

EARTH O DAWN



Tableau Infractus #7

TABLEAU INFRACTUS

"Because you could? What kind of justification is that?"

• **Final Statement from a Triad street judgement** •

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www.groettum.ne, that archive is now off line.

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This is a work by a fan for fans.

In short please don't litigate against me.

Volume #1 Issue #7 Earthdawn Tableau Infractus

AUTHOR'S CORNER

I began this Author's Corner with the intent to celebrate the one year anniversary of the Tableau Infractus Fanzine. The article became long winded and eventually uninteresting. So I scrapped it and decided to go with a smattering of Earthdawn Related topics.

The anniversary hurrah

Well the first year is complete. Six fanzine issues, four web archives, and four spellbook web archives have been produced. The next year is looking to be just as productive should the American economy remain in the toilet.

So far the response has been positive to the web-archives and the fanzine. You keep reading and I'll keep producing.

This year I have a few excellent interviews planned, Lou Prosperi of FASA, Carsten Damm of Redbrick and Marco Soto of Living Room Games have all agreed to submit to the questioning. So if you have a question you would like asked send it to the address Tableau.Infractus@yahoo.com, I'll include it with the questions I ask. Perhaps you will get to see a response to it in a future issue.

The Book of Tomorrow needs you

Fanzines are the most obvious manner in which a player can share their ideas with the rest of the gaming community over the long term. [The Book of Tomorrow](#) is a fanzine for Earthdawn produced by the good folks over at the [Earthdawn Publishing Trust \(EDPT\)](#). They are looking for submissions from writers, artists and folks willing to share their house rules. Drop by their website and check it out. Contact Quorlox, it is my understanding he is in charge of the 'zine. Every little article helps contribute the game we all love to play.

RPG Review online magazine

The quarterly publication [RPG Review](#) has announced that it will produce an in-depth review of the Earthdawn game system in their [Issue #11](#). It's not out just yet but soon. In theory the link should work once it is released.

I had been in conversation with Lev Lafayette to write the review but alas Mother Nature felt the sudden need to attempt to flood me out of my home. I don't know who they did get to write the review but I look forward to reading it once it is released. The RPG Review is actually a pretty good review fanzine which covers lots of different games and different genres.

100+ Earthdawn links

I have recently updated my [100 Earthdawn Links](#) with 25% more live links and 1 dead one (it died between February and March). Check it out and if you don't see a link that should be there let me know and I'll get it put on the list. I have tried to note the language of the page if the page is not defaulted to English.

International Collector's Checklist

I can be a little obsessive. The [Earthdawn International Collector's Checklist](#) is the result of an obsessive behavior gone ... right? I found myself wondering just what had been produced in what countries and what might there be out in the world that I had no chance of ever collecting. This list is how I can now keep track of what I have and what I will most likely never have, in reference to Earthdawn. So as with any of my other lists if you see any thing missing let me know. I am certain I can spare a few more brain cells to obsess on something else that I can never have.

Thanks for reading and enjoy the issue.

MAGIC: A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

With increased individual power comes the increased individual responsibility to wield it correctly. It is the duty of every adept to add to the collective betterment of society.

- Uhl Denairastas -

CITY UNDER SIEGE

Visiting dignitaries from various nations have asked why the walls of Iopos lack fire cannon and lightning ballista. The answer always surprises them. Iopos has no need of such obvious and easily eliminated defenses. What follows is a brief provided to all inquisitive visiting dignitaries.

- S'flint Senior Scribe of the Library of Enlightenment -

Every visitor to Iopos recognizes the peace and prosperity of our great and fair city. What they may not realize is that the peace and prosperity is the direct result of Uhl, the adepts in the Holders of Trust and the willingness of the population to perform to the highest expectations of the society. Simply put Iopans do not behave in a manner unacceptable to other Iopans.

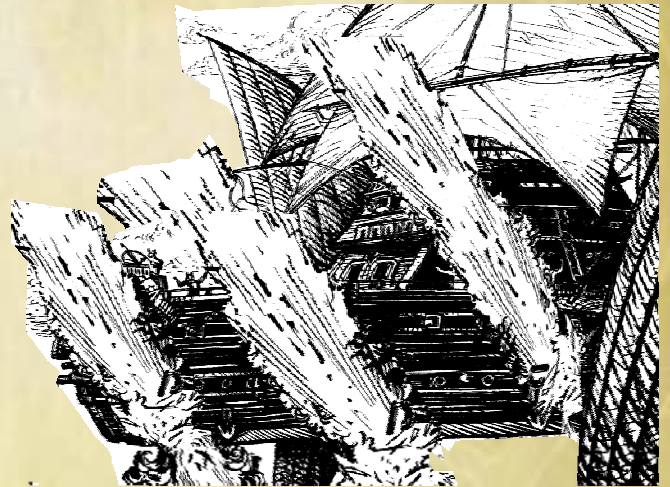
The Holders of Trust are charged to maintain the city's defenses. The Malachite Throne has deemed it unacceptable to reveal all Iopos' defenses but will allow some of the less obvious to be revealed.

The four concentric walls that ring our city are designed to withstand ground and air offenses, should either or both occurrence arise.

In the case of a siege our walls are manned in minutes with Journeyman and Master rank magicians. Using devastating spells of Denairastas design the magicians keep the skies clear of unfriendly flying ships, mounts and troops. The aerial displays of these spells are quite lovely and their destructive

capability is such that no air bourn debris has ever reached the city.

Because our citadel used concentric nested domes of elemental air as one of the barriers to the horrors, we of Iopos had centuries to perfect our aerial defenses during the scourge. No invader has ever managed to penetrate these fortifications from the sky.



Ground based assaults upon Iopos must contend not only with the magicians of the Holders of Trust but also the Archer Legion. Any army attempting to cross the open grasslands around the city must do so without the luxury of cover or any other natural protections like hills, valleys, or trees.

Uhl and the entire Denairastas family is proud to welcome you to Iopos and hopes that the previous description of the public safety measures will meet with your approval. Your safety is assured while within the national borders of Iopos.

City Defender

The Denairastas are the premiere magician family of Iopos. It is likely there is not another family of equal power in all of Barsaive. Vast resources are spent increasing their magical knowledge, developing new magical skills and new spells. This knowledge works its way down to the Holders of Trust through the training supplied by the Denairastas family.

The following represent the most publicly valued members of the Holders of the Holders of Trust, the magicians whose duty it is to defend the city. These abilities are available only when the city defender is in the appropriate location on the walls. By being in the right location the city defender becomes a focus in the astral pattern for the city of Iopos. This allows the magician to augment their power by using the city's pattern to help power their spells.

Every Journeyman magician trained for this position by the Holders of Trust is capable of increasing their Spell Effect Step by their rank in spell casting. This makes a Journeyman city defender Holders of Trust very deadly.

The Master Ranks of these Holders of Trust Magicians have multiple magical skills. Like the Journeyman they are capable of increasing their Spell Effect Step by their rank in spell casting. Masters may also spend an additional Karma to increase the success level of a spell that they have just successfully cast. Lastly the Master Rank Holders of Trust Magicians may elect to take strain equivalent to a wound and use that many additional Karma dice on one Spell Effect. The wound will not cause a knock down test.

The Denairastas understand the necessity of city defense. These abilities were developed specifically to fend off the horrors of the scourge and to be prepared for when Thera or Throal decided to attempt to subjugate Iopos.

Using the City Defender in Your Game

The city defender is not a discipline or a discipline specific variant. It is a position of responsibility in the city of Iopos that only magicians may hold. They are endowed with some very powerful spell casting abilities designed specifically for anti-siege situations. The limitation of location and membership in the Holders of Trust almost guarantees that only Non-player Characters will be city defenders. This need not be the case though.

Having your characters as members of the Holders of Trust during an airship raid from Thera or Throal can be very rewarding. The massive scope of a fleet of airships and several thousand enemy soldiers advancing on your player's defensive positions can be awe-inspiring. The first time one of your players incinerates an airship with a well placed fireball that has had its Success Level increased from Excellent to Heroic and its Effect increased by their spell casting step as well as several karma dice; it will be a subject of discussion for a very long time.

Conversely having your players as part of the invading army on the field of battle against such horrific power might give them pause. Perhaps they might think about what they are doing and how they might achieve a better result with a less head-on solution. An adventure could be built around trying to convince the leaders of the invading army to not throw away the lives of their troops so easily.

If your characters are spies that are attempting to bring down the Denairastas then the knowledge of the defenses for the city would be very useful to their patron nation. Knowing that the Denairastas have developed a method of tapping into the power of the pattern for Iopos might lead to a method for preventing the Denairastas from using that power.

MAGICAL EQUALITY

Some Iopan magicians have developed a lucrative business in the temporary storage of spells for use by non-magician adepts and non-adept name-givers. What follows is an opinion from Nhima'din, a scroll merchant in the Grand Market.

- Jo'hanas Economic Specialist for The Library of Enlightenment -

Spell scrolls are the closest that non-adept name-givers will ever come to the thrill of casting real magic. Ok to be honest it is the closest that a, let me stress this, *wealthy* non-adept name-giver will ever come to casting real magic. Poor non-adepts will never have the experience, and that is sad, but on to the not sad parts of the business.

Scrolls are akin to a single use torch, or a paper sack used to transport fish, it is used once and then discarded. The very disposable nature is what makes the scroll a useful tool. As with every tool there is a circumstance for its use, a spell scroll provides an uncommon solution to uncommon problems.

Minimal training is required when a customer purchases a Spell Scroll from me. It would not be seemly to have one of my customers immolate himself using a Spell Scroll I created. I require that the purchaser be aware that the individual using the scroll must have full access of their arms, legs and voice. They must also know how to read the language in which the scroll is inscribed.

Many magicians dislike the concept of Spell Scrolls being available to the layman. I think, that they think, the layman will not

value their high and mighty magician-ship as much, and the magicians in question will have to tone down their high horses. It also occurs to me that it could be that they dislike knowing that a non-magician can perform spell magic. Either way, many magicians dislike the idea of non-magicians having spell scrolls.



Really they should not worry, Spell Scroll creation is an art form. Each scroll is a unique work of art designed for a unique purpose. Yes I suppose the methods could be refined and standardized to produce the same scroll over and over; but this is not a fabrika of Marac. Even if it were, to produce Spell Scrolls in such a manner would cheapen them and I would suffer a most unpleasant financial calamity.

To magicians Spell Scrolls are very cumbersome; a spell matrix is a far better choice. Spell Scrolls take time, effort and depending on the individual, many attempts at use to get them to work as they are intended.

The resources for each Spell Scroll varies dependant on the desired effects. I once created a *Delusion of Grandeur* using a dragon's scale. How I acquired it is not the subject of the story. I made this scroll for a young woman who wanted to woo a Great Dragon; I have not seen her in some time.

Oh yes the resources, animal vellum and the ink's derived from flowers are fine for some simple spells. The extravagance of the spell and the ability to use the scroll more than once, are both determined by the type and quality of the resources used to create it.

Scrolls

A scroll's description shows the scroll's game statistics and a description of the spell. The statistics are: Spell Name, Spell Circle, Language, Rounds, Read, Somatic, Wear, Range, Duration, Area of Effect, and Effect.

Spell Name: What the spell is called

Spell Circle: The circle the spell normally becomes available.

Language: The language in which the scroll is written.

Rounds: The number of rounds it will take to successfully cast from the scroll.

Read: The difficulty number to read the words of the spell out loud correctly.

Somatic: The difficulty number to perform the physical aspects of the spell.

Wear: This is the life span of the scroll, equivalent to circle of the spell stored on it.

Range, Duration, Area of Effect, and Effect; are all dependant on the spell.

Example of a Spell Scroll Description

Scroll of Air Blast

Circle: 4 **Language:** Iopan

Rounds: 1 **Wear:** 4

Read: 10 **Somatic:** 8

Range: 24 yards **Duration:** 1 round

Area of Effect: 60-degree arc from an origin hex adjacent to the performer towards the target hex, up to the spell's range. For every 2 yards (1 hex) length away from the reader, the effect expands by 2 yards (1 hex) in width.

Effect: WIL + 9

This spell creates a howling blast of wind. The performer places both hands to his lips and blows hard, then flings his arms wide and makes the Somatic Test. If successful, a powerful blast of air surges away from the performer in a 60-degree arc in the direction he is facing. Those caught in the wind's path must make a successful Knockdown Test against the Effect Test to avoid being Knocked Down.

Sequence for Spell Scroll Usage

- 1) Perform a Read Test.
- 2) Perform the Somatic Test
- 3) Determine the Spell's Effect
- 4) Determine the Spell's duration
- 5) Determine the Scroll Wear.
- 6) Resolve excess Wear effects

Perform a Read Test

Scrolls can be written in any racial or national language but not in magic. This is because scrolls are intended for non-adepts to be able to perform magic. This test uses the skill, or the talent, Read/Write Language. The scroll must be read aloud. If the test is passed then move on to the Somatic test, if it fails then record the failure on the scroll and end the round for the performer. A successful Read Test must be completed every round required by the scroll.

Perform a Somatic Test

Scrolls are designed for non-adepts to replicate the movements of magicians. This is a dexterity test. If the test is passed then move on to determine the Spell's Effect, if it fails then record the failure on the scroll and end the round for the performer. A successful Somatic Test must be completed every round required by the scroll.

Determine Spell Effect

Spells scrolls are guaranteed to work as intended. This means that if the scroll is performed without error, the spell will have the correct effect per the spell's description. A spell from a scroll can only have a success level of "good".

Determine Spell Duration

The spell duration will be determined by the spell description. If the spell's duration is determined by the spell's success level then that success level will only be "good".

Determine Scroll Wear

A Scroll is a temporary spell pattern designed to filter out the corruption of astral space. During the scroll's use the spell pattern deteriorates. Scrolls wear every time they are attempted and every time they are successful.

For each failed attempt to read a scroll its Wear Rating is reduced by 1. For each failed somatic attempt a scroll's Wear Rating is reduce by 1. Every successful use of a scroll reduces its Wear Rating by 1.

Determine Scroll Wear Effects

If a scroll is successfully performed, and its Wear Rating is zero, then the scroll is destroyed. If there is excessive wear on the scroll, the performer of the scroll will suffer warping damage equivalent to one step per point of excess wear on the scroll.

Here is an example using the scroll from the previous page. It has a Wear Rating of 4, if during the attempt to use the scroll the performer failed five separate tests, that rating would drop to -1. If that performer finally completed the scroll it would be at a -2 Wear Rating (-5 for the failures, -1 for the successful performance). The spell would activate as designed, the scroll would be destroyed and the performer would take step 2 warping damage from the excess wear on the scroll.

A scroll will not suffer from Wear effects until it is successfully performed. This means that a single scroll could have a negative Wear Rating if it has never been successfully performed.

Game Mechanics for Converting Spells to Scrolls

Any spell may be interpreted into a scroll using the following guidelines.

- 1) The Number of Threads becomes the number of turns it will take to successfully cast the spell from a scroll.
- 2) The "Thread Weaving" value becomes the "Read Scroll" value.
- 3) The "On the fly" value is halved and becomes the Somatic value.
- 4) The circle of the spell is the Wear Rating for the scroll.
- 5) All occurrences of "Spellcaster", "Caster" or "Magician" in the description become "Performer".
- 6) "Casting" difficulty number is dropped.

Always rewrite the spell to read as though it is on the scroll, this helps to find possible problem areas before the scroll is used by a player.

Talent Knack

Create Spell Scroll

Talent: Read/Write Magic
Rank: 5 Strain: 1

A magician with the Create Spell Scroll Talent Knack may inscribe any spell from their personal grimoire onto a spell scroll. The magician must write the scroll in a language other than Magic.

The difficulty of this task is double the spell's circle learning difficulty (see **Players Guide, pg 131**). For example a Circle 1 Spell has a learning difficulty of 9, so its Create Scroll difficulty is 18. This value is reduced by 1 for every component that is worked into the scroll. Components can be anything that can be harvested from Plants, Animals, Creatures, Monsters, or other Name-givers. ([see issue #3, Shopping List](#)). Other unique components may be used as well per the Gamemaster's discretion.

Once all the desired components are collected the magician weaves them into the desired fabric of the scroll (the fabric may also be one of the components). There is no test for this and it takes one hour to complete. The Magician then inscribes the spell on the scroll by making a Read/Write Magic test, this takes one hour per spell circle. A "good" success is required for the scroll to be useable. Additional success levels add 1 to the Wear Rating of the spell.

For example, the Scroll of Air Blast on the previous page has a Create Spell Scroll difficulty of 18, but if the magician inscribing the scroll uses ten different types of components the difficulty is reduced to 8. The magician then makes the Read/ Write magic test to inscribe the scroll and the result is an "excellent" success. Four hours later the resulting scroll now has a Wear Rating of 5. An excellent scroll indeed, as it has a better chance of being used multiple times before it reaches its wear limit.

A spell cannot be learned from a spell scroll because the scroll is not written in the language of Magic but written with magic in a mundane language.

Game Mechanics Design Philosophy for Spells Scrolls

The basic design for spell scrolls is for them to be useful but not more useful than matrix casting.

The individual that reads the scroll, speaks the words and acts out the physical movements is termed the Performer of the scroll. This differentiates a real magician from a name-giver using a scroll.

Scrolls are a method for the storage of a single spell. The stored spell may be used by any name giver provided they can read the language of the scroll, invoke the words and perform the movements required by the spell. These requirements were developed from reading the canon novel "Talisman".

Scrolls should never be better than a Matrix Item, or a Spell Matrix. They should be a last ditch solution for adepts or the only solution for non-adept name-givers. Scrolls by definition are slower than Matrix Casting, Grimoire Casting and Raw Casting.

A scroll is guaranteed to work as the spell description intends, at least one time. The performer is the variable that the scroll's creator has no control over. Thus for every failed test the wear rating is reduced. With the Wear rating no scroll will be guaranteed safe.

Scrolls appear in astral space as a pattern that has been twisted into a series of "knots". Scrolls that have excessive Wear on them will appear tattered and frayed at the edges of the "knots".

Scrolls are considered inanimate objects when targeted by spells. The base spell defense for a scroll is 2. Scrolls that are physically destroyed before the spell is released are consumed by the power of the spell. This type of destruction releases the spell's pent up power without damaging the surroundings or the performer.

Using Spell Scrolls in Your Game

Scrolls are a common element in fantasy games but not so much in Earthdawn where, until now, they did not fit the game world.

With these rules for scrolls magicians have a reason to collect all those gross little bits of things and keep them in jars.

The standard quest of "Go get me the petal of a Bloodthorn" now has a reason. The Bloodthorn could be a component in a high circle Spell Scroll.

Thera produced the scrolls needed to create the wards and protections for kaers before the scourge. Some of these scrolls were never used and have been sitting for centuries. Throal, Iopos or even Kratas would be very interested in acquiring this type of treasure for research. Thera would be interested in an effort to prevent the secrets of creating these scrolls from escaping imperial control.

Scrolls are intended for non-adept name-givers to perform magic, but there is no reason a magician would not keep scrolls of a discipline other than his own. What if a wizard of the first circle discovered a spell scroll for "City in a Bottle" and decided that capturing Throal or Iopos was a good idea?

Some judgment is required when allowing scrolls to function in your game. Keep a tight reign on their use and discuss their functionality with any player that wishes to stockpile them.

A trove of spell scrolls is a treasure beyond compare to many magicians. Because of the time and effort that has to go into the creation of a scroll, the process is not generally undertaken just to provide a spare fireball or lightning bolt, although those do exist. Access to a spell from a discipline other than their own is often enough for a magician to express an interest in a spell scroll.

A TRAINED EYE

Many magicians of the Throalic schools of magic will state that the following information is an unsubstantiated boast. The Iopan magician will tell you this is a fact.

- Char' ieh Holders of Trust Journeyman Magician -

Every trained warrior, adept or not, wagers their life on the skills they have learned. They depend on their knowledge of fighting styles and counters to survive brutal situations. Any experienced swordsman can recognize where his opponent learned to fight if he has had previous experience with that style of fighting. This type of information provides options, tricks, and tactics to use against the opponent.

The same can be said for the magician. I can tell if my opponent has trained in Thera, Throal or Travar. The same spell is taught in all those places. The methodology of the teaching is different and the resultant spell, to the trained eye, is also different.

A fireball cast by a magician trained in the styles of Throal appears similar to Travar, this is to be expected because of Travar's heavy reliance on the Book of Tomorrow. Still both spells perform the same basic function. Create a ball of flame, project that flame outward from the caster to a target and then burn that target to a cinder.

The movements of both magicians would appear to be the same to an individual not trained to look for the minutia of technique and style. Each slight variation has a reason, understanding that reason provides a slight advantage over that individual magician.



Where the Throalic trained magician may hold his left arm rigidly over his head at the last second, believing that action provides better targeting of his spell. The Travarian magician will have a slight snap of the hand at the end of his rigid arm this minor flourish is believed to provide extra range to the spell.

Shaman magicians have understood this concept of minutia observation since before name-givers left the wilds and joined cities. They must analyze all aspects of a spell before it can be replicated with any accuracy. The most subtle detail must be examined to determine if it is actually required for the spell.

A magician trained in reading these details is provided a wealth of information on his opponent. That information can be very broad such as if the opponent is using a Theran style of casting. Or it can be very specific. If the magician has the training and experience it is possible to determine the actual instructor of the opponent.

Hedge Magicians, more romantically referred to as "Adventurer Magicians", are more difficult to analyze. This is due to their inability to remain in any one place long enough to develop a recognizable style. A Hedge Magician is likely to have strong influences of one type or another with a smattering of local or regional spell casting influences.

Studying in the Holders of Trust with the greatest masters of magic, The Denairastas has provided me with a strong understanding of the differences of magical technique and the advantages that can be gained from it.

Technique Observance

Like Throal or Thera or any other nation, Iopos must be vigilant in its attempts to capture spies and sleeper cells within its borders. The identification of regional techniques is the fastest method for a Triad of Holders to determine the nationality of possible spies.

This skill is taught to every member of the Holders of Trust. It is the reason Throal and Thera find it so difficult to maintain a spy network in Iopos with agents that are not Iopan in origin. Using local disenfranchised citizens can be a tricky proposition though. It is difficult to tell if they are truly as they appear, or if they are very well trained Holders agents.

New Skills

Technique Observance (Magician)

Step: Perception + Rank Default: No
Action: Varies Strain: 0

The magician may attempt to discern general information about his subject, the greater the result the more information the magician can determine.

Casual Observation is not an action, the information determined is broad and general. Some examples include:

- The National casting style of the observed magician
- The preferred casting method of the magician
- The possible spell compliment of the observed magician based on national training

Scrutinized Observation is an action. Information garnered from scrutinized observation is far more in-depth. Depending on the success the scrutinizing magician can learn pertinent information about his subject. The information learned is insightful to the background of the subject. Some examples:

- The regional casting influences of the magician
- If the magician has had a legendary instructor
- Effective counter measures to the magician's style of casting.

Technique Observance (Martial)

Step: Perception + Rank Default: No
Action: Varies Strain: 0

The martial version function is a similar manner to the magician's version with reference to the fighting style and stances of the observed subject.

Using Technique Observance in Your Game

With Technique Observance the players are given information that adds to the flavor of the game. Many old martial arts films cover the use of this type of skill. The phrase "I have seen enough of your style to know I can beat you", is a common line from these old films. To an extent this ends up being true but the hero inevitably has some trick that is not tied to his style. That trick is what is used to defeat the bad guy. A more main stream movie would be the "Karate Kid" where the finishing move is not one that is standard to the style of the fight.

This skill set is geared more toward the character interaction of players and non-player characters. It allows for thematic verbal posturing between adversaries and nemeses.

The Holders of Trust have no issue with other nationalities knowing that their own movements will give information away. It forces the potential adversary to begin to second guess their actions causing hesitation. Or worse, not change the intended actions only to find that the action has been anticipated.

This skill set is of course, not for all players. The idea that Technique Observance lacks a cumulative quantifiable combat advantage will prevent some players from even trying to use it. This is unfortunate but unavoidable.

However its use can go a very long way in helping a story progress by providing vital clues to players about non-player characters. Knowledge is power, or so the saying goes. The more the players can determine the more likely they will be to precede in the direction that you, as the Gammaster, want them to go.

MECHANICIAN'S INNOVATION

The use of magic is all fine and dandy but understanding the world in a manner what lets everyone live to their fullest potential is a better choice.

- *The Mechanician's Creed, paraphrased by Hary'Ziem master Mechanician -*

Now you see all name-givers can add, subtract, multiply and divide if they are learned to so. Lot's o' them learn to speak other languages. I myself, am from a small mining village on in the foothills o' the Delaris Moutains and Iopan ain't my first language neither.

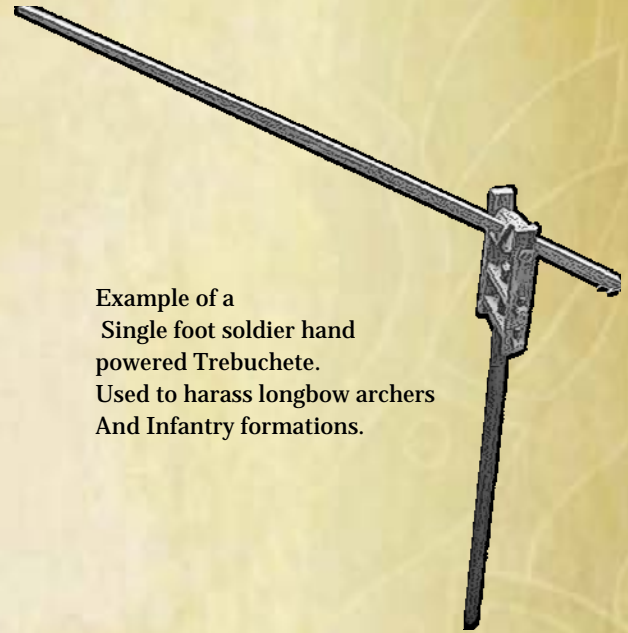
Magic has its place, and that place is slowly goin' away. The depths of the scourge spawned not only the nastiest horrors but the greatest o' magical abilities. In a short five hun'nred years magic peaked and begun to subside.

But you know what hasn't... Math, mechanics, understandin' o' the world without the use o' magic. These things are the future. I ani't no magician, er adept, er nuthin' but I can tell you that with a big enough stick in just the right place the mountains, they can be moved.

Our great leader Uhl understands this. That's why he allows our work to continue. If you look at all them contraptions in the Library o' Enlightenment, you'll see lots o' stuff that is the steppin' stones to the world as it is today. We o' the Mechanician's Foundry are buildin' tomorrow's Iopos today. Er at least we are tryin' to do.

Lately though we been workin' on tools to allow a adept to apply their magic to a machine. Nethermancers give me the willies, but they seem to get the ideas better than the others. They say its somthin' to do with their understandin' life. I don't know what it is but they get the golems movin' real good and they got the same drive that lots o' the Mechanician's do. That, stay up all night and

work all day attitude is what will bring this city to the top o' civilization.



Example of a
Single foot soldier hand
powered Trebuchete.
Used to harass longbow archers
And Infantry formations.

It won't be long, maybe another five or six hun'nerd years before all the magic will be gone. By then Iopos will have the finest city defenses in the world. With self-loadin' ballista and trebuchet what can hurl a burnin' explosive half a mile.

We are workin' on equipment for soldiers designed to catch arrows and bolts right out the air. We got a armor what attracts swords and spears and holds them in tight so they won't come free. Keepin' the enemy close so the soldier can kill 'em.

We even got a workin' version of the heavens in a box. It shows when the seasons change, where the moon and the sun will be on any particular day. It tracks the comets and the constellations o' the passions too so we know when the next scourge is commin'.

Magic rules now, but it ain't always ruled, and soon it won't. The time when magic don't rule no more won't happen in my life, but soon enough that we are makin' plans for it. You watch and see, someday Thera will be grovelin' at our gates and we'll rain down their destruction.

The Riddle of Mechanics

The Iopan Mechanician Forge is a place of wonder and danger. It is here that research is done to promote the use of non-adept name-giver driven technology.

Being independent of magic or depending on it for very little Mechanics design, develop and test technological marvels. Most of the research is geared toward war and civil development.

The research geared toward war is currently focused on using large mechanical frames made of bronze, steel and wood to house a single soldier. This soldier is strapped in with a series of quick release leather harnesses. The frame is armed with a rapid reloading crossbow and a miniature self loading trebuchet that can fire a handful of times before running out of ammunition.

The whole contraption is kept up right through the use of a very large gyro. The soldier that is captaining the frame must periodically crank a coil to wind the spring that keeps the gyro spinning. Numerous accidents have resulted in the frames exploding from the strain of the springs and gears.

The civil development is oriented toward treadle wound spring powered, gear carts for use in the city. The idea is that with the massive influx of outside population Iopos could easily fall into being a filthy morass of feces lined streets. The carts are equipped with a shovel that is lowered by use of a lever. The cart drives over the pile and the shovel scoops the waste into a bucket to the side of the cart. The waste is then transported to the nearest sewer system entrance.

Wealthy merchants have also been known to hire Mechanics to develop fancy puzzle boxes and games. Some of the more enterprising Mechanics have also taken to combining their knowledge with that of nethermancers in an attempt to create an armed force of golems.

Using Mechanics in your game

Just because Earthdawn is a high fantasy game where magic is a common place occurrence shouldn't mean that technology should be nonexistent. I was very pleased to come across the reference in the novel *Talisman*, to the Mechanics Guild.

Water-clocks, gear driven conveyances and fantastic machines are all perfectly acceptable in this type of setting. Machines of simple design and function would feel just as at home in Earthdawn as an elaborately carved fully animated statue.

The city of Throal is supposed to have some of finest engineers in Barsaive. It is bound to have elevators, cranes, counter weighted gates and the like.

If a Mechanician were to develop the Difference Engine it would be a device of great wonder and every government would want to control it. Perhaps the Mechanician has hired your players to protect his plans while he travels across Barsaive looking for a government willing to pay to have it built.

Perhaps you players have come across the Iopan version of the Antikythera Mechanism. This item could be the pattern item of a very powerful magician or it might be a trap built by the horror Artificer to lure the unwary.

Combining magic and technology can be very rewarding for the players as well as the Gamemaster. Physics is extremely malleable when magic is included in the mix.

Take the idea of the Armed Force of Golems for instance. If one of the nations of Barsaive developed such a weapon it would change the balance of power through out the province. Take it one step further and suppose a horror has influenced the Mechanician creator of these golems. Now you have a large force of possibly tainted golems running roughshod across the various nations of Barsaive.

AN ORK WITH SOMETHING TO SAY

Andrew Ragland has been an Earthdawn writer for years, with a writing career that spans all three editions of the game. Redbrick's latest release announcement *Burning Desires* is authored by him. Luckily for us, he took an afternoon to ponder his responses to my invasive questioning. The Interview was conducted over e-mail correspondence.



TI) What was your introduction to the Earthdawn line?

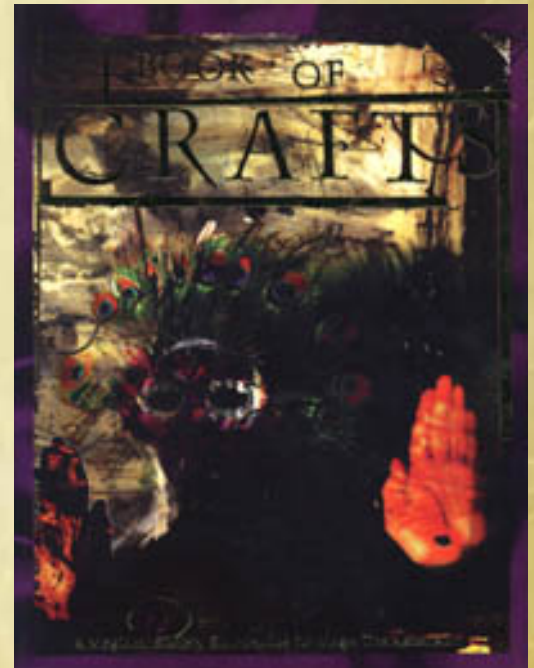
Andrew) *William Tracy was writing for FASA, and was in our Shadowrun group. He gave us the three flyers when he got them in his goodie box, as he wasn't interested in ED. Not his type of game. We thought it had great potential, and so when the next quarter's goodie box came in, William gave us his copy of the main rulebook for ED. The rest, as they say, is history. We bought some of the books, then I started writing for Earthdawn and later FASA proper, and got my own goodie box. We've turned on a lot of people to Earthdawn over the years, which is why my wife and I are listed as Questors for Redbrick.*

TI) You were involved with the [Earthdawn Journal](#) during its print run, was that your first foray into writing for roleplaying games?

Andrew) *Yes. EDJ was my first gaming writing. I posted a couple of paragraphs on the Earthdawn listserv about a city I was working on, and Lou Prosperi sent me an e-mail off-list pointing me to Kevin Knight and EDJ, and telling me that I should develop the paragraphs into a proper article. That became the [City of Ardatha](#), and my first publication. Since then, I've written for Shadowrun and Mage: The Ascension as well as Earthdawn.*

TI) I know you have played Earthdawn historically, do you still?

Andrew) *Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, our campaign, that started when the first rulebook was published, is still going. My wife has, according to James and Dammi, the longest-running player character in the Earthdawn system. She's been playing Vannin Darksbane since 1993. If you'd like to see some of what we're up to, our campaign has a wiki at <http://www.fortetsa-hebo.com>. There's over 600 cataloged NPCs, dozens of player characters and former player characters, and the Calendar*



sections where the events by day of the campaign (and the Vanguard, a parallel campaign) are recorded.

TI) What is your preferred discipline?

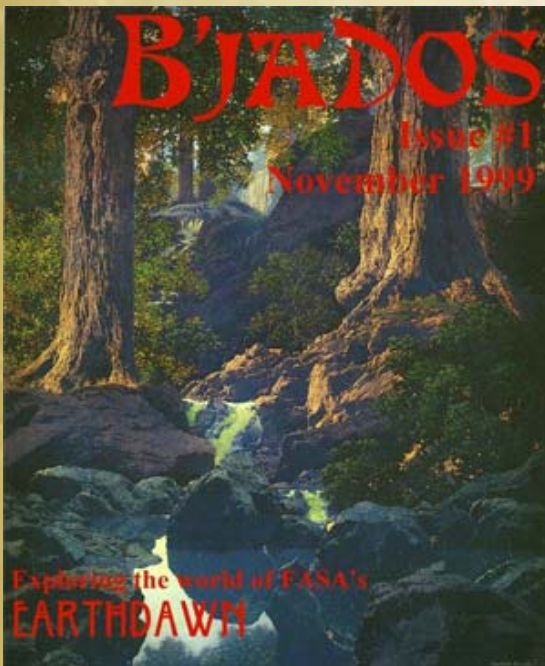
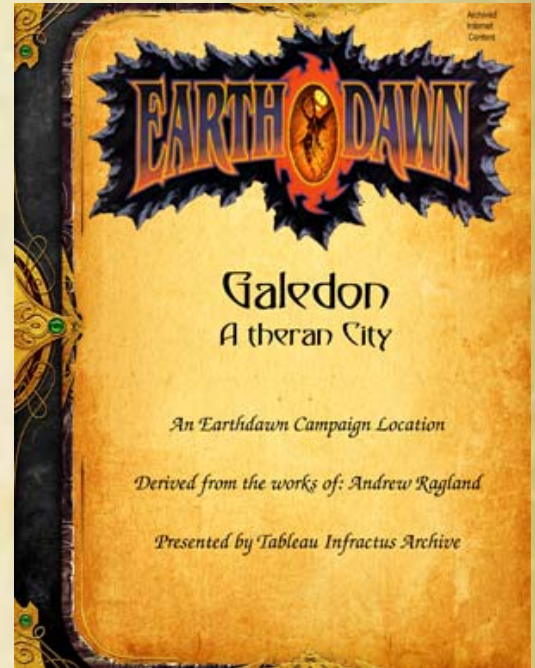
Andrew) *The Traveled Scholar, and not just because I wrote the chapter on it for Namegivers'. My GM avatar NPC has been a Traveled Scholar for many years. (See "Ueda Malgaine Nirelle" in the aforementioned wiki.) I'd probably be one myself. To go and see for yourself, and then come back and tell people about it, that's what life's about.*

TI) Your “Galedon” city is very detailed, is it a location that you have built from scratch or is it based on a real place??

Andrew) *Galedon is my own creation. The Dockside map is based very loosely on Alexandria, but the inhabitants and places and the layout of the city itself is all my own work. My campaign took the players there for some time, which helped me play-test the material and generate a bit more for the article. Sometimes I get going and it's hard to stop me. :)*

TI) Would you enlighten me about B’jados, is it an official Sword of the Knight Earthdawn release?

Andrew) *B'jados has nothing to do with SOK. As of EDJ #9, my wife and I took over EDJ as co-editors. We completed the layouts for EDJ #10, and sent them to Kevin Knight, who, a few weeks later, sent them back, saying that he was going out of business. I took all the SOK information off the layouts, revised them considerably to bring the layout more into line with what my wife and I thought an Earthdawn fanzine should look like, and published the content as B'jados #1, given away as a free PDF. We hoped that we could continue the zine, but submissions died off fast after Kevin announced his retirement from being a fanzine publisher, and the world just wasn't ready for a PDF fanzine for Earthdawn at that time.*



TI) Looking at your website, you’ve an ork named “Bubba” as a mascot, is he one of your player characters?

Andrew) *No, Bubba is just an inside joke. It'd take too much explaining and wouldn't be funny anyway because you weren't there.*

TI) You seem to identify with orks, why orks?

Andrew) *I'm big and loud and somewhat volatile. I make maille, and my jewelry tends to be bright and colorful and chunky, the kind of things orks like. I have things that set me off, in a serious way. Anybody who's friended me on Facebook knows about my political views and the sometimes overly strong opinions I hold. When I get on a rant, it's hard to stop me.*

TI) Have you ever finished your Earthdawn novel "[Provenance](#)"?

Andrew) No, I haven't. I'd like to someday, but don't see that happening in the immediate future. I think I still have all my notes on it, but am not sure.

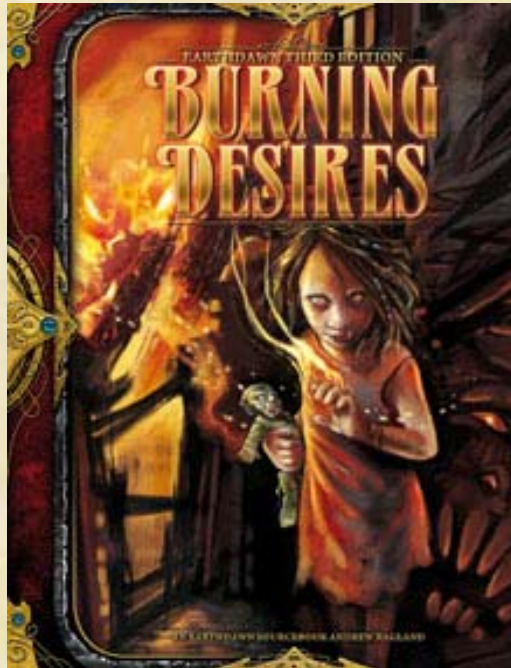
TI) Are you still writing for roleplaying games, if so what projects are on your burner?

Andrew) I am not writing for any gaming systems at this time. Dammi and James have first dibs if I ever start writing again, but I don't know if that's going to happen. There's some very personal reasons involved in why I'm not doing any writing at this point, and I'd rather not discuss them, or have them discussed. Let's just say that there's nobody I'm peeved at, that it's my issue and mine alone, and leave it at that.

TI) Thank you Mr. Ragaland for taking the time to share your comments with the readers and I.

Andrew) Thanks for giving me the opportunity to spout off about myself. :)

The Earthdawn 3rd Edition version of the adventure [Burning Desires](#) is tentatively scheduled for a July 2011 release by Redbrick. I suggest you pick it up when it is released, I was very happy with the Earthdawn Classics version of it.



I also suggest you drop by the website and read through the single chapter of "[Provenance](#)" and then find Mr. Ragland on facebook and give him some feedback, hopefully we will get to see it in print someday.

Unfortunately Andrew Ragland's website is no longer hosted on Geocities but parts of it appear to have been salvaged by Reocities.

Some readers have asked me about the comment I made about *Shosara* on the Tableau Infractus Facebook page. As I understand it from e-mail conversations with Andrew Ragland and Carsten Damm of Redbrick the article was originally written for *Earthdawn Journal*. At some point it was put on hold by Lou Prospero, something about possible conflicts with the, *at that time*, in-development elven source book. Eventually FASA stopped producing Earthdawn and the content languished. Years later Redbrick acquired the rights to Earthdawn and finally *Shosara* and its regional content was optioned for inclusion in the forth coming Elven Nations book. So a decade later *Shosara* will see some official love.

After my interview was completed I was pointed to another interview for Andrew Ragland located on the [Redbrick website](#). Some of it covers the same ground as this interview but there is also different content there as well.

ELF MINIATURES GALLERY

Elves are one of the easiest races in Earthdawn to find miniatures for. Practically every fantasy miniatures company produces elves. Still the elves of Earthdawn maintain a unique look for most of the range.

Because Heartbreaker produced so many of the miniatures for this line they maintain a strong resemblance to the elves in the heartbreaker games of Leviathan and Chrononopia. Elves from those lines would look quite at home with the elves from Earthdawn. Both of those games have current releases easily found on the internet.



Elf Swordmasters 3 Pack
Heartbreaker ED-336



Elf Illusionist on Flying Carpet (3 parts)
Heartbreaker ED-344



Elves (2 Elf Warriors and 1 Elf Wizard) 3 Pack
Heartbreaker ED-307



3 Elf Archers
Heartbreaker ED-319



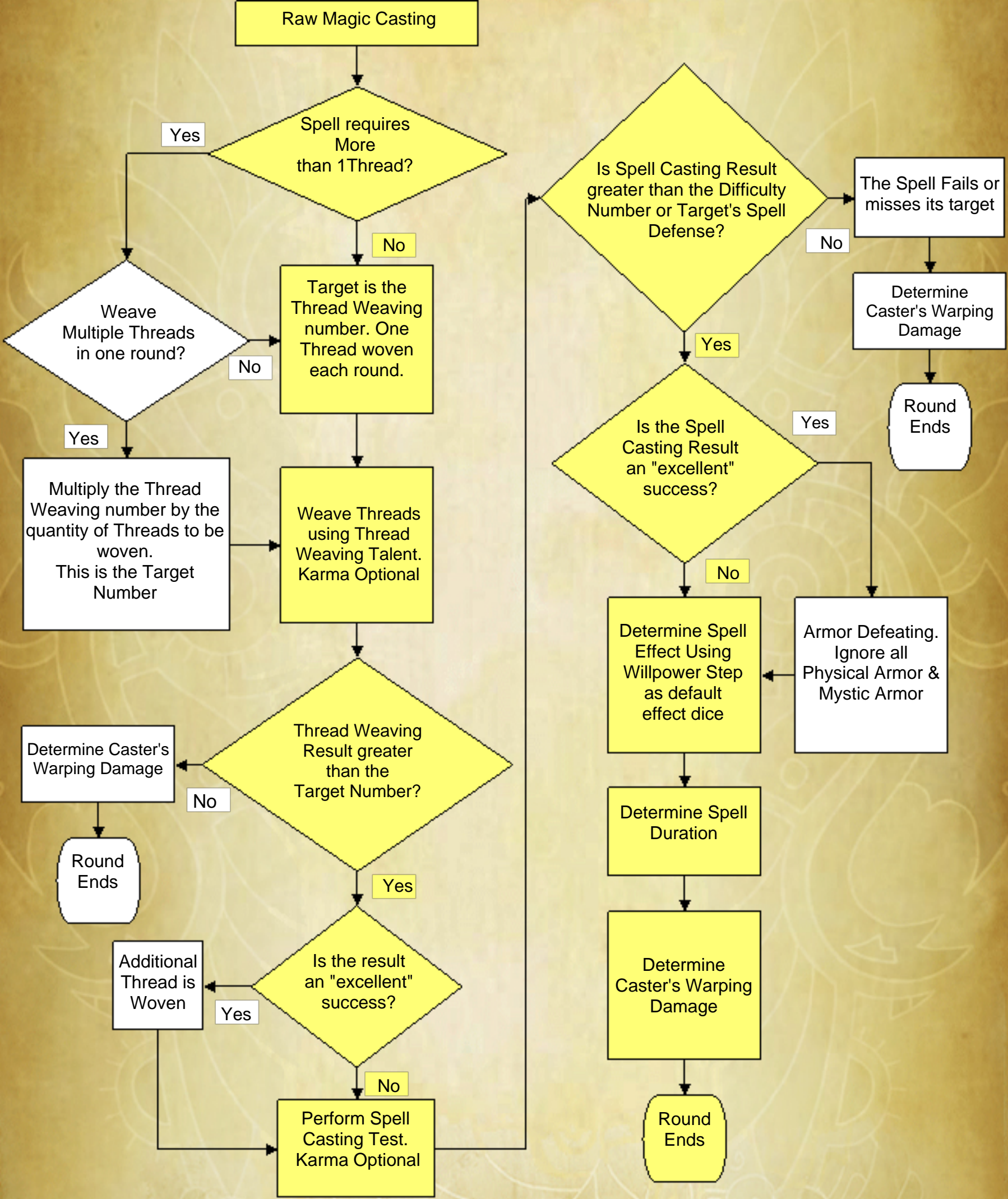
Me'Gana Elf Swordmaster
Ral-Partha 20-001

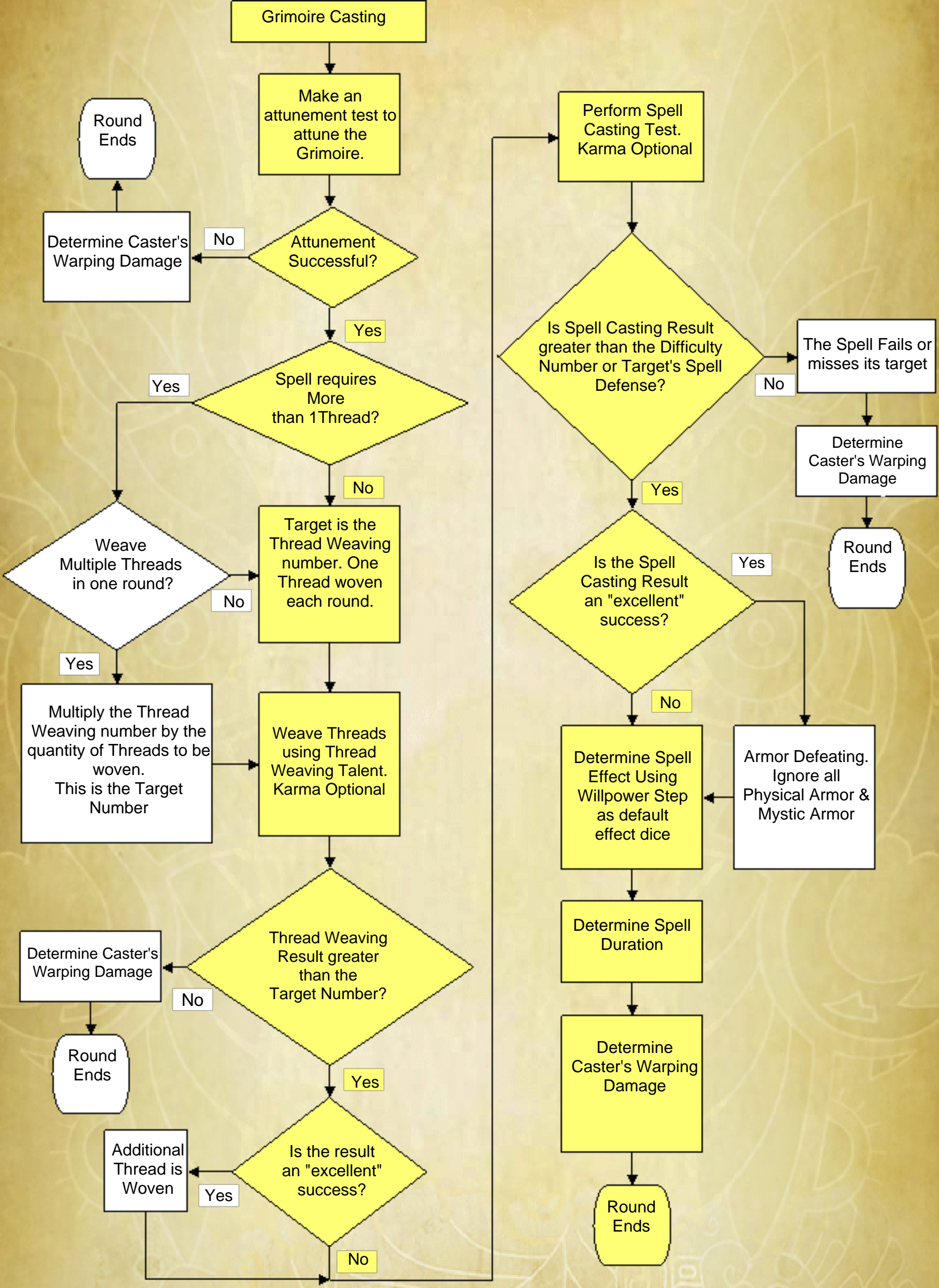


Elf Troubadour
Heartbreaker ED-320



Queen Alachia/Blood Elf & Grim Legion Mercenary
Heartbreaker ED-353





Grimoire Casting

Make an attunement test to attune the Grimoire.

Attunement Successful?

Determine Caster's Warping Damage

Round Ends

No

Yes

Spell requires More than 1 Thread?

Yes

No

Weave Multiple Threads in one round?

No

Yes

Multiply the Thread Weaving number by the quantity of Threads to be woven. This is the Target Number

Target is the Thread Weaving number. One Thread woven each round.

Weave Threads using Thread Weaving Talent. Karma Optional

Thread Weaving Result greater than the Target Number?

No

Yes

Determine Caster's Warping Damage

Round Ends

Is the result an "excellent" success?

Yes

No

Additional Thread is Woven

Perform Spell Casting Test. Karma Optional

Is Spell Casting Result greater than the Difficulty Number or Target's Spell Defense?

No

Yes

The Spell Fails or misses its target

Determine Caster's Warping Damage

Round Ends

Is the Spell Casting Result an "excellent" success?

Yes

No

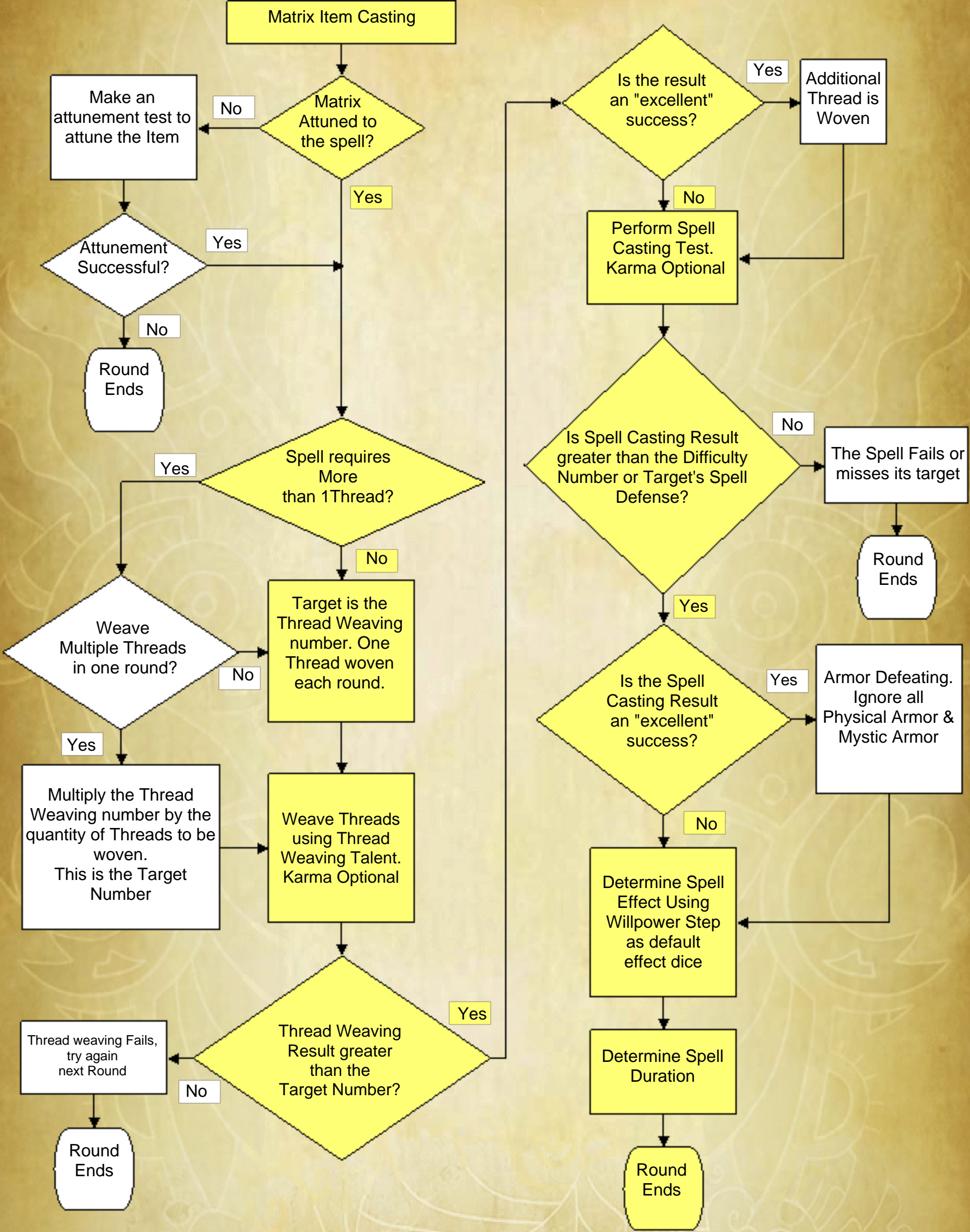
Armor Defeating. Ignore all Physical Armor & Mystic Armor

Determine Spell Effect Using Willpower Step as default effect dice

Determine Spell Duration

Determine Caster's Warping Damage

Round Ends



Matrix Item Casting

Matrix Attuned to the spell?

Make an attunement test to attune the Item

Attunement Successful?

Round Ends

Spell requires More than 1 Thread?

Target is the Thread Weaving number. One Thread woven each round.

Weave Multiple Threads in one round?

Multiply the Thread Weaving number by the quantity of Threads to be woven. This is the Target Number

Weave Threads using Thread Weaving Talent. Karma Optional

Thread Weaving Result greater than the Target Number?

Thread weaving Fails, try again next Round

Round Ends

Is the result an "excellent" success?

Additional Thread is Woven

Perform Spell Casting Test. Karma Optional

Is Spell Casting Result greater than the Difficulty Number or Target's Spell Defense?

The Spell Fails or misses its target

Round Ends

Is the Spell Casting Result an "excellent" success?

Armor Defeating. Ignore all Physical Armor & Mystic Armor

Determine Spell Effect Using Willpower Step as default effect dice

Determine Spell Duration

Round Ends

