



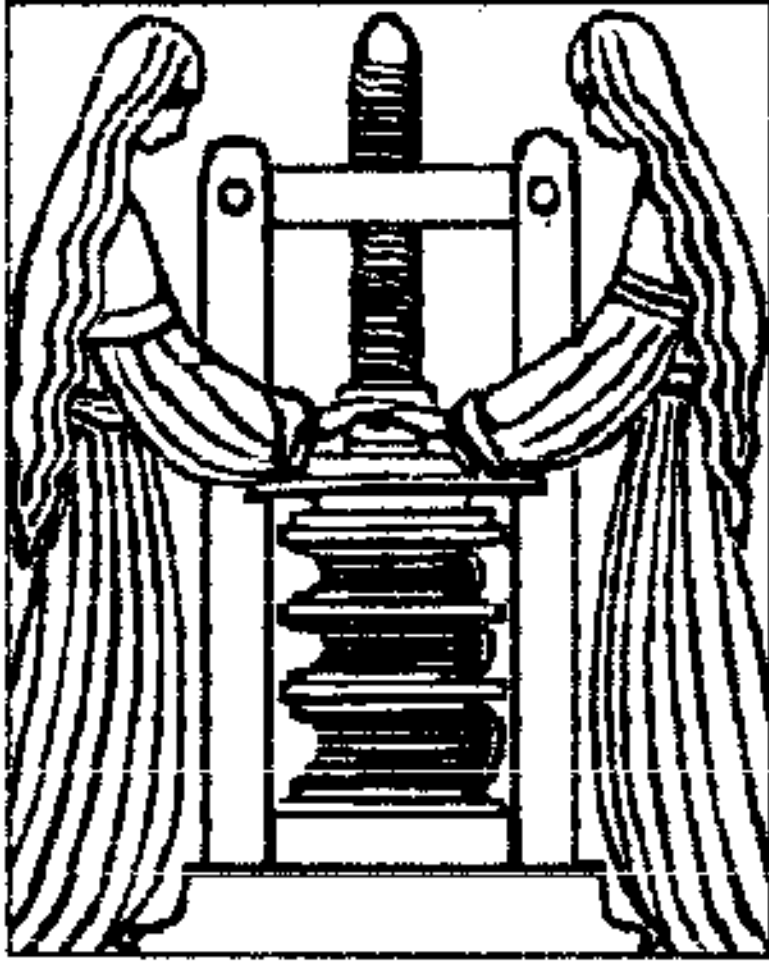
PAPYRUS™

2815 Lund Ave. #6
Rockford, IL 61109

Papyrus™ #11

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SCRIBBLES FROM THE SCRIBE

In our continuing effort to improve, we have made some minor changes to our layout. In the end, each page contains less unused space and you should still be able to punch holes in the margin for collection in a binder.

Just prior to printing, I received a call from Devlin Janax, the publisher/editor of Silver Griffin magazine. I have had several pieces published in Devlin's magazine and was glad to speak with him. During the conversation he asked about Papyrus, I was surprised but pleased that he had heard of it. At that point I had to confess that articles of mine that he had published often appear in Papyrus in rough or finished form (in fact, Runemasters appears in Silver Griffin #27). Devlin was gracious in allowing me this practice due to Papyrus' limited distribution, amateur status and non-competitive nature [Thanks again Devlin!]. I am happy to have endorsed Silver Griffin, for over a year now, in the pages of Papyrus. As Devlin is now working to clear up any ambiguity concerning Silver Griffin's ownership of material it prints, I would ask those considering submissions to Papyrus not send anything that has been previously printed without the publishers knowledge.

Work on our Papyrus Pages RPG supplement has been slow of late. In the end it will contain new creatures, character races, rules and accessories for AD&D(1&2), D&D, Gamma World and XXVc. Our new completion goal is year end.

We are considering another project that your opinions are solicited on. To promote further contact between gamers we would like to run a PBM Gladiator Arena. Using a home brew combo of several systems, it is our intention to provide subject matter for correspondence through participation in the games. Specifics on the hybrid system will follow at a later date. What do you think?

Last issue we discussed the lawsuit, between Palladium books and Wizards of the Coast, concerning inter-system conversion material contained in WotC's Primal Order cap system. We contacted WotC and received the following written statement from their president, Peter D. Adkison:



"Fortunately for us this lawsuit has now been settled. I am not at liberty to discuss the terms of the settlement." A statement of Palladium's and Kevin Siembieda's ownership of copyrights followed and will apparently appear on future printings of TPO. It seems Palladium has maintained their isolationism without bankrupting a bright new company, I guess that's all we can ask for. If this was such a big deal why aren't the other companies with games mentioned in TPO (including TSR) suing for their copyrights?

LETTERS (ok, one e-mail)

Area PER: Personal Messages

From: Aaron Allston

To: Nick Parenti

Msg #926, Apr-05-93 23:07:52

Subject: Papyrus

I just downloaded the archive of the four issues of Papyrus; interesting reading.

[Aaron Allston has designed games independently, for TSR, Hero and others. Here he refers to the BBS version of our fanzine which is a .TXT file published semi-annually.]

JUST A LITTLE BIT ...

Pirates believed that wearing earrings improved their eyesight. The position on the ear lobe which is normally pierced for earrings corresponds to an acupuncture point that controls the eyes. (info from Gothic Light, Summer '92 issue).



INGENIOUS ITEMS

Downloaded from Steve Jackson Games',
Illuminati BBS at 812/447-4449.
Historical Alchemical Elixirs for
GURPS Magic, by Steffan O'Sullivan
(This article originally appeared in
Roleplayer #13.)

With the publication of GURPS Magic, the alchemy rules have been expanded. Most of the 52 elixirs were written as part of a Fantasy game-system, that is, they weren't copied from historical sources. Yet alchemical elixirs of many types were indeed sold throughout the centuries to the wealthier nobility and merchants. In the course of doing research for GURPS Swashbucklers, I came across many references to alchemical elixirs and talismans owned by various queens and powerful ministers, who usually had great faith in them.

It is not the intention of this article to give a history of alchemy, but it should be mentioned that for centuries, alchemical potions were touted as having magical powers. These elixirs are mentioned in letters, books and documents of the time, and some are presented here in GURPS terms.

The names of the elixirs have been brought into line with the names in GURPS Magic, and are not to be construed as historical. I've had to fiddle slightly with the descriptions to get them to fit game mechanics, but basically all are given as the alchemists who sold them represented them! All GURPS Magic rules apply, including the limitations on learning the more powerful elixirs. The GM does not have to allow the addition of any of these elixirs into the game.

Animal Control

Castor (Elixir of Horse Taming): Grants the subject a +4 to any Animal Handling roll specific to horses and their relatives (mules and donkeys). In addition, it grants a +4 to any Riding, Teamster or Packing skill roll made concerning horses in a non-combat situation. The effect will last for 2d hours. Unguent only - rub on hands. \$50 in materials, 2 weeks. Cost: \$250/\$500.

Hostile Elixirs

Hecate (Elixir of Unluckiness):

The subject has the Unluckiness disadvantage (p. B37) which will come to pass once within 24 hours and then expire. Potion or Powder only. \$400 in materials, 6 weeks. \$1,600/\$3,000.

Magical Abilities

Aphrodite (Elixir of Attractiveness): Grants one level of the Good Appearance advantage (p.B15). The subject's looks will improve one level - from Average to Attractive, from Beautiful to Very Beautiful, or from Hideous to Ugly, for example. Very Beautiful people will positively glow! The effect will last for 2d+1 hours. Potion or unguent only. \$100 in materials, 3 weeks. Cost: \$600/\$1,000.

Moly (Elixir of Magic Resistance): Grants 5 levels of Magic Resistance (p. B21) to the subject for 1 hour. If taken by a mage, all of his spell rolls are at -5! All other Magic Resistance rules apply; see p. M13. Potion only. 5 weeks; \$500 in materials; -2 to skill. Cost: \$1,600/\$3,200.

Hector (Elixir of Pain Resistance): Grants the High Pain Threshold advantage (p. B20) for 1 hour. Any form except pastille. \$200 in materials, 2 weeks. Cost: \$600/\$1,000.

Kouon (Elixir of Gambling Luck): Allows subject a +3 on all gambling rolls for 1 hour. Use of this elixir is considered the same as cheating at gaming, and it is only available on the Black Market. Penalties if caught using it vary from a fine to a knife in the back, depending on the clientele of the game! This potion only affects games of chance - it will not confer a +3 to win a horse race or wrestling match just because there is a bet placed on it! Potion or powder only. 4 weeks; \$200 in materials; -1 to skill. Cost: \$900+ (whatever the market will bear).

Medical Elixirs

Athena (Elixir of Calming): Nullifies any extreme emotion the subject is under for 2d hours and allows rational thought. Specifically, this elixir grants a +3 to resist any spell or skill that works on the emotions, enabling the

subject to reason something through rather than be swayed by passions or sentiment. In addition, it will calm any hysterical or enraged person, and grant a +3 to the IQ roll to overcome the Berserk or Bad Temper disadvantages. It has no effect on other disadvantages, however. Any form. \$100 in materials, 2 weeks. Cost: \$500/\$900.

Aurora (Elixir of Awakening): Acts on the subject as the Awaken spell (p. M43). Any form. \$150 in materials, 3 weeks. Cost: \$500/\$900.

Mental Abilities

Artemis (Elixir of Immunity to Love): Protects against and cancels the effect of the Eros elixir. This elixir will also give the subject a +5 to resist any Sex Appeal attempt, and will nullify any infatuation the subject has. Duration is 2d hours for protection purposes; the effects of an Eros elixir taken within that time or earlier are cancelled permanently. A natural infatuation is nullified for 2d hours, and remains nullified until the subject next sees the object of his infatuation, or an image of her. Potion only. \$100 in materials, 3 weeks. Cost: \$500/\$1,000.

Mental Control

Phoebus (Elixir of Truthfulness): The subject cannot tell a lie, exactly as in the Compel Truth spell (p. M26). The effect will last for 1 hour. Potion or powder only. \$200 in materials, 4 weeks. Cost: \$1,100/\$2,000.

Pirithous (Elixir of Forgetfulness): Produces amnesia in the subject for one hour. The subject's IQ is treated as normal for intelligence purposes, but the subject cannot remember his name or what he was doing at the time he took the elixir. Any quest or geas will be forgotten. The subject will not remember his skills, though if persuaded he can accomplish a task, and will perform at -2. Spell casting is impossible while under the influence of this potion. Potion only. 3 weeks; \$100 in materials; -3 to skill. Cost: \$700/\$1,200.

Polyphemus (Elixir of

Gullibility): The subject acquires the Gullibility disadvantage for 1d hours (see p. B33). Any form except pastille. 2 weeks; \$150 in materials. Cost: \$500/\$900.

In a later article, I will present Alchemical Amulets and Talismans, which were also considered efficacious in medieval and Renaissance times.

PRESS RELEASE March 15, 1993
For Immediate Release
STEVE JACKSON GAMES WINS SUIT AGAINST SECRET SERVICE



Steve Jackson Games and its co-plaintiffs - Steve Jackson himself and three users of the Illuminati Bulletin Board -

have won their lawsuit against the US Secret Service. The decision was announced late Friday, March 12.

Federal judge Sam Sparks ruled for SJ Games on the PPA (Privacy Protection Act), saying that the publisher's work product was unlawfully seized and held. Under the ECPA (Electronic Communications Privacy Act), he ruled that the Secret Service had unlawfully read, disclosed and erased the messages - despite their repeated denials that they had done any such thing. On a separate ECPA count, he ruled for the defendants, saying that taking the computer out the door was not an "interception" of the messages on it within the meaning of the law.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, which sponsored the suit, hailed the decision as "groundbreaking." According to Mike Godwin, legal services counsel for the EFF, "This case should send a message to law-enforcement groups everywhere that they can't ignore the rights of those who communicate by computer."

The judge awarded damages of \$1,000 per plaintiff under the ECPA, for a total of \$5,000. Under the PPA, he awarded SJ Games \$42,259 for lost profits in 1990, and out-of-pocket costs of \$8,781. The plaintiff's attorneys are also entitled to costs,

an amount which will be well in excess of \$200,000.

The Justice Department has not stated whether it will appeal. Sparks' opinion was quite critical of the Secret Service's behavior, before, during and after their raid, calling the affidavit and warrant preparation "simply sloppy and not carefully done."

Commented Steve Jackson: "I'm overjoyed, and a little numb. We stood up to them and we won. It was never a sure thing . . . legally, this is all new ground. We won because what the Secret Service did to us was totally outrageous, and because our lawyers did a great job of penetrating their cover-up and bringing out all the facts.

"I'm more grateful than I can say to the Electronic Frontier Foundation for making the suit possible. And since the government will have to pay our legal costs, the EFF will get their money back, to fight the next case!

"And if I've gained any notoriety from all this mess, I want to use it to work for changes in the law, to stop this kind of abuse forever."

REVIEWS

Tapestry, reviewed by Scott Mash

Tapestry is a new role playing game created by Jonathan Turner and published by White Rose. This 8 1/2 X 11 book is 280 pages in length. The cover is done in a thin cardboard, the cover bends and tears easily. A guidebook of this type should have a heavy cardboard or hardback cover to help it hold up to the constant abuse it will take. The small amount of artwork in this book is done in black and white. Most of the art is less than spectacular, some pictures did not photocopy well while others were just below par.

One must remember though, it is not the cover or art that makes a good role playing game but the contents and ideas of the creator. This role playing game is based on the medieval European society. This rpg follows closely the medieval history of feudalism, manorialism, warfare, nobility and many other aspects of the historic medieval

society.

Elves, dwarves and other fantasy races did not exist in medieval times and also do not exist in the realms of this rpg. To compensate for the absence of fantasy races different human races and societies will be the bases of characters.

One element of the character creation in Tapestry that I found both original and useful is the age at which you begin playing your character. All characters start at level 0 which is the end of childhood (7-10 years) to apprenticeship (12-14 years). This gives players a chance to mold their characters and to get a better feel to how their character may react towards different situations.

There are 15 different character statistics which are broken down into 3 sections: Physical, Mental & Social. To keep most gamer's happy the stats can either be rolled randomly (3d6) or the gamer can use a player points system. To complete the player character one must choose from a list of cultures such as catholics, jews, mongrels, etc and also choose a profession from a subset of fighting, magical, clerical, rogue, entertainer and other professions.

I also found this book to be another great source of spells and prayers. The 60 pages of spells and prayers could easily be converted for use with AD&D, Primal Order or any other rpg.

If you are a medieval historian then Tapestry is a must. The combat, spell and monetary systems are easy to use though the character creation and statistics can become a little tedious. The artwork is a little less than desirable and the cover may not withstand a GM's use for long. I found this rpg to be well thought out with original rules. Errata is available by writing the publisher at the address below. I recommend Tapestry for all medieval fans, it is well worth the \$12.00.

White Rose Publishing, P.O. Box 933, Amherst, MA 01004-0933

Talislanta Geographica, reviewed by Scott Mash

Talislanta Geographica was produced by The Wizards of the Coast and was written/created by whole team of people. Eric Hotz created the full color map, Peter Adkinson and George Lowe wrote the map text and finally Jeff Goldman and George Lowe wrote the small adventures contained in this accessory. This packet contains a 30 X 20 (approximately) full color map, badly needed game master screens and a 16 page sourcebook packed full of Talislanta geographic facts. There was one thing that I quickly noticed, I could find no price anywhere on the packet. I think the price was \$8.50 but I got it free to do a review on so I may be wrong.

I feel this supplement is for hard core game masters (GM) only. Unexperienced or novice GM would not get much use from this supplement because of the detailed information which might slow some down. Talislanta Geographica is a great supplement that deals with many items left out by other role playing games. Several items found within are a wind speed chart, wind direction chart (wind direction map included), ocean currents, additional information on languages (language map included) and information on socio-political conflicts. This is a source that any geographer would be proud of. There are also 3 mini adventures about a page or two in length.

I feel this supplement is for hard core GM's only, unless of course you want the full color map. The GM screens are nice, but all charts can be found throughout the Talislanta Guidebook though it is nice to have them all together. I recommend this supplement for both experienced GM's and GM's who like full color maps and consolidated informational charts.

Scent of the Beast, reviewed by Scott Mash

The Scent of the Beast, written by Jonathan Tweet and produced by Wizards Of The Coast (address below), is the first module for the 3rd Edition Talislanta world. The module is 8 1/2" X 11" with a full color cover, all pictures inside are black and white and are very well done.

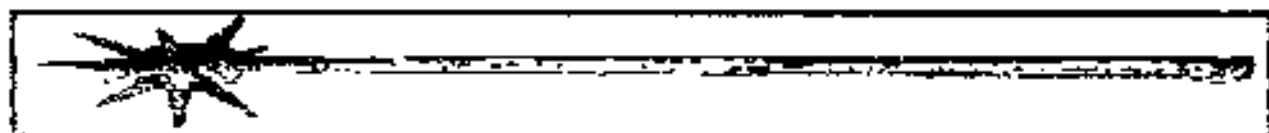
The \$10.00 cost is competitively priced for a 70 page module. Inside the front cover additional information concerning the Wizards of the Coast newsletter and electronic mailing lists.

The Scent of the Beast is designed for 4 to 7 first level player characters. This module was written with beginning game masters (GM) and players in mind, several player handouts and GM charts are included. Many tables, pictures and maps are spread throughout the module that contain a wealth of information. Also in the back of the book there are 2 new skills and 3 new archetypes. On pages 67-70 a brief overview of Talislanta rules can found so those who have no experience with the rules can also play this module.

The module is centered around the rise of the submen which include the Araq, Beastman and Za races which are all a violent and nomadic people. This module leads up to an event which will allow the PC's to save the Seven Kingdoms of Talislanta from the submen. This module seems to be concerned more with trading and mercantile activities then with stopping the submen uprising. Perhaps The Scent of the Beast would of been a much better module if it had been split into an epic "save the country" module and a mercantile "collection of riches" module.

Though after reading through the module, as well as playtesting a few events I found this module perhaps be the easiest module to GM that I have found. All the information to run combats and trades are laid out in charts and page numbers to reference the Talislanta Guidebook are also given. The stats for PC's and NPC's could easily be converted into other game settings such as AD&D, GURPS or your favorite home grown world. I HIGHLY recommend this module for all gamers, especially for new GM's as it gives an abundance of material to make their work easier.

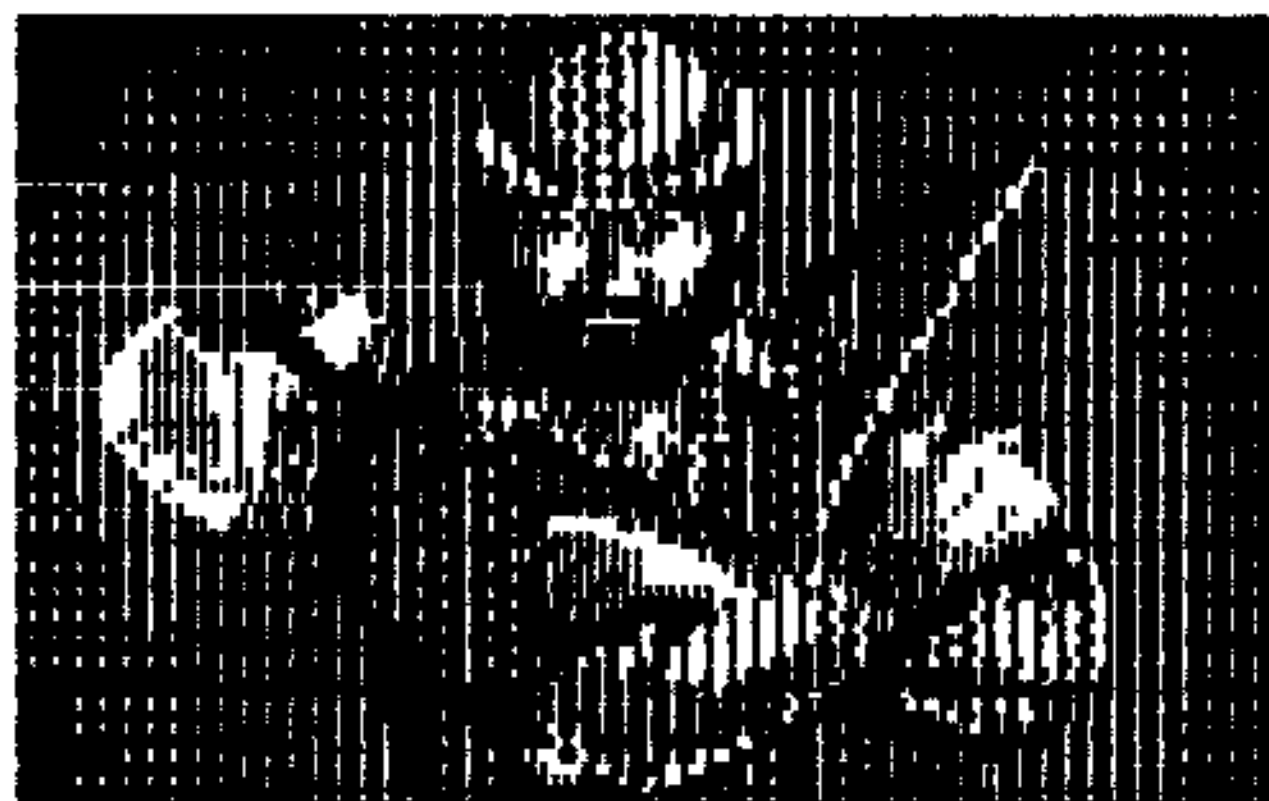
Wizards Of The Coast, P.O. Box 707,
Renton, WA 98057



PECULIAR PERSONALITIES

Mof the Bounty Hunter, 8th level
Thief (Bounty Hunter)

HP: 42 Int: High Align: CN
THACO:14 #At: 2 Dmg: 1d8+2



Mof is a highly usable NPC in most settings, but especially city adventures. He is very skilled at his work and can get from 5K to 25K gps for a single job. Although he always gets his man (so far) he enjoys a humorous way of doing so. If he is used as a henchman, he must be role-played this way and extra EXP are recommended if the death/capture is particularly whimsical. His usual weapon is his bow and arrows (+1, 40). He always carries 500 gps (unless the campaign's currency is different, like in Dark Sun where he would carry 500 cps) and he always wears his Bracers of Defense (AC 6).

Mof is reprinted from, Tales of a Minstrel, the newsletter of The Guild of the Green Dragon, P.O. Box 13552, Savannah, GA 31416.

RUNEMASTERS: Dwarven Magic Users, by Nick Parenti. Also to be printed in Silver Griffin #27, and printed here with that publisher's knowledge.

It has always been thought that dwarves do not possess the ability nor will to become mages. Yet the natural dwarven drive for stoic detail in craftsmanship would seem to be perfect for performing the precise art of spell weaving. Another fact that flies in the face of dwarven spell casting inability is their talent for forging weapons with magical properties. Dwarven clerics, a rarity, are too few to account for all of the enchantments. The clue to this apparent dichotomy is in the

reasoning behind the dwarven ability to make arms with special powers, the meticulous and exacting dwarven smithing process.

Your basic dwarven smith, in general, far outranks the smiths of all other races. Their skill and craftsmanship are renown in all worlds. A few artisans of dwarven smithcraft have arcane knowledge of the power of secret dwarven rune languages. These written tongues are not a spoken language but are runic incantations developed by dwarven sages and elven mages at a time long ago when the two races were more disposed to cooperate. To elves this form of spell casting is beauty-less and therefore mostly forgotten, but to the serious minded dwarves it provides an efficient means of enchantment that requires exactness and detail. Dwarven smiths with the knowledge of these runic spells are called runemasters.

Dwarves are not able to cast spells via "standard" means. This is due to physical differences in their bodies and vocal chords. Apparently they are incapable of the exact motions and vocalizations required to cast spells "normally". The runemaster's art substitutes the detailed runic symbols for verbal and physical components, and detailed carving is definitely a skill dwarves excel at.

The runemasters' "spell books" are constructed much in the same manner as any other mage. The pages contain examples of runes, the order and process of drawing the lines that make the runes, and the runes effect on different materials. For the most part such books concern themselves with runes cut into metals and rock, on rare occasion other material such as wood are mentioned due to original elven influences in the art. Spells must be studied and memorized from the book, as with normal spell casting. Using the book as a guide during casting causes the rune to disappear from the book once it is copied much like a regular spell book or scroll.

First and foremost runemasters are master smiths. Initial training is undertaken in all aspects of smithing

and metallurgy. Once certified a senior journeyman by the dwarven smiths' guild, training begins in alchemy, arcane knowledge and runemaster smithing techniques. By the end of this basic training, the now 0 level runemaster is a skilled master smith as well. It is at this point that they begin to learn minor runic magics.

For the most part runemastery is concerned with the enchantment of items, be they weapons, tools, jewelry or door ways. The runic spells closely resemble those cast by most spell weavers with the exceptions of component use, the smithing process and the runic carving vice physical or verbal components. In other words, its the same magic executed via a different language (a written one) and procedure (the carving).

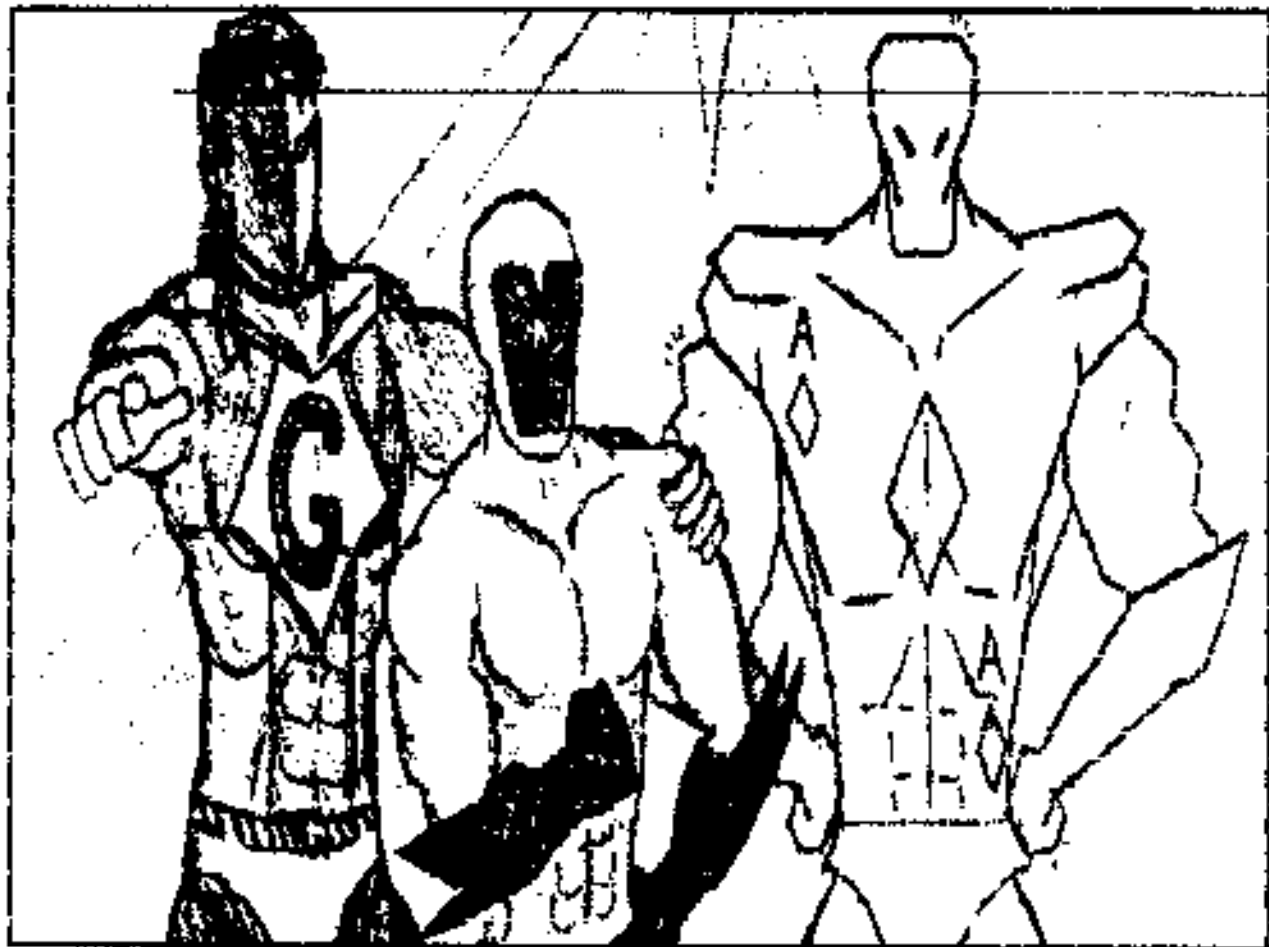
A runemaster constructing a magic sword would need to know the runes for the powers/spells he wished to bestow upon the sword as well as a permanency rune. A magic mouth spell would be cast via a rune carved onto the area to have the mouth appear upon it. Each rune has a specific order in which its lines are carved. Material carved, depth and shape of grooves also play a part in the casting.

The runemaster's weakness is in the inability of his art exhibits casting offensive and defensive spells on demand. Magic missile, shield or web spells do not lend themselves to runic castings. Runemasters do have an art that allows them to cast these spells when needed. The runic spells can be carved into rods, staves, stones, wands, etc accompanied by a triggering ruin (of the same spell level) to activate the spell when a condition is met. The triggering rune can be set to activate a runic spell when a verbal command is given, or a physical motion is performed, or if the rune carved object is within 50' (or less) of a designated object/being. The requirements are much like those set to trigger a magic mouth spell.

It should be obvious why there are so few runemaster adventurers.

Profit and practice of the art are best done in a smithy. Their style of casting does not provide adequate response time for safe adventuring. They will on rare occasions, join or commission a group of adventurers for the purpose of collecting rune enchanted weapons or other examples for study. On such occasions they will more than likely be armed to the teeth with runic spells stored for triggering.

Special Super Section!



copyright Charles J. Parenti 1993

FIGHTING CRIME IN LONG UNDERWEAR, an editorial by Adrian Gomez

For many people, over the past fifty years, the greatest form of escape has been through comic books. We are in an age without legends, and comic books (along with television and movies) are now our system of the fantastic, a way to leave the daily pressures behind. The super hero genre has appealed to youngsters for more than five decades, and it's stronger than ever.

The Super Heroes Comic Books: This is the kingdom of spandex, adamantine claws and DNAliens. Although there has been refreshing changes from time to time, the books circle around generally the same theme. Most of these champions deny to kill, fight crime as freelancers and super-women keep perfect figures entering combat in high heels without hesitating.

Right now, in America, they are the best sellers of the comic book industry eclipsing every other genre.

Early issues of popular comic books are valuable to the extreme, and it is nearly impossible but for the wealthiest collectors to obtain original releases.

Since the comic book boom in the 80s, super heroes have recuperated their huge popularity from the golden and silver age. Superman may die, Punisher may live, but their significance and symbolism remain. Super heroes first came to America in the 30s, Al Capone's decade. The police and government were infected with corruption, and science was turning myth and the Bible into bloody pulp. Facing a world too scary to live in, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster (both teenagers) created Superman. Better in every aspect than any human, and totally incorruptible, this perfect specimen had to be an alien, from the planet Krypton.

The publishing moguls repeatedly turned down the project, until one with a spot to fill reluctantly accepted the experiment. Only the authors had faith in the idea, but the buying public sold it for them. As any TV producer can tell you, when an original idea turns successful, it is quickly imitated.

These first super heroes were detectives in recycled mystery tales, or super patriots responding to Nazi and Japanese Imperial aggression during WWII. These idealistic supermen were the staple for years after the war ended.

After awhile, these characters became parodies of themselves. Stan Lee and Jack Kirby then decided to tilt the scales of super hero types. Going to extremes, their new characters were either god-like (Thor) or realistic (Spider-Man). Instead of common-garden criminals, there came the rise of the super villain. The everyday troubles of these heroes, like catching a cold or cashing a check, allowed the readers to identify with their idols.

Super heroes are always victorious, able to overcome any obstacle, tragedy or handicap. Justice is always served with power, speed and intensity. Super heroes allow us to transcend our world.

The characters have been transferred to other media with increasing frequency. Captain America, Batman, Spider-man, Flash, Wonder Woman, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and the Incredible Hulk have all made it to television with varying degrees of success. Superman, Batman and TMNT have been the focal points of both movies and hit television series. It comes as no surprise when we discover the popularity of super hero RPGs, as we are able to become our favorite heroes from comic-dom. If you have never tried these games, and you like comic books, this can be a wonderful introduction to a new genre or role-playing in general.

The first step is choosing a rules system. The most popular are Marvel Super Heroes (TSR), DC Heroes (Mayfair) and Heroes Unlimited (Palladium, compatible with TMNT) [editors note - I believe Champions (Hero/ICE) is the most popular. I do not feel that Villains & Vigilantes (FGU) nor GURPS Supers (SJG) should be discounted from this list, both are very popular]. Both Marvel and DC have the distinct advantage of a huge background and gigantic array of characters to choose from, and Heroes emphasizes originality and versatility.

Character creation in Marvel is handled by random rolls so your character might get stuck with a single movement power (behold, Fly-Boy!). DC uses a "hero point" system, in which you buy abilities and powers, creating a well balanced team. Heroes uses a variant of the "Palladium Universal System" which gives random abilities, chosen powers, sub-powers and skills.

Marvel has a lot of good points, like the idea of power stunts, which let you perform variations of a power. Fire generation modified by power stunts can be used as: body armor, fire control, flight and the creation of flame cages, swords, etc. A very simple chart is used for combat which allows almost anything your super hero can think of. The Karma system (experience points) encourages adequate role-playing, rewarding heroic behavior and swiftly

punishing unchivalrous acts. If you kill someone, even by mistake or mind control, you lose ALL of your Karma. Sorry, no Punisher/Wolverine-like characters allowed. The system's main flaw is character advancement, it takes tons of Karma to raise super-powers and abilities, and buying new ones is a laughing matter. The fact that Karma is also used to alter dice roles doesn't help one bit. The system is also very weak if you want to play a mystical super hero like Dr. Strange. Magic is simply an imitation of technological or mutant powers.

DC uses "victories" system for combat. You cross reference a chart with the pertinent ability required for success, find your number of victories, and then the defender uses the chart to find his own victories. The difference indicates failure, success and/or damage. This can be time consuming and requires a bit of getting used to. The game also uses a single nomenclature for any kind of measurement (volume, length, strength, time, weight, etc.) which is based on logarithms. This is also an uncommon feature in RPGs. Advancement is once again managed with a purchase system, but is more affordable than in Marvel. I only recommend DC if you love the background and you are willing to put some work into it.

Heroes Unlimited gives you the boon of flexibility. With a little effort you can create virtually any kind of super h e r o i n existence: high technology, mutation, aliens and magic are equally covered. Advancement is based in the t r a d i t i o n a l



experience point system. One thing I do recommend about this system is the supplement, "Villains Unlimited". This book boasts 80 original villains, 12 anti-heroes (a la Punisher), 8 villain organizations and one "Superbeing Control Agency". All are easily adaptable to the system of your choice. Great ideas

and gimmicks are provided to torment your players game after game.

Once you have chosen a system, you should set a power-level for your players. Do you want cosmic adventure, filled with awesome clashes with god-like beings? Would you prefer a high-power campaign, like the JLA or Avengers? Maybe you would enjoy the urban crusader like Batman and Daredevil?

Now your heroes must have a good reason to stick together. Are they all mutants, fighting for mutual survival? Do they serve a government agency like SHIELD or X-factor? Have they been educated by some mystical mentor? An interesting role-playing situation would be a team where the members dislike each other, but their powers would not function if they didn't act as a group. If your campaign is not confined to a small urban area, a means of transportation would be quite useful. Riding the bus in a yellow spandex suit can be embarrassing at best [so would a hero being mugged in the subway].

Although action and super powered combat are the glue that keeps this genre together, role-playing is of the utmost importance. The heroes do not just reach the evil mastermind's secret chamber and proceed to blow him to smithereens easily. Dialogue and manipulation are the golden rule. Make your plots an enigma wrapped in a mystery. Let the good guys get the bad guys, but only after several disappointments and surprises. The GM's mission should be to vary the theme now and then. If they just repelled the last Skrull invasion, let them track a mystical serial killer. Don't take the players by the nose from one similar mission to another. Drop hints of possible missions three or more sessions in advance. The players will then feel they are in control of their character's fate. Play the villains to the hilt. Brainiac should manipulate everything and everyone. Dr. Doom must be arrogant, use top of the line technology and act with royal class. Venom should be bad to the bone, obsessed with Spiderman's demise.

Super hero campaigns require a

special state of mind, and turns you into your favorite caped crusader. If run correctly it can be an exciting and wonderful role-playing experience, give it a try. Any and all comments on the super hero genre are welcome through the wonderful staff of Papyrus.

GHOST RIDER FOR DC HEROES, Converting characters from MSH to DC Heroes by Robert Rees. Originally printed in Black Mole #8, a UK fanzine published by Gareth Jones, 69 Atherley Road, Shirely, Southampton, SO1 5DT, England.

Question: Why bother converting Marvel characters of DC Heroes? I really love the Marvel characters but don't want to pay to practically freeform. I like the DC Heroes rules anyway (I use the simpler "Batman" set). I produced a set of rules for conversions, which only took a few days, and now mean that I can use practically any Marvel super hero product with DC Heroes (which lacks solid support). If anyone would like my ideas, drop Gareth a line at Black Mole, include a SASE. He'll pass the request on to me, and I'll try to get you a speedy reply.

Requests: 1. Has anyone produced a conversion for Champions, Golden Heroes or Heroes Unlimited to DC Heroes? 2. After reading the "Days of Future Present" graphic novel, I would love stats for Boom-Boom, Sunspot, Warlock, Rictor, Iceman, Beast, Cyclops, She-Thing (or whatever she's called) and anybody from Alpha Flight. Some list, huh? Oh yes, why is Ben Grimm no longer the Thing? Thicky me for not keeping up!

Ghost Rider - alias Daniel Ketch
DEX 3/5 STR 2/6 BODY 3/15 Wealth 1
INT 3/3 WILL3/4 MIND 3/5
INFL4/8 AURA3/8 SPIRIT 3/8 HP 40/80

Ghost Rider is two separate personalities altogether, Daniel Ketch and the demon Zarathos. The demon needs the human body to manifest, Daniel cannot control the Ghost Rider's actions. Ketch must touch the bike's petrol cap to transform. None of the powers are available to Ketch (except telepathy). All stats before the "/" symbol are Ketch's

Powers: Telepathy 8, Skin Armor 8,
Magic Blast 8

Skills: Vehicles (land) 4, Scholar
(Occult/Mysticism)

Advantages: 2 gadgets;

Chain (BODY 8, STR 8, ZAP long,
Shape Change 8, [EV(Stars)5])

Bike (BODY 16, Running 7, STR 6,
Skin Armor 16, Flame Project 5, Misc
drawback - Flame Project only works
on the bike's tires.)

Misc. Advantages:

As Ghost Rider's body is made up
of hellfire, he can be considered to
have a 40AP resistance to
radiation/gas/poison/heat/fire.
Ghost Rider is immune to attacks that
affect/damage a living human soul
because he hasn't got one (ie. Magic
Blast, Hypnotism, Mind Probe).

Disadvantages:

Telepathy can only be used to
control the bike. Daniel Ketch can
use this power inadvertently to bring
the bike to him if he cannot reach
it.

Special Note: Ghost Rider's Magic
Blast is a special attack called his
"Penance stare". He must be in
physical contact with the victim, who
then receives an attack equivalent to
the worst pain he/she has ever
inflicted on someone else. In
addition, the victim must make an
INF/AURA save vs an attack of 8/8 or
lose 1 pt of SPIRIT (any RAPs save)
permanently. If SPIRIT is reduced to
0, the victim dies and their soul is
lost (no comebacks). A save of
BODY/BODY vs an attack of 8 must also
be made to avoid unconsciousness.

A full Ghost Rider history is in
Dragon #169.



HIDEAWAY, A new
GURPS Supers
Advantage, by SD
Anderson

Similar to the
enchantment of
the same name
(see GURPS Magic,
p.39), a person

with this advantage can open up a
pocket dimension. The base size of
this dimension is on "cubic" hex (1yd
across, 2yd high). The default
version presumes it leaves a "mental
signature" and is a "movable area"

that stays fixed once the character
is in the game.

The player may define the shape of
the pocket dimension even "breaching"
the "cubic hex" borders, so long as
less than half the volume is
"outside" its hex, or base area of
effect. Shape is fixed once the
character is in the game. If a
larger of variable shape is needed,
see the enhancements Increase Area
and Wall.

SPECIAL LIMITATION: Reduced size,
-20%. The hideaway holds no more
than 3ft³ worth of material.
Something that could only hold the
contents of a pants pocket or small
purse, -30%.

SPECIAL LIMITATION: 50% of weight
inside the hideaway counts against
the character's encumbrance. Note,
if the hideaway is attached to a
gadget the character doesn't carry or
if the advantage takes the "fixed
location" limitation, this is not a
real limitation to the character and
cannot reduce the cost of the
advantage, -30%.

SPECIAL ENHANCEMENT: Link,
normally this is restricted to Super
Powers, and not available to
advantages (see Supers p.51).
However "life support" type
advantages such as temperature
tolerance or vacuum support can be
included as part of this advantage.
The costs of these advantages may be
reduced with the limitation "only in
the hideaway", -20%. The PCs will
have to buy these with the
enhancement "affects others" if the
heroes place a witness to a
ganglord's murder in their extra
dimensional base for safety, the
witness can safely exist even if all
the heroes are outside.

SPECIAL ENHANCEMENT: The hideaway
has lighting, always on +10% or can
be turned off +20%. Pre-requisite, 1
level of illuminate power.

SPECIAL ENHANCEMENT: The hideaway can
be programmed to open under pre-
specified conditions. +20% if the
character has to be conscious at that
time and in the vicinity of the
hideaway, +40% for one of those
conditions being in effect, and +60%
for neither being required.

SPECIAL ADVANTAGE: The hideaway

has other doorways that lead to other points in the real world. Cost, 60 pts. Base range is 10 miles. Every 10 pts increases that range by a factor of 10. If psi is allowed in the Supers game, this advantage is not permitted. If Psi teleporting is permitted in the game, Auto or Exo teleport at a level powerful enough to reach the specified distances must be purchased instead, +20%.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

INSTANT COSTUME CHANGE: The hideaway follows the character and holds his costume or battlesuit contorting its shape to the characters every movement. Activating the hideaway puts the costume or battlesuit on him then and there, ready for use. (Hideaway +20% instantaneous, cost 48 pts)

GROUP BASE: Each player must buy this advantage separately. If non-members are allowed inside this base, all players must purchase this with the "affects others" enhancement. Instead of having a number of distinct pocket universes, the characters define theirs as a single one, with each player having a doorway that accompanies them.

Unless bought with limitations that prevent it, one hideaway works perfectly normally inside another. An instant change/battlesuited character above could enter this type of hero base without causing a disruption of the space-time continuum. Please note, he's had to buy this twice already!

If players buy different sized areas for that same base, there are parts of the base certain characters cannot access without the presence and willingness of the character who "owns" that part of the dimension. For example, ArmorMan buys the group base, which has a 12 hex radius, and adds 1 extra hex of radius. This gives him 397 hexes of shared base, plus an additional 72 hexes he's free to use for himself. 72 out of 469 hexes is well under half the volume and he can place it off to one side without any problems. ArmorMan's player can define that 72 hex volume's shape more or less as he pleases.

(Hideaway +220% Increased Area +11

hexes, +40% Affects Others, +10% Linked to Vacuum Support, +10% Linked to Temperature Tolerance (note, the group has electrical power and normal lighting). +280%. Cost, 152 pts per character (ArmorMan pays 160). Oh, by the way, each character also pays for Vacuum Support and Temperature Tolerance, adding 35 pts to the cost if they take the limitation noted above.

A character could also make a private (and reasonably secure) residence out of this power. If the teleport enhancement/other door advantage above is purchased, a character based in Vancouver could enter the group's pocket universe, and exit through another character's doorway (one say, located in Atlanta) raising the cost accordingly.

HEALING CHAMBER: Preset to open and swallow the character at any time the character suffers enough damage to go unconscious. This hideaway would have to have Life Support and the character would have to have some manner of regeneration or other healing. (Hideaway +20% instantaneous, +20% Closes instantaneously, +40% Conditionally activated even when the character is unconscious, +80%. Cost 72 pts.)

MORE DUNGEON FOR YOUR \$

Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe: Richard Rider to Sidewinder, by Marvel Comics

This series of comic books is Marvel's answer to DC's "definitive directory" series (one reviewed in A&E 208). I found this \$1.50 comic in the bargain bin and took it home for .50. Like its DC cousin it provides descriptions of heroes, villains, groups, organizations and alien races. Physical characteristics, strengths, weaknesses, assets, affiliations and powers are all given in terms that any GM could translate to game stats. Histories add color and depth to each description and can easily be absorbed into an existing campaign.

This particular issue had something for everyone: Hardcore superheroes and villains for SHRPGs. Pulp type heroes for pulp campaigners. Several alien races for

ScifiRPGs. Good and evil organizations and companies for modern and post-modern RPGs. An intelligent humanoid racoon and his universe for Toon lovers or anthropomorphic settings. Savage Lands Mutates, sorcerers and jungle princesses for FRPGs.

Star Trek, The RPG, adventure book, by FASA

I picked up this book at a flea market for \$3, which I am sure is half the cover price. It contains 3 Star Trek the RPG adventures, all with connections to an original series episode. The scenarios are good, detailed yet loose, allowing for some good role playing potential. There are few references to the core rules and the stats are easy to decipher (they look to be based on a 1-100 scale). The one ship form that is provided appears to be adaptable to most of the simpler ship-to-ship combat simulations I've seen, providing boxes to denote power/hp levels for various ship operations and construction. It is my guess that anyone can adapt these adventures to there favorite scifi rules, with satisfying results.

Starting from the back cover, printed upside down, are several pages of data sheets on the Constitution Class Heavy Cruiser and the Klingon D-7 class Battlecruiser. There are no deck diagrams but a verbal description of each ship's major sections and capabilities are provided in detail. These "Recognition Handbooks" can allow the use of these vessels with other rules system.

While Mayfair, ICE and WEG slug it out, you could be cruising the galaxy at warp 6 using Space Master, GURPS or some other set of rules. I would venture to guess that most STTRPG adventures are easy to use with other games as well. Look for a sale and try one out, at the least you can imagine your way thru it and enjoy a non-rerun Trekkie high.

Omegakron, by T Moldvay, for AH's Lords of Creation RPG

Those boxed LoC modules, sitting on the upper shelf, had been nagging

at me with their \$3.99 reduced sticker on them for almost a year now. I'd looked at them, fingered them and even read some of their back covers. Armed with a fin, I entered the hobby store looking for a bargain. This time I cracked, having recently received massive doses of Gamma World and XXVc material, and picked up this post nuclear holocaust adventure.

The box promised mutant, cyborg and android cultures. Futuristic airship merchants, giant "reclaimers", intelligent mutated animals, etc where the highlights. At first glance inside my new purchase I was sorely disappointed. 70% of the packages weight was a pad of LoC character sheets, useless to me. After I discarded some promotional material I was left with a 30 page book, an 8 page booklet on the early history of Akron, OH and 2 (other) player aid sheets (some texts and some maps of encounter areas). I was depressed.

As I pursued the main adventure book, I found great promise. After absorbing its contents I found an adventure/sourcebook very suitable for multiple campaigns: XXVc, GW, Torg, Shadowrun, (Toon?) or any dark future/post holocaust/time travel/scifi game. The adventure's encounters are not exciting but promote role-playing and are well connected. There are puzzles to solve, confrontations to resolve and missions to complete. Within the text are general descriptions of: several mutant animal cultures, several street gangs, 2 hi tech cultures, 3 recovering cultures and some dangerous wild encounters. There are: mobile cities, domed cities, time agents, a supernatural phenomena, old cities, new cultures, radioactive wilderness and a Godzilla-like nasty. If any of this sounds familiar to your campaign, then this module is useful to you, but don't pay more than \$4.

THE DICTIONARY SAYS ... fakir (fa kir') n. [Ar. faqir, lit., poor] 1. one of a Moslem holy sect og beggars 2. a Hindu ascetic (= one who leads a life of strict self-denial, esp. for religious purposes)

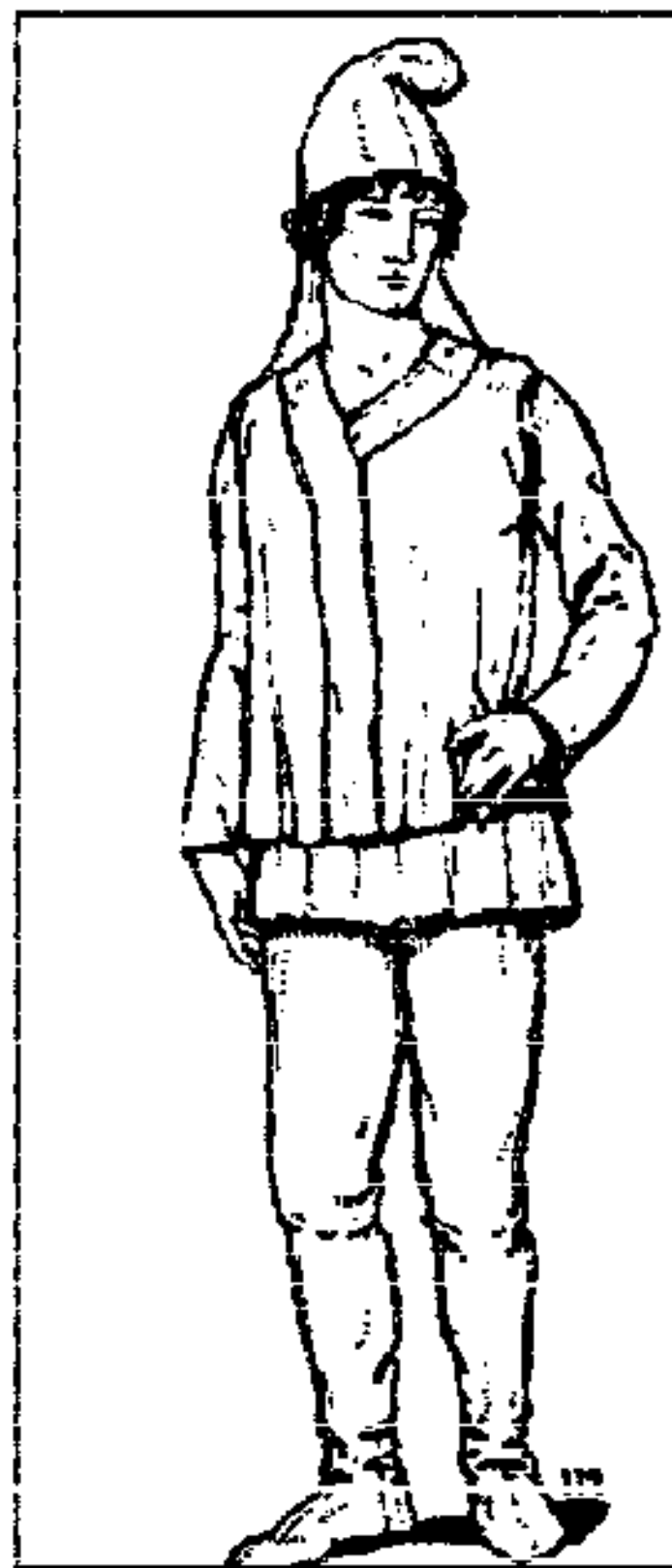
MACH, a RPG by Michael Lange for Alliance Publications Ltd. reviewed by Nick Parenti

It was on sale (\$8) and even though it is out of print, Rick Swan's Complete Guide to RPGs had some good things to say about it. Swan cited it as an original, interesting scifi background and he was right.

A highly advanced, benevolent race visits 1980s Earth with news that their sun's pending supernova will destroy all life on Earth. They arrange to transport the inhabitants of our planet and any goods, save weapons, to the planet Mach. Here they will share their new home with its original inhabitants and 3 other refugee races. In the process a large portion of Earth's population is misplaced (though humans outnumber the other refugee races), weapons are smuggled and the savior race is nowhere to be found nor ever heard from again. The game takes place 200 years later.

Characters are of one of the refugee races, Machs or a very non-humanoid alien race who made it to Mach on their own with unknown intent. The adventure is in living on, and exploring, the planet in the wake of 200 years of technical atrophy and destructive warfare.

The game system itself is usable, not overly easy nor complicated, but by no means original. It uses a skill based system in which "blocks" in a skill, or psionic discipline, are purchased with experience points increasing the character's



proficiency in that skill/discipline (much like DragonQuest levels). DragonQuest (and possibly Fifth Cycle) players may find this psionic system and skills useful, with little tinkering. Experience points are earned via adventuring, self training, using a tutor and/or going to a school. Some skills/disciplines require tutor or school training at certain levels in order to advance.

Character attributes are compatible with AD&D/D&D with the additions of Psyche (for psionic ability, much like magic aptitude in DragonQuest or Fifth Cycle) and Appearance (AD&D 1st edition comeliness). Interesting rules which provide for relationships between high and low Stamina (constitution) and Strength, as well as Charisma and Appearance, are easily adapted to AD&D/D&D. Similarly the PC/NPC races are also AD&D/D&D compatible, providing the following new options: Bane - giant, physically powerful but of low intellect, Mach - aboriginal natives with possible psionic powers, Palir - psionic, formerly pacifist, asexual and scholarly, Tofus - possibly evil, psionic, exploitive and hated, and Tracks - very non-humanoid and strange aliens.

Mach is actually very AD&D/D&D compatible, including weapons statistics and creature parallels. In fact this world would make an excellent addition to a Spelljammer campaign or as a campaign world itself, using the AD&D/D&D system. The lack/low occurrence of fire arms and technology make this an excellent fantasy campaign. (Although it would

also work extremely well with Gamma World, 4th ed., from what I've seen of it so far. It may be even more compatible with GW4 than AD&D/D&D, providing an alternate campaign world or addition.) Psionics replaces magic on Mach and the psionic system is easily adapted into AD&D/D&D rules. The skill system could also be used to augment existing character classes, create new ones or as a source of non-weapon proficiencies.

With the exception of the physical powerful, and giant sized Bane, all PC/NPC races have at least some chance at psionic abilities. The psionics, races and attribute ranges (high by traditional AD&D/D&D standards) are very "Dark Sun-like" although this world is hardly devastated nor dominated. On the contrary, it is ripe for exploration, adventure and exploitation.

To an only slightly lesser degree, this game is compatible with Lands of Adventure, Villains & Vigilantes, Chaosim's BRP system, Palladium's RPG system and the Hero system. Character statistic ranges and weapon damage info are within usable ranges. Just as with AD&D/D&D the skill/psionic systems are at least useful add-ons.

The scenario that is included in the boxed set is genre generic and is useful even outside of Mach based campaigns. I highly recommend this game for AD&D/D&D, Palladium, Fantasy Hero, BRP and V&V (and maybe GW, DQ & 5th Cycle) players looking for a unique change of pace at a low price. If a campaign on Mach is not to your liking, maybe a visit to it, or at least pirating of some of its ideas is well worth \$8.

Mach comes complete with background, mechanics and extremely easy to use character skill/psionic discipline advancement record sheets. What it lacks is any maps or other such details. We are told there are cities of colonists and ancient ruins to explore but almost no details are given. This will not hinder the creative nor the rules pirates. Only those who are looking for commercial campaigns that are all sewn up are cautioned away from Mach.

NEWS



FROM THE INDUSTRY

ICE has secured a new multi-year renewal of their JRR Tolkien license.

GAMA has spent \$46K to promote an amendment to a NY state law banning lead toys, aimed at preserving lead miniatures. No results yet. At that rate, 50 states would total \$2.3 million so we can maintain the right to buy expensive lead miniatures instead of the industry changing to plastic. Another special interest to ponder.

Mayfair's Role-Aids line is showing some new products that tickled my interest. "To Hell & Back", a source book for Dante's Inferno, Land of Fairie, Atlantis, Avalon and Selene (what, no Ys?!) but if its anything like the Monsters of Myth & Legends series it'll bomb. "Techno-Time", provides info for introducing time travel to any FRPG campaign and could be a useful addition to my ever growing AD&D/D&D/GW/V&V/XXVc "in my dreams" universal system. "Undead: Army of Night", apparently contains the same kind of source material their other monster aids contain but also covers undead PCs (another dimension for addition to my expanding cross-game system, system.).

On to other subjects. It seems the AE combo letter is contagious (AErth, AEsheba) or maybe E Gary Gygax is freelancing for ICE. ICE's latest catalog lists Gethaenna (with ae combined), Underearth Emer, a sourcebook for their Shadow World.

OTHER POINTS OF VIEW

B. Dalton's bookstores, Sense of Wonder, newsletter carries RPG info in the form of new releases and reviews. It's a free resource that's worth at least a glance.

Gamer's Forum, P.O. Box 373, Ewa Beach, HI 96862. I have #4 (Mar'92) of this fanzine. In appearance, it mimics earlier issues of The Gamer's Connection (previously mentioned and a visitor to our pages) without interior graphics. Articles cover all genre, system generic plot hooks, cyberpunk, GURPS and a review of a computer game. No hint as to price or print schedule. If you check it out, tell 'em Nick from Papyrus sent ya.