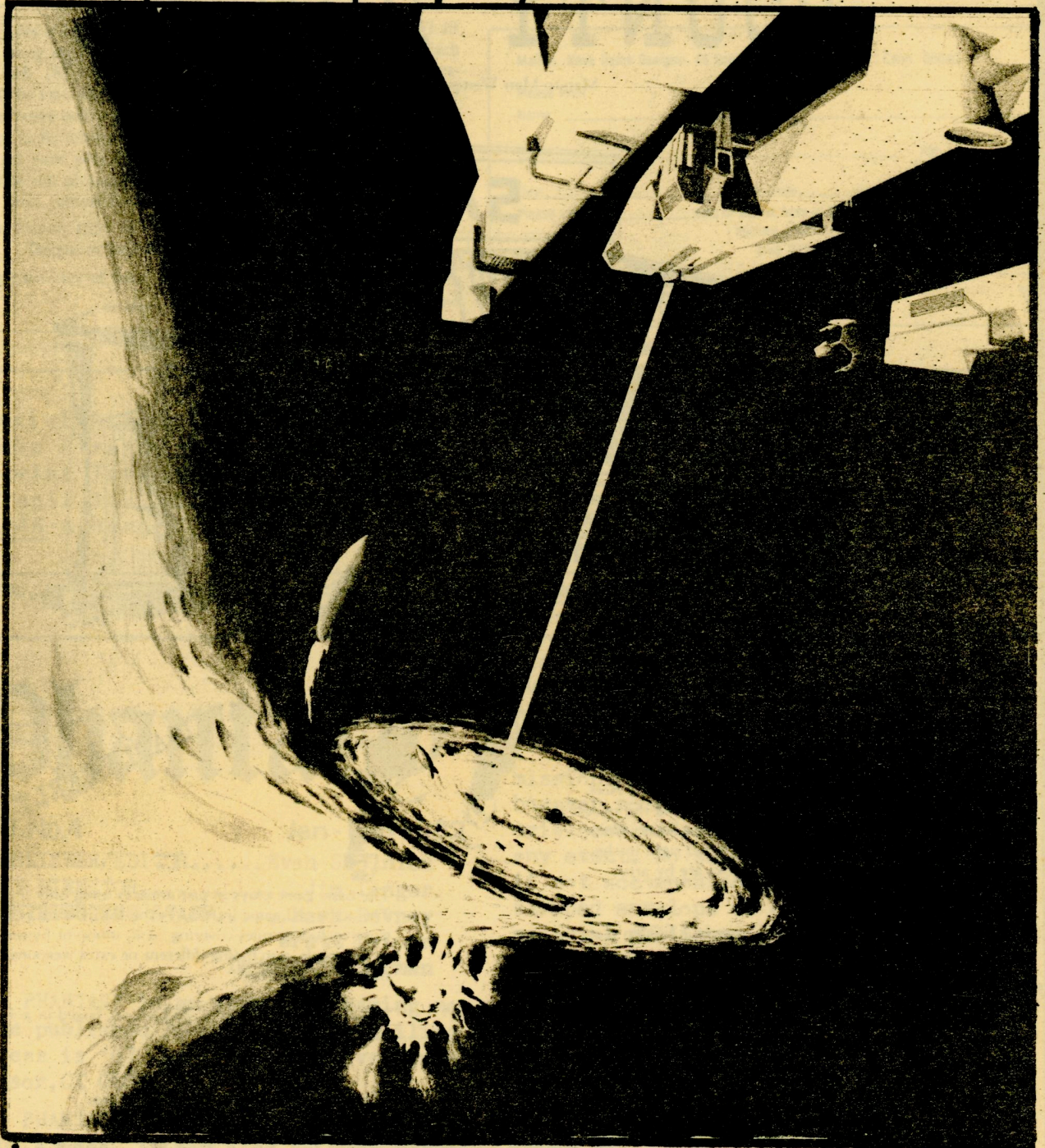


phantasy

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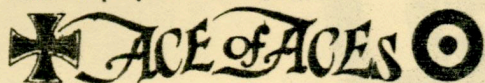
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#5



the pirates - a ranger redone - ace of aces

From the people who brought you

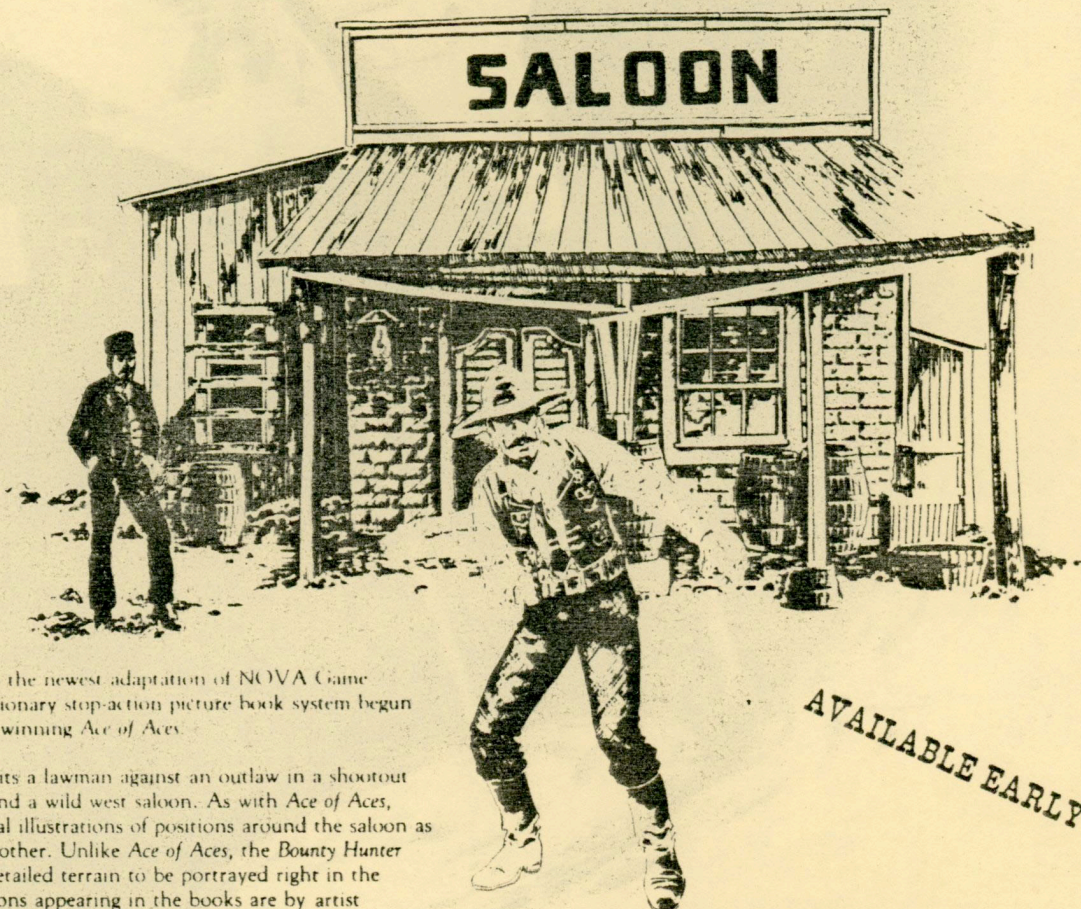


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CONTENTS

<p>Special Attraction The Pirates 5</p>	<p>True Seeing -reviews ace of aces 10</p>	<p>Dragon's Hoard -magic items 14</p>
<p>Regular Features Magic Mouth 4</p>	<p>Explosive Runes -reader phanmail 12</p>	<p>Cuthbert's Ordeal -comedy 15</p>
<p>PAN-a ranger redone 7</p>	<p>Spotlight-2 articles 13</p>	<p>Subscription form- back cover</p>

Cover Art by Jim Rosinus; first appeared in Timelag by Nova Game Designs, Inc.

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Phantasy

Vol. II, No. 4 Jan - Feb 1982

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PHANTASY is an adventure gaming magazine published bi-monthly. The mailing address is 187 Quarry Brook Drive, South Windsor, CT 06074.

PHANTASY is available at better hobby stores. It can also be purchased directly from the publisher by individual subscription. Rates are \$5 for six months or \$9 for one year. The issue of expiration for each subscription is printed on the mailing label of each subscrip-

tion issue in the form of "PH-" and the number of the last issue. PHANTASY is mailed first class.

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MAGIC MOUTH

"Why do you keep changing so much?" This is a common question asked of us here at PHANTASY. The answer is easy: to make our magazine always attractive in your very important eyes. Looking at the same thing every issue can get monotonous, we think, and we wouldn't want that to happen, would we?

It is under that reasoning that I decided to combine the columns Alpha to Omega and Magic Mouth. This way they will take up less space--and you'll be "surprised" by the bulk of the material inside, instead of knowing exactly what to expect.

Inside this fifth issue of PHANTASY are several new ventures we are giving a try. First, the Pirate (N)PC is introduced, for all you really-meanies. Another first at PHANTASY is the revamping of a character class; the Ranger is redone by Jim Langer within these pages. And, although we are basically a FRP magazine, the revolutionary game Ace of Aces is examined closely in our review column, True Seeing.

On a sad note, we bid farewell to Sarulan, the ongoing story of the god-king. He was killed off to make room for more pertinent material.

You have probably noticed a few things about this issue of PHANTASY. One, it has a cover of different color and weight. Two, it is slightly thinner than usual (a situation we hope to remedy next issue). And third, the new logo, the new...hmmm. What should I call it? "Style?" That's about right. Our new style.

If you think the changes in this issue are dramatic, then do I have a few surprises for you next issue! No, I'm not going to tell you what I meant by that. You'll know soon enough anyway.

In the last issue of PHANTASY, there was an article entitled "Good Luck/Bad Luck" which was said to have been done by Jennie M. Good. What it should have said was "by Evan Skolnick

based on an idea by Jennie M. Good". Credit for the article goes to me, Evan Skolnick.

We're holding off on the module-making contest we had planned for a while. For those of you readers who have already started (or even completed) a module for this contest, well, we're giving you more time to work on it.

Now for some good news. First, and most importantly, we are planning to release a booklet by Jim Langer, on the spells of Merlin. Release date is not known, but it will be a while...

We are also considering a computer column, with programs, reviews of games, and other relevant data, if I may use the term. However, we need to know how many of you would find this useful. (Or useless.) So, drop us a line.

And I will say it once again: we need more contributors! PHANTASY is your chance to get involved with the world of gaming. An article sent to us has a better chance of getting published than in any other magazine of this type. Almost every issue I ask each and every reader to send something.

There are a myriad of different things you could send in. Whether you want to submit a magic item or a module, a review or just a letter, there's a pretty good chance that it will get published, if you put a lot of thought into it.

So try it. You may surprise yourself--and your fellow gamers.

That wraps up this edition of Magic Mouth; here's hoping you enjoy this issue of PHANTASY. Feel free to send in any comments and/or suggestions concerning it. I'd appreciate it.

Evan Skolnick

P.S. There seems to be a bit of confusion over the last sentence of #4's Alpha to Omega column. When I said "contribution", I meant a written submission. Not money. Fortunately, nobody followed up on their misinterpretation. Did I say "fortunately"?

phantasy presents

the pirates

by Evan Skolnick



For thousands of years, the galleys of the Phoenicians, the dragonships of the Norse, the galleons of the Spaniards, and even the battleships of the Americans have plied the waters of their respective continents. And with the merchants, explorers, and sailors, there was always the nefarious, the evil, the greedy, the cruel...the pirates. In this feature I will give the statistics for a Pirate player character or NPC. No waterborne adventure is complete without them.

Ability Scores

Strength: 13-18 (d6+12)
Intelligence: 4-16 (4d4)
Wisdom: 3-8 (d6+2)
Dexterity: 10-17 (d8+9)
Constitution: 11-18 (d8+10)
Charisma: 3-6 (d4+2) or 15+

Hit Die Type

Six-sided

Spell Ability

None

Weapons Permitted

Dagger, Club, Sling, Broad/Short swords, Whip

Armor Permitted

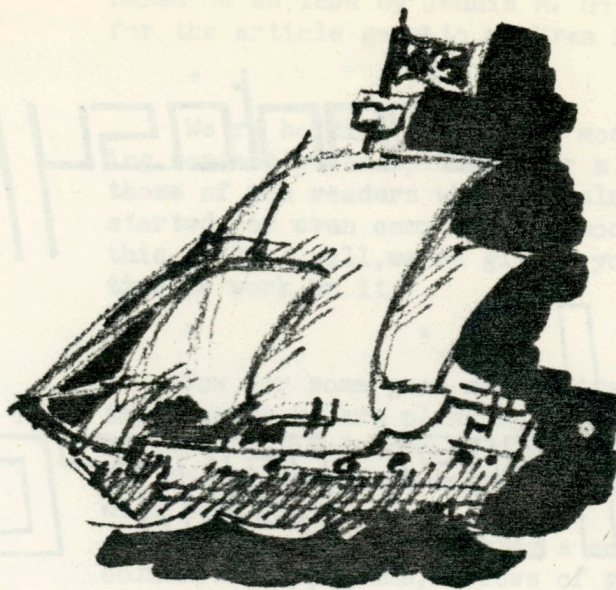
Leather, no shield

Races Possible

Any; no level restrictions

Experience Level Table

Ex. Pts.	XP level, # of d6s
0-1,500	1
1,501-3000	2
3,001-5,800	3
5,801-9,000	4
9,001-20,000	5
20,001-40,000	6



Ex. Pts.	XP level, # of d6s
40,001-70,000	7
70,001-105,000	8
105,001-150,000	9
150,001-220,000	10
220,000-500,000	11
500,001-1,000,000	12

400,000 experience points for each additional level after the 12th.

Pirates gain 2 hp per level after the 12th.

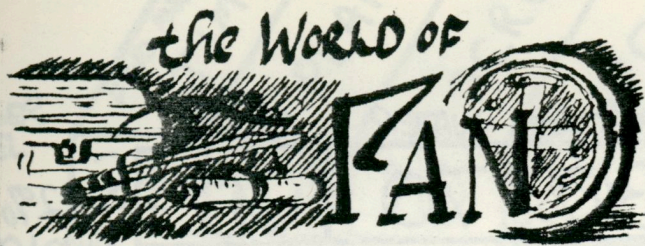
Pirates are a subclass of the thief. They melee on the same combat table that thieves do. There is a major difference between Pirates and all other classes: they get experience for gold pieces on a 2 to 1 basis. In other words, for every gold piece that a Pirate gets from a haul, he or she gets two experience points. However, Pirates only get 1/2 of normal experience points for people and monsters killed.

Pirates are always either chaotic neutral or chaotic evil. They have the thief abilities of picking pockets, moving silently, hiding in shadows, and backstabbing, but use these abilities as a thief would three levels lower.

Ship captains are the only Pirates that have a charisma above 14, and they are always of at least the 6th level.

And there you have them. The evil, malevolent Pirates. Here's hoping your players fear them as they should—or enjoy preying on merchant ships. Just follow the North Star...





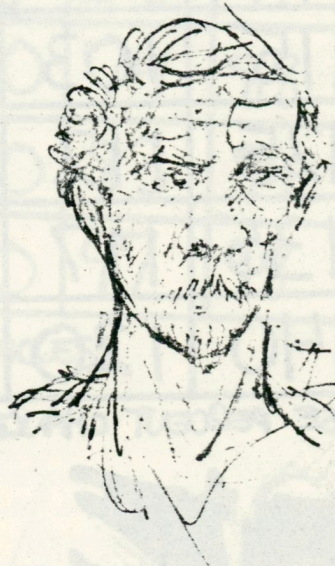
"Rearranging the Ranger" by JIM LANGER

In the years that The World of Pan existed, I had the pleasure of observing one player in particular apply a tremendous amount of time, effort, and skill in creating viable characters to take on my most challenging situations. His name is Pat Swanson. Pat became especially attached to his roles as John Tyler, of Pan, and Léon DuBois, of my current campaign, "Risqué". Both of these PCs are Rangers, a class often passed over by beginners and experienced players when creating a new character.

It's odd, I think, that Rangers should be so relatively unpopular, as they happen to hold great potential in terms of advancement, skill-at-arms, and possible spell activity. I would think that a vision of Strider tracking a foe in the forest would be enough to encourage a player with the right stats to become a Ranger. Maybe it's that these players would rather opt for a Fighter's ten-sided hit dice rather than the Ranger's eight-sided. But at first level, a Fighter can have 1 to 10 hit points, as compared to a Ranger's 2 to 16. Perhaps it is the fact that Rangers can't keep great hoards of wealth that they cannot carry on their person. But at 1st level, the least of a character's worries is what he or she will do with the mounds of treasure they have...because they don't have any, nor are they likely to in the near future.

Pat found out, while playing the role of John Tyler, Ranger of the Andorian Mts., that the varied talents of a Ranger can be used quite effectively to gain experience and make a name for ones' self.

On the following two pages are two tables we used to further recognize inherent talents Rangers possess. Both were created specifically for John Tyler, and then were broadened to include all Rangers. Good hunting!



Players
in
FAN



John
Tyler

Merlin

RANGER TRACKING

RANGER LEVEL	NORMALLY	TRYING	NORM. TRICKS	EXPERT TRICKS	WATER	STONE
1	90%	98	70	30	70	60
2	92	99	72	35	74	68
3	94	99	75	47	76	72
4	96	100	82	53	80	74
5	98	105	85	64	87	80
6	99	107	90	82	93	88
7	102	112	96	95	99	95
8	106	115	103	100	103	100
9	115	125	112	110	108	103
10	130	135	117	115	113	110
11 AND UP	135	140	120	117	115	113

+2% for every creature above one in party
 +5% for horses or wagons off-road
 -10% for every 24 hrs.
 -25% for every hour of rain/snow

UNDERGROUND:
 All restrictions in the book apply.

BASE PERCENT CHANCE TO TRACK



Normally: the Ranger is tracking something he has seen in the last 24 hours.

Trying: quarry is trying to be followed, by leaving a trail.

Norm. Tricks: refers to tricks like walking backwards, covering tracks, etc. by normal beings.

Expert Tricks: refers to Rangers trying not to be followed. Shown is a 1st level Ranger; the % chance goes down 5% for every additional level.

Water: Going through lakes or rivers while changing direction. -3% for every 10' of water crossed.

Stone: traveling on stone or tar.



RANGER LEVEL	FIND AND CONSTRUCT TIME IN HOURS		PLAIN	SCRUB	WOODS	JUNGLE/ROUGH	DESERT	HILLS	MOUNTAINS	MARSH
	TIME	IN HOURS								
1	2½	10%	20	25	45	8	30	40	15	
2	2½	10	20	30	50	10	35	43	20	
3	2	12	24	32	53	15	43	55	30	
4	2	12	24	40	60	23	50	63	43	
5	1½	15	34	45	77	33	59	78	55	
6	1	18	46	58	85	45	69	94	68	
7	½	23	54	68	96	56	75	110	75	
8	¼	26	65	83	120	74	88	120	90	
9	¼	29	80	100	130	83	94	125	95	
10 and up	¼	35	100	110	140	97	98	130	100	

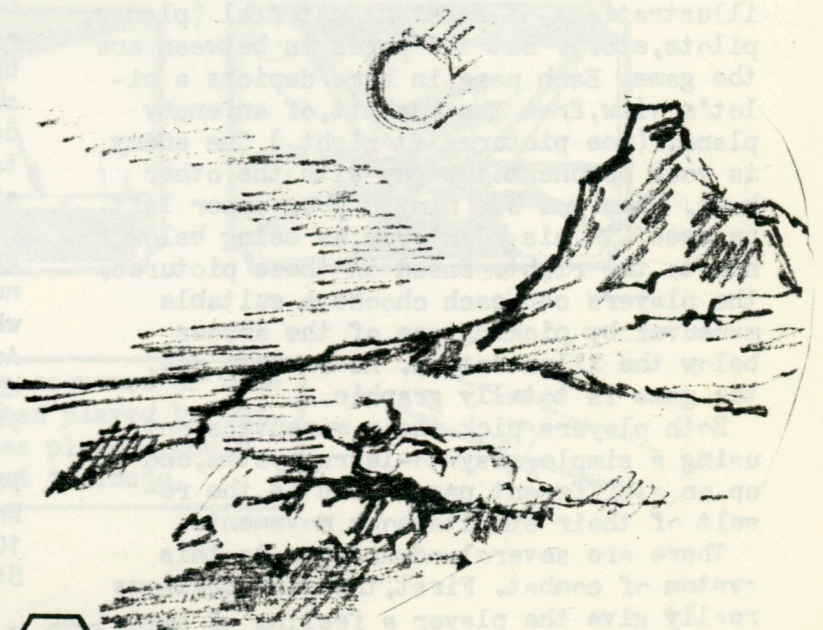
BASE CHANCE FOR SUCCESS

HIDDEN SHELTER

-5% for all members of party above 1 (noise, room, etc.).

+15% for every 50' distance between searchers and the shelter.

-20% when Ranger or Druid is searching; -5% additionally for every level.



ACE of ACES

reviewed by Evan Skolnick

It would be difficult to compile a list of all the games that claimed to be a new idea that has never been tried before and works well. The list would grow smaller, however, if it was only comprised of the truly original game systems that worked not only well, but better than previous games of that genre. Ace of Aces would be on that list.

Ace of Aces is a WWI air combat game produced by Nova Game Designs, Inc., a Manchester, CT game company. It is packaged in an attractive full-color box, which contains two booklets of about 280 pages each; one marked Germans, the other Allies.

TRUE SEEING

There is also an extra booklet of less than ten pages, which is a sort of supplement.

About sixty of the pages in each booklet are rules; they are split in half, so that the first 30 or so pages are rules, and so are the last 30, accompanied by illustrations of relevant material (planes, pilots, etc.). But the pages in between are the game. Each page in here depicts a pilot's view, from the cockpit, of an enemy plane. (See pictures at right.) The enemy is your opponent: the guy with the other book. When you see him to your upper left, he sees (in his book) you as being below him, to the right. Based on these pictures, the players can each choose a suitable maneuver by picking one of the arrows below the illustration. As one can see, the game is totally graphic.

Both players pick their maneuvers, and, using a simple, easy-to-learn system, end up on a different page, which is the result of their simultaneous movements.

There are several advantages to this system of combat. First, the illustrations really give the player a feeling of being

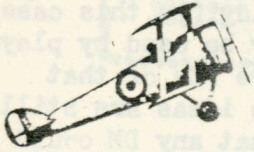


"in the cockpit". Instead of being told, "my plane is here and yours is here and I'm shooting you," the player sees an enemy Fokker triplane bearing down on him, guns blazing. Second, each player is totally ignorant of the other's move. Not only before the maneuver, but even right after, players cannot tell exactly what their opponent did. Third, the game claims to play "as fast as real WWI air combat". Like most of their claims, this one is true. The simplicity of the combat system is attained only through the complex mathematical nature of it. Co-designer Al Leonardi said that the prototype required one hundred and thirty-eight thousand calculations.

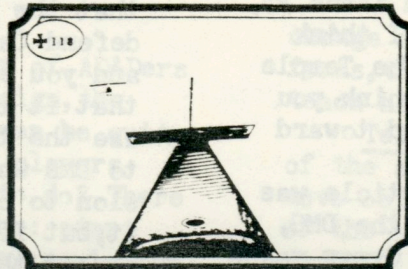
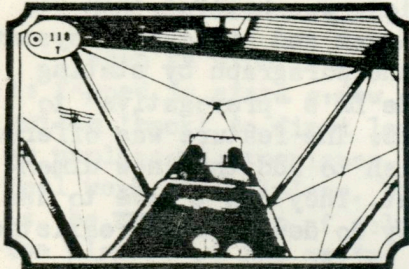
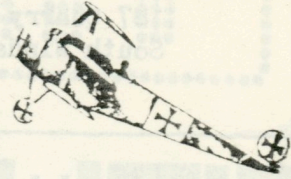
The incredible part is not that the game is successful, or that it has won numerous awards, but that now, quite a while after its release, the two Ace of Aces games are the only games of their kind on the market. Nova Game Designs protect their idea like a good mother.

The two Ace of Aces games (Rotary and Powerhouse Series) can be purchased from Nova Game Designs at \$14.95 each plus 10% P&H. Their address is 46 Dougherty St., Manchester, CT 06040.

Nova also has produced other games, which I intend to review in the future.



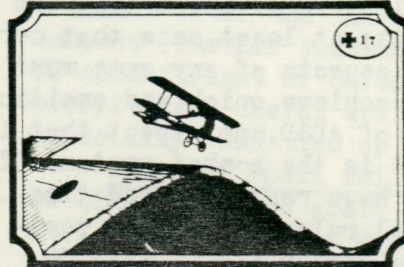
To better help you to understand the Ace of Aces game, we have included below a sample of Ace of Aces combat. It is accompanied by a scenario description. The left image is the Allied pilot's view, and the right one is the German's.



Sir Roger, patrolling over his own lines in his Sopwith Camel, spots an enemy Fokker DR1 cruising over the trenches (''Artillery spotting, likely.'') on p. 118. As the German stalls left to p. 145 (''Spotted something, eh?''), Sir Roger gives his plane full throttle to p. 11 sending both craft to p. 17

Suddenly aware of the Camel behind him, the

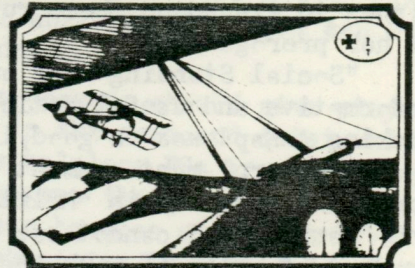
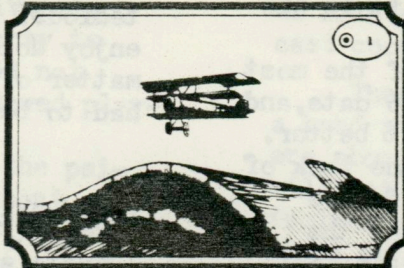
German evades. Sir Roger, watching the Hun's rudder, reacts instantly. Anticipating a quick escape attempt, he barrel rolls right to p. 2 but ... the Ger-



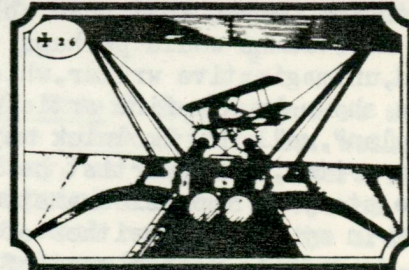
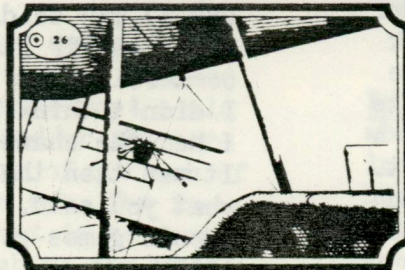
man isn't leaving! Instead, he's side-slipped right to p. 81 and Sir Roger passes him as they both end up on p. 1!

And just that quickly

the tables are turned! Sir Roger, desperately trying to correct his mistake and bring his twin Lewis guns to bear, takes advantage of the torque of his plane's rotary engine, and executes a perfect 180° rotary turn to p. 20. But the German, now with the tailing advantage, weaves right to p. 49 sending both planes to p. 26 ...



and as the Red Baron's bullets shred the canvas of his plane, Sir Roger reflects — today isn't turning out quite as he had planned.



The entire sequence of maneuvers above, when played by veteran Ace of Aces players, would have taken about 1 minute.





Explosive Runes

c/o PHANTASY Magazine
187 Quarry Brook Drive
South Windsor, CT 06074

Good, but...

Dear PHANTASY,

As per your instructions in issue #3, I'll complain a bit, but overall, I think PHANTASY #4 was a good issue. "The Temple of Diemen" was okay, although I think you should offer more features geared toward lower level campaigns.

The "Good Luck/Bad Luck" article was helpful; but if one was to check the DMG, it would be discovered that Mr. Gygax makes no claims to realism in Advanced Dungeons & Dragons. He notes at least once that certain "realistic" aspects of any game must be sacrificed to achieve quick and exciting play; in the case of AD&D, one aspect that is under this 'rule' is the combat system. Of course, as we all have read time and time again, the official rules are merely parameters for a game master, and if that GM wishes to expand on these rules, it is his or her prerogative.

"Social Standing" was one of the most informative and useful article to date, and "Taking A Map" was as good, if not better.

However, I must comment on the lack of quality I perceive in "Military Orders" and "Sarulan". I cannot see MOs as the product of a lot of work and imagination. I think that a person that read only Mr. Palmer's MO columns would perhaps think him a bad, unimaginative writer, which he is not, as shown by his fine articles. As for "Sarulan", well, Mr. Skolnick may be a competent writer, but an artist he isn't. The whole story is too melodramatic and drawn out. In my opinion, neither of these features do justice to the rest of the magazine. I am not saying they are unsalvagable, just below par. I hope that something can be done about them.

David Peterson
Norfolk, CT

Complain you did, David, and here are a few replies to your gripes. Your first request is a fairly valid one; much of our

material is geared toward medium-level campaigns (say, 5-8th level). However, you cannot assume that just because a particular installment is for use with a certain level of play (in this case a module) it can only be used by players who happen to have PCs of that particular level. The ideas are still there, and I'm sure that any DM could adjust the module to fit his or her campaign.

Your second paragraph continues to puzzle me. You start it off by saying that the article was helpful, then you defend Gary Gygax and his combat system, and you end the paragraph by stating that it is the DM's "prerogative" to use the tables. The feature was offered to DMs who wish to add this new dimension to combat. They don't have to use it; but if they do desire more realistic combat, there it is.

Your comments on "Social Standing" have been echoed; it was probably the most well received feature in PH-4.

I'm sorry you didn't enjoy the Military Orders installment; you seem to be in the minority there. As for Sarulan, well, I may enjoy rushing each issue out, but a masochist I'm not. The whole story is too time-consuming and tedious. I am not saying that I didn't enjoy doing this feature, it's just a matter of not enough time. Something had to be done about it.—ES

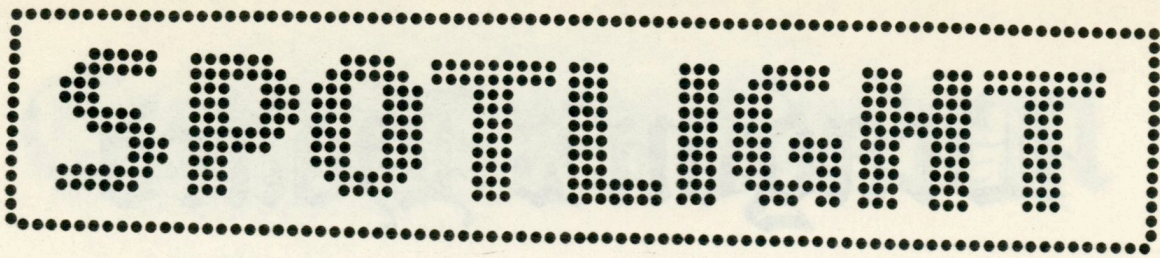
Bright future?

Dear Editor,

In one of your Magic Mouth columns (PH-3), you said, basically, that you thought that the FRP gaming industry was going commercial. At the time I first read it, I didn't think much of it; but recently I had the chance to play "Dark Tower". It was then that I realized the merit of what you said. The game is good, as electronic games go, but it is no match for AD&D.

What worries me is the kind of people that play this game and other similar ones, and what effect they will have on us, the real gamers. I don't want pre-pubescent, wild-eyed schoolchildren running underfoot at conventions and the like, and I certainly don't need Orson Welles to tell me how great adventure gaming is!

Dennis Halnon
North Canton, CT



INHERENT ABILITIES

by Brett Palmer

When an experienced group of AD&Ders is forced to start a new campaign, the switch 'back' to first level can be quite an unpleasant experience. The players feel weak and helpless. What to do? There is the usual group of solutions: start the players at 2nd or 3rd level; equip the party with powerful magic items; give them a friend in high places.

There is another answer: inherent abilities. These are special powers or abilities that put the party one step ahead of the general populace, a place they like to be.

Inherent abilities must be handled correctly or they can upset the balance of the game. They should be given to only one member (two if the party is exceptionally large), and should not be so great as to give the endowed player an unfair advantage.

The powers can be any of the psionic disciplines (only one, without awarding actual psionics to the PC), or you can make your own. Here are a few examples.

The Sight: also called second sight, this power allows the possessor limited knowledge of upcoming events that could be dangerous to him/her and/or the party. This comes in the form of a flash of a 'picture' in the mind's eye. For instance, if a party was about to be jumped by a bunch of orcs from above, the PC would see orcs in his mind for a moment. He wouldn't know where they were or exactly how many of them there were. The power only works when it is a sure thing that the party will indeed be attacked. It won't work if they might be attacked.

Shapechange: like the Druid ability, this allows the PC to change once a day into one form. (If the player was trained to change into a crow, then he can only

change into a crow.) The PC may learn new forms, though, if he can find someone to teach him.

Telekinesis: not related to the spell of the same name, this power lets the PC move objects with his mind alone. Weight of the object cannot exceed that of a dagger. It is a draining feat, and for 3 rounds after the telekinesis is attempted (whether successful or not), the PC cannot fight or defend himself. However, it is a useful ability, being handy especially when tied up or imprisoned.

Inherent Spell Ability: this should be limited to one spell (such as Produce Fire, Create Food and Water, etc.), and is only usable by PCs which are not of classes with spell ability. The spell can be cast once a day.

These few powers should give players a head start in the game, and quiet whimpers about how helpless PCs are. Yet they will not unbalance the game, as the other "solutions" can, because at a high level where every character is highly formidable, one more ability is almost superflous.

* * *

Editor's Note: I suppose you're wondering where the other article is. Well, it's a long story, as they say. There isn't room here to print the exact reasons. If there was that much room, then the article would be here instead of this apologetic memo. In any case, I apologize to all you readers who saw the contents clearly say two articles, not one plus an editor's note.

The article was by Jim Langer on Air Combat. It may appear in the next issue, but with these kinds of things going on, you never know.—ES

Dragon's Hoard

MIRROR SHIELDS

by Evan Skolnick

Mirror Shields appear as shields with a clear gem set in the middle of a mirror-like face. The gem cannot be removed, and the front surface, although fragile-looking, has all the strength of steel. The shield has a magical bonus of +2 in combat, but its true properties will not be discovered until the owner is attacked with certain spells.

When a character holding the shield is attacked with the following spells, he or she can attempt to block the attack by rolling a saving throw. If the saving throw is successful, then the spell has his the shield. If this happens, the owner will take no damage. Instead, the shield will absorb the magic, sometimes changing colors. One round later, all the magic will move into the gem, and the exact same spell is "shot" out of it.

Magical Spells Able to be Reflected:

Ray of Enfeeblement; Magic Missile; Fireball*; Cone of Cold*

Illusionist Spells:

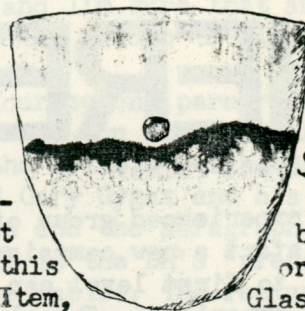
Color Spray*; Prismatic Spray

*will absorb and return only $\frac{1}{2}$ of original spell capacity

Although the front surface is a mirror, from the back looking out the shield is a transparent glass-like surface. When looked through at the spell caster, it will negate both the M-U and illusionist versions of the spells Mirror Image and Projected Image.

The shield's main weakness is the 2nd level M-U spell Shatter, which, if not saved against at +4, will destroy the shield, making it, of course, lose all magical properties.

Making a Mirror Shield is not an easy task. A finely crafted glass shield must be purchased for no less than 100 gp. Then the



following spells must be cast on it in this order: Enchant an Item, Glassteel, Mirror Image, Shield, Strength, Dispel Magic, Limited Wish, Permanancy.

Experience Point Value: 10,000
Gold Piece Sale Value: 25,000

LIGHTNING GLOBES

by Mark DeVney

Lightning Globes were created by a M-U for M-U's. These small, 3" diameter spheres are charged with electricity. Made of a light metal, each one contains enough electricity to deliver 20 hp of electrical damage to an opponent 2-40 times.

Only mages can touch the deadly globes without being shocked. They can be hurled at an opponent, or held in the hand. When used in these ways, the globes are +7 to hit. Why? While a dagger must penetrate armor or hides, the spheres must merely touch the victim in order to inflict their unique damage.

If any character is shocked more than half their hit points away, they will fall unconscious for 1-6 turns.

While being thrown, the globes are AC-1. They obey all laws of electricity, so a monk would be better off to try to hit it with a bo-stick. Just keep in mind that the human body does conduct electricity. Damage from electricity is regained at the rate of 1 hp/turn unless it causes death.
Experience Point Value: 3,000

Gold Piece Sale Value: 4,000



Cuthbert's Ordeal

by R. Dennis Warren

The phone rang. Pete put down his sinister dungeon plans to pick up the receiver.

"'Lo," he muttered, knowing full well that Cuthbert was on the other end of the line. Pete was annoyed by the weekly phone calls, since Cuthbert obviously attended the gatherings every week for social reasons and not gaming.

"We getting together tonight?" Cuthbert inquired in his unmistakable voice.

After much procrastination the group finally arrived and promptly began some non-game related chit-chat. As usual, Cuthbert was not in the room; he was questing not for adventure but for snacks.

"Shopping day tomorrow, huh, Pete?" Cuthbert called from within the refrigerator. Pete ignored that, although several choice mockeries of Cuthbert's unusual name floated in his mind.

"Shall we start, gentlemen?" Art said, setting up his screen and pulling out a few hidden books. Art was always the DM. There was also his roommate Bill, who had been telling the players of his upcoming campaign for nine months now (the joke was to ask him if he had "finished naming all the peasants in his world yet"). Dirk had made one of his 'cameo' appearances tonight, and was prepared to argue with any rule at all, just like you read you're not supposed to.

Pete privately decided that tonight Cuthbert was not going to ruin the game. Each previous one was marred by the actions of Cuthbert. He had a bad case of the Game Disruption Syndrome. Not in the memory of any of the other players had a night gone by where he had wasted less than a good hour of play time with his non-

stop talking and leaving the room. But tonight would be different.

As Cuthbert left the room for the ninth time, Pete said, "If you leave the room one more time, we're all going to put a spell on you." The whole group laughed, sharing Pete's feelings.

"Here, Pete, here's the player's handbook." They all laughed again.

For quite a while, Cuthbert didn't leave the room. But eventually, he felt the urge. "I'm still listening, go on ahead," he murmured as he made his move towards the bathroom door. All the guys started chanting and laughing.

Cuthbert was used to taking a lot of time in the bathroom, but because of the "spell" he had full intention to be decidedly prompt.

Upon his ascent from the "throne", however, he found he could not get up. In fact there was a pulling force from below, a force that caused him to grope wildly for a hold. He grabbed the tissue dispenser. A terrible falling sensation was the last thing he felt before he lost consciousness.

Cuthbert awoke to a strange man wearing a brown paper bag over his head. "Who are you?" he asked.

"The unknown cleric," he responded. "You were without benefit of pants or shoes, so I procured you some. I also saved your life."

"You did?" Cuthbert asked, because he couldn't think of anything else to say.

"Aye, though I know not why," said the cleric. "You had the strangest scroll in your grasp..." He pulled it out from behind his back.

Cuthbert looked at the soggy roll of toilet paper and passed out.

NEXT ISSUE



A PHANTASY Exclusive! Next issue we proudly present The Making of a Game: Bounty Hunter. In this fascinating look at a game as it developed, designer Mike Vitale of NOVA Game Designs recounts the events that lead to the new "book game" that may break as much new ground as Ace of Aces did. And that's not all!



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