterity due to the operation.

Coring. TL11; Cr-millions to tens of millions. Normally illegal. This involves killing someone in (hopefully) perfect health. Perhaps the bodies of condemned criminals would be used. A superb surgeon and an excellent hospital are required. The character's brain and large parts of his nervous system are surgically removed, and implanted in a new body. The donor's brain may be destroyed or placed in a robot body (see below). The transplanted character retains his own Intelligence, Education and skills; he gains the donor's former Strength, Endurance and appearance; Dexterity is reduced to the lower of the two previous values; Social Standing may be that of the donor or transplantee, depending on how secret the operation was. Aging then proceeds normally, in the new body.

Robot Bodies. TL12; Cr-millions to tens of millions. At TL12 it is possible to keep a person's brain alive without a body. The brain is kept in a tank of nutrient fluid, surrounded by life support equipment, normally wired up to numerous sensors so that it does not go insane. The equipment is fairly bulky, massing several tons; the robot 'body' is likely to be a large vehicle, perhaps a starship, directly controlled by the disembodied brain. Such a brain retains its Intelligence, Education and skills; other abilities depend on the 'body'. At higher tech levels, the life support equipment, becomes smaller and more mobile, until at TL15 a true robot body is possible. The characteristics of this depend on what system the referee uses for robots. Normally, robot bodies are used either for criminals (who must serve out their sentence as useful construction or earth-moving equipment before getting their bodies back) or those born hopelessly crippled, who then repay the cost of the operations by working for the government as courier ships, transport, etc.

At TL17, an electronic recording of a character's personality and brain pattern can be taken and replayed into a true robot body with no biological parts.

Robot Antibodies. TL17; Cr-millions. These virus-sized 'robots' are programmed to destroy harmful germs, viruses and other nasties such as cholesterol blocking the arteries, and cancer cells. Injected into the bloodstream they keep the user healthy from the inside. In game terms, they make the user immune to disease and most poisons, and allow a sizeable DM (+3 to +5 according to price) on all subsequent aging throws.

Clones

TL13; Cr-millions to tens of millions. A character gives a sample of his flesh (often only a couple of cells) to the cloning complex, comprising a large hospital and computer facility, where it is

grown into a duplicate body. The clone's age is accelerated to 18 in a few months, at which point it has no skills and zero education and social standing; the rest of its UPP is the same as the character's was when he was first diced up, before enlisting. This, as it stands, is not much use to the would-be immortal. However, at TL 14 it becomes possible to grind up a character's brain and extract the memory RNA in which his memories and personality are contained; this is then introduced into the clone body, so that the character has its own skills and experience, but in an 18-year old body. At TL 16, an electronic recording of a character's personality and brain pattern is taken and replayed into the clone body, with identical effect. In either case, the character's Strength, Dexterity, Endurance and appearance are effectively restored to their values at age 18.

Matter Transporters. TL16; Cr-millions to tens of millions. Depending on the way in which the Matter Transporter (MT) is ruled to work, it may be possible to produce copies of an individual without destroying the original – similar in

effect to cloning. Normally, however, these will be exactly the same as the original, so nothing would be gained. At TL18, the information being beamed from transmitter to receiver is edited, producing a younger or healthier version of the original. Typically, the character will be beamed to the receiver minus all the accumulated aging toxins in his systems, allowing a +4 DM on the next set of aging rolls.

Unusual Techniques

Low Berths. TL8, Cr50,000. Not an attractive method for the adventurer, since there is no point in living forever if you are in a drugged and frozen sleep all the time. However, rulers might store gifted experts in this way against possible future needs.

Psionic Powers. TL0, Cr0. A recurrent theme in science fiction is the individual who lives forever for no apparent reason, because of a happy accident of genetic makeup or supernatural help. The easiest way to represent this is as an extremely rare psionic special power; perhaps with a prerequisite of maximum

possible scores in psionic strength and a couple of other characteristics. After training, ability would rise one level if the monthly advancement roll was a natural 12. The character can use the square root of his ability level (rounded down) as a DM on all future aging rolls.

SUBJECTS

Problems of immortality in SF are not so much technical as social and psychological. Who gets it? Usually it is assumed the method is very rare and expensive – not for the masses, but only for the few.

Rulers

The obvious group to get the treatment are the people in power. The rulers probably paid for the research, and if it is only available for a few, will make sure they get it first. If there is any left over, close relatives and friends will get some, as will trusted and skilled associates. The reason for this is partly sentimental, and partly to ensure loyalty (by threatening to withdraw the technique) and avoid being assassinated in jealousy.

Skilled Technicians

It is unlikely to be cheaper to keep a minion on anagathics than to train a new one every 30 years, but if a ruler does so, such a minion will likely be loyal (or at least terrified of losing favour), and will be vastly more useful because of his vast experience.

Long Term Personnel

If a project requires continual supervision and is likely to last centuries, the personnel concerned might be put on anagathics. This applies especially to slower-than-light starship crews, or even faster-than-light crews if the game universe is vast enough compared to the drive speed. This is the lowest-priority group, since one can always get by with machines or avoid such projects.



PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS

Just watch your friends playing their 'unkillable' high-level characters, and you will see the sort of behaviour that is likely in an immortal character.

Risk-Taking

There are two likely attitudes towards taking risks for an immortal; either his extended life becomes so precious that he will do nothing to risk it or his immortality drug/machine. Such characters will not adventure at all if they can avoid it, and when they do it is with massive bodies of loyal guards against weak and surprised opposition. He becomes a master of the pre-emptive strike and the inescapable trap. Eventually he is assassinated. Or the immortal is likely to grow careless of danger and will tackle anything, sure that he will (somehow) survive. He may even start taking crazy risks just for kicks; sooner or later he takes one risk too many and dies.

Boredom

After a character has lived two or three hundred years, and seen it all, a feeling of boredom sets in. First, he may react against the boredom by doing weirder and weirder things. Often he feels long

life is only appreciated when there is a risk of losing it, and so takes progressively worse chances until one finally kills him.

Second, he may become a jack-of-all-trades; a career, a marriage, a hobby last 20-50 years, then he gives them up and starts afresh with a new set. This is common where the immortality method is secret and known only to a few; the immortal then needs to change his identity every few decades and move to a new planet, or Awkward Questions are asked.

Third, the immortal can dedicate himself to some very long-term purpose or project, often a scientific or social project which will need lifetimes of work.

Problem Solving

As the character gets older he will see solutions to problems more and more quickly, because he will have seen similar problems many times before. Often he will grasp the answer before the question is fully stated, and so tend to jump to conclusions; but these conclusions will usually be right. However, the immortal grows less and less likely to explain his orders, more and more con-

temptuous of those less experienced than himself. Frequently, the immortal is very predictable in his actions despite his search for novelty.

Lack of Memory Space

There could be a limit to the amount of information the human brain can store. If some form of personality recording and transfer exists, the immortal will edit his memory every few centuries to remove unpleasant or irrelevant memories. If the immortal cannot edit his memory, he will be very careful about what he learns. For instance, he will not learn to drive – he can always hire a chauffeur, and cars are likely to be obsolete within a few centuries anyway.

Identity Crisis

This is the most serious problem, and arises if personality recording and transfer is used. If the transfer destroys the original personality rather than copying it, you are not immortal – just dead. There is now an artificial personality which has your memories, right up to the moment of recording (or perhaps matter transmission), but it is *not* you. Some people will be able to accept this,

or will be unable to see what difference it makes, but others will get very depressed once they realise it. If the referee believes his personality recordings contain the character's souls (if they have souls!) he may allow the characters to use this method of immortality, but should persuasively put the opposite

case to players to worry them; if not, any character trying to use these methods simply dies.

If the personality transfer copies the original personality—which one is really you? One of the two identical personalities is older, of course, but that one is no worse off than before and may

well envy the younger version. Although both start with the same memories, from the instant they recover, both are separate people leading separate lives. Lawyers will probably rule that the new version of the personality has no wealth or property unless these are freely given to it by the old one, perhaps in a will.

EFFECTS ON SOCIETY

Oligarchy

As the immortal rulers get older, society is likely to become more centralised, more authoritarian, and more conservative. What's more, the government gets better and better at keeping it that way. Even with the best of intentions, the rulers will lose touch with the masses. Still, they will become harder to overthrow. The only real hope is that one of the rulers will wipe out the others, because one ruler alone must die eventually by accident or assassination. The next generation of rulers will probably not want to wait for their elders to die, and may well try to kill them. In a continuously-expanding empire, young nobles might be given a ship and some troops and told to go and carve out their own fief; this is only possible near the edge of human space, because near the middle of a race's sphere of influence it is easier to grab a neighbouring state or assassinate pater. The young noble might be fobbed off with a provincial governorship.

Resentment

If immortality is only available for a few, the masses will resent paying for it. They will probably decide that if they can't

have it, nobody's having it. In addition, there will be a few philosophers who feel the whole thing is unhealthy for mankind. The mob will try to destroy the process and kill the users, which will drive the users underground unless they have an iron grip on society. The rulers in turn will bribe anyone competent enough to be dangerous with offers of anagathics provided they join the current clique.

Currency

Anagathic drugs might be the standard to which the Imperial currency is tied. Drugs are easy to assay, easy to dilute, small, easily carried and scarce. This would mean characters would be faced with a dilemma; whether to spend their drugs or take them. Of course, paper currency (or whatever) would continue to exist. Drugs would only be used for settling accounts between planets.

Sexism

People who can live forever are less likely to seek immortality by proxy through children, so perhaps the birth rate would fall. Certainly if the process only works on one sex, that one would

dominate society. Possibly without the need to raise children, or if the drugs arrested aging before puberty, the sexes would go their separate ways.

The Xerox Problem

If you can copy the personality once, why not do it twice? Fifty times? A thousand times? If a criminal is executed, the search must go on in case there is a copy of him somewhere, or in case the original is still alive and you only executed a copy. Is a duplicate of a criminal guilty of crimes the original committed? Legally, each copy must be treated as a separate entity with regard to possession and inheritance. This assumes some method of identifying which copy is which—possibly a radioactive tracer or a tattoo. Unemployment will rise still further—only the very best are good enough to be copied, and only a copy of the very best will be good enough for a big employer. Human life will become fairly cheap. If your top surgeon gets killed, you can always make another. If your ace pilot is sent on a suicide mission, you haven't killed him—you still have the original safe at home.

SCENARIO

Patron: Noble.

Required Skills: Combat

Type of Immortality: Cloning with personality transfer, TL16.



Player's Information: The band are approached by an obviously rich and nervous person who has heard of their reputation and knows they are offworlders. She is an immortal, she confesses, in need of protection. Each time her new body wakes up, a recording is taken of her personality so that she has one available which is up-to-date. Normally she updates this recording at yearly intervals. Thus, she should remember waking up, living for a while then making a new recording, and so on.

Instead, she remembers waking up four times in a row; her guards and technicians assure her that she was assassinated each time before updating her recording. She no longer trusts her bodyguard, and reasons that the local police have already failed at least three times, so she will offer the players Cr1,000 per month each to be her new bodyguard until the mystery is solved. They will be expected to track down the assassin as well.

Referee's Information: Of course, the patron does something very like this every time she wakes up, and the killer knows the pattern by now. The band are thus under scrutiny at all times by the assassin.

1: The killer is one of the previous four versions of the patron (the first), who committed a vile crime and intends to assassinate the patron in some deserted spot so that she can replace the current version, which as far as the police are concerned is innocent of the crime. Naturally she will be able to impersonate the patron perfectly.

2: As 1, but the killer has already substituted herself for the newly awakened clone. She should make some slips so that the players have a chance to uncover the plot, for example remembering an item of news she should not have seen, or having been seen in public while supposedly dead.

3: As 1, but the police are aware of what is going on and are hoping to catch

the killer and bring her to justice. If the current clone is assassinated they will not care, since another will be grown in a few months once it is clear the patron is dead.

4: As 3, but after a successful assassination the police intend to kill whichever clone survives—just to be on the safe side.

5: As 3, but the players will foil the assassination attempt and kill the assassin in the process. Their patron will then be wrongfully arrested, and they will be charged with killing the innocent version of the patron.

6: The mystery is due to a fault in the cloning complex computer which accidentally killed the last four clones before the fault was completely repaired. The only way to test the machines was to try a new clone. The technicians are worried that the patron will fire them if she finds out. □

Bibliography

Drugs: *Dune*, Frank Herbert; *Tales of Known Space*, *Ringworld* etc, Larry Niven; *A Life for the Stars*, *Earthman, Come Home*, James Blish.
Medicine: *Protector*, Larry Niven.
Surgery: *The Long ARM of Gil Hamilton*, *A Gift From Earth*, Larry Niven; *The Ship Who Sang*, Anne McCaffrey.
Clones: *The Ophiuchi Hotline*, John Varley; *Pursuit of the Screamer*, Anson Dibell; *To Live Forever*, Jack Vance; *Time Enough for Love*, Robert A Heinlein.

A thrilling fantasy adventure serial in which you are the hero.

THE CASTLE OF LOST SOULS

Part One: The Champion by Dave Morris and Yve Newnham

GETTING STARTED

This is an adventure like the well-known *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*. Your fate will be determined by the decisions you make – along with a little luck. Read only those numbered paragraphs you are sent to in the text – reading any out of turn may ruin the adventure. You begin by determining your *characteristics*. These show how good an adventurer you are.

1. Roll one die. Add 5 to this number. The total is your *Fighting Prowess*. The higher the score, the better you are at swordplay and other martial skills.
2. Roll two dice and add 10. This is your *Constitution*. A high score enables you to resist hardship, disease and poison, and gives you the strength to fight on even when badly wounded.
3. Roll one die and add 5. This is your *Cleverness* – how fast you can think and act in an emergency. Your *Cleverness* helps when you are trying to jump clear of a hidden trapdoor, hide from a pursuer and so on.
4. Roll one die and add 3. Add 1 more if your *Fighting Prowess* is 7 or less. Add 1 if your *Constitution* is 14 or less. This is your *Magical Fortitude*. The higher it is, the better chance you have of resisting the effects of hostile sorcery.

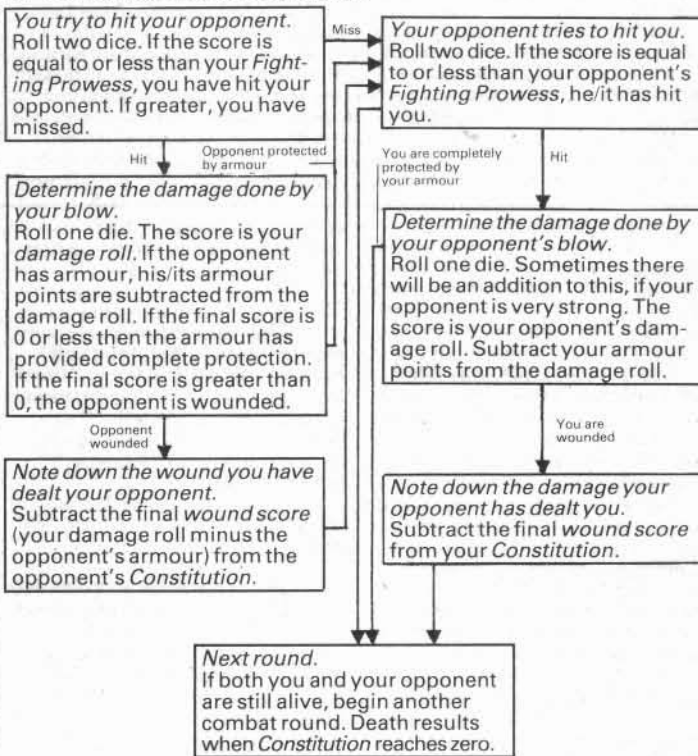
What you have just done is called *rolling up a character*. Note down your scores in each characteristic on the *Adventure Record*.

Adventure Record		
Characteristic	Initial Score	Current Score
Fighting Prowess
Constitution
Cleverness
Magical Fortitude
Honour
Armour		
Gold Pieces		
Potions		
Other		

Combat

When you have to fight, you will be told the opponent's *Fighting Prowess*, *Constitution* and armour. Note these down before starting the combat.

A fight consists of a number of *combat rounds*. During each round, both you and your opponent get to strike at one another. The sequence for each combat round is as follows:



Keeping Track of Your Characteristics

Keep careful note of your characteristics on your *Adventure Record*. Your *Constitution* could change quite a bit, as you take wounds in combat or suffer other hardships. Sometimes your other characteristics may change as well. Make a special note of your initial score in each characteristic as (unless you are told otherwise) your score in a characteristic cannot exceed its initial value. If you successfully complete this adventure, you will have a chance to permanently increase one of your characteristics.

Armour

The armour you are wearing reduces the damage you take from a blow. Your opponents will often have armour as well. In the case of monsters, this usually represents their tough skin rather than being actual armour. 1-point armour is leather (or thick hide); 2-point is chainmail (or horny scales, like a dragon's). You start your adventure with chainmail armour, which will absorb 2 points from the damage of any blow that strikes you. Note this down on your *Adventure Record*.

Equipment

You must note down the equipment you have on your *Adventure Record*. As well as the chainmail, you have a sword, a dagger, a bow and six arrows, a backpack for holding treasure, a *Potion of Healing* (see below), and 10 gold pieces. Whenever you pick something up during the adventure, note it down on the *adventure record*.

The Potion of Healing

You start with a flask containing one dose of this potion. When you drink it (which you can do at any time except during a combat), roll one die and add 3. This is the number of *Constitution* points you recover. The potion cannot, however, increase your *Constitution* above its initial score.

Honour

The more chivalrously you behave during the adventure, the more *Honour* you will acquire. Conversely, you lose *Honour* by behaving in an underhand fashion. In many cases it may seem easier to take a dishonourable course of action, but be warned that this could make parts of your subsequent adventures more difficult. You begin with 3 points of *Honour*.

The Adventure

You are a famous and skilled warrior. Your many adventures have pitted you against all manner of foes – wily goblins in the Spiderbite Hills, mummified guards of desert tombs, and ghoulish-witches of Dastragor Marsh, many a crazed wizard and more than a dozen of the kingdom's mightiest knights. Your fame (or notoriety) precedes you into every town and village, so you are not surprised when you trudge into yet another smoky tavern to hear the rowdy hubbub stop as faces turn to >

▷ look at you. You drop your backpack by the hearth and sit at an empty table, your broadsword carefully propped against the chair.

The landlord pours you ale while whispers flit among the other patrons. 'I suppose they are unused to seeing an adventurer in a town such as this,' you say to him.

'Allow me to correct you,' he replies cheerfully. 'Lately, adventurers have been as thick as flies on the back of an old horse. My other customers are surely discussing your chances on the morrow. Aha! Look there.' He gestures towards two men counting money. 'I believe, Logbrew the miller has just wagered five silvers on your acceptance.'

You lean forward, interested now, and motion the innkeeper to sit down. 'Please join me for a glass of wine and explain all this to me. I have just arrived in town after a long trek through the uninhabited forest to the east.'

'Well then, you will not have heard of the interviews tomorrow. Hogron, head of the wealthy and prestigious Greengosh family since his father's death some months ago, seeks to hire a warrior for some

great quest. Word has been sent far and wide, and adventurers have come here from many leagues away to apply for the position. The candidate selected by Hogron and his brothers stands to profit richly.'

After getting full details from the innkeeper, you take a room for the night. In the morning, you arise and have a light breakfast. Refreshed, you set out briskly for the Greengosh estates at the west of the town. You are confident that the interviews are a mere formality and that you will be selected for the quest.

The Greengosh mansion is an imposing edifice in some thirty acres of grounds. A gaunt servant in a black coat opens the door and escorts you upstairs to a room off a long gallery. Shortly, you are joined by a well-groomed man of about forty who introduces himself as Hogron. After a few questions relating to your previous adventures and preferred fighting technique, he jots down some notes in a ledger he carries. He tells you the interviews are nearly all complete and so you will not have to wait long. Then he leaves. Turn to 1.

1: After a few hours, Hogron calls the candidates to the main hall. You look around at the others. Most seem to be scoundrels or opportunist ruffians, but there are one or two whose exploits rival yours.

Hogron steps forward. 'After due and careful consideration of the, er, corroborated adventures of each candidate, my brothers and I have chosen Salakar as our champion.'

You are horrified to see Hogron clasp hands with Salakar, whom you have always regarded as a loudmouthed braggart! A disgruntled murmur from some of the other candidates is silenced by the five pieces of gold each is given for his trouble. You take your gold with bitter heart, trying to think of a way to cancel or reverse Hogron's decision and make yourself champion. Do you: Challenge Salakar to a duel to show who is the more worthy champion? If so, turn to 91. Suggest that two of you would be better off than one? If so, turn to 45. Leave now but wait outside the mansion, and follow Salakar? If so, turn to 80. Wait outside the hall and eavesdrop on what Hogron has to say to his new champion? If so, turn to 14. Attack Salakar right now? If so, turn to 85.

2: You are now Salakar. Your initial characteristics are: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; *Cleverness*: 7; *Magical Fortitude*: 5.

You have 2-point armour (chainmail), standard equipment, 12 gold pieces, and a silver amulet which marks you out as the Greengosh family's champion.

You have no potions, and no *Honour* either. Hogron told you something about getting a crystal ball and the ashes of a saint, along with some other items. None of that matters for now – you just have to find a certain cave up in the hills and get some magical boots that Hogron says are hidden there. Simple. Turn to 53.

3: You are some kind of sucker for punishment. Again you lose *Constitution* (one die's worth). You give up on the pool for now. You can try the stone slab (turn to 52) or return to the entrance (turn to 21).

4: A servant nearly spotted you, but you heard him coming and dived behind a tapestry. You go back to listen at the door, and hear Hogron saying something about the ashes of a saint and a crystal ball. There could be a lot more that you mis-

sed. You slink out of the house and wait to follow Salakar when he emerges. Turn to 80.

5: Whether or not you were the original champion, Hogron is delighted you brought the magical boots. 'Excellent!' he cries, showing the boots to his brothers. 'Wearing these, you will be able to travel to the demon's castle and free my father's soul!'

You smile nervously at them, but you're in too far to back out now. Turn to 104.

6: Your pride prevents you from continuing the adventure. But you have only enough gold for a few more days at the inn, then you must move on. A balladeer tells you that Salakar's seven brothers are all great warriors who will be after you from now on. Perhaps you will accept Hogron's offer after all. Turn to 101.

7: Your treachery has paid off – Salakar lies dead at your feet. Being the sort of cur you are, you decide to loot his body. You get 12 gold pieces. There is a silver amulet around his neck. If you take it, note it down on your Adventure Record. You lose 1 point of *Honour*, by the way. That's if you had any left. Now go to 16.

8: Hogron accuses you of murdering Salakar, and has you seized and thrown from the mansion. You hadn't found the magical boots anyway so (as Hogron yells to you now from an upstairs window) you couldn't expect to be paid. You can rejoin the adventure next issue.

9: Salakar manages to stay in the saddle. He wheels around, levels his lance, and charges again. You spur your horse on, determined to unseat him this time. Roll for both of you to see if you hit. If you hit Salakar but he missed you then turn to 24. If Salakar hit you but you missed him, turn to 86. If you both hit, turn to 39. If you both missed, you turn for another charge. Roll again until someone hits.

10: The liquid in the pool looks strange. It is probably magical. What do you want to do? Put on the long gloves (if you have them) and pull the lever (turn to 65)? Take off the silver amulet (if you have it) and pull the lever (turn to 23)? Drink from the pool and then pull the lever (turn to 75)? Reconsider your options (turn to 50)?

11: The right-hand tunnel leads to a low-ceilinged chamber. You can return to the cave entrance (turn to 21) or enter the chamber (turn to 49).

12: If you are Salakar, turn to 33. If not, turn to 72.

13: You return to where you got the blue satin gloves. You can replace them if you like (if you still have them). Go to 34.

14: You lurk in the corridor outside the main hall, trying to listen to what Hogron is telling Salakar. You hear him say something about getting some magical boots. Try to roll your *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to 4. If you fail, turn to 87.

15: Salakar is still the champion. You hear from the innkeeper's daughter that he is about to set out. You decide to follow him – something will turn up. Turn to 80.

16: You go on into the hills for almost an hour. Salakar seems to be following the stream. Suddenly a rabble of hill goblins leap out of the trees nearby, hurling rocks and small javelins. Roll one die. On a roll of 1-3 you have been hit by one missile. On a 4-5, two have hit. On a 6 you have been hit by three missiles. Armour subtracts from each missile's damage separately. Take any damage off your *Constitution*. Before you can retaliate, the goblins scatter and run off. Turn to 62.

17: Salakar's lance hurls you from the saddle. You hit the ground with a jarring impact that makes your head swim. Try to roll *Constitution* or less on four dice. If you succeed, turn to 90. If you fail, turn to 67.

18: You rush over to Salakar. He is coughing blood – he hasn't long to live. 'I've failed, he groans, 'but you can carry on the quest. At least wipe out that giant for me. Here... take this.' He gives you a silver amulet from around his neck. 'That makes you the Greengosh family champion. In case Hogron thinks you killed me for it, tell him you know he needs a saint's ashes and a crystal ball. In the first place, though, you've got to get some magical boots from the cave up there.'

You allow yourself but a moment of pity as your old rival passes from this world. Then you filch the 12 gold pieces in his belt-

pouch. You creep up the path to the cave. You can see the giant just inside, chewing on a leg (not his own) for lunch. You draw your sword and attack. Take 3 points off the giant's initial *Constitution* for the wound Salakar did him. Turn to 82.

19: You flip the lid of the chest open. Roll two dice, trying to score your *Cleverness* or less. If you succeed, turn to 20. If you fail, turn to 32.

20: Phew! You were just quick enough to dodge three sharp needles that shot out of the lock and flew past your ear. They were probably poisoned. Turn to 79.

21: You are just inside the cave mouth. You can see two tunnels leading away. You will need a lantern if you wish to go down either tunnel. You can take the left tunnel (turn to 77), the right tunnel (turn to 11) or leave the cave (turn to 83).

22: You stand over Salakar's body. Several of the other candidates watch, aghast. There is a moment of silence. You turn to Hogron, whose expression mingles shock and distaste. 'An interesting way to establish your credentials,' he sighs, obviously offended by your churlishness. 'The position of champion appears to have become vacant. Perhaps you will accept the job in Salakar's place?'

You feel the weight of his moral censure – lose 1 point of *Honour*. Perhaps you will behave more chivalrously in future. Perhaps not. Turn to 101.

23: Turn to 29.

24: You are satisfied to see your lance strike Salakar's shield with bone-crunching impact. Your own shield is barely scratched by his inaccurate blow. Roll one die and add 3 to determine the damage for this mighty blow! He seems to have lost his contempt for you now. He could be thrown from the saddle – roll two dice and compare the score with Salakar's *Cleverness*. If the dice score is more than his *Cleverness*, turn to 71. If the score is less than or equal to his *Cleverness*, turn to 9.

25: You are in a small chamber with a wooden chest in the middle of the floor. You can try to open it (turn to 19) or go back (turn to 21).



26: Hogron will brief you on your adventure tomorrow. You decide to return to your room at the inn. As midnight approaches, you hear a creaking sound. Someone is coming in through the window! You leap out of bed and grasp your sword. Your assailant is a black-garbed assassin.

Assassin: *Fighting Prowess*: 5, *Constitution*: 6, 1-point armour.

Fight. You are naked at the moment, so your chainmail armour will not count. If you win, turn to **63**. If you lose, turn to **48**. If the assassin rolls a 12 on two dice when trying to hit you, turn to **96**.

27: You burn the troll's corpse and take the boots. They are covered with strange runes and sigils. You take them back to town. Turn to **5**.

28: Congratulations on killing a defenceless old man. Lose a point of *Honour*. You retrieve your dagger and decide it is time to get away before you're discovered. You creep out of the mansion and conceal yourself in the bushes like the worm that you are. You wait for Salakar to come out and then follow him. Turn to **80**.

29: A shiver runs through your whole body as your fingers thrust into the pool. Roll one die. You lose this many points of *Constitution* – and armour does not protect you. You jump back from the pool. You can return to the cave mouth (turn to

36), try and push the stone slab aside (turn to **41**) or take some special precautions (turn to **10**).

30: You are dead. If you wish to have another go at the adventure, roll up a new character and start at the beginning. If you don't like the idea of winding back time like that, it is possible to join at the beginning of next issue's adventure.

31: Salakar does not get up. He has been knocked cold by the fall from his horse. Turn to **37**.

32: Three sharp needles fly out of the lock and strike you on the cheek. You feel a burning pain where they scratched you. Poison. Try to roll your *Constitution* or less on four dice. If you succeed, turn to **69**. If you fail, turn to **30**.

33: A pesky adventurer, disgruntled at not being selected as champion, followed you and tried to cause trouble. You tell Hogron how you finished him off, but Hogron is more concerned that you haven't brought back the magical boots. He pays you a derisory 5 gold pieces and shows you the door. You can try the whole adventure from the beginning, using a new character, or you can join at the beginning of next issue's adventure.

34: You are back at the cave mouth. A couple of rats are chewing on the giant's body, but they scuttle into the shadows as you approach. You can take the left-hand tunnel (turn to **13**), the right-hand tunnel (turn to **92**) or go back to town (turn to **43**).

35: Struggling to remain conscious, you get to your feet. A squire runs up and gives you your sword. Salakar has already got his sword ready and is closing in. You fight. If you win, turn to **37**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

36: You are back at the cave mouth. You can take the left-hand tunnel (turn to **61**) or the right-hand one (turn to **100**). Or you can leave the cave (turn to **81**).

37: You have beaten Salakar. Hogron rushes forward. 'How can I apologize to you for my misjudgement?' he says. 'I see now that Salakar's great deeds were nothing beside your own. He won me over with his empty boastfulness, but I can see now that your noble reticence disguised a fierce and peerless skill. Please forgive me for my wretched stupidity, and agree to become our family's champion.'

You think there is a strong element of sarcasm in Hogron's obsequious manner. If you turn him down, go to **6**. If you agree to become the champion in Salakar's place, turn to **101**.

38: Hogron comes forward. 'You have certainly shown more skill than Salakar. Since he himself offered you the choice of competition, I feel sure he will agree that you should be

our champion in his place.'

He gives Salakar ten gold pieces for his trouble. The expression on Salakar's face suggests you may have made a lifelong enemy. Turn to **26**.

39: Both your lances find their targets. Roll one die and add 3. This is how much damage you take; your chainmail armour absorbs 2 points of this. Roll the damage to Salakar as well.

Each of you must roll *Cleverness* or less on two dice or be thrown from the saddle. If you both make it, turn to **64**. If you make the roll and he doesn't, turn to **71**. If he makes the roll and you don't, turn to **17**. If neither of you makes it, turn to **98**.

40: Do you have the silver amulet Salakar was wearing? If so, turn to **56**. If not, turn to **46**.

41: All your strength cannot budge the stone slab. You must find some other way to get into the tunnel beyond. You could try pulling the lever in the pool (turn to **29**), though you might like to take some precautions first (turn to **10**). If you wish to go back to the cave mouth, turn to **36**.

42: Several of the other candidates pull you and Salakar apart. You hear someone say you are a sore loser. The taunts don't hurt as much as the 2 *Honour* points you've just lost.

'Obviously you are a thoroughly unworthy knave!' cries Hogron, shaking with rage. 'To disturb a bereaved household with your coarse and objectionable ways! You have merely confirmed my... our opinion that Salakar is the right man for the job. Now begone.'

You are unceremoniously hurled into the street. There is nothing for it but to wait and follow Salakar when he comes out. You'll find some way to redeem yourself – or bring about Salakar's demise, perhaps? Turn to **80**.

43: Turn to **12**.

44: Hogron comes over after examining the butts. 'You have scarcely demonstrated your overwhelming superiority,' he says to you. 'My decision stands – Salakar of the Wild Moor is our champion.' You leave, deciding that the best thing is to follow Salakar when he begins his adventure. Turn to **80**.

45: Salakar laughs derisively. 'Pah! Why should I want to team up with you?' he chortles. 'So few people have been witness to your 'mighty deeds' that one is forced to dismiss them as your own lies.' Resentment boils up within you. The reason there's no-one to corroborate your greatest exploits is that you prefer to adventure alone. You could relate some of your most daring exploits (turn to **94**), or challenge Salakar to a duel to show him just how skilled a warrior you really are (turn to **91**). Come to that, you could draw your sword and attack him here and now (turn to **85**).

46: Hogron gives you a cold glare. 'Where are the magical boots?' he demands. 'Without them, the quest cannot proceed.' You admit to failure. Hogron gives you 5 gold pieces and has you shown out. If you want, you can roll up a new character and try the whole adventure through from the start. Or you can keep this character and join at the beginning of next issue's adventure.

47: You run out of Green-gosh mansion. No-one follows you. You are pretty certain that the servant would not recognize you if he saw you again. You wait behind a tree. When Salakar comes out you follow him. Turn to **80**.

48: Unfortunately you are dead. If you wish to continue the adventure, roll a new character. Your new character has heard all about the Greengosh family's requirements from rejected candidates. You decide to follow their champion, Salakar, when he begins his quest. Turn to **80**.

49: There is a pool of shimmering blue liquid in the middle of this chamber. Beyond this is a heavy stone slab which appears to block up a tunnel. The pool is about eighteen inches deep with some sort of lever at the bottom.

What do you want to do? Return to the cave entrance (turn to **21**)? Reach into the pool and pull the lever (turn to **59**)? Try to push the stone slab aside (turn to **52**)?

50: In the middle of the chamber is a pool of bright blue liquid. A heavy stone slab blocks another tunnel on the far side of the chamber. The pool is about eighteen inches deep and has some sort of lever at the bottom. Do you want to: Go back to the cave entrance (turn to **36**)? Reach into the pool and pull the lever (turn to **29**)? Try to push the stone slab aside (turn to **41**)? Take some precautions (turn to **10**)?

51: Whatever excuses you make don't impress Hogron. Turn to **8**.

52: The slab is obviously blocking another tunnel. You cannot shift it – even the giant would have had trouble. You can reach into the pool and pull the lever (turn to **59**) or return to the entrance (turn to **21**).

53: After a while you find the cave set in the hillside. Stealthily you follow the narrow path which snakes towards it. There are human skulls scattered around, but you aren't so easily frightened. Inside, with his back to you, sits a giant chewing on the leg of his last victim. You decide to attack. Turn to **82**.

54: You hurl the dagger. Try to roll your *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice. If you succeed, roll one die to see how much damage the dagger does. Unless you kill the servant with this one throw (he has a *Constitution* of 3 and, of course, no



▷armour), his shouts will bring Salakar and Hogron. If you kill him turn to 28. If you don't, turn to 74.

55: You drop your lance and take your sword from the squire who runs up to you. Salakar is struggling to his feet, dazed. He seems confused as he takes his sword from another squire. You ride down on him, sword raised. Surely you have him now! Fight. Because you are on horseback, and thus have the advantage, subtract 1 from Salakar's *Fighting Prowess*. If you win, turn to 37. If you lose, turn to 48.

56: Hogron notices the amulet. 'Did you get this from Salakar, then?' he asks, obviously suspecting you of foul play. You tell him that Salakar gave it to you. 'Well, perhaps you can mention another couple of items that Salakar was going to obtain later in his quest?' replies Hogron. 'He might have told you when he gave you the amulet.' Do you mention the ashes of a saint and a crystal ball (turn to 46), a brass helmet and a goblin's left hand (turn to 8) or nothing at all (turn to 51)?

57: You leap at Salakar with your sword raised for a mighty blow. Startled, he reaches for his own weapon. Because you surprised him, he doesn't get to strike at you in the first combat round. After that, the fight proceeds normally.

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour.

If you lose, turn to 70. If you win, turn to 7.

58: Salakar is about eighty yards ahead of you. You glance aside just for a moment. When you look back, you see Salakar struggling with several hill goblins which are swarming over him. He crushes two or three with his shield; seeing this display of martial prowess the others run for it. As a parting shot, one of them throws a tiny javelin which catches Salakar in the arm. He is slightly wounded now. Do you want to attack and finish him off? If so, turn to 93. If not, turn to 78.

59: The moment that you plunge your hands into the blue waters, you can feel an icy chill run through your body. Roll one die – this is how many points of *Constitution* you lose from the numbing cold of the waters. Armour makes no difference in this case. You jump back from the pool. Do you want to try again (turn to 3), have a go at pushing the stone slab aside (turn to 52) or return to the entrance (turn to 21).

60: Somehow you resist the fell sorcery that threatened you. That was worse than the time the demon-lady Halthania tried to get you drunk on wyrm's blood! You reconsider your options. Go to 50.

61: The tunnel leads to a small chamber. You have been here before. If you didn't take the gloves last time then you could take them now. Turn to 36.

62: You press on. You will need your wits about you to find Salakar's objective. Try to roll *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to 88. If you fail, turn to 99.

63: You dump the assassin's body out of the window and go back to bed. You have a fairly shrewd idea who sent the assassin (or should have), but you'll have plenty of time to settle your score with him when you've sorted out the Greengosh family's problem. Due to the night's disturbance you oversleep, and have to rush to keep your appointment with Hogron and his brothers. Turn to 101.

64: You just managed to stay in the saddle! You wheel your horse around. Salakar is already charging in towards you. You will not give in. Roll as before to see if you hit (and do the same for Salakar). If you hit Salakar but he missed you, turn to 24. If Salakar hit you but you missed him, turn to 86. If you both hit one another, turn to 39. If you both missed, roll again. Keep doing this until one or both of you scores a hit.

65: You feel a slight chill, but no ill-effects. You pull the lever and the stone slab grates aside. Beyond it, a tunnel leads down, with rough steps hewn into the rock. Do you want to go down the steps (turn to 84)

or go back to the entrance (turn to 34).

66: You get out of the mansion safely, but had to leave your dagger behind. You could be traced. You rush back to the inn, gather your gear together and depart at once. If you wish to resume the adventure, roll up a new character. The new character hears a few rumours from other champions and decides to follow the Greengosh family's champion, Salakar, on the first part of his quest. Turn to 80.

67: You try to rise, but everything goes black. After a while you wake up in your room at the inn. You ache all over. The innkeeper's wife brings you a rich, warming broth and a flagon of ale, however, and all your wounds are soon forgotten. Restore your *Constitution* to normal and turn to 15.

68: You meet Salakar for the joust at noon the following day. His horse is richly caparisoned in scarlet and grey, and his armour gleams in the sun. But all this finery cannot disguise a certain awkwardness in the saddle. You feel the choice of a joust gives you the advantage. Now is your chance to teach him a lesson.

The two of you ride to opposite sides of the field and rein in. Hogron raises a staff. You wait, staring across the field into the visored eyes of your rival. Hogron brings the staff down, and your horses thunder across the sward. Your shield and lance are steady, your concentration absolute.

Roll *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice for a hit, as usual. Do the same for Salakar. Note down his characteristics now:

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour; *Cleverness*: 7.

If both of you fail to hit on the first charge, you turn for another attempt. This continues until somebody's lance lands home. If Salakar hit you but you missed him, turn to 86. If you hit Salakar but he missed you, turn to 24. If you both hit one another, turn to 39.

69: You manage to shrug off the worst effects of the poison, but you feel groggy. Reduce your *Fighting Prowess* by 1 point for the rest of this issue's adventure. Reduce your *Constitution* by 1 point permanently. Turn to 79.

70: Well, some champion you would have made! Continue the adventure using Salakar as your character. Turn to 2, remembering to keep track of any wounds he has taken.

71: Salakar is thrown from his horse by the impact. You almost wince as he hits the ground with a sickening crunch. Roll four dice and compare the result with Salakar's *Constitution*. If the dice score exceeds his *Constitution*, turn to 31. If the score is less than or equal to his *Constitution*, turn to 55.

72: Were you actually selected as the family's champion? If so, turn to 46. If you left town tailing Salakar, turn to 40.

73: Well, at least you spat it out in time. You look around you and take stock of your options. Turn to 50.

74: For an old fellow, the servant can make a lot of noise! His yells will quickly bring Hogron and Salakar and a host of others. You run for it. Turn to 66.

75: You drank it!? What do adventurers use for brains these days? You must roll one die. This is how much *Constitution* you lose – your armour does not protect you. Also, try to roll *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to 73. If not, turn to 95.

76: You meet the following afternoon at a bridge quite near the town. Hogron has come along in a curtained carriage to watch. There is some honour in such a duel, because you are not taking undue advantage of Salakar's low *Constitution*. Gain 1 point of *Honour*. Salakar stands ready. At a signal, you both draw your swords and close to fight.

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess*: 8; *Constitution*: 11; 2-point armour.

If you win, turn to 37. If you lose, turn to 48. If you are faring badly at any point, you can submit by throwing down your sword (turn to 102).

77: You are in a narrow tunnel. You can go deeper into the hillside (turn to 25) or turn back (turn to 21).

78: Salakar clammers up a winding path. At the top is a cave entrance with skulls scattered in front of it. Suddenly a ferocious giant leaps out of the cave and brings his club down on Salakar, splintering his shield. He slices back, wounding his huge opponent in the thigh. The giant bellows with rage and deals Salakar another mighty blow, dashing him from the ledge. He tumbles down the slope to where you are. You see the giant amble back into the cave without noticing you. Turn to 18.

79: Looking inside the chest, you see two strange gloves. They are made of blue satin and cover your whole arm right up to the shoulder. If you take them, mark them down on your Adventure Record. You return to the entrance. Turn to 36.

80: Salakar spends some time in town buying equipment for an adventure. You buy the same things: a lantern and a flint and tinder. This costs you 2 gold pieces. Turn to 103.

81: You are on the ledge outside the cave. You can return to town if you think you have all that Hogron wants (turn to 12). If your business here is unfinished, turn to 36.



85: You draw your sword and charge at the amazed Salakar with a cry of rage. In the first combat round he doesn't get to strike back because you caught him unprepared. You fight. The fight then proceeds normally.

Salakar: *Fighting Prowess:* 8
Constitution: 11; 2-point armour.

If the fight goes on for more than four combat rounds, turn to **42**. If you win before then, turn to **22**. If you lose before then, turn to **48**.

86: The damage roll for this massive blow is one die plus 3 points. Your armour will protect you from 2 points of this. Your whole arm is numbed. Try to roll your *Cleverness* or less on two dice. If you succeed, turn to **64**. If you fail, turn to **17**.

87: Oops! An aged servant comes around the corridor and sees you skulking about. He is about to call for help. You must act quickly. You can run (turn to **47**), try to kill him by throwing your dagger at his throat (turn to **54**) or wait (turn to **89**).

88: You see a cave entrance up in the hillside ahead of you. Maybe that's where Salakar was going. You draw closer, alert to any danger. A narrow path leads up to the cave. You clamber up it as quietly as possible. There are skulls strewn about the ledge in front of the cave, adventurers like yourself perhaps? You can see the cause just inside – a giant seated on a low slab of rock. He seems to be eating something, so you can take him unawares. You attack. Turn to **82**.

89: Hearing the servant call out, Hogron comes into the corridor. Before you can think of an excuse, the servant says, 'He was listening at your key'ole, sir.'

Hogron glares at you. 'I admire a certain tenacity in a man,' he says slowly, 'but if you harbour any hopes of becoming our family's champion, I must dash them here and now. Salakar has agreed to the mission, and your continued presence in my house will be regarded as trespassing.' You leave at once, deciding that it is better to wait outside and follow Salakar when he emerges. Turn to **80**.

90: Somehow you manage to get to your feet. A squire rushes up with your sword. You take it and stand ready. Salakar is already bearing down on you with his sword raised. You fight. Being on horseback gives Salakar the advantage, so subtract 1 from your *Fighting Prowess* for the duration of this combat. If you win, turn to **37**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

91: Sneering, he accepts your challenge. 'So sure am I of success,' he declares, 'that I leave to you the choice of combat. Will you joust, or duel, or compete with me on the archery field?'

A duel involves a straight fight,

a joust is strenuous and demanding, while archery tests only your skill. Your assessment of Salakar is that he is unused to hardship and would fare badly in a punishing joust. What do you choose? A joust (turn to **68**), a duel (turn to **76**) or archery (turn to **97**)?

92: You go back to the chamber with the blue pool. Steps lead down from the arch that the stone slab previously blocked. Do you want to go down the steps (turn to **84**) or return (turn to **34**).

93: The wound from the goblin's javelin cost Salakar 2 points of *Constitution*. Knock this off his total before the fight begins. Turn to **57**.

94: Hogron and Salakar listen to your tales. After some time (fifteen minutes or more – you're just on the story of how you rescued the Princess Ezmerelda from the white fortress of Hangdrak), Hogron interrupts you: 'This is all very, um, stirring stuff, I'm sure, but I have made my choice. Salakar is our champion.' You could challenge Salakar to a duel (turn to **91**), attack him here and now (turn to **85**) or wait outside and follow him later (turn to **80**).

95: You swallowed the liquid. Your soul feels as though it's being torn from your body. Fingers of ice seem to stroke across your skin. You scream. Try to roll your *Magical Fortitude* or less on two dice. If you make it, turn to **60**. If you fail, go to **30**.

96: The assassin misses and instead hits the innkeeper's cat, which had chosen to curl up on the foot of your bed. The cat howls and leaps across the room. It has only lost a couple of inches of tail, but you are enraged that your assailant should have hurt a dumb animal. You go berserk, adding 1 to *Fighting Prowess* for this combat only. If you win, turn to **63**. If you lose, turn to **48**.

97: By choosing an archery competition you are not taking any advantage of Salakar's low *Constitution*. Gain 2 points of *Honour*. The competition is held on the lawn of the Greengosh mansion. Hogron shows you the butts, about 70 yards away. To score a hit on the butt you must roll your *Fighting Prowess* or less on two dice. Do the same for Salakar, whose *Fighting Prowess* is 8. Compare your score and Salakar's when you have each taken five shots at the butts.

If you scored more than Salakar, turn to **38**. If you scored the same or less, turn to **44**.

98: You both take a tumble. Roll *Constitution* or less on four dice. Make this roll for Salakar as well. If you both fail, turn to **67**. If you succeed but Salakar doesn't, turn to **37**. If Salakar succeeds but you fail, turn to **67**. If you both succeed, turn to **35**.

99: Another goblin aiming! Roll one die. A roll of 1-3 indicates one missile has hit you. A 4-5 indicates two missiles. On a 6 you have been struck by three missiles. Each missile does you one die of damage less 2 points for your armour. Cross any damage you have taken off your *Constitution* and turn to **62**.

100: The tunnel leads to a low-ceilinged chamber. You can go back to the entrance (turn to **36**) or enter the chamber (turn to **50**).

101: In their father's study, Hogron and his brothers brief you on your mission. Hogron gives you a silver amulet, by which all friends of the Greengosh family will know you are their champion. 'This will be a long and challenging quest,' he explains, 'and you will need to gather many curious objects for it – a saint's ashes, a crystal ball and a four-leaf clover, among other items. At first, though, you have only to go to a certain cave up in the hills and bring back some magical boots you will find there. I advise you to buy a lantern and a flint and tinder before you set out.' After describing roughly where the cave is, he gives you a pouch containing 6 gold pieces, wishes you good luck and sends you on your way.

You buy the equipment Hogron recommended, at a cost of 2 gold pieces, and set out. Barely two hours' walk from the town, you find the cave you are looking for. You climb the steep path leading to it. On the ledge in front of the cave there are several human skulls. Forewarned, you peer into the cave. A giant is sitting inside with his back to you, chewing on something. You decide to attack him. Turn to **82**.

102: You cast your sword aside. Lose 1 point of *Honour*. You are at Salakar's mercy, but unfortunately he is a rather merciless chap. Roll one die. On a roll of 6 he decides you're not worth killing (turn to **15**); on a roll of 1-5 he cuts you down (turn to **48**).

103: You follow Salakar into the hills north of the town. He is so intent on watching the trail ahead that he doesn't spot you. After an hour or so he pauses by a brook to fill his waterskin. You could attack him now. If you do, turn to **57**. If not, turn to **58**.

104: You have successfully completed the first part of your quest. Gain 1 point of *Honour*. You can now attempt to improve your score in either *Fighting Prowess*, *Magical Fortitude* or *Cleverness*. Decide which characteristic you will try to improve, then roll two dice. If the number roll is more than or equal to your current score, you have learnt from your experiences – increase the characteristic permanently by 1 point. Hogron gives you 25 gold pieces. He also gives you a bottle containing one dose of *Potion of Healing*. The adventure continues next issue...□

Giant: *Fighting Prowess:* 5;
Constitution: 18; 1-point armour.

He fights with the leg he was eating for lunch, using it as a club. He is so strong that he adds 1 point to his damage rolls. If you beat him, turn to **21**. If you lose, turn to **30**.

83: You are on the ledge outside the cave. If you are sure you have what Hogron wants, go back to town (turn to **12**). Otherwise, you could have another look at the cave (turn to **21**).

84: The steps lead down into a dank cavern. On a rock ahead of you, you can see two fine boots of grey leather. Before you can reach them, however, there is a terrible shriek and a troll leaps out at you, raking with its bronze claws. You must fight.

Troll: *Fighting Prowess:* 6;
Constitution: 7; 1-point armour.

Trolls regenerate damage. At the start of each round, add 1 point to the troll's *Constitution* unless you have already killed it. (Once its *Constitution* is down to zero, you can burn this appalling creature with fire from your lantern to prevent it regenerating.) Regeneration can never increase the troll's *Constitution* above its initial score. If you win the fight, turn to **27**. If you lose, turn to **30**.

The Serpent's Venom

by Liz Fletcher

An AD&D Scenario for Beginning Characters of 1st-3rd Levels



PLAYERS' INTRODUCTION

Finding themselves somewhat impoverished, the player characters enter the town of Overdale one cold evening and are forced to make do with only a meagre supper of bread and cheese at the Black Rose inn. Naturally, then, they are quick to accept when a tall, slender blonde in robes of green and grey approaches and invites them to dine with her. 'I am Galadria the Gifted,' she says. 'I know what it is to be down on one's luck, so I extend this charitable hand to a group of fellow adventurers.' The charitable hand in question glitters with a number of heavy gold rings. She sweeps gracefully between the benches where the common patrons of the inn sit drinking, and leads the characters to one of the partitioned tables off to one side of the room. She orders stew and mulled wine for them all before explaining that she is a magic-user who has been looking for a party of suitable adventuring companions to help her deal with an usually awkward situation.

As the food is brought, there is a brief lull in the conversation, and the characters cannot help overhearing something of what is being said by the group at the next table. The word 'treasure' is mentioned several times. Discreetly listening at the thin wooden partition, they hear snatches of discussion – the other group are also adventurers, planning to explore and loot an abandoned temple a day's ride to the north. The temple appears to be located in an underground complex hidden beside a lake surrounded by weeping willows. Galadria whispers that she knows the lake, having recently passed that way – it is called Willow Lake. Suddenly one of the men at the next table rises to leave – Galadria and her player characters immediately pretend to be chatting to one another. The man who has risen says goodbye to his friends and leaves. At the door, he turns and calls back: 'I'll get some horses and see you back here in two days, then!' before walking into the night.

Galadria leans forward and speaks in hushed tones, glancing from time to time at the next table as if to reassure herself that the eavesdropping has not

been detected. 'Luck has delivered us an excellent opportunity, or so it seems. If this group aren't planning to depart for another two days, we can steal a march on them. I hope that none of you consider this dishonourable – they do look rather disreputable types themselves, and honour must go by the board when one's pocket is almost empty of gold.'

DMs BACKGROUND

This has actually been a con – an elaborate charade enacted to dupe the player characters. Galadria is the accomplice of the men at the next table. She and they are worshippers of the evil god Set [see *Deities & Demigods*]. The abandoned temple to the north was their own, but it was attacked almost a year ago by a group of paladins. Galadria and the others were the only ones to escape. They would like to retrieve the idol of Set and the coffers from the temple, but have been unable to do so because several of the skeleton guards of the temple were not destroyed by the paladins and now patrol parts of the complex following their original orders: to attack anyone not accompanied by a full Priest of Set (at least 5th level).

For some time, Galadria and the others lured several adventuring parties to the temple in order to whittle down the number of undead guards without risking themselves. Then events were complicated by a group of goblins led by a doppelganger posing as a hobgoblin moving into the abandoned temple. The doppelganger instructed the goblins to board the skeletons into one section of the complex. Although many goblins died in the attempt, this was achieved, and the skeletons do not have the orders or the intellect to dismantle the barricade.

The remaining worshippers of Set know about the goblins, but not the nature of their leader. They have evolved new tactics: Galadria will take the player characters into the temple and make a drive straight for the main shrine in order to get the sacred idol. On the way out, Vorgus and the others plan to mount an ambush – whereupon Galadria will reveal her true colours and (they intend) the player characters will be slain.

Galadria

4th level MU; (worshipper of Set); AC8; HP9; Alignment: Lawful Evil. Str: 8; Int: 15; Wis: 9; Con: 10; Dex: 12; Cha 14.

Spells: 1st: *Shield, burning hands, magic missile.*

2nd: *Web, ray of enfeeblement.*

Equipment: *Ring of Protection +1* (in the form of a coiled serpent) staff, dagger, components etc.

The Journey to the Temple

The ride north takes the characters through rolling, green countryside, through vales and gentle hills, past small hamlets, and farms where peasants till the fields. At one point, they espy a sombre, black chapel or monastery across the valley. Even at this distance, it is easy to see that it is deserted and overgrown. (This chapel was the home of the paladins who raided the temple of Set. So many were slain in the endeavour that the wounded who returned decided to deconsecrate their chapel and move south). It is deserted.

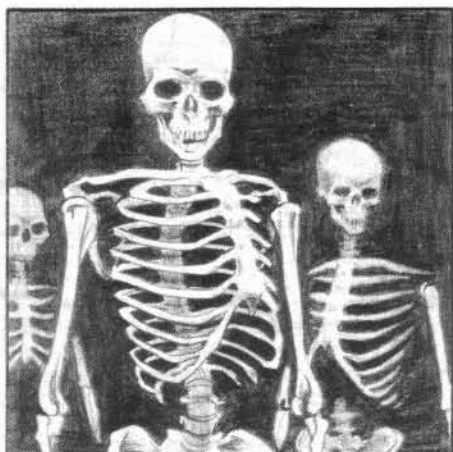
Finally their objective is in sight. As the characters ride towards the lake, however, they are suddenly attacked by a party of five goblins who were out foraging. Goblins: AC6; HD1; Move: 6"; No of Attacks: 1; Damage: 1 by weapon; HP4, 6, 2, 8, 5, short swords and slings.

These goblins will not attempt to reach the temple, (if they try to escape, it will be into the wilderness) because they know that the goblin look-out there will have seen the characters approaching and will be given the alarm, so the way in will be barricaded (see below).

Galadria will try not to use her spells unless absolutely necessary. She does need at least 3 of the players to carry the idol out of the temple, however, so she will bear this in mind.

The entrance to the temple is a cave mouth on the lake shore. (See elevation above.) This is concealed behind the trunk of a weeping willow, but Galadria will soon 'stumble across' the entrance if the characters don't spot it. Once inside the temple, her aim will be to lead them directly to the major shrine and the temple treasury. This will involve Galadria

THE SERPENT'S VENOM



in noticing several secret doors, and although she will try to pretend that she is just doing this by luck, her eagerness to complete the mission may make her find the secret doors suspiciously quickly.

The Temple Complex

1. Entrance Passage.

Crudely hewn steps lead up about 6' behind the willow tree. The passage then levels out and carries on for another 5' or so – ie, just more than the range of torchlight.

2. Entrance Hall.

Barricades to the left and right block the exit passages from this room. Sturdy ropes lead across from behind the left barricade and are secured to the other. As the characters enter, they can see several goblins peering out from behind the left-hand barricade.

Suddenly the ropes go taut and the right-hand barricade is pulled down. There is a noxious tittering from the goblins as four skeletons advance through the collapsed barricade and attack the characters. There are a total of nine skeletons in the temple complex, previously trapped in the passage to rooms 12, 13 and 14; they will issue forth to attack the characters at the rate of 1-3 a round until all have been killed. They will also attack Galadria, even though she is a worshipper of Set, because she is not accompanied by a priest of the god.

Skeletons: AC7; HD1; Move: 12"; No of Attacks: 1; Damage: 1-6; Special Defences: edged and pointed weapons cause only half damage; unaffected by *sleep*, *charm*, *cold* or *hold* spells; HP4,3,4,3,5,2,2,2,6.

The barricades are made of logs and branches. The left-hand one must be broken down for the characters to reach the goblins. This will take 4-6 rounds, with the goblins sniping at the players all the time. Galadria will prefer to take the party this way even if all the skeletons have been destroyed, because she knows about the nightmare guarding the armoury and regards it as the safer of the two routes.

The goblins and their leader. The goblins occupy the section of the complex covering rooms 3, 4, 5 and 6. Their leader is a doppelganger who has taken the form of a hobgoblin.

Goblins: AC6; HD1; Move: 6"; No of Attacks: 1; Damage: by weapon; HP3,2,4,6,2,2,7,3,2,1, armed with short swords and slings.

Doppelganger: AC5; HD4; Move: 9"; No of Attacks: 1; Damage: 1-12; Special Attacks: surprise on 1-4; Special Defences: immune to *sleep* and *charm*, save as 10th level fighter; HP13.

3. Storeroom.

This was originally the temple storeroom. Some game hangs from hooks in the ceiling for a banquet the goblins were planning. The smaller chamber off to the end is where the food is prepared.

4. Refectory.

There are plain wooden benches and a table.

5. Dormitory.

This is where the lower-ranking worshippers slept (Galadria, Vargus and the others). It is now the goblins dormitory, of course. One goblin lies in bed here – he has a fever, and could not join his fellows in defending their lair. Anyone who touches him has a 5% chance of contracting the disease (which is a mucus membrane infection).

6. Outer Shrine.

There is a bas-relief of a jackal-headed man on the opposite wall. Originally the room was hung with tapestries and was a place for silent prayer to Set. It is now the doppelganger's private chamber, and he uses the tapestries for his bedding.

7. Robing Room.

Several black robes with a coiled serpent design in white over the abdomen hang on hooks around the room. A wooden cupboard contains six serpentine head-

dresses with veils of silver gauze. There are five mouldering corpses in the room, two of which wear rusting armour. (There is a 5% chance that a player character will notice that Galadria is unusually disturbed by the sight of these corpses. The three unarmoured ones were, of course, priests of the temple; the other two were paladins slain in the attacks.)

8. Major Shrine.

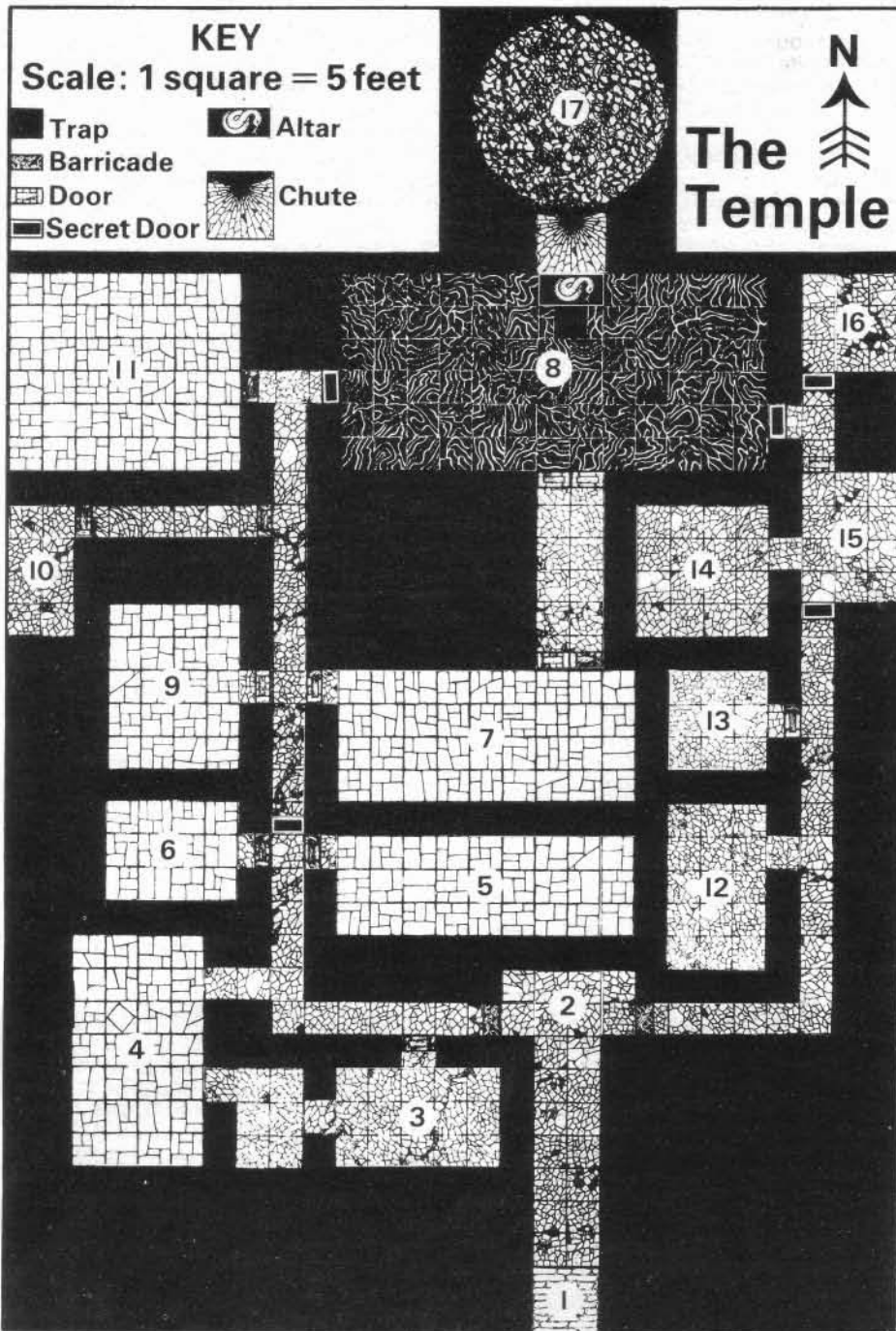
This is a large chamber of black marble veined with quartz. On the altar stone there is a golden idol in the form of a rearing serpent. (*Note*: as a worshipper of Set, Galadria should perform a genuflection as she crosses the threshold of this chamber. She won't actually do this because it would be an obvious giveaway, but from that point she will be -1 on all rolls – and enemies will be 1 on saves vs her spells – until ritually absolved by a cleric of Set.)

There are two traps on the idol that even Galadria doesn't know about. Firstly, if touched anywhere except behind the head, it will shoot out its forked tongue to strike any character standing directly in front of the altar stone (unless they have taken specific precautions against this); the tongue does 1-8 points and is poisoned. Secondly, a 5'x5' trapdoor will open directly in front of the altar, dropping anyone standing there down a sloping chute to room 17. The idol is worth 1,000gps and radiates an aura of evil.

9. Priests' Dormitory.

There are five beds with decaying linen. There are two corpses here – it seems▷





through completely must save vs spells or lose a point of Wisdom.

12. Barracks.
A bare room. This is where the skeletons remained when 'off duty'.

13. Tomb Chamber.
Two sarcophagi contain the mortal remains of earlier High Priests of this temple.

14. Cells.
Manacles hang from the walls. There is a decayed corpse chained here. This is where victims were kept awaiting sacrifice to the deity.

15. Armoury.
A nightmare guards the special weapons of the temple. Nightmare: AC-4; HD6+6; Move: 15"/36"; No of Attacks: 3; Damage: 2-8/4-10/4-10; Special Defences: opponents must save against its choking breath or fight at -2. The nightmare will attack anyone except the High Priest, so Galadria knows better than to enter the room. The nightmare will not leave this room, even to pursue intruders, as its orders were to stay and guard.

The special weapons and armour are: a +1 Mace, a +1 Warhammer, a suit of +1 Chainmail; two +1 Shields.

16. Treasury.
The temple coffers contain 6000gps and 2000sps, guarded by two zombies: AC8; HD2; Move: 6"; No of Attacks: 1; Damage: 1-8, immune to cold, charm, hold and sleep; HP7,8.

17. A Dank Chamber.
Contains the temple's special guardian, which will attack any who fall down the chute into its lair. It is a hook horror: AC3; HD5; Move: 9"; No of Attacks: 2; Damage: 1-8, 1-8; HP20 (see *Fiend Folio* and *WD12*). It usually subsists on small creatures such as rats and moles which burrow into its lair (the priests used to feed it regularly) – a human should provide quite a feast!

Leaving the Temple

As the characters leave the complex, they are ambushed by Vargus and the other worshippers of Set. Galadria will turn on them now, if she hasn't been killed in the temple.

Since the sacking of their temple by the paladins, these remaining worshippers have devoted their efforts to recovering the idol and the temple coffers. Losogon, although but an acolyte, is their spiritual leader now – but he is not a leader of men, so it is Vargus, as an officer of the temple guard, who gives the orders. Galadria, by virtue of her intelligence and personal power, wields much influence, but the others do not see her as leader because most Set-worshipping fighting men would not take orders from a female magic-user. □

▷ that an armoured knight slew one of the sleeping priests but was then struck down from behind.

10. High Priests' Room.
Two decomposing bodies lie together on the floor. The armoured knight thrust his sword through the High Priest, but the latter locked his hands around the paladin's throat and choked him even in death. The paladin's sword has not rusted, unlike his armour. A serpent staff hangs on the far wall. The High Priest was trying to reach his *Staff of the Serpent* (adder) when the chief paladin caught up with him. The paladin's sword is +1.

When the characters have been in this room for two rounds, a shadowy form will rise from the High Priest's corpse. It will attack anyone except a worshipper of Set. It is the High Priest's wraith. Wraith: AC4; HD5+3; Move: 12"/24";

No of Attacks: 1; Damage: 1-6 plus energy drain; Special Defence: only harmed by silver and magical weapons; HP21. If this wraith is struck with the paladin's sword it will take 2-20 points of damage immediately, because some of the paladin's goodness has remained in his weapon which was the cause of the Priest's death.

11. Library.
Shelves around the room are stocked with numerous books, all of which deal with the revolting and terrible rituals of the priesthood of Set. Any good character who reads one of these books

Name	Class	Level	HP	Notes	AC	Weapon
Vorgus	Ftr	2	11	Streak of white hair in beard	4	Longsword
Losogon	Cleric	1	5	Carries fig-wood staff in snake-form	4	Morning Star
Anabat	Ftr	1	4	Scar over left eye	5	2-handed Sword
Finbal	Ftr	1	7	Uses gilded scimitar	4	Scimitar
Rish	Ass	1	4	Sword has serpentine hilt	7	Broadsword

Dear *WD*,

I don't know if it really is becoming obligatory to throw in some flattery when writing to you these days, but if it is, then I'm going to find it easier this time, as there was a couple of things in *WD50* worth complimenting. Garth Nix's *A Few Small Formalities* was excellent – perhaps the best example of a technique for slowing down and confusing hack'n'slay *Travellers* yet published. Mike Polling's Part II of *The Key of Tirandor* was also fine – the first *AD&D* scenario I've yet seen that would be worth reading as a story.

The only problem with the issue was that the description of Agaroth's Boasting skill (*Fiend Factory*) was left out. To summarise: a successful Boasting roll produces an effect as a *glamour* spell; a fumble may cause the intended victim to conclude that the boaster is all mouth and loincloth, and generally makes the would-be-target burst out laughing.

Yours till Agaroth takes up poetry,
Phil Masters, Stevenage, Herts.

Dear *WD*,

I write to complain at the ill-treatment we hobbits receive in your strange world of Arpeege. The second-worst doers of this evil are those foul, fell creatures, the Tee'ess-ars in their monstrous creations *AD&D* and even good old *D&D*: our race are referred to as Halflings. Do we not warrant the use of our own name? The Tee'ess-ars should follow the example of the *Flying Buffalo* worshippers and call us hobbits.

The real evil-doers are, I fear, the perpetrators of *Imagine* and your good selves. Must we put up with that foul orc Gobbledigook and his 'sauced hobbit toes', or sick diagrams of the squashed remnants of our kin beneath foul giants? And with being referred to as 'noisy' and 'at the end of the street' [*WD47*] and always being cited as the weakest creatures ('do hobbits kick sand in your face? You need our *Manual of Bodily Health*', seen in some eldritch journal). Our great ancestors Meriadoc Brandybuck and Peregrin Took were by no means weak.

Surely the hobbits, two of whom saved the world of men from Sauron in TA3019, warrant better treatment? Our great chronicler, J R R Tolkien must have wanted it so.

Yours in gentle wrath,
Jondo Almond Baggins, The Shire.

Dear *WD*,

As a proud possessor of some of the early *White Dwarfs* (Dwarves?) I have recently returned to the new format, monthly magazine. Though standards have, if anything, improved, I have one complaint to make: too much material relies on articles in previous issues. For example, *Irilian*, a highly praised campaign, made little sense if you only had one chapter, and though the *AD&D* demonist will always find a niche in my campaign, without a number of back copies, I will never know its full potential. While this policy encourages us to buy more regularly, it is rather frustrating to buy a *WD* only to find 50% of it is useless without the previous five copies. Could we please see a few more 'one-offs'!

Yours,
John Outram, Coventry.

You have a point, John, and we'll try to be more circumspect in the future, but to be fair – there was no other way to run Irilian other than to serialize it, because of its size. Judging from people's response to it, however, it was worth it –Ed.

Dear *WD*,

As an avid reader of *WD* it is not often I notice anything glaringly wrong with one of your articles but this is an exception. In the dim and distant ages of *WD42* there was an article called '...to catch a thief'. In this, the author talks about retina prints being used as a security device with the prints recorded at TL10 in *Traveller*. Alas, he is wrong. In a recent TV program a device exactly the same as the one in the article is being used in a bank for access to company records. We are at the equivalent of a mere TL7.

Anyhow, enough of the criticism; there have been some superb scenarios like *Irilian* and more recently *The Key of Tirandor*. I do tend to feel that *WD* does look only at the fantasy side of RPGing. We want some more *Traveller* scenarios. Even the attempts made at them are not that good, take *Shuttle Scuttle* for instance. I yearn for the days of the *Sable Rose* and other good sci-fi scenarios.

I have enjoyed *Counterpoint* and *Thrud the Barbarian*. Keep up your high standards and can we have more reader surveys.

Yours,
S J Sanders, Reading.

Dear *WD*,

First of all, may I say that I am glad that the majority of your readers like the new style of *White Dwarf* – it is, in fact, excellent.

More miniature reviews would be good, especially the more obscure figures and manufacturers. I must also agree with some letters on your letters page; that scenarios for any system would be useful for the players who play some of the less popular role-playing games. Also, to us avid fans of *Warhammer* and other fantasy wargames, a feature on army and regiment organization and strategy would be greatly appreciated.

Yours Suggestively,
William Chippendale.

Tabletop Heroes should satisfy your desire for figure reviews, and you'll be pleased to know that next issue features a full-scale 'Battle of the Pelennor Fields' from Lord of the Rings for Warhammer, followed by some Tolkienesque Army Lists –Ed.

Dear *WD*,

Congratulations on your 50th issue. I have been buying *White Dwarf* since issue 6 and in this time the magazine has had only once price increase but has doubled in size, an achievement unique amongst gaming magazine's and worthy of praise. However you have only managed to adequately cover three role-playing games and, when you have covered another system the results have not been too enlightening, either to the player of a different system or to the reader who has never played the system. To give an example, take the recent *Bushido* and *Call of Cthulhu* adventures – (two of my favourite RPGs) published in *WD47* and *WD50*. The adventures, while interesting were difficult to integrate into an existing campaign (a fault shared by most adventures published in gaming magazines) and I would assume, of little interest to your average *D&D* player. Perhaps the space would have been better used by an article which introduced the reader to a new RPG similar to a recent article in *Imagine 7* on *DragonQuest* (the only article of any originality in that collection of *Dragon* reprints) or the articles by Lew Pulsipher in *WD7* (I think) on *Chivalry and Sorcery*.

Yours Thirstingly,
Vlad the Impaler.

Dear *WD*,

Although not an experienced DM, I find that the *Monster Manual* and *Fiend Folio* provide a wide and varied number of monsters – so why is there a need for a second *Monster Manual*? Also, how do all these monsters get their food? Even allowing for a large supply of cattle (and the odd human!) is there really enough food for all of them? I'm not questioning the realism behind this since it is a fantasy game, but how is it possible? Lamb doesn't grow on trees you know. Think of the unbalanced ecological situation that results. Or, to put it in a nutshell, think of how much a giant eats, then think of the number of giants you've killed or met in a dungeon.

Yours sincerely,
J T Hallide, Elvas, Portugal.

exterminate
exterminate
exterminate



LETTERS PAGE,
WHITE DWARF,
27/29 SUNBEAM ROAD,
PARK ROYAL,
LONDON NW10 6JP.



RuneRites is a regular column for RuneQuest enthusiasts, edited by Dave Morris. This issue, a look at magical rings.

RINGS

by Dave Morris

With this issue, I am taking over RuneRites from Oliver Dickinson, who has found that pressure of work prevents him from continuing. I am sure that RuneQuesters everywhere will join in thanking Oliver for the excellent material he has presented to us in this column over the last two years.

RuneRites still needs your contributions to thrive, of course. I have been a little disappointed by the general quality of submissions we have on file at the moment. Where are the innovative spell-systems, the new magical items, exotic beasts and sparkling ideas? Instead we have numerous articles on yet more detailed ways to simulate combat procedure, or protracted theses on Gloranthan cults which are Chaosium's province, not ours. If you think you have an interesting idea for RuneRites, why not send it in?

Magic rings are a traditional fantasy element, but they are not given much prominence in *RQ*. It is always possible to make a 'routine' magic item by casting *matrix creation* on a ring or setting a powered crystal into it, of course, but here are some special magic rings that could be included in a campaign. They are all created with Rituals of Enchantment similar to that involved in enchanting a runeblade (see *WD39*), and are thus very rare. Those rings which have charges will be found with $2d10+1$; they can be recharged up to their maximum (21 charges) at a cost of 400 points of battle magic POW per charge. All 400 POW must be provided by a single individual – usually a bound spirit of the ringwearer – within a period of one month.

Ring of Agonizing Doom

Each charge of the ring produces a bolt of black lightning which forks out to strike 2-8 beings within 25m. The 'Attack chance' for each branch of the bolt is 70%, and the victim can apply Defence (if any) in an attempt to dodge. A victim who is hit takes 1-4 blows for 1d10 damage each; armour protects as normal, except that all metals give 6-point protection.

Ring of Alarums

This enables the user to set invisible spell-alarms on the back of doors, on the floor, etc, to tell him when any being passes that way. To receive the alarm, he must be within 250m and wearing the ring at the time. Each spell-alarm set costs one charge.

Ring of Fire

Each charge of this ring enables the wearer to create a momentary gout of flame from his hands. This will ignite combustibles, etc. If used against someone the wearer is grappling with, the flame does 2d6 *heatshock* (cf *salamanders*).

Ring of Teleportation

This enables the wearer and one companion to *teleport* over distances up to 150m instantaneously, as long as the wearer has previous first-hand knowledge of the location he is *teleporting* to. If the range is exceeded, or if some large object now occupies the intended destination, roll for the result – 1-30: wearer and companion each land at a (different) random destination within 15km; 31-60: wearer and companion each land at a random destination within 2000km; 61-90: wearer and companion are transported to another plane (perhaps a demonic realm, etc); 91-00: wearer and companion rematerialize at their departure point and each take 5d6 CON damage.

Ring of Terror

The wearer of this ring is at all times cloaked in an image of nightmarish appearance. Creatures encountering him have a chance ($INT \times 2$ or less on d100) of seeing through the image. If this roll is failed, the victim actually believes that he is faced with some horrendous monster, and must roll $MDF \times 6$ or less on d100 (for MDF, see *WD47 RuneRites – Mental Discipline Factor = $\frac{1}{3}$ [CON+CHA + highest skill divided by 5]) or succumb to *demoralization*. If a *demoralized* character is meleed by the ringwearer, he must take a second MDF roll or panic and flee. Once out of the wearer's presence, victims make a further MDF roll every other Melee Round to see if they recover from their fear.*

Ring of Flying

Each charge of this ring enables the wearer to *fly* for 15 minutes at speeds of up to 30km/h. While manoeuvring in combat, a flying character will have a movement of 12 and be +10% on Attacks and Parries owing to his height advantage over earthbound opponents.

Ring of Communing

This enables the wearer to communicate telepathically with any being he can see. He can also communicate over any distance with anyone else wearing a *Ring*

of *Communing*, so long as they have met one another at least once.

Ring of the Nether Planes

The wearer can ask three questions of the spirits each day. These must be yes/no questions and concern events of the past or present – the spirits cannot see the future, nor know a person's innermost thoughts. Questions delving back 30 years or more into the past will be answered with 70% accuracy; more recent events will be known to the spirits with only 20%-55% accuracy. If the spirits do not know the answer to a question, they will answer randomly.

Ring of Soul Storing

The function of this ring is to store its wearer's spirit if he is slain. The spirit remains dormant in the ring, with all abilities and spell-knowledge intact, until someone else puts it on – at which point the spirit can attempt to possess the body as per normal spirit combat. The assailed character can break off spirit combat by removing the ring, so a cunning spirit might wait until this was inconvenient – perhaps while the character was in melee, or climbing a cliff. A spirit can be driven from the ring with the *free ghost* spell.

Ring of Red Ruin

Each charge of this ring releases a beam of searing red light which can be aimed at one victim within 200m. The accuracy of the beam will be equal to the wearer's ability with a crossbow or $DEX \times 5\%$, whichever is higher. If the beam strikes, it does 1d20 damage, with armour giving only half normal protection.

Ring of Shapechanging

The wearer of this ring can change his shape into that of any creature of similar size. STR and DEX will alter to become appropriate to the new form. The wearer will gain physical attributes of the new form, but not magical ones. (Eg: by becoming a small dragon he would get wings to fly with, but not the power to breathe flame.) The ring itself remains apparent on the hand (or paw, or claw, or leg) of the new form. Each transformation costs one charge.

Ring of Invisibility

The wearer is invisible at all times, except when attacking, casting a spell, etc.

Ring of Invulnerability

By expending a charge, the wearer becomes like an immutable statue – he cannot move or cast any spells, but is immune to physical damage, magical attack, spirit combat, or any other form of assault. He remains in contact with his familiars, and they can still act for him. The effect lasts one hour.

Ring of Fortunate Action

The wearer of this ring cannot *fumble* any manual skill, including combat skills. Fumble rolls are treated as simple failure.

Ring of Sensing Enchantment

The wearer can sense the presence of magic in an object. He has only to look at the object and concentrate for one Melee Round; any enchantment will be visible as a greenish aura. □

The TRAVELLERS

CHAPTER ONE: GAS GIANT •••

IMP STARDATE: 037-1105

The *Osprey II* exits *Jumpspace* and begins falling back into the relative universe... in relative control of their newly acquired ship (won in a game of *Astro-Tiddlywinks*) is pilot *Captain Flinn* and his relatively sane crew:



Jumpspace:
A parallel universe where the fabric of relative space, time and distance are distorted into a kaleidoscopic display... in other words...

"IT'S PRETTY."

Ship's comp here: **Malfunction!**

Jumpdrive malfunction!

Not that I'm surprised. Round here, 'Routine Maintenance' is a dirty word.



AMAZING. THIS COMPUTER IS JUST AS RATTY AS THE FIRST ONE. MUST BE A NEW GENERATION.

WE'RE ALL GONNA DIEEE!

I AM CALLED GVIN

Dinalt (Gunner)

RELAX - WE'RE OUT OF JUMP...

FOUND REGINA GAS GIANT - IT'S SOMEWHERE ON OUR LEFT - BIG ROUND THING - CAN'T MISS IT.

THANK YOU HAYES... EVERYONE LOOKOUT FOR A BIG ROUND THING.

NOONE KILLS "MAD GUY" AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!

Gavin (Alien Relations)

Eventually...

WELCOME TO THE REGINA SUBSECTOR GAS GIANT PROPERTY OF SHEIK YERJELLY (AIR-ABS)



At Regina...

REGINA CONTROL - THIS IS OSPREY II REQUIRING CLEARANCE TO MAKE PLANET-FALL.

THIS IS REGINA HYDRA - A MINUTE WILL YAH! IVE ONLY GOT 7 HEADS AND 3 OF THOSE ARE WATCHING THE FOOTBALL!

ZZZZZZ Hey keep it down Mac.

IT WAS EASIER IN THE OLD DAYS... BEFORE WE EDUCATED THOSE GASSY AIR-ABS

AT LEAST IT AIN'T LIKE THE GAS EMBARGO OF '79

GO WHEN LIGHT IS GREEN

- 1 STRATO ★★
 - 2 TROPO ★★
 - 3 IONO ★★
- PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE BP

WELL - HERE WE GO AGAIN FOR ANOTHER BORING REFIT.

"IF ONLY WE BELIEVED THAT..."

NEXT: STARPORT.

Treasure Chest is a regular department for readers AD&D/D&D ideas. This issue, a collection of magic items.

Pandora's Box

CASKET OF TROUBLES by Julian Clark

These small caskets are made of ebony and bound in gold and silver; they are inlaid with several plaques depicting many men fleeing from an opened container, issuing from which are swarms of hideous insects with an *ethereal* quality about them.

If a casket is opened, a huge cloud of insects (identical to those on the plaques) will come forth — they will attack any creature within a 200' radius of the casket, hitting as a 3HD monster for 1d4+4 damage; each character (regardless of numbers) will be subjected to 1-4 attacks each. If hit, a save vs dragon breath must be made or the victim receives one minor malevolent effect from the *DMG* (rolled randomly). Adventurers will receive only one such effect, ie additional hits just cause more damage, regardless of the number of times hit. The insects can be dispelled by a successful clerical attempt to turn undead (as a mummy) or by striking the area of the swarm with a magical weapon of at least +3 bonus. In any case, the insects will leave the area after 1 turn to spread chaos elsewhere.

A *Casket of Troubles* can be created by an evil magic-user of 14th level or above. After releasing its curse, the casket disintegrates.

TROLL DUST by Keith Thompson

In distant times a mighty wizard had troubles with a horde of trolls. This wizard captured many of the trolls and used them for various experiments. The way in which *Troll Dust* was created is now lost in the mists of time, but it is rumoured to have something to do with dehydration...

In any case, *Troll Dust* will be found in potion type containers with water-tight stoppers. Any amount of this powder mixing with water will form a (normal) troll after a 1 to 6 round delay (remember trollish regeneration!). Dust that is susceptible to atmospheric moisture will also form a troll; 24 hours are needed for this transformation to take place.

A troll created in this way will be just that — a perfectly 'normal' troll, ie unpleasant.

GHOUL GUM by John Paul Vincent

This non-magical but useful item is usually found in a bronze copper-coated

catch-locked box, 2 inches square. The box will contain from 1 to 8 pieces of white soft gum wrapped in brown paper; these pieces of gum will, when chewed, negate the paralyzing effect of a ghouls touch, just as if the character was an elf. The gum must be chewed during the time of the ghouls attack and its effectiveness will last for about 20 rounds. A character will know when the gum's becoming useless because it will start to turn tasteless (in its useful state it will taste very like cinnamon).

The gum pieces are round and roughly the size of a small marble; they are also useless if swallowed or spat out, and must be chewed continuously to be effective.

SWORD OF THUNDER by Paul Ormston

This long sword has a curiously engraved blade, a blue leather covered hand grip (blue dragon hide) and a large clear crystal as its pommel. This is a +2 sword and will always have intelligence and ego. When attacked by a *lightning bolt* the character can elect to forfeit his normal saving throw and instead try to use the sword to deflect the bolt. To deflect the bolt the character must throw to hit Armour Class 0 (strength bonuses do *not* apply but the magical plus of the weapon does). If the throw is missed full damage is automatically taken by the character. If a hit is scored then no damage is taken by the wielder and half the *lightning bolt's* damage is absorbed by

the blade and is stored in the crystal, which then turns blue in colour showing that the sword is charged. Only one charge can be stored in the sword. The other half of the damage is deflected in a random direction. If the sword is already charged then all of the bolt's power is deflected, again in a random direction, but the deflected bolt will never harm the wielder.

If the wielder hits a target when the sword is charged then the electrical power stored in the sword will be released with a loud crack of thunder and is added to the normal damage done by the sword.

This weapon can only be recharged by this method; trying to recharge the sword by sticking it in the ground and firing *lightning bolts* at it, or any other such trick will achieve nothing.

DRAGON SHIELDS by Greg Philips

These are large shields made from 14 back scales of huge ancient dragons. They range in value from +1 to +4 on Armour Class, plus complete protection from that dragon type's breath weapon. For example, if the scales were taken from a red dragon it would confer protection from the red dragon's breath weapon.

Naturally, the shields are very rare indeed. It is rumoured that scales from Tiamat's back (which are *extremely* hard to get hold of) give a +5 bonus and protection from *all* evil dragons.

POTION OF WARMTH by Mark Byng

Duration 1 turn. Confers invulnerability to all natural frigidity (up to and including arctic conditions) and the imbiber is protected from the effects of weak freezing spells such as *chill metal*. The potion also confers a resistance to unnatural, intense cold caused by such things as *cone of cold* spells or white dragon breath. Against this type of attack the imbiber's Saving Throw is at +2 and damage is 1/2 or 1/4 depending on the success of the saving throw. □



Does the full moon bring fear and trepidation? Then ring LA (Lycanthropes Anonymous)

MIDGARDIAN

Are Vampires a pain in the neck? Then you need: Van Helsing's Garlic Rub™

'Mushrooms are a threat to mankind' claims top report

A newly discovered fungus could pose a dire threat to human life. This startling report has been made by *Chaosium* in their new *Call of Cthulhu* adventure *The Fungi from Yuggoth*. A team of adventurers is being assembled to try and counter the threat. To help them *Chaosium* have also published a newly revised edition of *Call of Cthulhu*, the role-playing game set in the mythos of H. P. Lovecraft.

For those unable to join the team to fight the fungi threat, *Theatre of the Mind Enterprises* have released news of other *Cthulhu* horrors in their new scenario, *Whispers from the Abyss*.

B-Movie Video Nasties

'They Want Our Women!' scream the banners for *Bug-Eyed Monsters*, the latest SF game to be granted general release. *West End Games*, the publishers, stated that this is not a video nasty, but a B-movie spoof designed by Greg Costikyan, the designer of the classic *The Creature that Ate Sheboygan*.

NEWS IN BRIEF

World aid programme revised

TSR have just released a revised and repackaged edition of *The World of Greyhawk*, a complete fantasy world setting for use with their fantasy role-playing game, *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*.

Also on view on their stand at the recent HIA show in America were a series of adult adventure modules for *AD&D* featuring some spectacular cover artwork. These are not yet available but should be out in a few months time.

Ring the changes

The next issue of *White Dwarf* features *Minis Tirith*, a *Warhammer* scenario based on the famous siege in *Lord of the Rings*; part two of the solo adventure *Castle of Lost Souls*; further explorations of role-playing games in *The Name of the Game*; plus all the regular features and more.

Links with Far East established

Angry letters exchanged on Rogue Trader issue

Silence was maintained in the face of stern cross-examination in the *Citadel* following an exchange of letters earlier this month. Was there a *Rogue Trader* in the house? A spokesperson for *Citadel Miniatures* stated that there was no question of impropriety, and that everything was above board on *Rogue Trader*, their new SF role-playing system. When asked when a full statement might be forthcoming, the spokesperson announced that the full boxed details would be published in July. The hon member for Antares,

Denis Skinhead, enquired if it would be subtitled 'Lost in Space'.

In the meantime, speculation is rife. This Sunday's *Aerial Observant* published conclusive evidence that *Citadel's* latest boxed set of miniature figures has links with the Far East. Pictured here are several of the figures. They are obviously *Oriental Heroes* and can be seen in the shops now.

In the meantime, the public demand for a clarifying statement on the *Rogue Trader* issue is growing.



A suitable case for treatment?

Mayfair Games have released a series entitled *Role Aids*. This series is currently available and includes the following scenario titles: *Dragons of Weng T'Sen*, *Elves*, *The Contract*, *Swordthrust*, *Evil Ruins* and *Shipwrecker* and the supplement *Dark Folk* detailing the culture and origins of trolls, orcs, goblins, kobolds and gnolls. All these items are boldly labelled suitable for use with *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, however, *TSR* who hold the registered trade mark for *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* are expected to have something to say on the matter.

Mayfair have also released *The Forever War*, a board game based on the book.

Cityport not trapped by rate capping

Elders of the city council stated that they were not trapped as a result of government rate capping moves but by the release of Steve Jackson's latest book in his *Sorcery* series published by *Penguin*. *Khare - Cityport of Traps* is a solo fantasy adventure in the style of the *Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks*.

Puffin have also released three new titles in the *Fighting Fantasy* series: *Deathtrap Dungeon* and *Island of the Lizard King*, both by Ian Livingstone, while the third title is *Fighting Fantasy* in which Steve Jackson describes how to create and run multiplayer *Fighting Fantasy* adventures along with two mini-adventures.

Expedition organised to capture rare specimen

Volunteers for an expedition to capture a rare specimen of an alien species are being sought in *Safaris Ship*, Adventure 10 for *Traveller*, the SF role-playing game by *Game Designers' Workshop*. *GDW* have also released Adventure 11: *Arcturus Station*, a sort of ten-little-vargr murder mystery, and *The Traveller Adventure*, a series of linked scenarios in one large softback book.

The British are coming!

In fact they have arrived. *Games Workshop (US)* is now up and running in Maryland. US gamers should now find it easier to grab their copies of *White Dwarf* and *Games Workshop's* games - *Talisman*, *Battlecars*, *Judge Dredd*, *Dr Who* and also *Citadel Miniatures*. Leading the invasion is John Olsen who is diplomatically suited (American father and British mother) for the job. He will be at *Origins* and *GenCon* with all the new releases. People who can't wait that long should write to John at *Games Workshop (US)*, P O Box 2537, Gaithersburg, MD 20870.

Space war a reality

Warfare in space comes one step nearer with the news that *FASA* have released *Star Trek II*, an expansion set for their *Star Trek* role-playing game, which simulates starship combat. Other new products in their successful *Star Trek* range are the *Star Trek Screen*, a referee's screen, and the scenarios *The Vanished*, *Denial of Destiny*, *Demand of Honour* and *Termination 1456* which is only usable with the Klingon pack.

One out, one in

Since joining the *White Dwarf* team, Ian Marsh no longer has time to publish his zine *Dragonlords*. So it's *Dragonlords RIP* after issue 22.

But this month sees the first issue of *Warlock*, the quarterly *Fighting Fantasy* magazine edited by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone and published by *Penguin*. No 1 contains a revised *Warlock of Firetop Mountain* adventure, a map of the kingdom, new monsters and mapping hints.

GOBBLEDIGOOK by Bil



In Tabletop Heroes, we shall be taking a regular squint at role-playing miniatures, reviewing new releases and throwing in the odd modelling or conversion hint on the way. Write and tell us your particular interest regards miniatures in RPGs; if we feel it would be of interest we'll include it whenever space permits.

Armoured fighters are by far the most popular single range of fantasy figures on sale today. Superb examples of these muscled miniatures have recently appeared and many more exist in ranges that FRP gamers may have overlooked simply because they are listed in historical wargaming catalogues. If painted with a little care and imagination, they can become some of your most colourful characters.

Fig 1 shows a fully armoured knight, a recent release from *Essex Miniatures* and an example of one of the large range of armoured fighters available from this traditionally 'wargames' orientated company. Many of their figures are cast with open hands to accept any weapon from a paladin's lance to a cleric's mace; a very useful feature for any proficient fighter. Individual weapons and shields are available in packs of eight. All of the *Essex* figures are cast in a well-detailed 'chunky' style and are virtually flash-free. The 'Medieval' range includes a series of identical foot/horse knights ideal for role-playing wilderness and dungeon adventures. Warrior monks, men-at-arms and male/female NPCs are also available.

Fig 2 shows a couple of *Citadel's* new *High Chivalry* figures indulging in a spot of mutual 'hack-and-slay'. Many fighters in this range have been cast with open helmets, revealing superbly detailed expressions.

Fig 3: A newcomer to the range of *Citadel Chaos Warriors*. Shades of 'Elric of Melniboné' inspired the painting of this doom-laden miniature as an albino. The hair colour is obtained by dry-brushing white paint over a grey base, and a little touch of green was mixed into the basic flesh tint to give the face an unhealthy pallor. Red eyes and dark armour contributed to his air of menace. By the way, the pillar started life as a wedding cake accessory, but is a cheap and effective addition to any DM's table.

Fig 4 is yet another new *Chaos Warrior* from the *Citadel* vats. The mace suggests this to be a useful addition to their range of Evil Clerics. The armour has some very nice skull motifs, whilst the shield bears the same design as that depicted on the front of the *Warhammer* box. The helm and the skull-like face are a little reminiscent of *2000 AD's* Judge Death character, and the pose and proportion is pleasantly threatening – definitely another one for the collection! If you're stuck for ideas as to what to do with your army of chaos warriors, take a look at the *Citadel Compendium*.

Although the *Mark of Chaos* section is primarily for *Warhammer*, it can be easily adapted to most FRPGs; many of the Chaotic Attribute Tables need no alterations whatsoever.

Fig 5 ...Meanwhile back at the siege, smiling Odo Wargfrenzy has been smitten with terminal earache...! Yet more of the *Citadel High Chivalry* range, this

A Hard Day's Knight

A Close-Up Look at Fighter Figures

This is the first in our new monthly department, Tabletop Heroes, written by Joe Dever and Gary Chalk. It will cover figures, figure reviews, painting tips and the like.

time in the company of a (shock! horror! gasp!)...bombard! Very few fantasy gamers include gunpowder in their campaigns although fantasy literature has many examples of its usage. The discovery of black powder and its introduction into a fantasy campaign can inspire many new scenarios; saving its inventor from the clutches of an arch-nasty or adventurers hired to locate a new source of sulphur, or how about magic versus technology in a fantasy wargaming campaign?

Fig 6 shows the entire bombard battery and its crumbling target. Sieges, with or without gunpowder, make for an interesting FRP setting. We will be taking an in-depth look at FRP sieges in a future article, so suffice to say that the battery position and city were all scratch-built from balsa strips and expanded polystyrene ceiling tiles. Sadistically inclined DMs and referees interested in introducing gunpowder to their campaigns would do well to note that early black powder devices were almost as dangerous to the firer as to the target.

Fig 7: *City Chaos Warrior* sporting a rather natty shield. After a white undercoat was applied to this figure, the armoured areas were painted black before being dry-brushed with gold and silver. Dry-brushing is a very useful skill and relatively easy to master. Using an old brush, mix a little of the metallic paint on a pallet, and then wipe the paint-charged bristles of your brush onto an old rag or tissue until they are almost dry. Brush the armoured areas of your figure very lightly and you will notice that the metallic paint that remains on the bristles will begin to adhere to all the raised 'high-spots' of the miniature, picking out all the joints, chainmail links etc. The heavier you apply the dry-brushing, the brighter the armour will progressively become. This technique is equally useful for enhancing the texture of wood planking and fur. Simply paint said area and leave to dry, then 'dry-brush' this area with a lighter tone of the same colour. The detail appears as if by magic! A fuller description of this technique together with a very useful 'Tone Chart' can be found in the back of the *Citadel* catalogue.

Whilst on the subject of painting, it's worth considering heraldry and its usage with fantasy miniatures. Heraldry evolved out of the need for battlefield identification, but over the years it developed into a system of signs and symbols that possessed an almost linguistic complexity. There were certain basic rules which can be useful for for-

mulating your own fantasy heraldry and a prime example is the restricted range of colours originally used. The basic colours were two 'metals' – *Or* (gold or yellow) and *Argent* (silver or white), and five 'colours' – *Gules* (red), *Azure* (blue), *Sable* (black), *Vert* (green) and *Purpure* (purple). Now, if you decided to take say a bull's head as your emblem, following traditional rules of heraldry you could only depict it in certain shades dependant on the colour of the body or 'field' of your shield. A 'metal' device could never appear on a 'metal' field, and a 'colour' device would never appear upon a 'colour' field. Therefore, by adhering to these guidelines you could not adopt a red bull's head on a green background, or indeed a white device on a yellow background. Kings and nobles would often dress their retainers in 'livery' – clothes dyed in the main colours of their coat-of-arms. Thus, if your paladin possesses a shield device of a white cross upon a blue field, and after many years of hardy adventuring he attracts a following of hirelings and men-at-arms, it would be rather chic to have them attired in blue tunics and white hose. Indeed many nobles throughout history also adopted a badge which their retainers sported upon their clothing. The ostrich feathers of the Prince of Wales, the white boar of Richard III, and Henry VI's swan are all relatively well-known and long-lived examples. Our hypothetical paladin could well follow their lead and each of his loyal supporters could bear a small white cross on the shoulder or breast of his tunic. The following list is by no means exhaustive, but it may serve as your first step into the realm of fantasy heraldry:

Good Devices: The sun, the cross, a chalice, a heart, a broadsword, noble animals such as deer, lion, eagles or fantastic creatures such as unicorns.

Evil Devices: Skulls, bones, jagged swords, axes, wolf-heads, snakes, half-moons. An interesting idea for evil emblems is to deface a 'good' symbol. My hobgoblin tribe bear a banner depicting a serated sword impaling a bleeding heart. A rude runic comment beneath it completes the blasphemy!

Elvish Symbols: Full moon, stars, flowers, trees, leaves, swans and the sea.

Reptilian Banners/Symbols: Octopi, fish, dragons, broken egg symbol.

Dwarves: Hammers are an obvious choice, but what about mountains, portcullis's, gold coins, shovels and picks, as well as helms, gauntlets and stands of armour to depict the fabled armoury skills. □



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 5



Fig 3



Fig 4

Photographs by Gary Chalk and Joe Dever



Fig 6



Fig 7

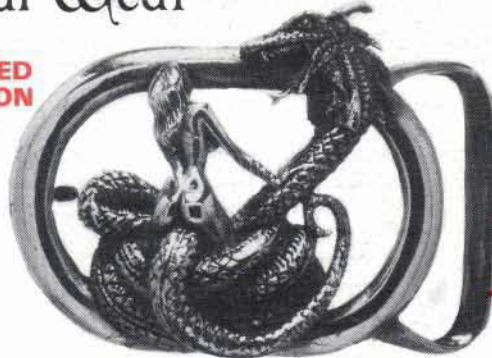
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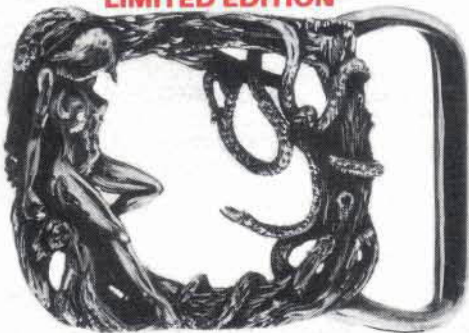


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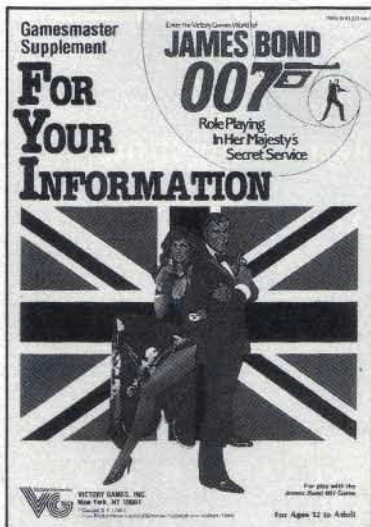


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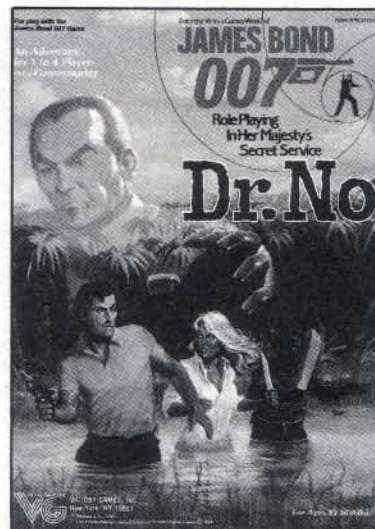
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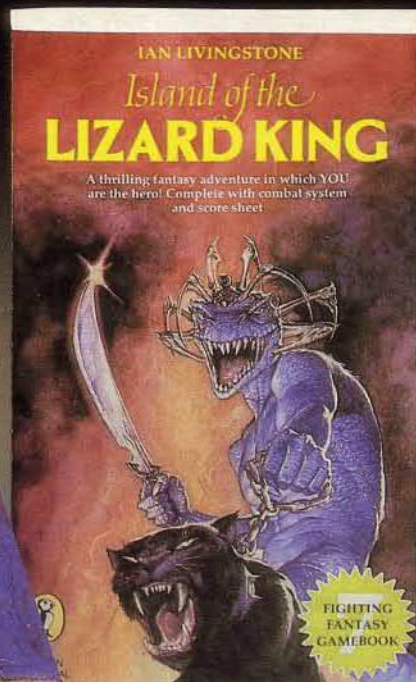
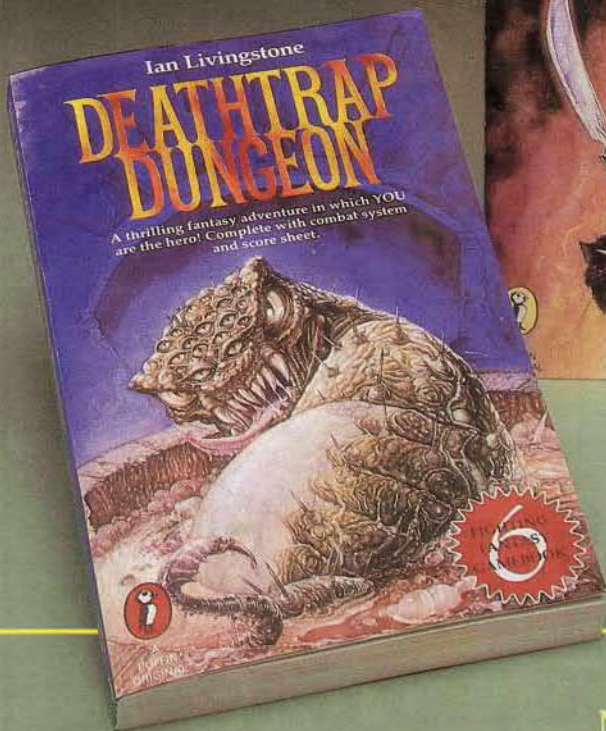
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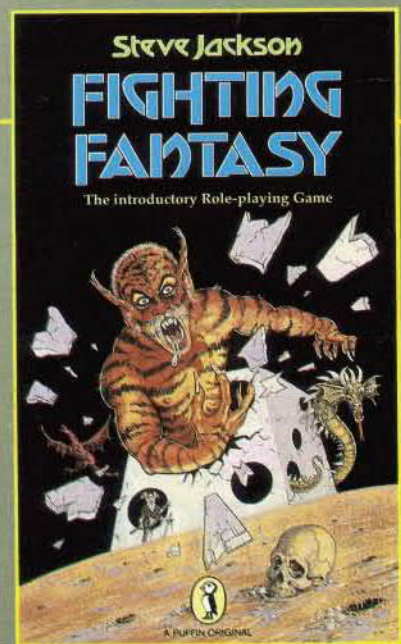
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Boy, 12, wishes to hear from other males aged 10 to 12. Players/DMs phone: Roger, 354 7483, or write to: 61 Alcester Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B73 6PZ.

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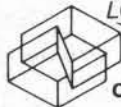
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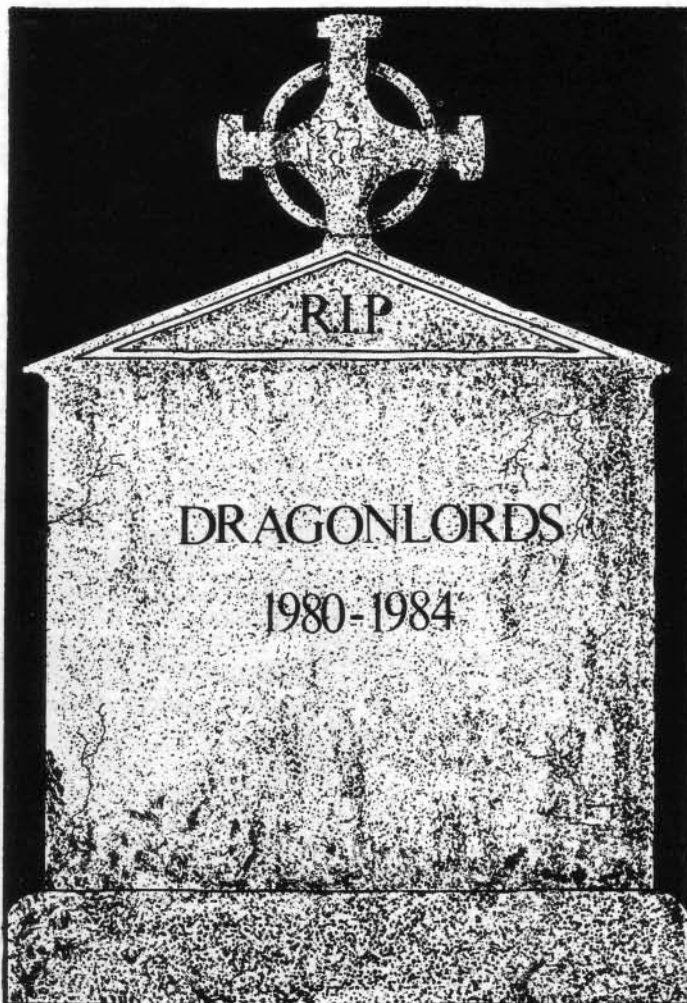
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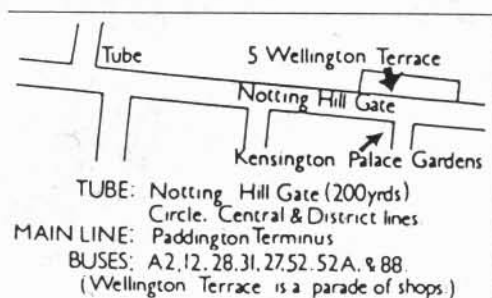
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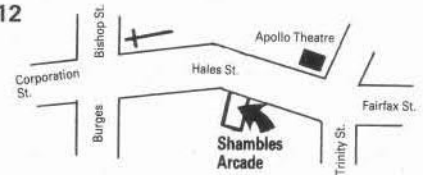
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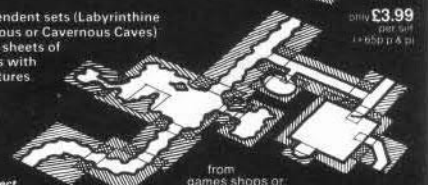
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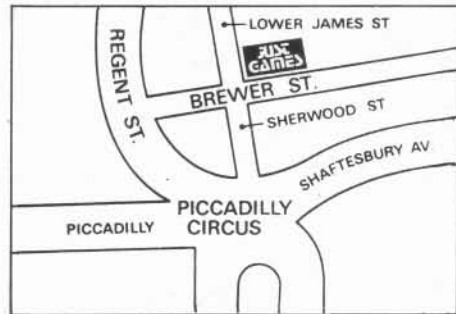
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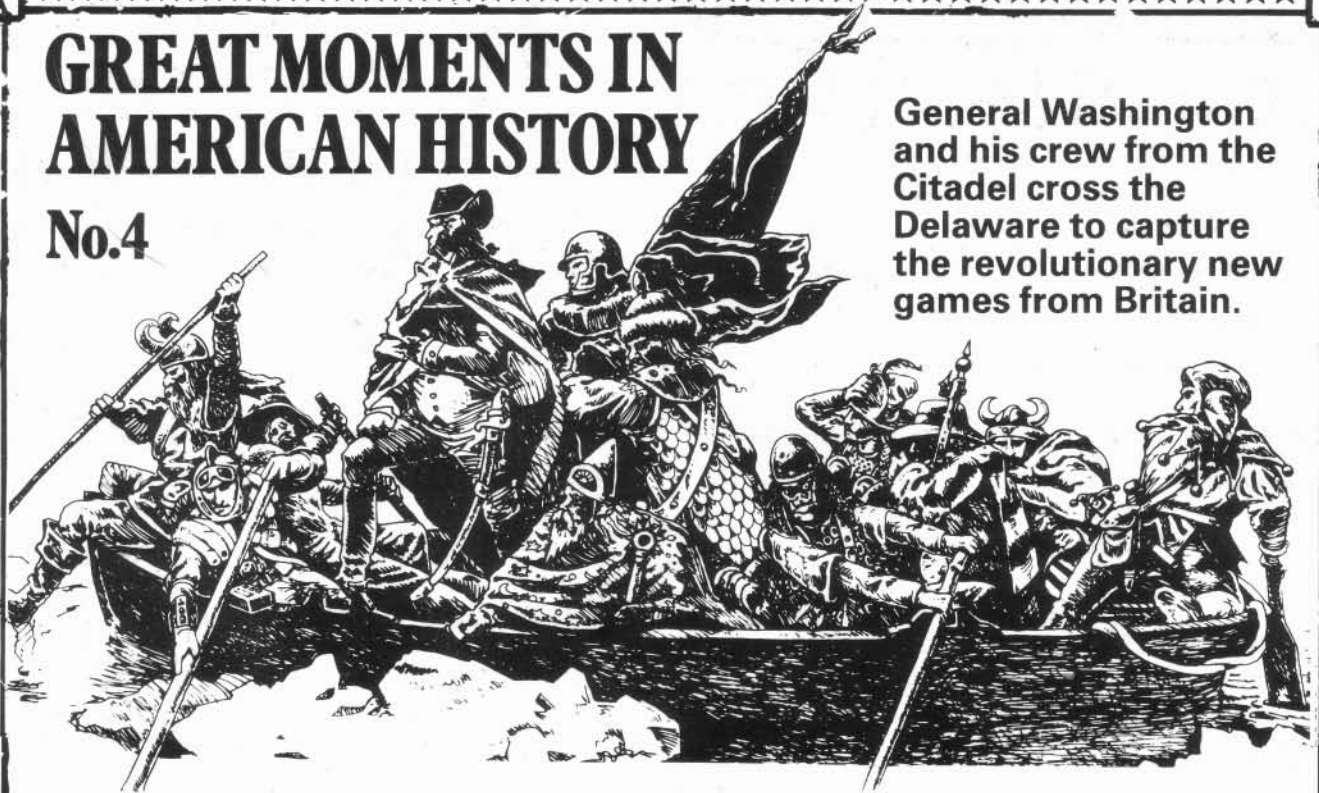
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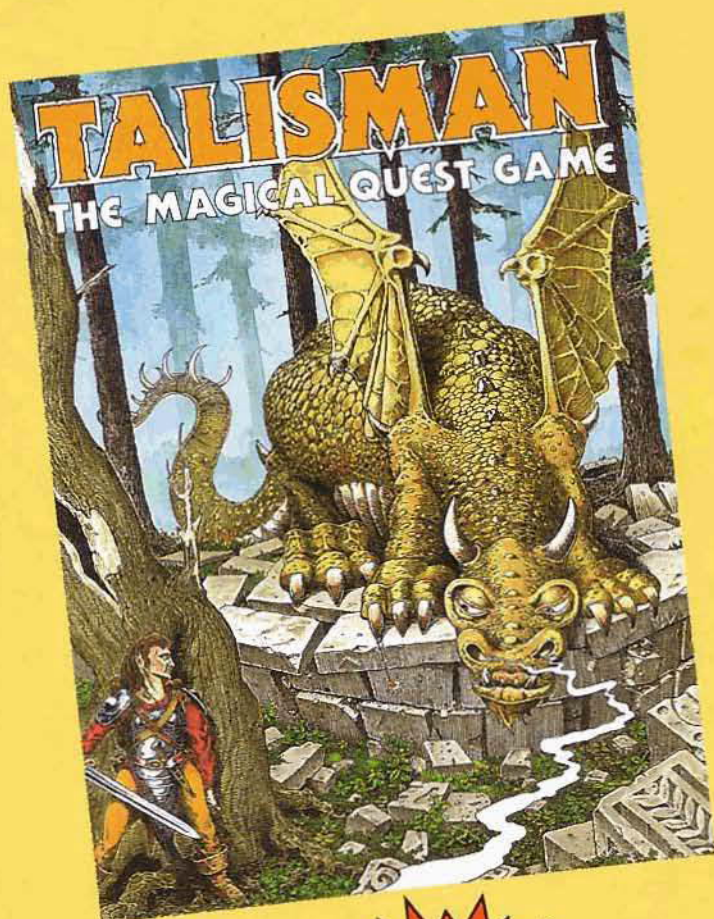
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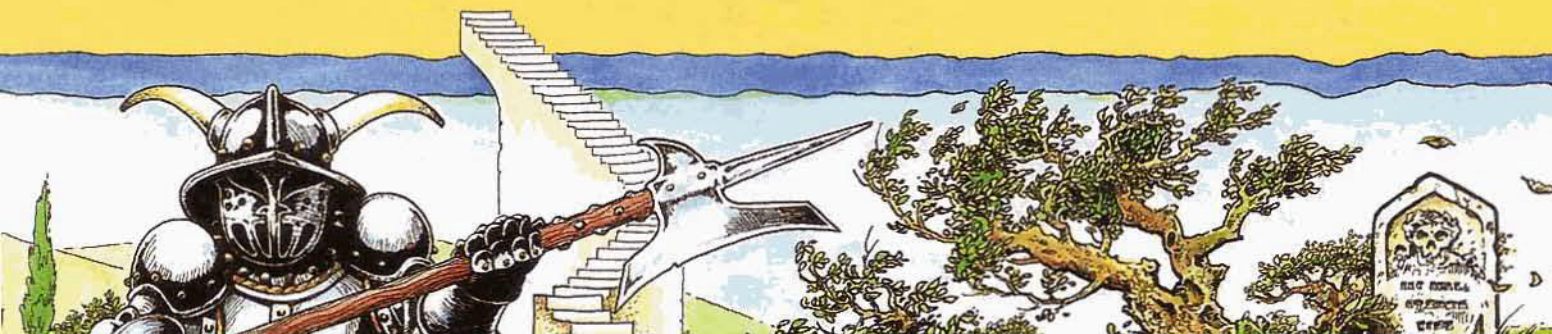


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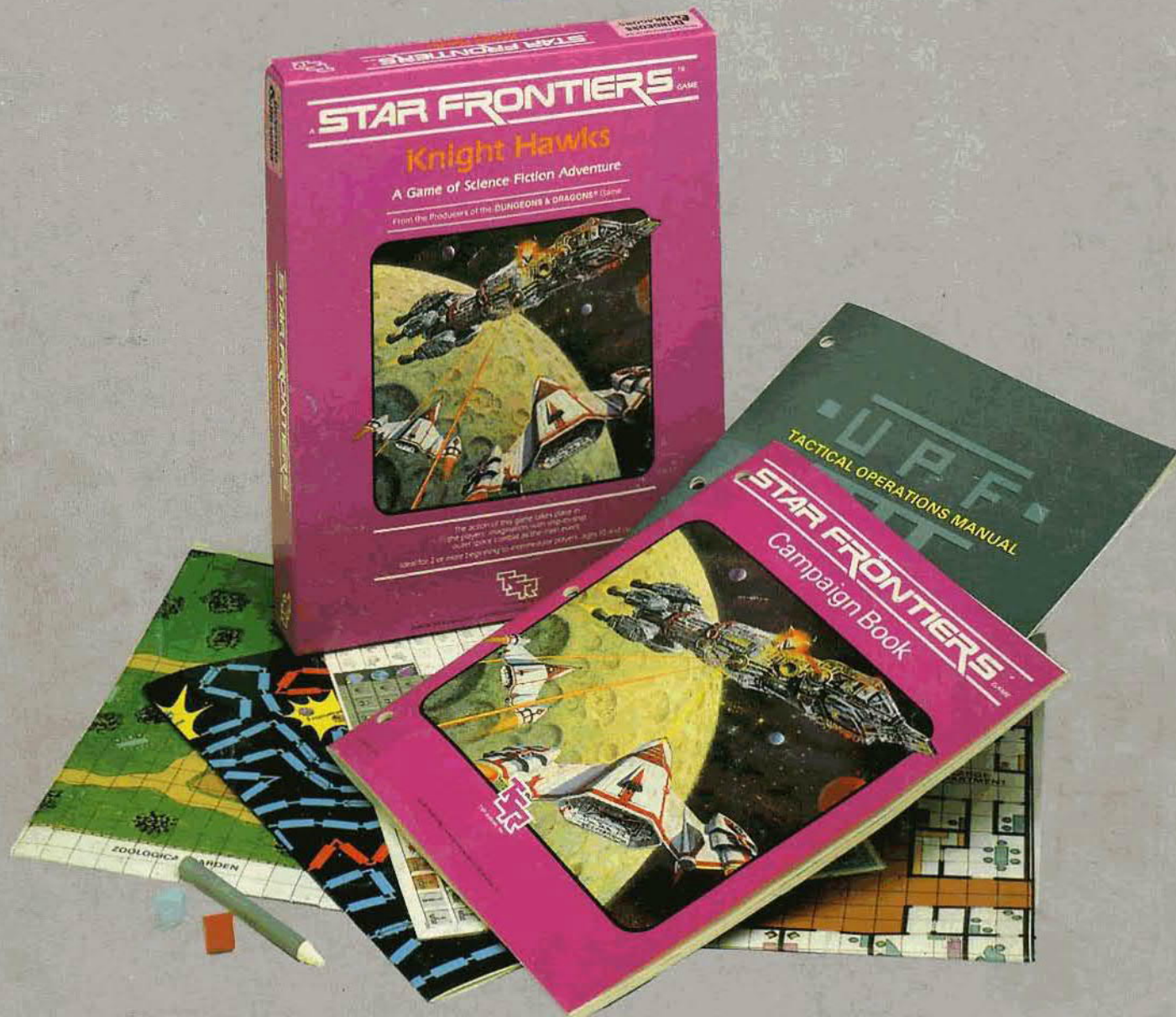
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