DRAGONS!

IN THIS ISSUE: TRAPS IN **GHOST ARCHIPELAGO!**

Editorial

Earlier this year, while I was working on the Osprey Games stand at Adepticon, an attendee walked up and said something to the effect of, '*There are no rules for dragons in* Frostgrave? *What am I supposed to do with this?* He then pulled a large, Reaper Bones dragon out of his bag and waved it at me. It was all good fun, and I got a nice chuckle out of it, but I didn't have much of answer for him. In truth, since *Frostgrave*'s debut, I have probably received more requests for rules for dragons than anything else. It shows what a hold these creatures still have on the popular imagination, and how many great figures are available for them. Heck, I love dragons so much, I once wrote a book about underlined dragonslayer legends! Although I strongly considered it, I decided not to include dragons in any of the official supplements. Partly because I wasn't quite sure of their place in the world of *Frostgrave*, but more because I wasn't sure of their place in the game. For me, dragons are immensely powerful creatures. Most dragons could easily squash a wizard and his warband. To drop a dragon in the middle of a game of *Frostgrave* would send most players into panicked flight with all of the treasure likely forgotten!

But, then again, what is wrong with that? I think it is healthy for a game that it can be approached from different angles and give players new challenges and opportunities. If players want to seek out the ultimate danger of facing a dragon, this should probably be encouraged. So, with only minimal regard to warband survival, I have created rules for dragons. I have even broken dragons into four age/power brackets, so that players

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TRAPS IN GHOST ARCHIPELAGO

can pick their degree of suicide. Have fun. Tell me how it went, but don't blame me if your wizard ends up fried to a cinder.

Dragons may headline this issue, but there are plenty of other items to encourage players to get their minis onto the table. Also included are rules for using traps in your games of *Ghost Archipelago*, including a new trap list. This is accompanied by a solo scenario for *Ghost Archipelago* where your poor crew has to try to escape an ancient tomb filled with traps and undead. After this is a scenario that uses the basic *Frostgrave* rules to fight a battle between mechs in the far-flung future, and 'The Bridges of the Mal Dreath' – a *Frostgrave* scenario that was published years ago, but that many people might have missed. Finally, the issue rounds out with a couple of new features, the mail bag, where I try to answer reader questions, and 'Horizon', where I talk a bit about what is coming up in the world of *Frostgrave*.

After a bit of thought, I decided to have this issue professionally designed. This was partly to improve the look of the magazine, and partly to save the frustration of doing it myself. I think it best if I stick to game design and leave visual design to people with more skill in that area! It's with great pleasure that I was able to obtain the skills of Andrew Vallas, who has done a lot of work on the *Pathfinder* RPG. Andrew is a fan of *Frostgrave*, and it's great to have a chance to work with him.

I hope you enjoy this new issue. If you would like to keep up with my writing and all future releases for *Frostgrave*, check out my blog: therenaissancetroll.blogspot.co.uk

Now go fight some dragons!

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DRAGONS

To most of the inhabitants of the world of *Frostgrave*, dragons are creatures of myth and legend that died out centuries ago, if they ever really existed. But in a world that is so unexplored, whose maps are mostly blank, who knows what monsters might lurk in shadowy corners? And when some powerful wizards play with the magic of time, and others manipulate and mutate various beasts, can any creature truly be declared extinct?

Presented here are rules for using dragons in your games of *Frostgrave*. While including a powerful monster such as a dragon offers a unique challenge, it will almost certainly dominate any game in which it is fielded. For that reason, dragons should generally be saved for specific scenarios and not used as random encounters. Players should also accept that if a dragon is on the table, especially an older dragon, discretion might be the better part of valour. Older dragons are easily capable of tearing apart an entire warband or two.

Dragons are sentient creatures that grow in power as they get older. Unlike most other creatures, the do not suffer from 'age', and are

functionally immortal unless killed. In order to determine the stats and special abilities of a given dragon, I have broken them down into four age groups. The first two, Young and Adult, can be used in a game using the regular rules for creature actions as found in *Frostgrave*. Old and Ancient dragons have an array of magical powers which make them extremely difficult to use as uncontrolled creatures. I suggest these creatures are only used if there is a game-master or another player to control them.

All dragons should be considered unique individuals, and players should feel free to modify their stats and special abilities as they see fit. Players might consider rolling a couple of demonic attributes for each dragon, as found in *Frostgrave: Forgotten Pacts* (p.14), if that book is available.

Young Dragons

After hatching, dragons usually spend their first couple of decades completely dependent on their mother for food and protection. These baby dragons will be kept deep in a dragon's lair and are rarely, if ever, encountered. After about 20 years, dragons are able to hunt and survive on their own, although their wings will not yet be fully developed, leaving them unable to fly. While they are theoretically capable of breathing fire or spitting poison, they have not yet mastered this skill to the point of using it in combat situations.

During this youthful state, which lasts a few centuries, dragons have an intelligence and emotional state equivalent to that of a human teenager, making them erratic, unpredictable, and more prone to sudden and unprovoked violence than older dragons.

If a wizard or his warband slays a young dragon, the wizard receives +25 experience points.

Young Dragon						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
6	+5	+0	14	+6	22	Large, Powerful (treat as using two-handed weapon), Immune to Poison

Adult Dragons

Sometime in their fourth century, dragons reach full physical maturity. While they will continue to slowly bulk out, and their armour will continue to harden, they are now capable of flight, breathing fire or spitting poison, and breeding. This adult phase usually lasts five or six centuries, and is the dragon's most active period of life. These dragons will be the most commonly encountered as they will spend a great deal of their time outside of their lair, hunting for food, treasure, knowledge, and mates. Unlike young dragons, adults are a bit more cunning about when and where they decide to fight. They will happily slaughter anyone if there is something in it for them, but if there is little to fight for, or if they are badly wounded, they will attempt to leave the battlefield.

All adult dragons are capable of either breathing fire or spitting poison. This should be decided before the dragon enters play, or simply roll a die (1–10 breathe fire, 11–20 spit poison). Both require the dragon to spend an action, but this action can replace its move action (so a dragon can breathe fire and cast a spell in the same turn). To breathe fire, the dragon simply picks the closest enemy within line of sight. The target, plus any other figures within 2" and line of sight of the dragon, all suffer a +5 elemental magic shooting attack. The dragon is immune to its own fire and does not suffer an attack, even if it is within 2" of its target. Spitting poison works in a similar fashion. The dragon selects the closest enemy within line of sight, that isn't undead or a construct. The target, plus any figure within 2" must make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 14. If a figure fails this roll, it takes damage equal to the amount by which it failed the roll and is poisoned. Creatures that are immune to poison do not have to make a Will Roll and suffer no effects.

Because dragons are partially composed of elemental magic, they are somewhat resistant to spells that draw upon this power. Whenever suffering an elemental magic attack, treat the dragon's armour as 2 points higher.

Adult dragons are horrifying creatures, and even the bravest warriors can freeze when facing them. Any living figure that wishes to move into combat with an adult dragon must first make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 10. Failure does not cause the figure to lose its action, but it cannot attempt this roll again until its next activation.

Adult dragons are immune to critical hits and Mind Control.

If an adult dragon is reduced to 8 Health or less, it will use all of its actions to move off the board by the quickest means possible. It will not force combat and will only fight in order to push back its opponent and escape.

If a wizard or his warband kills an adult dragon they gain +50 experience points.

Adult Dragon						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
7	+7	+0	15	+8	26	Large, Flying (ignore terrain for the purposes of movement), Powerful (treat as using two-handed weapon), Immune to Poison, Elemental Damage Resistance +2, Breathe Fire or Spit Poison, Horrific, Immune to Critical Hits, Immune to Mind Control, Self-Preservation

Old Dragons

Around the end of their first millennia, dragons tend to settle down, establishing a permanent lair, filled with gold, jewels, and magical treasures of all descriptions. They spend most of their time sleeping or lost in studies of ancient magic. Every couple of years, they must emerge in order to hunt, gorging themselves on whatever is available. Otherwise, they are little interested in the goings-on of the outside world, unless they hear rumours of some great magical treasure, someone has the audacity to attempt to steal something from its hoard, or another dragon attempts to move into its territory.

Old dragons have all of the capabilities of adult dragons, except that most of them are improved. If the dragon can breathe fire, its attack is increased to +6. If it spits poison, the Target Number for the Will Roll is increased to 15. Their elemental magic resistance now gives them +3 armour against any elemental magic attack, and their horrific appearance has increased such that anyone wishing to move into combat with them must pass a Will Roll with a Target Number of 12, with failure resulting in the immediate end of the figure's activation.

All attacks made by old dragons count as magic.

Unlike their younger brethren, old dragons have mastered numerous magic spells. Dragons use these spells following the same rules as Wizards in *Frostgrave* and may empower their spells, or Will Rolls to resist spells, in the same way. However, because of their spell mastery, they never take damage from failing to cast a spell. The spell list presented here is just a sample, and players should feel free to come up with their own lists.

If a wizard or his warband kills an old dragon, the wizard gains +100 experience points. If a warband discovers the old dragon's lair, it will contain 8 treasure tokens.

Old Dragon						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
7	+8	+0	15	+10	30	Large, Flying (ignore terrain for the purposes of movement), Powerful (treat as using two-handed weapon), Magic Attacks, Immune to Poison, Elemental Damage Resistance +3, Breathe Fire or Spit Poison, Horrific, Immune to Critical Hits, Immune to Mind Control, Self-Preservation

Spells: Banish (8), Call Storm (10), Combat Awareness (12), Crumble (10), Explosive Rune (10), Fog (8), Mind Control (12), Reveal Invisible (8), Spelleater (8), Steal Health (10), Wizard Eye (8)

Ancient Dragons

Ancient dragons are creatures of immense power. Even in myth there have only been a few of these titanic beasts. These dragons are usually three or more millennia old. They will not only have a huge and impressive lair, but they will be the undisputed master of the land for miles in every direction. Their mere presence will have affected the landscape, ensuring that whatever it was before, it will become a barren, lifeless expanse, poisoned and dead.

These dragons almost never venture out. Instead, they use their magic powers to control a small group of servants that they

Ancient dragons are so powerful that they can serve as patrons to unscrupulous wizards. In such a case, players might considering using the 'Forging Pacts' rules found in *Forgotten Pacts*, but using the Dragon instead of a Demon.

send out to gather food and treasure and to fulfil whatever desires such a dragon might possess.

Only the largest, most highly experienced, and best-equipped warbands have even a prayer of defeating such a creature. In game terms, they should only be used as the major villain in an extended major campaign, and, even then, the game-master should probably include some weakness to ensure that the players have a chance.

Ancient dragons possess all of the abilities of adult and old dragons, but their abilities are even more powerful. If the dragon can breathe fire, it affects all figures within 3" of the target and its attack is increased to +8. If it spits poison, it affects all figures within 3" of the target and the Target Number for the Will Roll is increased to 16. Their elemental magic resistance now gives them +4 armour against any elemental magic attack, and their horrific appearance has increased such that anyone wishing to move into combat with them must pass a Will Roll with a Target Number of 16, with failure resulting in the immediate end of the figure's activation.

Ancient dragons have even further mastered the secrets of magic and possess numerous spells with very low casting numbers.

All ancient dragons will be supported by at least a small group of servants, but the exact nature of these servants is left up to the players.

If an ancient dragon is killed during a game, all of the wizards participating in that game gain +300 experience points. If the players discover the dragon's lair, it will contain 20 treasure tokens.

Ancient Dragon						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
7	+8	+0	16	+14	40	Large, Flying (ignore terrain for the purposes of movement), Powerful (treat as using two-handed weapon), Magic Attacks, Immune to Poison, Elemental Damage Resistance +4, Breathe Fire or Spit Poison, Horrific, Immune to Critical Hits, Immune to Mind Control, Self-Preservation

Spells: Banish (5), Call Storm (5), Combat Awareness (7), Crumble (6), Explosive Rune (6), Fog (5), Mind Control (5), Reveal Invisible (5), Spelleater (5), Steal Health (6), Wizard Eye (5)

Dragon Weaknesses

Dragons, especially old and ancient ones, are such fearsome creatures that often players will have little likelihood of defeating them. To give them a fighting chance, players or game-masters are encouraged to roll once on the Dragon Weakness Table below to determine some hidden weakness possessed by the specific dragon. In a campaign, it might be worth making the identification of a weakness be the reward for an earlier scenario.

Dragon Weakness Table	
Die Roll	**Weakness**
1–2	Subject to Critical Hits. This dragon is subject to the normal rules for critical hits.
3–4	No Elemental Damage Resistance. This dragon does not possess the Elemental Damage Resistance special ability.
5–6	One Eye. The dragon has only one eye. It is less able to dodge shooting attacks, and suffers -4 Fight when defending against them.
7–8	Weak-Willed. The dragon only has a Will stat of +2
9–10	Allergic. The dragon has an allergy to a specific substance. The dragon has -4 Armour when suffering attacks from weapons coated in that substance.
11–12	Susceptible to Poison. This dragon is not immune to poison. A dragon with this weakness may not spit poison and will breathe fire instead.
13–14	Fear of Undead. This dragon will always attack any undead creature first, if one is within line of sight.
15–16	Missing Scale. Any figure in line of sight may make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 20. If they succeed, they may spend an action in the same activation to make a shooting attack. If the attack hits, treat the dragon as Armour 10.
17–18	Bane Weapon. A specific magic weapon exists that is Fight +4, Damage +4 when fighting this dragon. Furthermore, any time the weapon damages the dragon, treat the dragon as having Armour 10.
19–20	Dragon Heart. The dragon has preserved some of its essence in a crystal heart. If this can be found and shattered, the dragon will lose half of its remaining Health and its Fight will be reduced to +2 for the rest of the game.

THE LAIR OF GREMOLEAN
A cooperative Frostgrave scenario featuring a dragon!

For centuries, the tribes of the far north have told stories about old Gremolean, a giant serpent that lives in the high peaks. The dragon itself is only seen every century or two, when it comes forth to wipe out a village or group of nomads, but even when it slumbers, its demonic agents steal forth in the night to murder, steal cattle, and cause carnage. Although many noble warriors, and even a few wizards, have attempted to defeat the dragon, all of their quests have ended in fiery death.

Recently, an ancient tome was discovered in the ruins of the Frozen City – a book of dragons. While most of the monsters listed in its pages are likely dead, or even fictional, there is a short section on Gremolean. According to the book, the dragon has tried to ensure its continued existence by placing pieces of its essence in four large crystals that it keeps guarded in its lair. If a warband could sneak into the lair and destroy those crystals, they might just be able to defeat the monster.

Set-Up

This scenario is for two warbands working together to defeat an extremely dangerous dragon. It is suggested that a third player control Gremolean and his demon servants. It should be played on a 3x3' table, or thereabouts. The table represents the lair of Gremolean and is one vast cavern. Players should use the underground rules from *Into the Breeding Pits* (p.6) if available. The table should be crowded in large rock formations, fallen boulders, piles of treasure (not treasure tokens), and large mounds of bones.

The two warbands should each set up within 8" of one table corner, connected by a table edge. Place the sleeping Gremolean in the exact centre of the table.

Four large crystals should be placed on the table. One crystal should be placed in each corner not occupied by a warband. The other two crystals should be placed halfway between the sleeping Gremolean and the side table edges, one on each side of the dragon. Place one minor demon (see

Frostgrave rulebook, p.118) adjacent to each of the crystals. Place four more minor demons on the table 6" from the sleeping dragon so that they form a square around him.

Special Rules

Gremolean is asleep at the start of the game. At the end of each turn, roll one die and add the modifiers listed on the Gremolean Sleeping Table below. If the result is 21 or more, Gremolean wakes up and will activate in the next turn. Unlike normal creatures, roll initiative for Gremolean as he will activate in the Wizard Phase. If he is attacked by any warband member, or any spellcaster attempts to cast a spell upon him, Gremolean wakes up automatically.

Minor demons follow the normal rules for uncontrolled creatures (unless another player is controlling them), except if they are ever called upon to make a random move, they will instead move towards the closest warband member, whether that figure is in line of sight or not.

Each crystal has +0 Fight, 8 Armour, and 10 Health. Any figure can attempt to destroy a crystal simply by attacking it in hand-to-hand combat or with a magic shooting attack and reducing it to 0 Health. Crystals cannot be destroyed by mundane shooting attacks. Every time a crystal is destroyed, Gremolean takes 8 points of damage and has his Fight reduced by -1 for the rest of the game.

Gremolean can use any non-destroyed crystal to draw line of sight for the purposes of casting a spell as though he had cast Wizard Eye on it.

Gremolean Sleeping Table	
Event	Bonus to Roll
Turn	Add the current turn number to the roll
Per minor demon killed	+1
Per crystal destroyed	+3

Experience and Treasure

If Gremolean is killed, each participating wizard gains 5 treasure tokens. If Gremolean is not killed, each participating wizard gains 1 treasure token.

These tokens are rolled for as normal. Experience is gained for the following actions only:

- +10 experience points for each spell successfully cast by a Wizard or Apprentice.
- +20 experience points for each minor demon killed by a Wizard or his warband.
- +40 experience points for each crystal destroyed by a wizard or his warband.
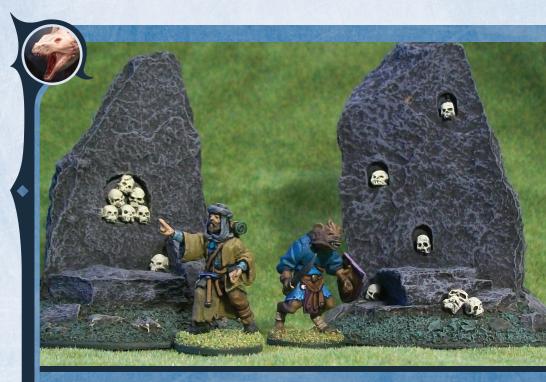- +100 experience points for each wizard that participates in the game if Gremolean is killed.

Gremolean

Gremolean has spent a thousand years studying the mysteries of summoning magic, and is evil to the core. Every century or so, he leaves his lair to hunt and to gather victims for his sorcerous experiments.

Gremolean is capable of breathing fire and has all of the other special abilities of an old dragon. Because he is fighting in his own lair, he doesn't follow the rules for Self-Preservation and will fight until killed. He does have a weakness in the form of the crystals as explained in the special rules above.

He has a unique spell list, given below, and will try to take control of any demons on the table that are not already under his control, before attempting to summon another demon, and casting Imp.

Gremolean, Old Dragon						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
7	+8	+0	15	+10	36	Large, Flying (ignore terrain for the purposes of movement), Powerful (treat as using two-handed weapon), Magic Attacks, Immune to Poison, Elemental Damage Resistance +3, Breathe Fire, Horrific, Immune to Critical Hits, Immune to Mind Control

Spells: Bind Demon (5), Control Animal (6), Control Construct (8), Control Undead (8), Imp (5), Mind Control (8), Possess (8), Spelleater (5), Steal Health (6), Summon Demon (5)

TRAPS IN GHOST ARCHIPELAGO

When writing the *Ghost Archipelago* rulebook, I was tempted to include rules for traps, as deadly traps have such a pedigree in classic pulp adventure stories. These rules already existed for *Frostgrave*, having been introduced in *Into the Breeding Pits*, and it would have been easy to replicate those rules. Upon reflection, however, I decided it was best to keep the main rulebook as simple as possible and not to confuse new players with large blocks of optional rules. Instead, I thought this would be the perfect kind of item to include in *Spellcaster*.

   Included here are the rules for traps and a completely new list of traps that are appropriate to the Lost Isles. Also included are the rules for the specialist soldier, the Trapper.

Springing Traps

When using traps, any time a player rolls a natural 1 on his initiative roll, a trap has been sprung. The player should immediately select the target of the trap, and may select any figure on the table, regardless of who controls it. He

may even select uncontrolled creatures. After the target figure has been selected, the player should roll on the Trap List presented below to identify the type of trap that has been sprung. Immediately apply the effects of the trap before any other actions are done in the turn.

If more than one player rolls a 1 for initiative, multiple traps have been sprung. Players should first re-roll to determine the order of initiative for the coming turn, and then follow the initiative order to select targets for traps. After all targets have been selected, traps are rolled for on the Trap List as normal, again following initiative order. Resolve the effects of each trap individually before moving on to the next one.

Many of the traps on the list call for the target to make a Stat Roll. Since certain types of figures are better at avoiding traps than others, these figures get a bonus to any Stat Roll or Fight Roll made because of a trap. These bonuses are given in the table below.

If your *Ghost Archipelago* game is set underground, or in some ancient temple, you might also consider using the 'Secret Passage' rules found in *Into the Breeding Pits*. These can be played exactly as presented in that book.

Trap Number Bonus Table	
Target	Bonus
Heritor, Trapper	+5
Warden, Guide, Scout	+3
Tomb Robber, Hunter, Savage	+2

The Trap List represents the most common traps found in the *Ghost Archipelago*, but players are encouraged to invent new traps to add to the list, or simply to make up their own lists to match a specific scenario. Just remember, any trap you create may get sprung on you!

Players who like a seriously dangerous game, might consider playing with 'Treasure Traps' as well. If so, whenever a player rolls for a Random Encounter due to a treasure being picked up, a result of 1 on the die means that the treasure was trapped. Immediately roll for a trap with the figure that picked up the treasure as the target.

Trap List

Trap List Table	
Die Roll	Trap
1	Poison Darts
2	Pit
3	Spiked Pit
4	Cursed Monolith
5	Diseased Mosquito
6	Death From Above
7	Hypnotic Marsh Gas
8	Quicksand
9	Rolling Boulder
10	Bear Trap
11	Annoying Monkey
12	Diamond Dart
13	Swarm of Bees
14	Deadfall
15	Jungle Tick
16	Fungal Spores
17	Leeches
18	Grasping Vines
19	Geyser
20	Exploding Sap Pod

Annoying Monkey

A monkey drops down from above and attempts to snatch a piece of the figure's equipment. The target figure should make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 14. If it fails, place a monkey 2" away from the figure in the direction of the nearest board edge. Next roll for a random piece of equipment on the target figure (re-rolling any Armour result). The monkey

has taken this equipment. If the monkey ever takes damage, he drops the equipment at that spot and it can be recovered by the figure that lost it, simply by moving onto it. The monkey will spend both actions each turn moving directly toward the closest table edge. Use the stats for the screamer monkey (*Ghost Archipelago* Rulebook, p.128) for this creature, but ignore the 'Attract Predators' ability. If the target figure is carrying no equipment, re-roll this result.

Bear Trap

The target figure must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 14. If it fails, it has its leg crushed in a spring-loaded trap. The figure suffers 2 points of damage. The figure may not make a move action until either it, or another figure within 1", frees the leg by spending an action and successfully making a Fight Roll with a Target Number of 14.

Cursed Monolith

The target figure unknowingly places his hand on an ancient, worn monolith covered in magical runes. The next time the figure activates, it must make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 12. If it fails, it receives no actions in the current activation. The figure must continue to make this Will Roll each time it activates, until it succeeds. This monolith remains on the table, and any figure that comes into contact with it, is subject to the same rules. If a Heritor or Warden comes into contact with the monolith, they gain +5 experience points.

Deadfall

Make a +2 shooting attack against the target figure and any other figure within 1". This attack does +2 damage.

Death From Above

Immediately roll a Level 1 Encounter on the Random Encounter Table. This creature drops from a tree or other structure directly above the target figure. The target must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 12. If it fails, place the creature directly in combat with the target. Otherwise the target may place the creature up to 2" away, so long as the creature is

in line of sight and not within 2" of another figure. This trap only ever generates one creature, even if the roll on the Random Encounter Table calls for multiple creatures. If the table calls for multiple creatures of different types, the player who controls the target of the trap may choose from among them.

Diamond Dart

Make a +3 shooting attack against the Target. If the attack hits, the target suffers -2 Armour (to a minimum of 10) for the purposes of determining damage of this attack. If the attack hits, but the figure is not reduced to 0 Health, the crew gains an additional 25gc after the game (after they dig out the dart).

Diseased Mosquito

The target figure is bitten by a mosquito carrying some strange tropical disease. The figure must make a Health Roll with a Target Number of 14 or miss the next game. Reroll this trap if the target figure is a Heritor.

Exploding Sap Pod

A large sap pod on a nearby plant erupts, spewing sticky sap in all directions. The target figure, and every figure within 2" must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 16. If they fail they suffer -2 Move for the rest of the game.

If players have access to *Into the Breeding Pits,* they could make the Fungal Spores trap even meaner by having a Violent Fungus appear within 1" of the Target Figure. Exact placement of this figure is decided by a randomly determined opponent.

Fungal Spores

A small explosion of fungal spores fills the air. The target figure, and every figure within 2" must make an immediate Will Roll with a Target Number of 14. If they fail, they may only take 1 action in the next activation. If they fail by 5 or more, they take 2 points of damage and may not take any actions in their next activation.

Geyser

A hidden geyser erupts right next to the target figure. Make a +3 shooting attack against this figure and any other figure within 1". The figure suffers -2 Armour during this attack (to a minimum of 10). After the attack, place a 2" diameter pool of deep water where the figure was standing. Place the figure adjacent to this pool, but not in contact with any enemy figures.

Grasping Vines

The target figure must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 14. If it fails, it is wrapped up in a fast moving vine. This figure may not make a Move Action until it, or a figure adjacent to it, spends an action and passes a Fight Roll with a Target Number of 12.

Hypnotic Marsh Gas

The target figure must make Will Roll with a Target Number of 14. If it fails, the opposing player (determined randomly if there are more than two players) may immediately move this figure up to 4" in any direction, following the normal rules for movement, provided the move does not lead to any direct damage (i.e. you can't move the figure off a cliff over 3" high, but you can move it into combat).

Jungle Tick

The target figure must make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 18. If it fails, place a jungle tick in combat with the figure. If it succeeds, place the jungle tick anywhere within 2" of the figure, provided it is not within 1" of any other figure.

Leeches

After a misstep into water, the figure finds its leg covered in leeches. The figure must spend an action and make a Fight Roll with a Target Number of 14 to get them off. Every time the figure fails this roll, it suffers 2 points of damage. Until the leeches are removed the figure suffers -2 Fight and -2 Will. Undead are immune to this trap.

Pit

The target figure must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 16 or fall into a hidden pit. If the figure falls into the pit, it suffers a +0 attack. The pit is 2" square and 3" deep. This pit becomes a permanent feature on the table. Any other figures that were standing where the pit appears are safe and should be moved to the edge of the pit, closest to where they were standing. A figure may only climb out of the pit by spending an action and making a Move Roll with a Target Number of 14. The figure receives a +4 to this roll if a friendly figure is standing on the edge of the pit, with no enemy figures within 1".

Poison Darts

Make a +3 shooting attack against the target figure and any other figures within 1" of the target figure. These attacks are poisonous.

Quicksand

The target figure must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 16 or fall into quicksand. Place a 2" diameter circle of quicksand on the table. Any other figure within the area of quicksand should be moved to the closest point next to it. Follow the rules for deep water for any figures that activate while in the quicksand.

Rolling Boulder

One opposing player (determined randomly if there is more than one) may draw an imaginary 12" straight line that includes the target figure. All figures under that line must make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 12 or suffer an immediate +5 attack.

Spiked Pit

As per the rules for a Pit, above, except that the figure takes a +5 attack instead of +0.

Swarm of Bees

The target figure must make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 15. If the figure fails, it is covered in a cloud of stinging insects. The cloud has a 1"

radius centred on, and moving with, the target figure. It affects all figures, including the target that are even partially within the radius. While being stung by insects, the figure suffers -4 Fight and -4 Shoot. To escape the insects, the target may make a Will Roll with a Target Number of 15 at the start of each turn. If successful, the swarm moves off.

New Soldier: The Trapper

These specialist soldiers have spent a lifetime in the wilderness setting traps, usually to catch animals, but also to prevent other trappers from encroaching on their territory. To represent their special skills, in a game where traps are used, if a player has a trapper on the table and under his control, the first time he rolls a 2 for initiative, he may treat it as 1 for the purposes of springing a trap. A player may only use this special effect once per game, no matter how many trappers he has in his crew.

Specialist	Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Will	Health	Notes
Trapper	6	+2	+0	11	+1	12	Light Armour, Two Daggers

THE DEAD KEEP IT
A solo Ghost Archipelago scenario featuring traps!

It took several hours to hack away at the dense foliage that blocked the entrance to the tomb, but eventually your crew were able to slide through the hole. It was pitch-black inside, so torches were lit. They revealed a wide chamber of old stone that dropped away in tiers or terraces, each with two narrow staircases leading downward. In the still air, the sound of the men breathing and the scrape of boots on stone, echoed softly, while weird shadows, cast by the torches, danced upon the walls. Large chunks of stone had fallen from a dark ceiling and shattered on the floor. Broken statues stared with lifeless eyes.

Down on the lowest tier, you found what you had been seeking. Several chests sat upon the stones, their old wood rotten and broken, and golden coins spilling out from inside. However, as soon as one of your men touched the first chest, a grinding noise and the horrible scrape of stone on stone came from all around. Doorways slid open on each side of the tiers and lifeless figures shambled out. As one of your men turned to run, a stone depressed under his foot and hail of darts fired from the walls.

You've got your treasure, but can you escape with it?

Set-Up

This scenario is played on a 2x3' table, divided into three 2x1' tiers. Each tier is 4" higher than the one before it. A pair of parallel staircases, about 12" apart, lead from each tier up to the next. There is a single doorway in the centre of the table edge of the highest tier.

The table should include a number of large rocks that have fallen from the ceiling and ancient statues or other small bits of scatter terrain. On the lowest tier, place 2 skeletons (*Ghost Archipelago* Rulebook, p.137) on each side of the tier (the 1' sides of the tier). On the second tier, place 2 zombies (use swamp zombie stats, *Ghost Archipelago* Rulebook, p.138) on either side of the tier. On the top tier, place 2 ghouls (*Ghost Archipelago* Rulebook, p.136) on either side of the tier.

Place all of the members of the crew within 4" of the 2' side of the lowest tier. Three figures, of your choice, begin the game carrying treasure tokens.

Special Rules

The crewmembers must move through the doorway on the top tier in order to escape. At the end of each turn, two things happen. First, roll for a random member of your crew that is on the table. This crewmember sets off a trap. Roll for a trap with this figure as the target figure. After that, another undead figure appears on the table. Roll to see what type.

Undead Creature	
Die Roll	**Type**
1–7	Skeleton
8–14	Zombie
15–19	Ghoul
20	Island Shade

Place the undead creature on the edge of the table, on the tier where creatures of that type started the game, on the side that is closest to a crew member. If an Island Shade (*Ghost Archipelago* Rulebook, p.137) appears, place it directly in front of the exit door.

Treasure and Experience

Roll for each treasure token as normal after the game. This scenario does not feature a central treasure token. Experience is gained as normal for this scenario with the following additions.

- +20 experience points if the Heritor exits the table via the doorway.
- +5 experience points for each skeleton, zombie, or ghoul killed by the crew.

A Heritor may only gain a maximum of 250 experience points in this scenario. Wardens can also gain additional experience in this scenario.

- +20 experience points if the Warden exits the table via the doorway.
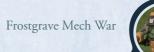
FROSTGRAVE MECH WAR

As a student of military history, I recognize the impracticality of giant stompy robots on a futuristic battlefield. As a geek who grew up watching *Robotech* and *Voltron* and playing *Battletech* and *Adeptus Titanicus*, however, I just don't care. I love mechs, and I need only the smallest excuse to get these man-driven robots onto the table.

At GenCon this year, the Head of Osprey Games, Phil Smith, suggested that the basic *Frostgrave* rules could probably be used for a mech game. At the time he mentioned it, I didn't give it that much consideration, but once I got home, I began playing around with a few ideas. I bounced these off Phil, and, after a little back-and-forth, those ideas grew into this scenario.

If *Spellcaster* readers enjoy these rules and would like to see them developed further, please let me know. Otherwise, they will hopefully at least provide an amusing, one-off game.

RULES MODIFICATIONS

Some rules have been changed or adapted from the core *Frostgrave* rules in order to better represent giant robots attempting to destroy one another. These rules are given here.

Initiative and Activation

Players should roll for initiative as normal. Starting with the primary player, the players should go back and forth, activating one mech at a time, and performing all of the actions for that mech. When only one player has unactivated mechs remaining, they should activate all of them, one at a time.

The Stats

Mechs use the same basic stats as figures in *Frostgrave*. However, in the mech profiles, I have listed both Fight and Shoot in parenthesis. This is because these stats are actually derived as a combination of the mech and the pilot. This is not relevant for this scenario, but will be for any future development. The 'Health' stat has been replaced with 'Structure'. It works exactly the same way, but sounds better when talking about robots.

Shooting

Shooting works in the same way as in *Frostgrave*, with one exception. During a shoot action, a mech may fire each of its weapon systems if it chooses. It should make a separate attack roll for each weapon. If the mech fires more than one weapon, however, it suffers a -1 modifier to every attack for each weapon it fires. In other words, a mech firing two weapons receives -2 on both Shoot Rolls. A mech firing three weapons receives -3 on each roll, and so on.

Weapon Systems

Each mech profile includes the mech's weapon systems. Each weapon has the following attributes.

Name: What that weapon system is called.

Range: This is the maximum range of the weapon system. Enemies beyond this range cannot be targeted by this weapon.

Damage: The damage modifier of the weapon.

Accuracy: A measurement of how accurate the weapon is, written as a bonus or penalty to any Shoot Rolls.

Ammunition: Some weapon systems have limited ammunition. This is the number of times that the weapon may be fired during one game (or campaign, if the mechs have no chance to reload). Weapons with an Ammunition of '-' have unlimited ammunition.

Melee: This weapon system is simply the bonus the mech gains when fighting in hand-to-hand combat (or whatever the mech uses to simply bash its opponent, if it doesn't have hands).

Critical Hits

These rules have their own Critical Hit system that replaces the one found in the *Frostgrave* rulebook. For every full 5 points of damage that a mech takes from a single attack, it also suffers one critical hit. So, a mech taking 7 points of damage rolls for 1 critical hit, while a mech taking 12 points of damage suffers 2. Each result on the table can be taken multiple times, and the penalties are cumulative.

Critical Hit Table		
Die Roll	Critical	Result
1–3	Engine Damage	-1 Move
4–6	Servo Damage	-1 Fight
7–9	Targeting Glitch	-1 Shoot
10–12	Cracked Armour	-1 Armour
13–15	Internal Explosion	5 additional points of Structure damage
16–18	Weapon Hit	Random weapon destroyed
19	Reactor Hit	Mech destroyed
20	Cockpit Hit	Pilot killed. Mech destroyed.

RETREAT FROM BLOOD RIVER
A competitive scenario featuring mechs!

The ambush at Blood River nearly destroyed the entire company. Only the lieutenant and a single trooper who had been covering the rear managed to escape the envelopment and make a run for their dropships.

Pushing their G*unfighter* mechs to the limit, they raced across the rocky plains, desperately trying to stay one step ahead of their pursuers, knowing that if they could just get within the range of their dropship's guns, they would be safe.

However, just as they reached the base of the last hill separating them from the cover of their ship, they detected enemy units closing in from all sides. Closing in fast…

Set-Up

This scenario is played on a 2x3' table. The table should be sparsely covered with large rocks, low hills, and perhaps a building or two.

Player A receives 2 *Gunfighter* mechs. These mechs must be deployed within 6" of one of the short table edges.

Player B receives 3 *Lancer* mechs. One *Lancer* mech should be deployed within 6" of the board edge opposite the *Gunfighters*. The other two *Lancers* will enter play in the first turn as described in the special rules.

Special Rules

Two of Player B's *Lancers* start the game off the table. On the first turn, the player must activate these two mechs. When activated, the mech must make a move action as its first action. This move is made from the middle point of one long table edge of the player's choice. The second *Lancer* that begins off the table must make its first move from the middle point of the opposite table edge.

Because the *Gunfighter* mechs have already been engaged in combat, they begin the game with only half of their normal ammunition of missiles (5 instead of 10).

Victory Conditions

To win the scenario, Player A must exit one of his *Gunfighter* mechs off the short table edge opposite their starting edge before the end of turn 10. Player B wins the scenario by preventing this from happening.

Player A Forces

Gunfighter A		Pilot:		Pts: 30
Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Structure
5	(+2)	(+3)	12	30

Weapon Systems				
Weapon	Range	Damage	Accuracy	Ammunition
Blast Cannon	12"	+4	+0	-
Missiles	24"	+2	-1	~~10~~ 5
Rotary Gun	8"	+2	+1	20
Melee	-	+3	+0	-

Gunfighter B		Pilot:		Pts: 30
Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Structure
5	(+2)	(+3)	12	30

Weapon Systems				
Weapon	Range	Damage	Accuracy	Ammunition
Blast Cannon	12"	+4	+0	-
Missiles	24"	+2	-1	~~10~~ 5
Rotary Gun	8"	+2	+1	20
Melee	-	+3	+0	-

Player B Forces

Lancer A		Pilot:		Pts: 20
Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Structure
7	(+2)	(+3)	10	22

Weapon Systems				
Weapon	Range	Damage	Accuracy	Ammunition
Pulse Laser	18"	+1	+1	-
Rockets	12"	+4	+0	6
Melee	-	+1	+0	-

Lancer B		Pilot:		Pts: 20
Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Structure
7	(+2)	(+3)	10	22

Weapon Systems				
Weapon	Range	Damage	Accuracy	Ammunition
Pulse Laser	18"	+1	+1	-
Rockets	12"	+4	+0	6
Melee	-	+1	+0	-

Lancer C		Pilot:		Pts: 20
Move	Fight	Shoot	Armour	Structure
7	(+2)	(+3)	10	22

Weapon Systems				
Weapon	Range	Damage	Accuracy	Ammunition
Pulse Laser	18"	+1	+1	-
Rockets	12"	+4	+0	6
Melee	-	+1	+0	-

THE BRIDGES OF THE MAL DREATH

This scenario originally appeared nearly two years ago in Tabletop Gaming Magazine #3. *While they did a lovely job presenting it, in the long term, I wanted to make it more easily available to* Frostgrave *fans. For that reason, I have included it here. Interestingly, the bone bats that appear in this scenario were later used as the basis for an artwork plate that appeared in* The Frostgrave Folio.

For nearly two hundred years, the Mal Dreath stood as one of the most famous and most exclusive concert halls in the city of Felstad. Although renowned for the quality of its musicians, dancers, and magical display artists, it was even better known to most in the city for its unique architecture. The Mal Dreath stood on a small island in the middle of the city, surrounded by a deep, square moat. Two bridges spanned this moat on opposite sides of the building. These bridges were a marvel of mechanical and magical ingenuity that attracted numerous visitors in their own right, for every few minutes, the bridges would swing slowly around the moat, moving on some unseen axel below the surface of the island. Their swing would stop ninety degrees later so that the two bridges now spanned the two sides of the moat that were not previously crossable. In this way, the two bridges could service all four of the great entrance doors of the Mal Dreath.

The great concert hall had only just opened its doors on the night the great cataclysm destroyed the city. During the storm, the Mal Dreath shattered and large sections tumbled down into the moat. The famous bridges cracked

and froze into place. For a thousand years they stood motionless, encased in ice and buried in snow. Now, however, the thaw has come. The snow and ice are receding, and, slowly, the bridges are starting to move again...

Set-Up

This scenario requires a 4x4' or larger table. In the centre of the table, mark out a 12" square island. This should be surrounded on all sides by a 6" moat. This can be marked with black paper or felt if players have no other way of creating a moat. Two bridges, each 4" in length should be placed in the moat, extending from the centre of opposite sides of the island. Both of these bridges are broken, so a 2" gap should be left between the end of the bridge and the mainland side of the moat.

The island should contain the ruins of one large building, with at least one section reaching a minimum of three storeys tall. The rest of the table should be covered in ruins as per a standard game of *Frostgrave*.

Four treasures should be placed on the island. Two should be placed 2" apart near the centre of the island. Two more should be placed in two opposite corners of the island. The remaining two treasures should be placed anywhere on the table, following the normal rules for treasure placement. If playing with 3 or more players, place six treasures on the island, two in the centre, and one in each of the four corners. Place the rest of the treasures on the table as normal.

Special Rules

The bridges of the Mal Dreath are moving again; unfortunately, they are broken and unreliable. When rolling for initiative at the beginning of the turn, if any player rolls above a 10, then the bridges move. Immediately pick up the bridges and move them 90 degrees around the island so they are touching the centre of the side of the island immediately to the right of the side they were previously touching. Any figures that are on the bridges when this occurs are moved along with the bridge but are otherwise unharmed. The bridges will only move a maximum of 90 degrees each turn. Since there is no clear path to the island, figures will either have to use some form of magical movement to reach the island or they will have to leap the distance between the edge of the moat and one of the broken ends of the bridges.

The moat itself is deep, but thankfully it is filled with soft snow. Figures that fall into the moat are out of the game, but otherwise unharmed. They will eventually climb out and re-join their warbands for the next game.

To complicate matters further, a small group of bone bats have taken up residence in the top of the ruins of the Mal Dreath and are using the island as a base to launch raids and store 'shiny objects'. Each turn at the start of the creature phase a single bone bat launches itself from the highest point of the ruins of the Mal Dreath. Determine a random direction for the bone bat's leap. Then, roll a die and add 5, this is the total distance in inches that the bone bat glides before touching down. If this move would take the bone bat into the moat or off of the table, place the bone bat on the closest safe spot on the table. As most of this movement is in the air, the bone bat ignores terrain and figures for this movement. On all subsequent turns the bone bat follows the normal rules for creatures. There are a total of four bone bats in the Mal Dreath.

Treasure and Experience

Treasure is determined as normal for this scenario. Experience is determined as normal with the following additions:

- +10 experience points for each bone bat killed by a Wizard or a member of his warband.
- +20 experience points if the Wizard or his Apprentice sets foot on the island of the Mal Dreath.

Bone Bats

Bone bats are an uncommon form of undead creature. They appear to be the skeletal remains of hunched, gargoyle-like creatures with leathery skin that stretches between their arms and torsos which grants them a limited ability to glide. Apart from the glide move mentioned in the Special Rules, these wings also mean that bone bats never suffer any damage from falling.

Bone Bat						
M	F	S	A	W	H	Notes
6	+0	+0	10	+0	1	Undead, Glide

THE MAIL BOX

I receive a lot of mail (well, email) asking questions about *Frostgrave* and *Ghost Archipelago*. I thought the readers of *Spellcaster* might be interested in some of those questions and answers. If you've got a question about anything *Frostgrave* related, drop me a line at frostgraveowg@gmail.com. It may take me a while to answer, but I will try to get back to everyone.

Will we ever see captains in Ghost Archipelago? (Tim)

Probably not. Crews in *Ghost Archipelago* already contain two 'character' figures that use different systems for their powers. Adding a third character, using a third different ability system, is more complication than I think most players want to see. Also, some of the captain's abilities overlap with the Heritor abilities, which could create confusion.

That said, the rules exist in *Frostgrave* and are completely compatible with *Ghost Archipelago*, so if you and your gaming group want to include them, go for it!
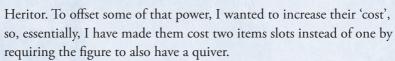
What happens when a figure 'falls' down a set of stairs? (Dan)

This is one of those situations that I think the players are in a better position to decide than I am as a rules writer. Terrain can vary so much from player to player that it would be a fool's errand for me to try and legislate for all of it. That said, if you want, I'll give it a go.

If a figure is pushed onto a slope or staircase with an angle of greater than 30 degrees, use the following rules for falling. The falling figure should make a Move Roll with a Target Number of 14. If the figure makes the roll, move him halfway down the slope or stairs. If he fails this roll, move him all of the way to the bottom of the stairs. In either case, determine falling damage as normal and then halve it, rounding down.

Why are quivers considered an item in Ghost Archipelago? (Nassim)

This is mostly a balancing mechanism. Bows and crossbows are powerful weapons in the game, especially when you put them in the hands of a

Heritor. To offset some of that power, I wanted to increase their 'cost', so, essentially, I have made them cost two items slots instead of one by requiring the figure to also have a quiver.

It also allows me to introduce magic quivers, if I so desire, and for them to be given to crewmen who carry a quiver. In *Ghost Archipelago: Lost Colossus*, coming early next year, I have allowed anyone carrying a quiver to also carry one piece of magical ammunition (arrow or crossbow bolt) without it taking up an item slot. This conversely, is to decrease the 'cost' of carrying a magic arrow.

I have just seen that you are writing a mass-battle fantasy game for Osprey. Does this mean we will see less Frostgrave? *(Dave)*

When I agreed to write *Oathmark* (the mass-battle game mentioned) it involved a complete restructuring of my work schedule, which actually means I have more time for *Frostgrave*. That is one of the reasons that *Spellcaster* has become possible. So, no worries – as long as people are still interested in *Frostgrave*, and I'm still enjoying it, there will be plenty more *Frostgrave* to come.

THE HORIZON

One of the oddities about being a writer is that while people are receiving, and hopefully enjoying, my 'latest' work, I am usually deep into something else. In fact, as I write, I've already handed in the manuscript for the next *Ghost Archipelago* supplement and am working on the next book for *Frostgrave*. So, while this strange 'time incongruity' is often a bit of a headache for me, it does mean I am in a great position to tell you what is on the horizon for the world of *Frostgrave*.

So, coming in February of 2018, is *Ghost Archipelago: Lost Colossus*. In many ways, this book serves the same function as *Thaw of the Lich Lord* did for *Frostgrave*. It presents one campaign containing ten connected scenarios. In this case, however, I've tried to make the scenarios not only connected in a narrative sense, but also through game mechanics. *Lost Colossus* is essentially a race, with the Heritors chasing after clues found on the remains of a giant statue that has been scattered across the Archipelago. So, every time a player wins a scenario, they will receive some minor advantage in the next one. One step ahead in the race. In a few cases, the winner even gets to determine which scenario is played next. So, it has got just a tiny bit of 'choose your own adventure' in it.

When working on the scenarios for *Lost Colossus*, I wanted to play off the evocative scenes that were created by a giant hand, leg, or half a head, serving as the centre piece. Now players don't necessary need these, admittedly rare, items in their terrain collections – you can always use substitutes and proxies – but if you want an excuse to create some neat looking tables, here you go. I think the book includes some of my better scenario writing. I hope players will agree.

Also, when working on *Lost Colossus*, it gave me a chance to rectify what I now perceive to be a shortcoming in the *Ghost Archipelago* rulebook. With Heritors as the protagonists, the game is much more about hand-to-hand combat than *Frostgrave*, but this is not reflected in the magic weapons and armour table. There just isn't near enough diversity in what can be found. So, with *Lost Colossus*, I have included a greatly expanded magic weapons and armour table, which contains all kinds of gear with lots of different properties.

Finally, *Lost Colossus* delves a little deeper into the mysterious snake-men. In fact, I have even included a new set of magic spells specifically for use with them. These spells play only a minor role in the campaign, and are mainly there for players to invent their own games, and potentially use them in a more role-playing style. This is the first time I have done this in a *Frostgrave* book, and I think it is nice little addition that doesn't take up too much space, but gives some neat new tools for players to use and develop. You'll have to let me know if you like it or not.

In really good news, at the same time *Lost Colossus* is released, we should also see a new boxed set of plastic snake-men from Osprey Games and North Star Military Figures. This will be a pretty standard *Frostgrave*-style minis box with a huge variety of heads, arms and weapons.

After *Lost Colossus*, we will be returning to the Frozen City with a new, larger-sized, supplement called *The Maze of Malcor*. This is still in development, so I'll save discussion on it for next time. For now, that's what's on the horizon!

SPELLCASTER