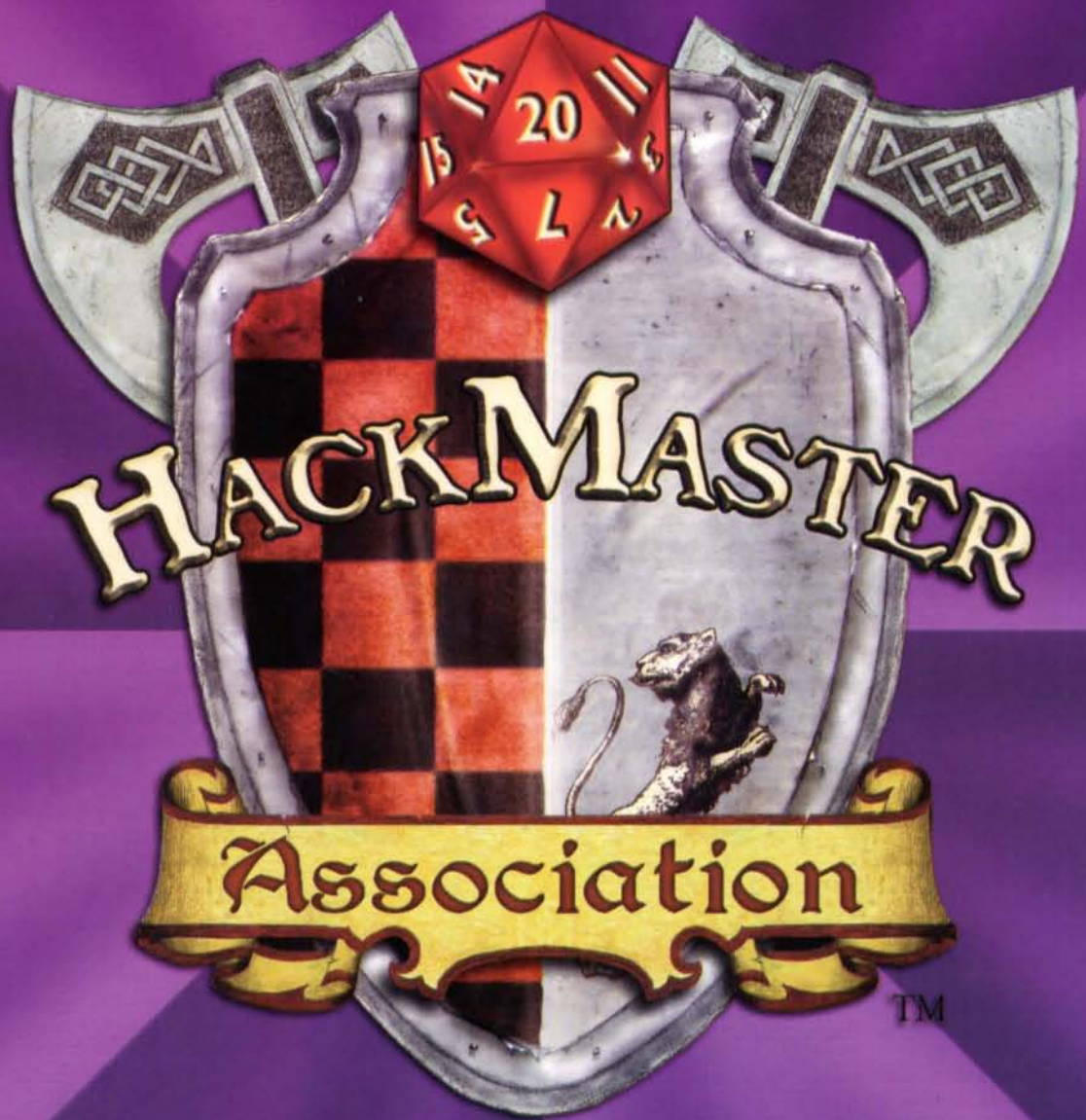


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THE FLOGGINGS WILL CONTINUE: In issue #3, we mistakenly credited the cover art to Brendon and Brian Fraim. Brad McDevitt was the artist. We apologize for the error.

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ISSUE #1

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From the Armchair of the Arch-Mage

On Supposed Rule Discrepancies in the 4th Incarnation of the HackMaster System

Greetings, and well-met gentle readers! If you are reading this, you are clearly a world-class gamer, a cut above the rest, one of a rare breed of players with the right stuff to play the single greatest game ever invented in the history of mankind. On this achievement (which is no small feat in-and-of itself as at least two former presidents and more than a handful of rocket scientists couldn't make the hack), I must express and extend a hearty and heart-felt Congratulations!!

Now then, let us dispense with the formalities and get down to the business of improving your insight and abilities. The subject of this article is rules-interpretation and the correctness of HackMaster 4th Edition as presented by the design team.

Before we proceed, I will tell you this flat-out: **THERE ARE NO RULE DISCREPENCIES IN HACKMASTER.** I do not discount the fact that there may be errata of one type or another, but these largely take the form of editor snafus, typos, word-processing mistakes, layout errors and software-glitch introduced irregularities in the text. But no errors in the rules. Don't believe me? I like your attitude, though it is misplaced and thus I will have to set you straight post-haste. I will explain in detail so you may understand and not waste my time with such matters henceforth.

Let us presuppose for a moment, gentle reader, that you are an experienced player, or even a GM (novices are years away from this position, but may find this article of interest nonetheless), and that you know the rules well. Sometimes, you will see a rule here or there and think you have found some form of contrariety or incongruity with a rule mentioned elsewhere. Now whether you have actually found a discrepancy depends on which core book you have consulted. Clearly 4th Edition superceded 3rd in all ways, so I will not bore you with rhetoric that you already understand and accept as canon. The relevant question is whether you are consulting the PHB or the GMG. This first possibility is easily explained and dismissed: the GMG supercedes the PHB in all ways and in all matters. Period.

Understanding that most of my audience are players, I will elaborate (and I will use words and concepts easily understood by players). The HackMaster Player's Handbook contains rules-errors and incongruities. So how does this apparent contradiction exist if there are "no rule discrepancies in HackMaster"? The answer is quite obvious. We placed them there by design. That's right players. I hear the silent, primordial scream of your minds of "Why oh WHY!???" so I will grace you with an answer. We did this to keep the players off balance

and on their toes. As GJ once said about players: "Theirs is not to know the rules, but to do or die!" We have given enough correct rules to allow players to know the basics and be able to keep a smooth game running smoothly. But we have NOT given all of the rules and some of the ones players THINK they know are incorrect! Indeed, the game would lose much of its luster and wonderment if we were simply to hand the players the rules on a silver platter so they could know-all from the start. What type of game would that be? About as much fun as playing hide and seek with your eyes open. Players know what the name of the game is. And the name they have for it is EXPERIENCE POINTS!

We have chosen to give you a great gift. We have decided to let the players find out the hidden secrets of hack as they play and learn them from EXPERIENCE. We've sent out a clear message to players, so instead of whining there like a schoolgirl with a skinned knee, get hacking and learn the GAME! Once again, when you thought you knew it all, HackMaster has proved itself the most realistic game around.

Speaking of thinking you know it all, let us at this time move on to the second possibility: that the GMG has a discordance of some type. At this possibility, I firmly place my hands on my rotund center, drop my head back and guffaw deep and loud. Oh how droll! I laugh at your sheer presumptuousness.

The HackMaster rules are like Mount Everest – only twice as foreboding. Indeed, HackMaster is a mountain of knowledge that you must scale to gain true understanding of your craft. We HackWriters stand tall upon the peak, holding strong and high the HackMaster banner. From here, we see the entire landscape of the HackMaster TetraVerse unfolding before us. We have tread all ground and can see with a clarity of understanding one can only hope to attain after not months, nor years, but decades of HackStudy. So when you see an apparent discrepancy, fear not, for it is only your lack of insight. Do not be dismayed by this, for such lack of comprehension is the path to understanding and greater knowledge of HackMaster, a pursuit most noble and consequential! It is an opportunity to speak up and ask another for the answer. But take care to form your question such that it is clear that you are seeking aid. For boldly stating that you have found an error will only get you laughed at again by anyone that has scaled the mountain to a greater level than thee.

Game on, friends!

So So Zeke

JoJo Zeke
HMGMA Number Classified



A Day in the Life

by Ray Ennis, HMGMA #TX-8-00008-01

Subject: DoppMeister

Reece's glare knifed through the cloud of insects buzzing around him and straight into Kari's back.

"Tell me again why we are crouching in a marsh being eaten alive while watching an old man plant flowers?" His voice was thick with frustration, and Reece swore softly as he swatted at another insect trying to bite him.

Kari pivoted around while staying crouched, with only a slight creak of her leather armor betraying the movement. She studied her partner of 3 years closely as he crouched behind a tree a few feet from her. Wet and muddy from falling into a bog earlier that morning, he had seemed to draw every insect within a mile to sting and bite him. Reece was always miserable any time they went more than fifty feet from a city. From what she had learned, he grew up on the streets, much like hundreds of other thieves, including Kari herself. However, Reece must have angered some gawd of nature—he had truly awful luck in the wilds. If there was an angry animal, a pit, a bog, or any other natural hazard, you could bet Reece would tumble into it. Reece knew this too, and avoided going out of the city whenever possible. It had taken Kari three weeks to convince him this was worth the effort, and wasn't about to let him back out now.

"I told you before," she hissed angrily, "the old man is rich. He goes into town twice a week with a bundle of equipment that he sells to the outfitter store, and then heads over to the tavern. His purse is a little lighter when he leaves, but still heavy enough. I've spent the last week flirting with the old creep while he was drunk. He's the last surviving member of an adventuring band that retired years ago. He is too old to fight now, and just spends his time out here working on his gardens. He must have hundreds of gold pieces in there." Kari inclined her head towards the house in the clearing, where the old man was now trimming shrubbery and humming loudly and off-key.

"Why don't we just go kill him and be done with it? This marsh is horrible!" Reece had to admit the two-story house was impressive looking, with its large and well-kept grounds. The old man must be nuts to have built it out here, three miles from town in this gawd-awful insect breeding pit.

"Because, you idiot! He's a retired adventurer. He knows the how the game is played. Have you seen any guards, pets, or anything? I haven't, and it's a sure bet he's got the treasure guarded. It must be traps, or magic, and I don't want to be surprised by either, do you?" Kari saw Reece's eyes widen a bit, as she mentioned magic. Good, she thought, now that he's scared he'll be a bit more cautious. She turned silently to resume watching the old man.

There were no defenses anywhere that Kari could spot. The old man's house stood in the center of a large clearing in the marsh. The ground in the clearing was covered in wild flowers, trimmed bushes and fruit trees, miniature shrub mazes, and a rock garden. It was a good fifty feet to the door of the house, and who knows what traps were set in between, hidden by the elaborate plants. Patience always pays off, she reminded herself. Shifting to get more comfortable, Kari settled in to watch the old man, paying careful attention to where he did and didn't step throughout the afternoon.

At dusk, the old man went into the house and shut the door. Signaling Reece, who was dozing against the tree, the two stretched out and began crawling into the clearing.

"Stay low, and don't touch the stone pathway. The old man didn't go on it all day."

"I noticed," Reece grunted as he crawled towards the house, "he even jumped over it at one point. I'm really looking forward to killing this guy; I spent all day in a marsh, and now I'm crawling through dirt. He'd better be loaded." The pair crept slowly closer, with Kari probing ahead with her dagger every few feet. Finally, after an hour of crawling through the dirt, grass, and rocks, they reached the front door.

Signaling for Reece to keep watch, Kari listened at the door. Frowning, she knelt down and inhaled deeply, smelling the air at the base of the door. Looking slightly puzzled, Kari leaned close and tickled Reece's ear with her whisper.

"I hear the old man in there humming, but that's all. I couldn't smell any food or smoke, or hear a fire and sounds of eating. I think he's just sitting in the dark, humming. It doesn't feel right."

It was now Reece who was angry.

"Oh no. You drag me through all this, and now you are afraid of a senile old man in the dark? Let's just go in, kill him, and search the place. I wouldn't mind sleeping in a bed, either. Now get out of the way and let me do the lock." Pushing Kari aside, Reece knelt and rolled out his lockpick set. A quick motion was followed by a subtle click, and Reece smiled as he pulled out a dagger and slowly opened the door.

Glancing around and seeing no one, he slid to one side and Kari silently padded in next to him, leaving the door partially open. After a moment, they heard deep, off-key humming coming from upstairs. With a wicked smile, Reece mimed slicing a throat with his dagger. Kari nodded, the pair moved ghost-like up the darkened stairs.

The old man pulled the ring off his finger, turning visible as he carefully stepped out the front door, keeping his eyes on the retreating forms of the two thieves. Once outside, the old man picked up a rake, and stood a few feet from the front door, ready to swing.

A moment later, the house collapsed in on itself, the muffled screams of the thieves inside were quickly silenced by the chewing sounds coming from the dopplemeister.

The old man smiled up at his long-time partner. The dopplemeister and he had come to an agreement long ago, and had kept each other company since, passing the time by gardening and talking about adventurers they had both known. It was the old man that had thought of luring thieves to the dopplemeister. It kept the town a bit safer, and his old friend fed regularly. The sheriff knew about him and his house, and paid the old man for his services by buying any equipment left behind through a front company in town.

"Nice job, my friend. They didn't even make it to the door this time." The old man took off his gardening hat and tipped it politely to the dopplemeister, who's eyes looked happily back at the old man.

"Thanks, and nice job with the roses. I really like how they wind around the bushes."



"Hey," the old man winced, "what did I tell you about talking with your mouth full?"

Chuckling, the doppelmeister looked apologetically at the old man, then grinned and opened wide. Making gagging sounds, the old man turned away and laughed after a moment, then began picking up the pieces of armor and weapons his old friend spat out, already anticipating how much he'd get for such fine armor.

"What do you think, house? We could get some nice pear trees from the druids with the money this time." The two continued talking long into the night, enjoying each other's company and planning for the coming spring.



WAR STORIES

The Fast Hack to Success

Advice for pacing your HackMaster combat encounters

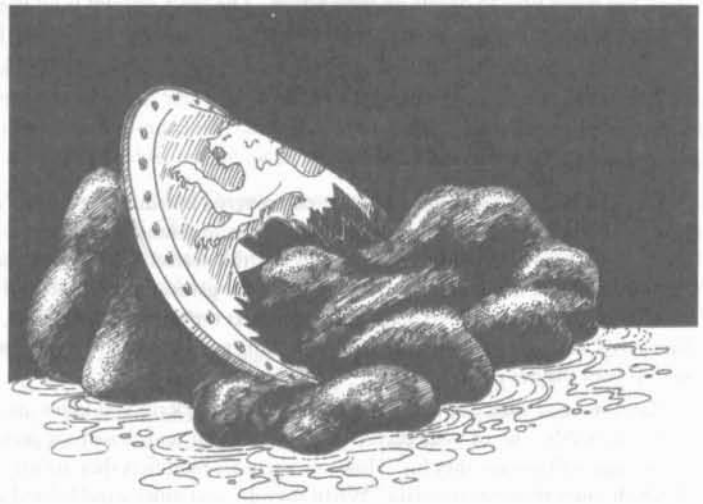
By Noah Kolman
HMGA# IL-8-00007-01

After GMing several sessions of HackMaster here at the Kenzerco offices, one thing became readily apparent: combat encounters can take a long time. However, as I put more sessions under my belt, I developed a few tricks to ensure that combat is the fast-paced hackfest it should be. Now I am prepared to impart my wisdom, gained through actual GameMastering experience, to you. So sit down and be prepared to take notes. There will be a test.

The key to making your HackMaster combat encounters enjoyable is to keep the pace brisk. Every player and GM loves combat, whether they admit it or not, because it is the purest form of competition between player and GM, and between players. However, if everyone becomes bogged down in tactics and details, the combat will drag on. While some players or GMs might enjoy this chess-like reenactment, combat is meant to be fast and brutal. A dwarven berserker is not taking fifteen minutes to decide on an action in combat. Instead he is reacting to past events and relying on his instincts (or blind rage, depending on the circumstances). Likewise, a player should not take an unreasonable amount of time deciding on an action for his character. By keeping the pace fast in combat, the players will have a better feel for what their character is experiencing. This will also keep the session moving, and allow you to weave a story in the limited amount of time you have available.

Be Prepared

The most important way to keep combat encounters moving is by doing your homework before the game. While not all combat that occurs is anticipated, those encounters that are planned before the session can be effectively prepared. You should start by making a separate sheet or sheets of paper for each encounter, depending on your needs. You should record the encounter name or number (for reference) at the top of the sheet and on the map location where it appears. Then, you need to record the pertinent information. One section should be devoted entirely to the hit points for each creature involved, noted separately, with enough space to mark damage to each one. Along with each hit point total should be their armor class and armor hit points, also with enough space to make changes. Remember that you want to do as much work beforehand, so that once combat starts, the players are not ever waiting on you. Finally, next to each creature should be the number required to hit them, again



with room for changes. This number should be recorded for each member of the party and any hirelings or NPCs the party may have, and should include any modifiers that will remain fixed during the combat. If this information is next to the creature's hit points, you will not have to waste time referencing the combat matrices during combat. The quickest way to bog down combat is to make player's wait for the results of their attack while you look up the combat matrices. It is not a bad idea to have the basic to-hit for 0th and 1st level fighter as well.

On a separate sheet of paper or separate section of the same page, you should record the other pertinent information on the creature. In one section should be all the attack related information. Most important is the basic to-hit number needed to hit each of the party's PCs and NPCs. Also included should be the number of attacks and the weapons, with their damage and range (if applicable). Another section should have saving throws and ability scores, if possible, along with any other equipment that is usable in or may affect combat. In some cases, such as when there is only one creature or a large group of homogeneous creatures, you will need only one entry. However, in the case of multiple unique opponents, you should clearly separate each creature's information. The purpose of these sheets is to minimize the time spent searching through any of the books. Making your players wait while you scour the GameMaster's Guide will destroy both the mood and pace of the combat.

Just as important as recording the encounter information is choosing smart encounters. In general, the more combatants in armor there are, the longer the encounter will take. This is because recording the loss of armor hit points is tedious and takes time, in addition to the fact that armor absorbs damage and prolongs the life of those wearing it. This is not to suggest that your players should never fight anything in armor; that would be silly. Instead, you should reduce the number or size of encounters that involved armored opponents. There are hundreds of unarmored opponents you can use as substitutes, so you will never lack variety. Similarly, encounters with a large number of creatures will also necessarily slow down the game, regardless of how many there are. This is because it greatly increases the amount of information you need to record, and due to the 20 hit point kicker, even the weakest creatures last for several combat rounds. Thus, the more encounters with single, large creatures there are, the faster the game will move.

Be Strict

During combat, the most important thing you can do as GM is to make the players act quickly. This does not mean that you should rush them, but that you must be strict with the time constraints you set. At the beginning of each round, go around the table and make the players declare their actions. They do not have to be specific, but they should indicate if they are attacking, moving, casting a spell, etc. Then, start calling out initiative numbers, starting with all actions that happen on or before zero. Do not speed through the numbers, but do not dilly-dally either. And most of all, if a player misses their initiative number, do not go back. They can go once they realize their mistake, but not before. If you maintain this policy, they will soon begin paying attention, and the whole process will run smoother. Similarly, when it is a player's turn, do not allow

them too much time to decide on their action. The exact amount is up to your discretion, but it should not exceed a two or three minutes. Once they have decided on an action, have them make the necessary rolls and move on. Continue this way each round until the encounter is over.

Be Confident

This will probably generate the most controversy, but during combat, your goal should be never to look in a rulebook. When in doubt, make the call that seems correct to you, and afterwards, find out the correct rule. Some people might object that this is ruining the sanctity of the game, but the fact is, if you mess up once, you are sure to remember it the next time. In the meantime, you have saved yourself countless minutes of searching and have kept the game moving. If your players object, too bad. The GM is always right.

Hand in hand with this is the notion of standing by calls you know are correct. Inevitably, one of your players will roll a to-hit and, based on previous knowledge, will assume they hit. However, there are modifiers they are unaware of which cause them to complain. When they do, you must stand behind your call, and move on. Remember that your goal is to keep things moving, so if a player wants to dispute a call, tell them you will do it after the combat. This is your right.

Remember that your goal is to make the combat encounter feel like actual combat for your players. This requires, most of all, proper pacing on your part. The suggestions made in this article should help you accomplish this goal, but you must keep in mind that these are only suggestions. Your game is your domain, and it is sacred. As GameMaster, you must be the master of your domain. Good luck. The game must go on.

Tales of the Broken Dartboard

by Tom Darga, HMGMA #WI-1-00027-01

"Wot's dis 'ere place?" Favian the elf asked Berg, his dwarven companion upon seeing an aged and shattered dartboard with a few pieces missing hanging by a pair of rusty chains.

"Ye nae wunt tae go in der iffen ye value yer 'ide! That be a 'stunty pub', an dey aint to kint tae ye tall filk." responded Berg - a hint of challenge in his voice.

"Aint offraed of a coople stunties .. let's have go at it."

A smirk crossed Berg's face as he led his elven associate into the tavern.

The Broken Dartboard is a quaint little tavern that was built by humans, but heavily modified by its current owner, Dirk McGregor, a Gnome Titan now ten years retired of the 7th Highland Brigade. From the outside it looks like an old, dumpy two story building with living quarters above, and only a shattered dartboard hanging from rusty chains as a sign of its use. The windows show signs of being long boarded up, but the front door looks particularly sturdy and well maintained. The sturdy bar counter sits four feet off the ground and runs along the length of the main room, ending in a 2 feet by 2 feet opening shuttered with a small door on the outside. Sturdy looking three foot high stools line both sides of the bar except for the six feet closest to the door where, on the far side, is often seen the bartender and proprietor, Dirk McGregor, walking on a small raised platform (more of a plank really). Behind his private space are two rows of ale kegs, stacked to the ceiling, with movable stairs on a hinge and supported by ropes and pulleys at the far end, designed to allow Dirk access to the various kegs by the pull of a rope.

Just past the second row of barrels, the bar has a side section with two stools. The left-most stool is "the seat of great prestige," currently reserved for the dwarf who won the last arm wrestling contest held at the bar. The other is reserved for those who wish to challenge Dirk to arm wrestling, "darts" (Dirk uses dagger), or "Last Man Standing." These seats offer unregulated access to one of the ale kegs and users are on the honor system for payment. Several months ago a grel was discovered taking drinks without paying. The location of

his honorless, unmarked grave is unknown. A red painted "free-throw" line separates this "L" section from the long part of the bar. The bar section in front of where Dirk sits is kept well oiled at all times. There are three 3' high by 18" wide passages cut through the bar (marked with dashed lines), one of which curves and gives access to the wine cellar via a stairwell beneath Dirk's moveable stairway. The stools "guarding" these accesses are hollowed out as well to permit passage beneath them. Gnome titans of the 7th Highland Brigade attempt to grab these stools whenever possible so as to be able to harass people attempting to pass beneath by "accidentally" kicking them. On the far wall and on the left side of the bar are two heavy-duty reinforced dartboards hanging from a foot thick, six foot tall, and three and a half foot wide, iron-banded solid oak backstop. Marks from axes, darts, and daggers can be seen in both the dartboards and the backstop.

To the right of the door are three low tables, each with three dwarf-sized chairs, and a foot-wide bench along the wall. Beyond the tables is a fireplace with a raised stone platform and a chair for a performing bard or entertainer. One of the doors to the kitchen is to the right of the fireplace.

Above the tables and continuing on above the kitchen is a first-and-a-half story loft area set six to seven feet above the floor. An identical structure can be found on the opposite side. They were added by Dirk soon after he took over because he believed the original structure's 15 foot ceiling to be an awful waste based on his desired clientele. The first-and-a-half story loft areas are five feet wide, and supported by angled beams that meet in the middle of the ceiling. A very narrow stairway runs up behind the kitchen. The only way to access the side above the bar is via a small bridge running over the entryway door. This elevated area contains several small tables with chairs.

PAIR OF DUCKS

The Broken Dartboard sponsors many games and tournaments. Among the most popular are arm wrestling, keeps, darts, elf-bowling, dwarf tossing and Last Man Standing. Rules for darts, keeps, and arm wrestling can be found in the GMG. Arm wrestling is often played as a prelude to Last Man Standing as a method of determining the betting odds, and darts are sometimes played as a prelude to elf-bowling because an unconscious elf is less likely to cause a foul.

- **Last Man Standing:** Based on an old tradition of the gnome titan 7th Highland Brigade, Last man Standing was originally a punishment drill used on those who had the gall to speak up in the ranks or question an order. If the gnome titan was willing to take a punch from his superior (sergeant, officer, etc.) and didn't flinch, then whatever he had to say must be important enough to listen to. A form of it became a way of proving your worth and eventually one of the initiation rites of the 7th Highland Brigade. Last Man Standing uses the skill crane (see the PHB). After determining who gets the first swing (usually by arm wrestling or darts), the players take turns punching each other until one drops or flinches, whichever comes first. The last person to punch wins.

- **Dwarf Tossing:** How dwarf tossing got its name is hotly debated but the game itself is a well-known gnome titan combat maneuver for leaping over low walls. Some think the name developed because gnome titan shot-put was too long, others think it was meant as an insult to dwarves. In reality the name caught on after a dwarf was goaded into playing. The game is played thus: teams of eight members are selected, a thrower, a leaper, and eight catchers. Pity the poor leaper who has pissed off too many of his catchers! The thrower stands with his hands cupped, facing the door, and with his back toward the catchers. The leaper, starting across the street to get a running start, makes an attack roll vs AC6 to hit the thrower's hands, then must make a successful jumping roll. The thrower rolls on open doors, the excess by which he makes that roll is added to the jump roll to yield the total distance the leaper is tossed. The contest is judged by distance tossed. Another successful alternate method is for the thrower to lay on the floor, legs up but crouched, head towards the catchers, and hands by his head. He stands ready to catch the leaper with his feet while doing a full extension handspring. This doubles the thrower's results but requires the acrobatics skill suite and an attack roll vs AC 6 (in addition to the rolls described above). If the leaper is lucky, the catchers will catch him before he hits

the ground (4 successful rolls to hit AC 6 for a successful catch) or he will eat falling damage based on half the distance he was tossed.

• **Elf Bowling:** If an elf enters the bar and does not go out of his way to make a good impression or if anyone taller than a dwarf makes a nuisance of himself, he will may soon notice the gnome titans whispering among themselves and glancing in his direction. That may be only chance to get out before someone yells "Elf Bowling!" Elf bowling involves grabbing the elf, pummeling him into submission (or playing darts with him tied in front of the dartboard to see if he will faint at the near misses), throwing him onto the bar next to the bartender and then sliding him down the bar. If the bowler crosses the free-throw line, the elf grabs someone or something or someone knocks the elf off the bar with an ale tankard, a "foul" is called and a barroom brawl ensues until the elf is recaptured and another throw proceeds. The goal is to get the elf to sail out the little opening, through the door and onto the trash heap. If this happens, the bar buys a round for the bowler and the gnome titans break into lusty drinking songs.

Yes, barroom brawls are common at the Broken Dartboard. That's why all the furniture is extremely sturdy and the tankards are made out of ironbound hardwoods two layers thick.

THE STAFF

Brewer/Bartender (Dirk McGregor): 5th level gnome titan male fighter; 3'3" tall, 88lbs, 68 years old; Str 24/71, Dex 24/42, Con 10/21, Int 14/14, Wis 10/74, Cha 13/75, Com 6/01, Hon 43; dagger (mastery), hurled tankard; peg-leg, hates elves, alcoholic, hack frenzy, psychotic aversion: trolls, inappropriate sense of humor; brawler 106%, brewing 41%, crane 88%. Known for joining barfights and accurately hurling tankards down the bar to customers. Keeps the bar well greased for this purpose as well as for elf-bowling.

Waitress (Gladiola Onyx): 0 level gnome female; Str 9, Dex 6, Con 13, Int 15, W is 9, Cha 12, Com 23, no skills, tries to get by on her good looks and personality, popular amongst some of the regulars and most newcomers.

Waitress (Amethyst): 1st level gnome female thief; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 9, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11, Com 12; Skills include: customs & etiquette (dwarf), customs & etiquette (halfling), attitude adjustment, cricket-in-the-pea pod, fondling, maintain self discipline, mimic dialect, pinch, seduction, slip into shadows; vision impaired: nearsighted, truthful, misguided. Amethyst is the local's favorite. Most are not aware of her "working the crowd".

Wine Steward (Sard Onyx): 0 level gnome male; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 11, Com 11; customs & etiquette (dwarf). Sard is Gladiola's older brother. He has worked as Dirk's wine steward for the last 6 years and is quite cool under tense circumstances. He usually is in the wine cellar when "trouble" starts.

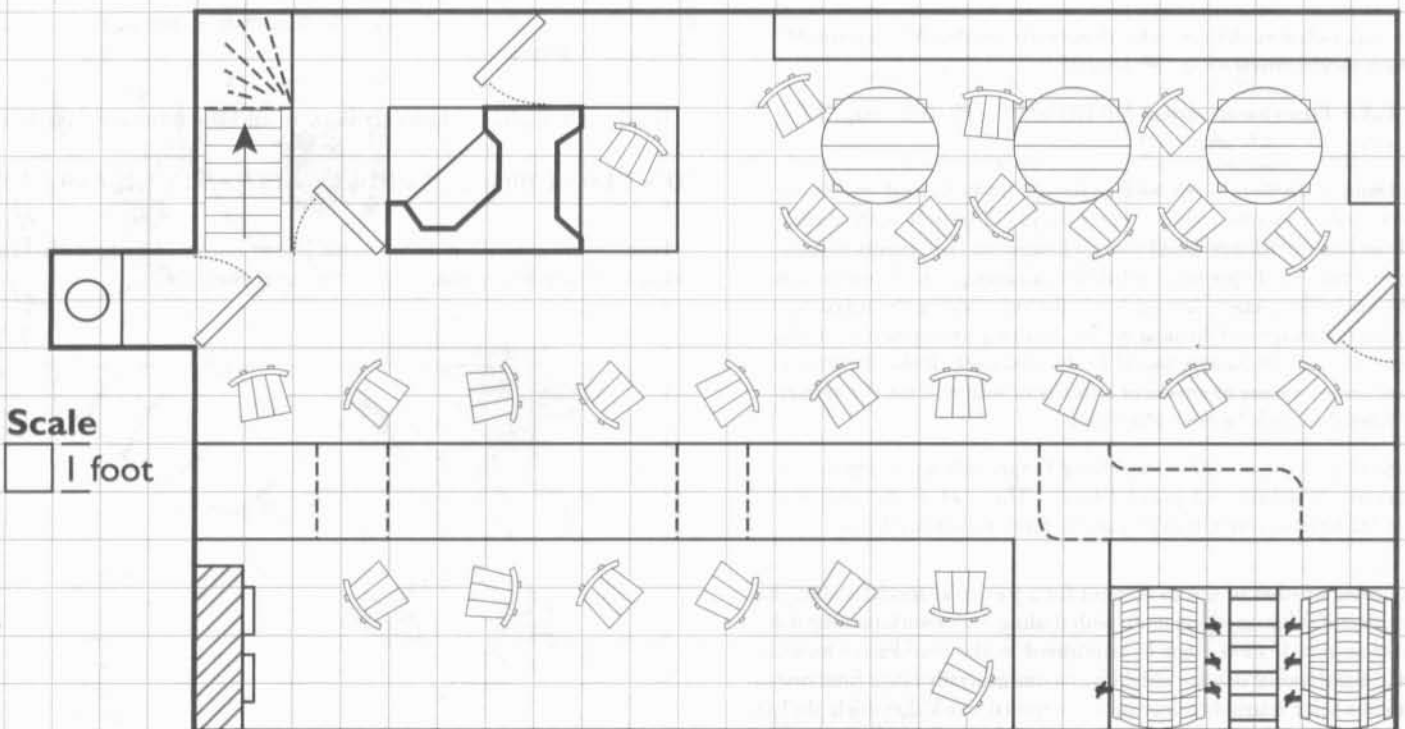
Waitress (Tina "Tray Trasher"): 0 level halfling female; Str 12, Dex 8, Con 7, Int 6, Wis 16, Cha 9, Com 16; Tina was hired because she was cute and a halfling. She is only allowed to serve drinks due to the incident which gained her the nickname "Tray Trasher". Some dwarves speak of it still.

Waitress (Florena): 0 level halfling female; Str 9, Dex 12, Con 8, Int 10, Wis 7, Cha 12, Com 13. Florena is only 16 years old and just started waitressing to supplement her parents' income (it was either that, join her father in the mines or help her mother wash clothes for the miners). She has yet to spill any drinks, despite the patrons best tries, and is starting to carry trays.

Assistant Cook (Tucker the Breadmaker): 1st level halfling male assassin; Str 14, Dex 19, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 7, Cha 10, Com 15; culinary arts 54%, cooking 9%; ulterior motive 11%, botany 53%, herbalist 37%; paranoid, psychotic aversion: orcs. Tucker is working undercover for the Guild so as to be in a position to take out certain patrons if necessary.

Cook (Oakenshield IronBeard): 0 level dwarf male; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 8, Com 4; culinary arts 83%, cooking 19%, orchestrate task 13%, slaughter livestock 66%, berate 11%; enmity: half-ogres. Oakenshield is a decent cook. A wise man would not complain about his cooking in any case.

The Broken Dartboard



What is Player Character HackFactor?

By Brian Jelke

HMGMA IL-10-0003-01

HackFactor (HF) is a scientific way to determine the relative "hackworthiness" of characters and monsters in the HackMaster RPG. It is a measure of the individual's ability to take damage, deal damage and perform special abilities that relate to dealing or withstanding damage. The exact formula for determining monster HackFactors is proprietary information. However, an experienced GM can estimate the relative HF of a creature by comparing its power to others in the Hacklopedia of Beasts. Now, this might be fine for monsters but a question often arises as to what HF should be assigned to people with a character class in the HackMaster game. Players always want to compare themselves to each other and a GM might want this information in order to adjust experience point awards to account for the relative strength of the parties involved.

The HackFactor of a HackMaster character (either PC or NPC) can be estimated using the following formula. Note that determining the relative weight for the factors involved is often subjective. That is why I use the term "estimate," as the weighting of certain factors can be incorrectly assigned different values by different GMs.

$$HF = \left([KF \times ((HD \text{ type}/8) \times \#HD)] \times \left[\frac{(10-AC)^2 + \text{Sum}(\text{Dam}) + 50 \times \text{Sum}(\text{SA}+\text{SD})}{100} \right] \right)$$

Where:

HD type = number of sides to character's HD (Fighter = 10, Magic User = 4, etc.)

#HD = total number of character's hit dice. Note that when a character stops receiving additional hit dice (e.g., a 10th level thief), count additional hit points gained per level as a fraction of a hit die. An 11th level thief has "10+2 hit dice" meaning 10 6-sided hit dice plus 2 hit points. Since 2 hit points is 1/3 of a 6-sided hit die, for purposes of this equation his hit dice are 10.33.

AC = armor class of character (for those with variable AC, use the AC with which they are most often encountered.)

KF (Kicker Factor) = character's HP kicker/20 (e.g., battle mage KF = 0.8, pixie fairy KF = 0.5, etc.)

Sum(Dam) = the sum of the average damage from normal attacks the creature can deal in one round. For example, a person with average Strength and one attack per round using a longsword (1d8 points of damage against a man-sized opponent) would deal an average of 4.5 points each round he hits. The average damage is calculated by adding the maximum and minimum damage and dividing by two. If that person gets two attacks in a round, the average damage would be doubled to 9. If the character is capable of using a variety of attacks or a variety of weapons, use the average damage from the attack he most often uses.

Sum(SA+SD) = the sum of the weighting factors assigned to represent a character's special abilities and special defenses. This is where the subjective nature of HackFactor comes into play and is further discussed below.

To determine whether or not to account for a particular special ability, one should consider if it has anything to do with dealing out or withstanding damage. If it does not, it should not be considered in the HackFactor formula. Special attack and special defense weighting factors generally range from one to three, with one being relatively minor such as a special attack that might do 1d8 points of damage. A level three special attack/defense would be something major like a breath weapon or petrification. For those abilities that are even less

significant, a lower value (such as 0.1) could be assigned. Note that quirks and flaws that hamper one's ability to fight can be weighted negatively in calculating HackFactor.

For spell casters, count "spell casting" as a single SA with a value equal to the spell caster's level (or the sum total of all spell casting levels for multiclass spell casters) divided by six. For example, a 5th level magic-user would have a spell casting SA of .83 and a 3rd/3rd level magic-user/cleric would have a spell casting SA of 1.0.

Consider the example of Bilamaroo the first level gnome titan fighter. Bilamaroo has a 19 Strength. He has great Honor, wears plate mail and is specialized in the use of the broad sword. He has no quirks or flaws and his skills, talents and racial abilities include defensive bonus, potion identification, less sleep, armor maintenance, haggle, first aid, cricket in the peapod, wuss slap, infravision, +2 to save vs. spell, +1 to hit Kobolds and Goblins, large size creatures get -4 to hit him, attack as one level higher, detect unsafe walls and groin stomp.

Being a first level fighter, he has one Hit Die and with plate mail, his AC is 3. His Strength gives him +7 to damage and weapon specialization adds another +2. However, because he uses a broad sword, his maximum damage bonus is +8 (range of broad sword damage is 2-8). The average damage of a broad sword is 5 and adding his damage bonus this becomes 13. His weapon specialization allows him three attacks every two rounds so we multiply his average damage in a round by 1.5 to get 18.5 for the Sum(Dam) factor in the HF formula.

Regarding his special attacks and defenses, potion identification, less sleep, armor maintenance, haggle, first aid, wuss slap, infravision and detect unsafe walls will be ruled out as they do not significantly relate to his ability to withstand or inflict damage in the middle of a fight. The remaining abilities: weapon specialization (+1 to hit), defensive bonus, cricket in a peapod, +2 save vs. spell, +1 to hit Kobolds and Goblins, large size creatures get -4 to hit him, attack as one level higher and groin stomp will be assigned a weighting factor of 0.1 each. His +3 "to hit" bonus from Strength is weighted at 0.3. If he were higher level or had studied some of his skills to raise them to 50% mastery or more, they would have a greater weighting factor, such as 0.2. Because he has great Honor, Bilamaroo also gets +1 to all die rolls and we can count this at a 0.1 weighted special defense/attack. The sum of the weighting factors for all of his special abilities is 1.2.

Finally, we can plug in the values above to calculate Bilamaroo's HackFactor.

$$HF = \left([1.0 \times ((10/8) \times 1)] \times \left[\frac{(10-3)^2 + 18.5 + 50 \times 1.2}{100} \right] \right) = 1.594$$

Fractions are generally rounded to the nearest integer so his final HackFactor would be 2, which is reasonable for a first level character.

Albino Purple Ice Worm

DESCRIPTION: Albino Purple Ice Worms are Purple Worms that have adapted to the frigid wastes of the north. They burrow through ice and snow just as a normal Purple Worm burrows through mud and muck. They are colored white with ice blue highlights.

COMBAT/TACTICS: The creature can bite opponents for 3-30 points of damage. Anyone struck must make a Dexterity check or slip into the creature's icy mouth. On an attack roll of a natural 20, the victim is automatically swallowed (this effect supersedes the critical hit effects in the GMG). The creature's digestive system is cold-based, so victims inside begin to freeze at the rate of 1-6 points of cold damage per round. At the end of the fifth round and every round thereafter, the victim must make a saving throw vs. poison or freeze solid. If the victim fails this save, on the next round and every round thereafter he must make a save vs. polymorph or be shattered and digested by the Worm.

The Worm's poison stinger tail does 1-6 points of damage and any victim struck must save vs. poison or become frozen solid. If a Neutralize Poison is cast upon the victim, he immediately recovers.

Albino Purple Ice Worm

AKA: Arctic Worm
HACKFACTOR: 82
EP VALUE: 7,000
CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Arctic
FREQUENCY: Very Rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE: Non- (0)
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
NO. APPEARING: 1
SIZE: G (140' long)
MOVEMENT: 9", 12" Burrow (snow & ice only)
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil
ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: Nil/Nil
MORALE: Fearless (19)
ARMOR CLASS: 0
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1 or 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 3-30 or 1-6
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Swallow whole, freezing sting
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to cold, half damage from electricity and acid
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard
HIT DICE: 17
ToP: Yes
FF: 5

These Arctic Worms take double damage from all fire-based spells and no damage from cold attacks. Electrical and acid attacks cause half damage.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: Albino Purple Ice Worms are mindless predators. They spend much of their lives lying dormant in the ice. Any vibration up to 100 feet away (plus 10 feet per year the Worm has spent in the ice) will awaken the Worm. It will immediately burst to the surface and devour everyone it can find. The lair of an Albino Purple Ice Worms will often be strewn with the creature's previous frozen victims.

ECOLOGY: These creatures can only exist in the frigid cold. Any temperature above freezing causes the creatures to take 1-4 points of damage per round. Some sages theorize that the Albino Purple Ice Worm is actually the earlier version of the species. Still other sages theorize that they are a creation of the gawds of ice. A very small percentage of sages theorize that the Albino Purple Ice Worms were carved out of ice by a group of children and given life by a magical hat.

YIELD:

MEDICINAL: The poison in the Albino Purple Ice Worm's tail is the rarest poison on Garweeze Würlid and is worth 2,000 gp per vial. 1-4 vials (minus one for each dose used that day) can be recovered from a worm, but the poison must be kept below freezing in order to be effective. Should the poison be brought to a temperature above freezing, it immediately loses its potency completely.

SPELL COMPONENTS: Nil
HIDE/TROPHY ITEMS: Nil
TREASURE: Incidental
OTHER: Nil

Asp of Doom

DESCRIPTION: The Asp of Doom resembles a six-foot long black asp. It has two distinctive swirls on the back of its hood.

COMBAT/TACTICS: The Asp can bite for 1d6-3 points of damage. It delivers venom that forces a victim to save vs. poison or become vulnerable to a powerful Suggestion from the Asp (no save). Additionally, meeting the gaze of the creature causes victims to save vs. spell or become hypnotized. The asp will use the opportunity to bite the victim and place it under its power. An Asp of Doom will have from 1-10 lackeys already in its control. These lackeys will obey the Asp without question. Although they will not fight to the death for the Asp, lackeys will immobilize targets for the Asp to bite.

The Asp's poison can be neutralized with a Neutral Poison spell. The effect wears off in 20 days minus the victim's Intelligence score. The Asp can deliver this poison up to four times per day. An Asp of Doom is immune to mental and magic attacks that attempt to charm or control it any way.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: The Asp of Doom is a perfect villain for the GM seeking to foil a rowdy bunch of low-level PCs. It thinks nothing of sacrificing its lackeys to further its own evil goals. Asps of Doom collect treasure and spread their influence via intermediaries. They will sometimes make alliances with powerful magic-users, clerics or thieves. The Asp of Doom often has an escape route that is too small for anyone but a snake to follow. This is known as an Asp hole.

ECOLOGY: One in every 100,000 asps born is an Asp of Doom. Ironically, all snakes and snake-like beings are immune to the creature's gaze and poison. It is therefore a sworn enemy of all snakes - it will have all such creatures within a few miles of its lair killed.

YIELD:

MEDICINAL: The venom can be used to make victims susceptible to Charm and Suggestion spells. Anyone who misses a save vs. the poison gets no saving throw against those spells for the duration of the poison. It is worth 100 gp per vial.

SPELL COMPONENTS: Nil
HIDE/TROPHY ITEMS: Nil
TREASURE: B
OTHER: Nil

Asp of Doom

AKA: Slithering Ruler
HACKFACTOR: 8
EP VALUE: 270
CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Desert
FREQUENCY: Very Rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Day
DIET: Carnivore
INTELLIGENCE: High (13-14)
ALIGNMENT: Lawful Evil
NO. APPEARING: 1
SIZE: S (6' long)
MOVEMENT: 9"
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil
ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: Nil/Nil
MORALE: Daring (15)
ARMOR CLASS: 3
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d6-3
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Suggestive poison, hypnosis gaze
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Immune to charm
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard
HIT DICE: 3
ToP: Yes
FF: 7



Albino Purple Ice Worm



Asp of Doom

Faux Lich

DESCRIPTION: Faux Liches resemble normal Liches in every way. Upon close examination, however, it is revealed that the creature is not undead. The tiny pinpoint of light in its skull are actually glowing pupils set far back in the head and the apparently skeletal figure is actually covered with a thin layer of clear flesh.

COMBAT/TACTICS: Like a normal Lich, the Faux Lich has a chilling touch that delivers 1-10 points of damage. The victim must also save vs. paralyzation. Like all pseudo-undead, it has just enough power to impersonate the undead creature that it resembles.

Most Faux Liches study magic to help better impersonate Liches. They will have the spell abilities of a 1st to 20th level magic-user. Almost all of these creatures learn the spell Change Self so they can disguise themselves as humans and mingle amongst them.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: Faux Liches begin life very powerful, so they tend to be lazy and unambitious. Usually, the smarter ones will combine forces with a large group of pseudo-undead to populate a fake dungeon in order to rob foolish adventurers.

Faux Liches sometimes join forces with bandits and use their abilities to frighten travelers. The bandits then pretend to rescue the travelers by driving away the "Lich". Faux Liches have also been known to impersonate Lich Masters, Crypt Things and other monsters with a similar appearance. The ones that do not pursue a life of crime often become actors.

ECOLOGY: It is believed that Faux Liches are the result of a mother's contact with a normal Lich during pregnancies. Faux Liches are not normally violent and evil (25% are good, 25% are evil and 50% are neutral.) Faux Lich actors take names such as Baron Eviltor, Malicebane, Awful Arthur and Steve.

Faux Lich

AKA: Switch Lich
HACKFACTOR: 23
EP VALUE: 2,000
CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Any
FREQUENCY: Very Rare
ORGANIZATION: Solitary
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any
DIET: Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE: Avg. to Genius (8-18)
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
NO. APPEARING: 1
SIZE: M (6' tall)
MOVEMENT: 12"
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil
ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: Nil/Nil
MORALE: Average (11)
ARMOR CLASS: 0
NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-10
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Paralysis touch, spells, See text
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Spells, See text
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard
HIT DICE: 11+
TO P: Yes
FF: 7



Faux Lich

YIELD:

MEDICINAL: Nil

SPELL COMPONENTS: Nil

HIDE/TROPHY ITEMS: Nil

TREASURE: A (10% of normal amounts)

OTHER: The brain of a Faux Lich can be used to brew a Potion of Faux Lich Control (EP Value: 200, GP Value: 1,000).

Gargantuan Whale Monkey

DESCRIPTION: A Gargantuan Whale Monkey is a bizarre mix of whale and monkey. The creature is some 50 feet tall and has a head that resembles that of a whale. It has a blowhole in the back of its head that it can use for breathing, but can breathe equally well through its mouth. It can hold its breath underwater for 20 minutes. The Whale Monkeys will always be encountered near a source of warm, fresh water.

COMBAT/TACTICS: The creature can attack with each of its massive hands for 2-16 points of damage per strike. Its bite attack inflicts 1-12 points of damage. Additionally, on an attack roll of a natural 20, it can swallow victims (this effect supersedes the critical hit charts in the GMG). Those swallowed suffer 2-8 points of damage per round (no save) and can only fight with small, pointy weapons such as daggers. Due to its great size, it is 25% likely to knock over a tree during combat. Opponents must make a Dexterity check or become pinned by a random tree, taking 2-20 points of damage. Note that statues, towers, free-standing pillars and buildings can be treated as trees for this purpose.

Gargantuan Whale Monkey

AKA: Moby Monkey
HACKFACTOR: 17
EP VALUE: 7,000
CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Tropical and Subtropical Jungles
FREQUENCY: Very Rare
ORGANIZATION: Family
ACTIVITY CYCLE: Day
DIET: Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE: Low (5-7)
ALIGNMENT: Neutral
NO. APPEARING: 1-3
SIZE: G (50' tall)
MOVEMENT: 15", 9" Climb, 12" Swim
PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil
ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: Nil/Nil
MORALE: Foolhardy (16)
ARMOR CLASS: 4
NO. OF ATTACKS: 3
DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-16/2-16/1-12
SPECIAL ATTACKS: Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard
HIT DICE: 15
TO P: Yes
FF: 6



Gargantuan Whale Monkey

HABITAT/SOCIETY: Gargantuan Whale Monkeys feed on giant fish and humungous bananas. Encounters with two of the creatures will always be a mated pair. Encounters with three will be a mated pair with a young Whale Monkey. The young creature will have 50% to 80% of an adult's hit points. The adults will fight to the death to save their young.

Male Whale Monkeys sometimes become the object of worship to primitive cultures. These cultures sacrifice young maidens to appease the great beasts. Male Whale Monkeys are fascinated with human females with a Comeliness of 16 or higher. They sometimes take hold of these females and climb to the tallest structure in the area in an attempt to impress them with the view.

ECOLOGY: It is unknown whether a monkey mated with a whale to create the first Gargantuan Whale Monkey, or if magic was involved. Fortunately, the creatures cannot live in temperatures of 40 degrees or below.

Whale Monkeys have a primal fear of fire and any source larger than a normal campfire forces them to make a morale check at -6 regardless of the circumstances. At least one Gargantuan Whale Monkey was brought back to civilization, only to run amok on opening night when the theater owner simultaneously lit all the torches to illuminate the beast for his customers. He later plummeted off the highest guard tower in the city and died.

YIELD:

MEDICINAL: Gargantuan Whale Monkeys taste like extremely fatty monkey.

SPELL COMPONENTS: Nil

HIDE/TROPHY ITEMS: Nil

TREASURE: Nil

OTHER: The great bones of these creatures can be carved into items suitable for enchantment. Jungle cultures often carve great thrones for their kings from the bones of Gargantuan Whale Monkeys.

Whooping Cave Cricket

DESCRIPTION: Whooping Cave Crickets resemble black crickets about one foot long. They dwell in groups, or "plagues", that can number in the hundreds or thousands. They sweep across the entire NetherDeep annoying anything that crosses their path.

COMBAT/TACTICS: Whooping Cave Crickets are mindless insects that feed on the mildew and fungus that grows in the NetherDeep. When disturbed by loud noises or bright light the creatures panic, jumping into everything in their radius (five feet per 10 Crickets).

Besides the minor damage these creatures can inflict with their bites, the crickets make a "Whoop" sound. Alone, the sound is harmless but combined with hundreds of crickets the sound is maddening. For every 200 Crickets a victim must save vs. poison or suffer Confusion as per the spell. Victims get -1 on saving throws for every 100 Crickets beyond

the 200 in the plague. (Victims that are deaf or purposely deafen themselves are immune to the Crickets' Whoop.)

A Silence 15' Radius spell will quell the whooping sound made by a plague of Whooping Cave Crickets for the duration of the spell.

HABITAT/SOCIETY: These insects can survive in nearly any underground climate, and it remains unknown whether they could survive above ground. Whooping Cave Crickets have few behaviors that are worth mentioning other than in passing. Their social behavior amounts to little more than a constant routine of eating, sleeping and reproducing.

ECOLOGY: One in a million of these creatures are born with an unusually high, genius-level Intelligence and the ability to dance and sing. Unfortunately, as soon as this unique Cricket attempts to communicate with his own kind he is labeled an "outsider" and a "witch" by his brethren and promptly devoured by them all. The non-intelligent Crickets are thought to believe that this behavior helps to preserve the pure sameness of their race — and that smart Crickets are extremely tasty.

YIELD:

MEDICINAL: Whooping Cave Crickets are edible and taste like meaty, though minty, vegetables.

SPELL COMPONENTS: Nil

HIDE/TROPHY ITEMS: Nil

TREASURE: Nil

OTHER: Nil

Whooping Cave Cricket

AKA: Wicked Cricket

HACKFACTOR: 0

EP VALUE: 1

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Subterranean

FREQUENCY: Uncommon

ORGANIZATION: Plague

ACTIVITY CYCLE: Any

DIET: Omnivore

INTELLIGENCE: Non- (0)

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 10-1000

SIZE: T (1' long)

MOVEMENT: 12"

PSIONIC ABILITY: Nil

ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: Nil/Nil

MORALE: Wuss (2)

ARMOR CLASS: 8

NO. OF ATTACKS: 1

DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1d6-4

SPECIAL ATTACKS: Whoop

SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil

MAGIC RESISTANCE: Standard

HIT DICE: 5

TO P: n/a

FF: n/a



Whooping Cave Crickets

FRAIM

Relb's Revenge

by Ray Ennis

HMGMA #TX-8-00008-01

Hackmaster Adventure for six 1st level characters. Originally run at GenCon 2001.

BACKGROUND & GM SYNOPSIS

The quiet town of Laert is situated in gently rolling grassy hills of farm country, a day's ride south of a major trade route. Rural landscapes, grazing livestock, and farm equipment are common sights in this area. Laert itself is growing year by year, and the small town is clearly starting to boom due to trade. Strangers are becoming more common in town, and recently several new taverns and teamster buildings have been constructed.

Nine months ago, the reclusive magic-user Relb, his five apprentices, and their servants came to town. Relb had been searching for an ancient necromancer's laboratory, and he finally discovered it half a day's ride west of Laert. The lab is underground, and the entrance is easily hidden in the rolling grasslands of the area; a perfect place for them to conduct experiments. The citizens of Laert keep to their own business, as did Relb, and since he regularly sent his servants into town for supplies, spending coin freely, everyone was happy.

Three months ago, the servant Relb sent to town for supplies had far too much ale, and began talking about the wonders he'd seen working for the mighty magic-user. Chief among his claims was that the magic-user had a diamond the size of a man's head in his workshop. Always alert for a chance for profit, a thief named Horace Summel got all the info he could from the servant then followed him back to Relb's workshop. Once he knew where it was, Horace tried to convince a few cronies to help him steal the diamond. Being afraid of the magic-user's revenge, they refused. Seeing his fortune slipping away, Horace sent word to the guild of thieves in the city of Erundy, two weeks north of Laert. A scheming sorceress, Lady Adiago, heard of the stone, and realized it's potential. She paid the thieves' guild a commission, and requested the diamond, agreeing to pay them 200,000 gp in exchange for the powerful gem.

Two weeks ago, the two thugs sent to help Horace arrived, and they planned their theft. One week ago, unfortunately for everyone, Horace and his accomplices succeeded in stealing the diamond. Relb's research was in transmutation, and the giant diamond was being used as a focus for a series of complex experimental spells. When the thieves managed to take the diamond, the magical energies were warped, causing all kinds of problems. The immediate backlash killed Relb, and drove his apprentices insane. The servants and the thieves tried to run, but the diamond was loaded with transmutation magic, and melted the stones, dooming several people, including one of the thieves. Horace and his remaining partner made it out of the deathtrap, and were camping in small hollows in the rolling hills since. The residual magic of the gem, however, has been mutating plants and animals, which have made their way toward the outlying farms around Laert. Horace is now completely insane. He killed his partner the day after they got out of the workshop.

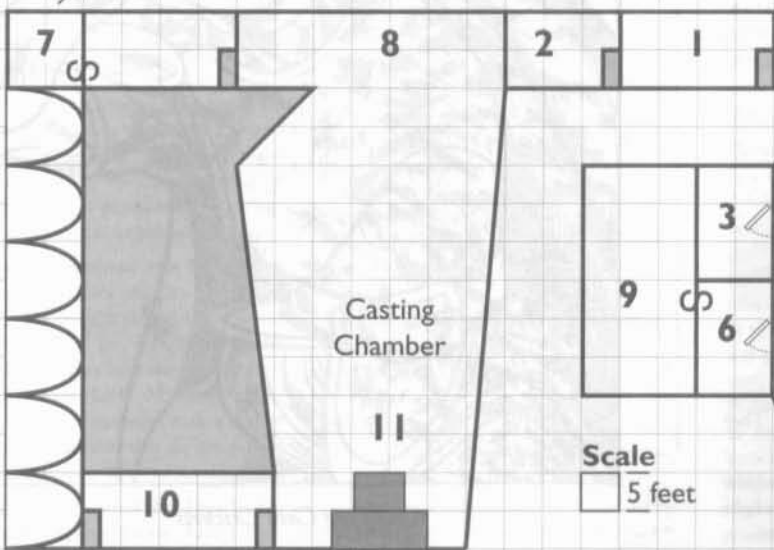
The guard captain of Laert, Shandra Tonvil (hmn F4), and her small company of volunteers have been fighting off mutated animals, animated tables and several other strange things. She has her hands full defending the town, and doesn't dare leave it to search for the source of the problem. Shandra hires the adventurers to seek the cause of the disturbances, and points them in the direction of Relb's workshop. The party goes to the workshop seeing quite a bit of destruction and mutated, half-eaten animals on the way and encountering a flock of hungry Blood Hawks who were drawn to the area by all the death. Once in the workshop they fight off insane apprentices, get past some animated furniture, and find the diamond is missing. They learn from the scattered notes of the last apprentice (partially transmuted into a plant) that the only way to break the power of the diamond is to throw it into a blazing fire. They also learn that three thieves made off with diamond a week ago.

By tracking the trail of mutations, the party finds the dead accomplice and Horace, just as a mutated sheep attacks him (DoppelEwe). They overcome the hideous beast, possibly Horace too, destroy the gem, and save the town of Laert.

Relb's Workshop- GenCon 2001 HackMaster Tournament

Cutaway View

Spiral Staircase



Level 1

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Level 2

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Spiral Staircase

SCENE 1: WELCOME TO LAERD

The morning sun shines brightly down on the green, rolling farmlands around your camp. Your party has been traveling south from the main caravan route for three days, following the instructions Captain Tonvil sent you when she hired your group. She told you strange plants and animals were terrorizing the area, but all you have seen are farms and herd animals the entire way. This looks like the easiest money your group ever earned. As you ride over another hill, you see a horseman in armor coming towards you from a small town. Her long black hair and a captain's badge on her shoulder indicate this is your new employer, Captain Shandra Torvil.

The party was hired for 200 gp, and two magical +1 Daggers. Shandra gives the party the daggers now, figuring they can use them, and saves the gp for their return. If the party negotiates she will increase the fee to 300 gp but no more. Shandra is a very friendly and charismatic person by nature but is showing signs of the stress her constant fight against mutant creatures has caused. After greeting the PCs and giving them the daggers she leads them down into town.

Shandra tells you of the recent horrors assaulting the farming town as you make your way into Laerd. She and her small guard have been protecting the town for over a week now. The incidents have increased steadily, and she fears what will happen when she fails to protect the town. That is why she hired you – to locate the source of the strange mutations and destroy it.

Riding into town, you see signs of fatigue on the townfolks' faces, and everyone is armed and nervous. As you cross the central square, off to the side you see several farmers fighting with axes against what looks like an aggressive apple tree. After a few moments, they hack it down, but not before the tree lashes out and cuts one of the men badly. Shandra sighs and says "This can't keep going on. You must find and stop this curse. Our town won't last much longer."

Shandra invites the party to rest, water their horses, etc. at the local tavern called the Farmer's Rest. All of the townfolk know the rough history of Relb's workshop and are happy to tell the PCs if they ask. No one has had any trouble with Relb before; he was generally well liked, if a bit odd. No one knows about Horace or the theft of the gem, however. After a meal, Shandra will grow impatient and try to encourage the PCs to move as quickly as possible. She sketches out a map showing the half-day ride to the west to get to the workshop and again asks the PCs to hurry.

SCENE 2: ON THE ROAD TO RELB'S WORKSHOP

The ride to Relb's workshop is mostly peaceful though the pleasant scenery is strangely twisted in places with warped trees, flowers eating birds, etc. It seems to get worse as the party gets closer to the workshop.

Encounter 1: Hawk Attack

About halfway to the workshop, some high-flying birds that have been circling the hills for a while, swoop down and attack the PCs. Do not roll a surprise die for the hawks. They are attacking the visible characters and are therefore never surprised. Blood Hawks surprise opponents 4 in 6. The Hawks will focus their attack on two party members, three Hawks each, and ignore the others unless hurt badly by an attack.

6 Blood Hawks. AC 7, 12 hp each (1/2 HD); Move: 1"/24" fly; #Att: 3 claw/claw/bite (1d4/1d4/1d6); Size: Small; EP 35 each (26 EP if made to flee), HF 1 each.

Loot: small silver bracelet with gem (30 gp value) on the neck of the lead hawk; the bracelet still has dried blood on it from the hawk's last meal.

Shortly after this encounter, the party arrives at the entrance to Relb's workshop.

SCENE 3: RELB'S WORKSHOP

At last you have arrived at the entrance to Relb's Workshop. The small stone doorway set in the side of the hill would normally be hard to see. However, several twisted, gray bushes have grown up around the doorway, out of place in the otherwise green valley. The door itself is made from worn wood and stone. It is partly open, revealing a dark hallway leading deeper into the hillside.

The plants are disgustingly pulpy and smelly, but otherwise harmless and easy to clear out from the doorway, allowing entrance to Room 1.

Room 1:

Pale and cracked stones line the walls and floor of this 20-foot long hallway. Small green and brown weeds have begun slowly breaking up the stonework further. An old door shaped like a huge, leering demon's face stands at the southern end of the hall. Parts of the doorway have been smashed recently, leaving rubble scattered in the hall.

The architecture of the place is from the necromancer who built it long ago. The door was broken three days ago with a war hammer by one of the insane inhabitants of the workshop.

Room 2:

The door to this area is unlocked but will not open more than halfway because it is blocked by one of the unlucky servants caught when the floor changed. The sculptures in the walls and floor are all that is left of servants and students caught when the diamond was taken.

You stand in a wide passageway leading left and right, curving out of sight to the south. The stonework here is far better than in the entry hall and much older. The walls and floor are seamless, with cleverly done carvings that look like frantic humans and demi-humans trapped on the other side, pushing through to where you are. The highly detailed sculptures are widely scattered, none extending more than 4 or 5 inches from the surface. Faint, whispered screams of many voices seem to emanate from the sculptures' frozen features. A large, drooling man covered in filth and carrying a large club is walking down the hall. As he sees you, he laughs cheerfully and charges, swinging his club.

Encounter 2: Deranged Servant

The attacker is one of the remaining servants driven violently insane by the experience. He will attack until knocked out or killed.

Madman (human lvl 2 fighter). AC 9, 34 hp (2 HD); Move: 12"; #Att: 1 (+1 to hit) club (1d6+3 dmg)



Size: Medium; Increased to hit and damage is due to high 15/25 Strength. He wears only a torn pair of trousers and shoddy boots, his AC bonus is due to 13/83 Dexterity. EP 137 (103 if made to flee), HF 0.

Loot: 3 small tiger-eye gems in his right boot, worth 20 gp each.

Room 3:

This chamber contains a simple cot and chest at one end, and a well-used writing desk at the other. Broken quills, ink stones and pieces of parchment are scattered across the floor. Someone in a plain black robe is hunched over the desk, facing away from you, scribbling furiously on a scroll, apparently unaware of your presence.

This is one of Relb's apprentices, driven insane by the magical backlash. He actually is aware of the party, he is just waiting to see what they do. He has several spells left he can cast, and will attack should the party touch him or any of his writings. Otherwise, he will just sit and write, saying nothing. The writings themselves are from his journal, which describe finding the abandoned necromancer lair, arcane details on the mutating nature of the diamond, and how it is the focus of Relb's work.

Encounter 3: Insane Magic-user

Relb's assistant (half-elf lvl 3 magic-user). AC 6, 31 HP (3 HD); Move: 12"; #Att: 1 (+1 to hit) dagger (1d4+1 dmg) Size: Medium; Improved AC from 16/02 Dexterity and magical rings. EP 249 (187 if made to flee), HF 1.

Spells: 3x Magic Missile, Sleep; Irritation

Loot: +1 Dagger (500 EP), 40 gp in a drawer of the desk, silver ring (+1 Ring of Protection, being worn, 1000 EP) and a turquoise ring (+1 Ring of Protection, being worn, 1000 EP)

Room 4:

The walls in this room are stained with layers of dried blood and gore. Several sets of chains hang from the ceiling, all with the gruesome remains of humanoids in them. A thick smoke coming from a brazier in the corner stings your eyes and as it clears, a young man in tattered armor, one foot made of stone, moves towards you saying, "Excellent! I need new fodder and you'll do well enough!" He brandishes a blade.

This crazed person is one of the thieves sent from Erundy to help Horace. He was trapped by the floor, but eventually pulled free, discovering his left foot had been petrified. He's totally insane, and will attack anyone who crosses his path. He first hurls daggers at anyone speaking until he's down to his last one, then he'll fight hand to hand.

Encounter 4: Insane Thief

Insane Guild Thief (human lvl 2 thief). AC 7, 24 hp (2 HD); Move: 12"; #Att: 1 melee/2 hurled, dagger (1d4 dmg, +3 "to hit" if thrown) Size: Medium; Improved AC from 16/60 Dexterity—his armor is worthless. EP 122 (92 if made to flee), HF 0.

Loot: 6 daggers (2 GP value each), a Potion of Healing (restores 2d4 +2 hp, 200 EP) and a small bronze amulet (1 gp) tucked into his shirt that pictures a coin purse with a dagger balanced on it. This is the symbol for the guild of thieves in Erundy. (Int check at -3 for a party member to recognize it.)

Room 5:

The warm smell of fresh bread greets you as the door swings open to this room. A cooking pit and stove are in the center of an array of pots, barrels and boxes. A young woman in traveling gear looks at you with glittering black eyes, growling, "Dinner isn't ready yet! Get out!"

This is another of Relb's apprentices, who decided the only thing she could do to help was get dressed and cook food. She seems normal but is totally out of reality, believing she just came from town and is fixing dinner for the rest of the group. She will attack the party only if they do not leave promptly. If they do leave, she will resume cooking, and ignore them until they come back in. Dinner is never ready, by the way, and is actually totally burnt.

Encounter 5: Insane Magic-user

Relb's assistant (half-elf lvl 1 magic-user). AC 7, 23 HP (1 HD); Move: 12"; #Att: 1 large metal spoon (1d4 dmg) Size: Medium; Improved AC from 17/03 Dexterity. EP 111 (83 if made to flee), HF 0.

Spells: 2x Magic Missile, 2x Weak Bladder cantrip

Loot: 40 sp in a pouch on her belt, and 3 gold rings (25 gp each) on her toes (hidden by her boot).

Room 6:

This room smells of old leather and paper. A small table sits in the center a room. Its walls are lined with four bookshelves filled with books of every size and description. There are human skull bookends on several of the shelves and a burned out lantern rests on the table. Blue sparks shoot out from some of the books, making a strange buzzing noise.

This room is the library used by Relb's assistants. The protective wards placed on some of the books went haywire when the diamond was stolen. The first party member to touch a bookshelf is shocked for 2d10 points of damage

(save vs. breath weapon for half damage). Tossing a metal item into a shelf will discharge it safely. Once the trap on a bookshelf has been discharged, it is safe to touch.

A secret passage is located behind one of the bookshelves, which is slightly out of place (Int check to notice) because it was not slid all the way back when it was last closed. Tipping the human skull on that bookshelf activates the secret passage.

Three of the books in this library are rare ("Tomas' Elliptical Zombie", "Crow's Summoning", and "Dread-Ghoul Delights") and can be sold for 100 gp each. PCs may make an Intelligence check for each 15 minutes spent searching. A success means one of the rare tomes is discovered and recognized as valuable. A critical failure means that one undiscovered tome is overlooked and will never be recognized as valuable.

Room 7:

The secret doorway opens into a dark hallway. Strange green and purple lights flicker randomly along a stairwell that spirals downward into darkness. A rope dangles from the ceiling in the corner, opposite the stairs. The eerie lights make the paintings of undead creatures and summoned fiends on the walls even more disturbing. Clearly, this stairway leads to a powerful magic-user's lair.

The rope pull is a trap designed to kill the curious. Anyone pulling on the rope opens a trapdoor to a pit beneath his feet. The pit is 30 feet deep and 5 feet wide. Anyone falling into the pit takes 3d6 falling damage. Sharp spikes angled downward make it more difficult to climb back up with a rope. Anyone doing so without a clever method of avoiding damage (or the Potion of Levitation) will suffer an additional 3d4 points of damage before getting out.

Loot: At the bottom of the pit is one of Relb's guards. He died when the diamond warped the stone and he fell into the pit. He has a +1 Long Sword (400 EP), one Potion of Levitation (bright orange, marked "poison", 250 EP, lifts up to 600 pounds) and one Potion of Healing (dark green, marked "water", 200 EP, heals 2d4+2).



Room 8:

This small 3-foot high balcony is constructed entirely from bones of large animals. It looks out over a large, 30-foot diameter pit lined with the skulls of all sorts of monsters, humans and animals. The skulls' jaw bones open and close, causing a strange clicking sound to echo throughout the chamber. Sixty feet below the balcony you can see colored smoke and sparks coming from a raised circular platform. You can barely make out several bodies lying on the platform next to an empty metal stand.

This was the necromancer's summoning place. There's nothing here now, it's just creepy. The skulls on the wall can be easily smashed if the party can reach them. The balcony looks down on Room 11, where the crystal and Relb were. Anyone who looks over the balcony for more than a minute or two must make a Constitution check or become dizzy (from the smoke) and fall 60' (6d6 damage) and must roll once on either PHB Table 6F: Minor Mental Quirks (1-3 on d6) or PHB Table 6H: Minor Personality Quirks (4-6 on d6) due to the effects of the smoke.

Room 9:

The walls of this secret room are covered with thick green and blue curtains. In the middle of the room is an inviting chair next to a desk, with a lamp to one side. A large tome with odd-looking paper lies open on the desk. Several gold and silver runes are carved into the desk's surface, surrounding the book — they sparkle in the torchlight.

This was Relb's personal study, where he kept his spell book (the large book on the desk). The runes protecting it are extremely powerful, and hum and spark if anyone approaches. Make ominous descriptions to warn the PCs away from trying anything with the book. Anyone who touches the book must save vs. death magic or be killed instantly by the protective runes. There are 50 pp in a bag in the desk, along with 5 small diamonds (100 gp each).

There are four runes around the book—once all four have been triggered, the book can be taken (though it is so large that it will not fit in a pack, and someone will end up carrying it in their hands.) The book radiates evil, and can be sold a necromancer for 500 pp. Any good-aligned characters will lose 1d12 Honor for trying to take or keep the spell book.

Room 10:

The smell of rotten eggs assaults your nose as soon as you open the door. Thick green and purple smoke tendrils drift slowly about the room. The room is obviously a spell-preparation area. It is filled with workbenches, tables, flasks of murky liquids and unrecognizable ingredients in jars. A large number of flasks have fallen and shattered on the ground all around a table. Apparently the mixed potions on the floor are the source of the clouds and smell. A door to the north is partially open and the many magical runes along its frame are destroyed, scorching the stones around them.

This was Relb's alchemy area. There are a 32 remaining potions here, all of them a bit hazardous after the backlash. The backlash also has the effect of making the potions shift in color and smell, making any sort of identification impossible. Any time a PC drinks from a potion here, roll for the result, subtracting 10 from the roll for every potion after the second (i.e. potion #3 roll is at a -10, potion #4 is an automatic 1, though a natural 20 will still turn someone into a giant badger)

Roll (1d20)	Result
1	Save vs. spells or die
2-3	Spontaneous gender-change and +3 to Charisma
4-6	Lose 2d6 hit points and suffer -3 Comeliness from ugly green patches that form on the skin
7-9	Roll a d6: Even—go blind for 24 hours; Odd—go deaf for 24 hours
10-12	Lose 2d4 hit points
13-15	Gain 3d4 hit points
16-17	Gain a bright purple magical aura, improving AC by 2 for 24 hours (and giving off light like a bonfire)
18-19	Super-speed—sparks occasionally shoot out of the character's ears and mouth (no damage)
20	Save vs. polymorph or change into a Giant Badger with the same Intelligence as before (the player can still use the character...he is just a Giant Badger now)

If any player brushes up against the center table it animates and attacks, folding over on itself then snapping like a mouse-trap at people.

Encounter 6: Animated Table

Stout Oak Table. AC 5 (it is tough wood), 20 hp (2 HD); Move: 6"; #Att: 1 table-slap (2d6 dmg); Moral: will fight "to the death." Takes double damage from fire-based attacks. EP 50 (38 if made to flee), HF 1.

Loot: It's not obvious but the table legs can each be used as +1 Clubs as long as they are not broken during the fight (500 EP per club).

Room II:

As the door opens flashing lights and the chattering of hundreds of jawbones wash over you. Various skulls are embedded all along the walls of this small chamber, extending up 50 feet. The magic has animated them, and they struggle to get free of their prison. In the center of the room is a small platform with a large, charred bookstand on one side and an unmoving human form in burnt robes on the other. An empty and badly bent iron stand is anchored to the center of the platform, apparently where some sort of melon-sized device once sat.

A pale, tired woman in a black robe is sunk up to her waist in the stone platform, and she looks up and smiles at you saying, "Thank the powers you've come! You must destroy the diamond with fire before the world is destroyed! But first help me!"

The roasted figure off to one side is all that is left of Relb. The empty iron stand once held the diamond, but is now ruined. There are no useful items in here; it was the center of the backlash. The skulls will keep on clacking their jaws indefinitely even if removed from the wall. They can be taken back to town and sold as gimmicks for 5 gp per skull (100 gp max, regardless of the number the party takes back).

The still-sane magic-user, Nicole Brentis (hmn lvl 3 magic-user, alignment: neutral) AC 8, 25 HP (3 HD); Move: 12"; #Att: 1 dagger (1d4 dmg) Size: Medium; Improved AC from 16/18. EP 175 (131 if made to flee), HF 0., who is stuck in the stone, was lucky enough not to fall all the way in. Her legs are not stone, she is just mired in it. Nicole currently has no spells memorized. She will tell the party the entire story about the thieves (who lowered a rope from the balcony and lassoed the diamond) and the magical backlash. She survived because she had her travel kit with her (she was getting ready to leave for the forest for ingredients) and has been eating the rations she had packed. She has been here for about a week.

It will take at least three days to chip enough stone out of the way to pull her free and she will discourage anyone from trying, telling them they must destroy the diamond by putting it in an ordinary campfire for three hours. She does ask that they leave rations for her, however, and will offer to pay them to set her

free if they are reluctant to help (she has 25 pp in her bag, and a +1 Ring of Protection on her left hand.) Note that this will cause an immediate Honor loss of 15 points for any good-aligned PC who demands payment for helping her. Before the PCs go, she gives them a small diamond needle that points to the large diamond at all times due to powerful spells placed on it.

SCENE 4: SAVING THE DAY

You quickly make your way back out of the workshop. As you step outside, the needle spins in your hand and points northwest. Following its directions for a couple of hours brings you to a series of small gorges at the edge of the grasslands. A flock of sheep off to the left bleats loudly and eats grass. About 30 feet in front of you is part of a human in leather armor—the person was recently ripped to pieces! Suddenly, a panicked and bleeding man in tattered clothes, hugging a large diamond to his chest, sprints around the corner. He sees you, tosses the diamond to you and screams, "Save me! Save me!"

A moment later, two sheep trot around the corner. They slow down, watching your group with leering stares. Suddenly, tentacles and extra mouths sprout from all around the two sheep and they charge!

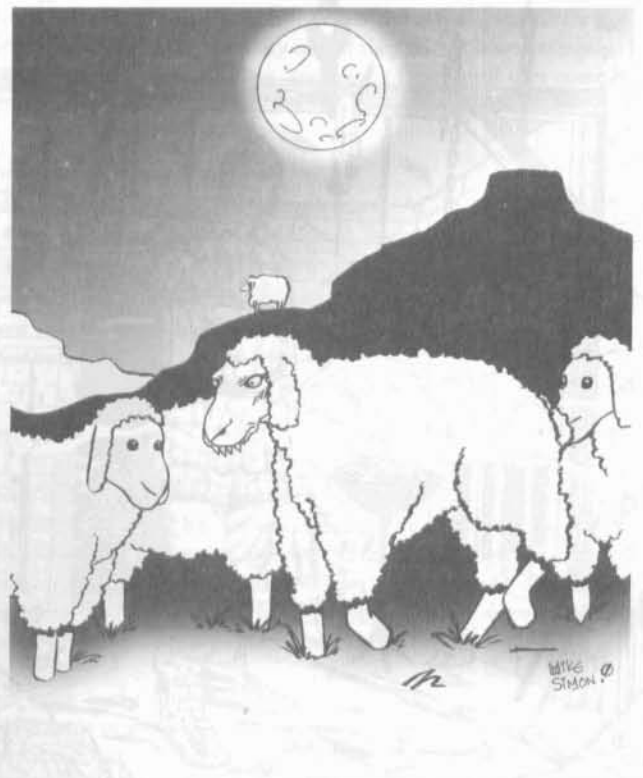
The two sheep are actually DoppelEwe, sinister sheep-like predators who can polymorph additional mouths and tentacles.

Encounter 7: DoppelEwes

2 DoppelEwes. AC 3, 25 HP and 35 HP (3 +1 HD each); Move: 9"; #Att: 3 (any combo of mouths and tentacles, 2d4 dmg each); Size: M (4' long); alignment: chaotic evil; EP 270 (203 if forced to flee), HF 5 each.

Loot: None.

The tattered man is Horace (hmn thief, 3 HD, currently only 10 hit points, and no weapons or armor left. 40 EP, 30 if forced to flee, HF 0). His life has



been such a total nightmare of sleepless nights, strange horrors chasing him, etc. that he WANTS to give up the gem. He will tell the PCs everything and even willingly stand trial in Laerd as long as he is away from the diamond. He will try to run if the PCs attack him, begging for his life the whole time.

The diamond can be destroyed if put into any regular fire for several hours. It simply cracks and melts away without fanfare. With the diamond destroyed, Horace taken care of (one way or the other...no one in Laerd wants to see him again) and the Dopples destroyed, the PCs can return to town, victorious, to great celebrations and feasting!

Awarding EPs in HackMaster Tournaments

HackMaster Universal Individual EP Multiplier

All EP awards given out in HackMaster tournaments use an Individual EP Multiplier determined using the HackMaster Universal Individual EP Multiplier table. The GameMaster should track the total amount of EP given to each character during a tournament then determine what percent of the total EP awarded is earned by each player. For example, if 4,000 total EP was awarded during the tournament, a character who earned 800 EP earned 20% of the total.

It's important to determine this percentage based on the total EP that was actually awarded, not on the total potential EP which could have been awarded. If a tournament had a potential of 6,000 EP but certain tasks were not accomplished and only 4,000 EP was actually awarded, determine the individual percentages based on 4,000 EP, not on 6,000 EP. Round all percentages up to the nearest multiple of 5% (16% becomes 20%, 34% becomes 35%, etc.).

Compare this "percentage of total" to the Universal Individual EP Multiplier Table (shown on this page) to determine the PC's EP multiplier for that tournament.

For example, let's use a tournament in which 6,000 total EP was awarded. If a PC earned 558 EP, he earned 9.3% of the total which gets rounded up to the nearest 5% for a final "percentage of total" of 10%. According to the Universal Individual EP Multiplier chart, that PC has an EP Multiplier of "NC" which means there is no change to the amount of EP he earns.

If a character earned 1,209 EP during that same adventure, he earned 20.15% which gets rounded up to 25%. His EP Multiplier is +15% so his 1,209 EP gets increased by 15% for a total of 1,390 EP.

TREASURE EP AWARDS

According to the HackMaster GameMaster's Guide, to award EP for treasure, first convert the value of non-magical treasure to gold pieces. Next, compare the total value (not average value) of all the monsters' HackFactors to the total value (not average value) of all the PCs' HackFactors. If the total HackFactor of the monsters equal or exceeds the total HackFactor of the PCs, then EP is awarded at 1 EP per 5 GPs worth of non-magical treasure value.

If the total HackFactor of the PCs exceeds the total HackFactor of the monsters, then EP should be awarded according to that ratio (but never better than 1:5). For example, if a party with a total HackFactor of 70 overcomes a group of monsters with a HackFactor of 10, then their HackFactor exceeds the monsters' HackFactor by a ratio of 7:1, so treasure EP for that encounter should be

Combat EP Award Table

Average party level	Max total combat EP
1-3	3,000
4-6	20,000
7-9	40,000
10-14	65,000
15-19	90,000
20+	120,000

Typical EP Awards for Non-Combat Actions

Action critical to completion of mission	500 EP/avg level of party
Action important to completion of mission	300 EP/avg level of party
Action exceptionally brave/honorable	200 EP/avg level of party
Action brave/honorable	100 EP/avg level of party
Action beneficial to party or PC	50 EP/avg level of party

Magic Item EP Award Chart

Average party level	Max total magic item EP
1-3	2,000
4-6	16,000
7-9	25,000
10-14	55,000
15-19	80,000
20+	100,000

awarded at 1 EP for each 7 GPs worth of non-magical treasure value (or a ratio of 7:1).

This ratio is only for non-magical treasure EP. Combat EP is awarded as normal no matter what. EP for magical treasure is likewise awarded as normal. If the party in the above example finds a +1 Dagger, that dagger is worth 500 EP, which is the value listed in the GMG.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

EP penalties issued in tournaments can't lower the total EP awarded to a PC to less than zero. Simply put, a PC can't walk away from a tournament with fewer EP than he started with.

Unguarded treasure yields zero EP.

A group of PCs with a total combined HackFactor of 1 or more won't gain EP from non-magical treasure taken from a group of monsters with a total combined HackFactor of zero.

EP awarded for combat and treasure (including magical treasure) is evenly divided among all party members who survived that encounter.

Universal Individual EP Multiplier Table

percentage of total	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%
individual multiplier	NC	NC	NC	+10%	+15%	+20%	+25%	+30%	+25%	+20%
percentage of total	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%	90%	95%	100%
individual multiplier	+15%	+10%	NC	NC	NC	-10%	-20%	-30%	-40%	-50%

Relb's Revenge Scoring Sheet

See the article entitled "Awarding EP in HackMaster Tournaments" which accompanied this Scoring Sheet to determine the Individual EP Multiplier for each PC.

Scene 1: Welcome to Laerd

+50 EP – a PC begins successful negotiations with Shandra to get a higher reward.

Scene 2: On the Road to Relb's Workshop

Encounter 1: Blood Hawks

+35 EP – each Blood Hawk killed
+26 EP – each Blood Hawk forced to flee
Treasure EP: 30 GP value, total monster HF of 6

Scene 3: Relb's Workshop

Encounter 2: Deranged Servant

+137 EP – servant killed
+103 EP – servant forced to flee
Treasure EP: 60 GP value, total monster HF of 0

Encounter 3: Insane Magic-user

+249 EP – magic-user killed
+187 EP – magic-user forced to flee
Treasure EP: 40 GP value, total monster HF of 1
Magic item EP: 2,500 EP
+50 EP – a PC reads the magic-user's journal

Encounter 4: Insane Thief

+122 EP – thief killed
+92 EP – thief forced to flee
Treasure EP: 13 GP value, total monster HF of 0
Magic item EP: 200 EP
+50 EP – a PC performs some version of "last rites" on the bodies in Room 4

Encounter 5: Insane Magic-user

+111 EP – magic-user killed
+83 – magic-user forced to flee
Treasure EP: 75.4 GP value, total monster HF of 0

Room 6

+25 EP – a PC finds the secret passage
+25 EP – a PC finds one of the rare books
-50 EP – a PC takes damage from the magical trap
Treasure EP: 300 GP value, unguarded

Room 7

-50 EP – a PC takes damage exiting the pit trap
Magic item EP: 850 EP

Room 8

-75 EP – a PC falls over the railing

Room 9

+200 – a good-aligned PC destroys Relb's spellbook
-100 – a good-aligned PC takes Relb's spellbook
Treasure EP: 3,250 GP value, unguarded

Room 10

+20 EP – a PC tries one of the potions

Encounter 6: Animated Table

+50 – animated table killed
Magic item EP: 2,000 EP

Room 11

+175 – Nicole killed (the PCs are not meant to attack her)
(zero EP awarded if she is killed while still trapped in the floor)
+131 – Nicole is made to flee (PCs are not meant to attack her)
+50 EP – for each PC who assists in freeing Nicole
Treasure EP: 225 GP value, total monster HF of 0
Magic item EP: 500 EP

Scene 4: Saving the Day

Encounter 7: DoppleEwes

+270 – each DoppleEwe killed
+203 – each DoppleEwe forced to flee
+40 EP – Horace killed (the PCs are not meant to attack him)
+30 EP – Horace forced to flee (PCs are not meant to attack him)
-100 – penalty applied to each PC if Horace is allowed to get away

Role-Playing EP Awards

+50 EP – awarded to a PC if he acts on any of the following at least twice during the tournament: alignment, background, flaw/quirk. Multiple awards are allowed but no more than 250 EP total to any one PC.

Creating Your Own HackMaster Tournaments

Included in this issue of HackJournal is *Relb's Revenge*, one of the first HackMaster tournaments to be offered to the public. It ran at GenCon 2001 and was well-received by GMs and players alike. We've included *Relb's Revenge* in order to give an example of what we consider to be a well-designed tournament. *Note: Relb's Revenge does exceed the maximum EP award for magic items as noted below but it was designed many months before those limits were created.*

The scoring for HackMaster tournaments is based on EP awards. We thought about using an arbitrary point system but decided, *Hell, this is HackMaster. It should be about the EP!* Because the scoring system is based on EP, HMA members designing tournaments need to have a strong understanding not only of how EP is awarded in HackMaster but of HackFactor as well because it ties in directly with EP awarded for treasure.

It's difficult to set an absolute scale for determining how much EP to award in a tournament, but we're HMA Headquarters and there's little we can't do. Use the following guidelines for setting EP awards for tournaments. *Remember that HackMaster tournaments should be written for a six-character party.*

For example, if you're creating a tournament for 8th level adventurers, the total combined EP for combat in the entire tournament may not exceed 40,000 EP and the total combined EP for magic items awarded may not exceed 25,000 EP.

Use the Table entitled Typical EP Awards for Non-Combat Actions to set EP award values to actions that PCs may perform during the course of a tournament in order to gain points. Whenever possible, the EP awards should reflect the actions of a single PC.

HMA tournaments should be submitted via e-mail to hma@kenzerco.com. HackJournal will not be publishing tournaments in the future until they are retired from active duty. Creating an HMA tournament is not the same thing as writing an adventure for submission in HackJournal.

All tournament materials submitted to the HackMaster Association become the sole and exclusive property of Kenzer & Company.



Welcome to the first HackJournal Annual! HackJournal Annual collects material previously published in quarterly issues of HackJournal. HackJournal is the official publication of the HackMaster Player's Association.

For those of you who missed the first four issues of HackJournal, this book provides you with a great opportunity to expand your Hackverse! The HackJournal Annual is packed with over 40 articles essential for both players and GMs! While written for HackMaster 4th Edition, most of the ideas and material are easily adaptable to any RPG system.

Here's some of what you get:

- Tips for the GM - Pacing Combat Encounters, Calculating Hackfactor, Awarding EPs in Tournaments, Creating Temples, Tournament Dungeon Design, Adding Suspense to Your Campaign, and Calculating Initiative
- Player's Advantage - Getting the Most Out of Cantrips, Overcoming Flaws, Weapons for the Wee Ones and Weapons for the Huge Ones, Illusionist Advice, • How to Use Alchemy and Herbalism Properly
- Three "Day in the Life" Stories from across Garweeze Wurld, the default campaign setting for the HackMaster TeraVerse.
- Monsters, Monsters and more Monsters! (All of them created exclusively for HackJournal!) - Albino Purple Ice Worm, Faux Lich, Gargantuan Whale Monkey, Whooping Cave Cricket, Shetland Pegasus, Gnomeling Titan, Rust Bats, Pixie Wolf, and more!
- Two complete short adventures - Relb's Revenge (The 2001 HackMaster World Championship Tournament), and a descent into the infamous One-Legged Gagwaller Research Station.
- More Magic Items than you can shake a magical stick at! - Cloak of Dramatic Entrances, Tooth of Witty Banter, Short Sword of Gnomish Battle Sense, 4 magical items tailored for the monk, Strahdi Bows, Magical Food, 4 nonmagical assassin "enhancement" items, and more!
- Garweeze Wurld - The Waylands are an intriguing region of Garweeze Wurld developed exclusively by HackMaster Association members, and you can only read about them here! This book includes sixteen pages stuffed with descriptions of 18 different nations, two highly detailed city settings, and unique organizations.
- Alphabetical Skill and Talent master index, and many more useful articles!



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