



PAPYRUS™

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See, "Scribbles from the Scribe", for a special trade offer.

Papyrus™ #13

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Happy Holidays and best
to all in the New Year!

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SCRIBBLES FROM THE SCRIBE - Beloved backgrounds uncovered by RPGs.

Pern would probably be a popular choice. Although "real role players" and "story tellers" may be able to enjoy the subtle-ties of the politics and romance in the stories, "roll players" and those of us with baby-boomer short attention spans would tire quickly. Lets face it, until Renegades of Pern, action was limited and violence minimal. Don't get me wrong, I love the books, I've read every one of them, I just like my gaming to contain more ... brainless excitement. The righteousness and dominance of the dragonriders is an unbalancing aspect of the society from a gaming point of view.

A number of years ago, I toyed with the idea of adapting standard RPG high fantasy to Pern. The details included: the disappearance of Northern Dragons / further perversion of Southern/Old Dragons (to mimic traditional nasties) / adventures centered around exploration and search for lost tech and lore (through ancient southern settlements and abandoned northern weyrs/ the existence of a dwarf race in southern mts (products of a small gene pool) / hostile sapient natives evolved from fire lizards that inhabit the 3rd continent (draconian) / human-dolphin cross-breeds from the final days of landing (thread drowned and dolphins accompanied the colonists)/ native subterranean race of insect-like humanoids / psionics in place of magic. I'm embarrassed to share this shameless twisting of a gorgeous work, but the result would have been a more mainstream fantasy-tech campaign. I never did flesh it all out.

Otherwise, source material abounds: Dragon Lovers Guide to Pern, The Atlas of Pern, Mayfair's boardgame (for thread fall resolution), Nova's game books (for detailing individual thread flying performance), Dragonfire and Dragonharper "choose your own path" game-novels for stats and adventures, and the novels themselves. Maybe it would work.

Dark Matter, the new Ether?

I just finished an article in the June '93 issue of Smithsonian on dark matter. It seems that the latest theory on the force that holds the universe together involves the predominance of an alternate configuration of subatomic particles called ... dark matter. If the theory is correct, 95% of the universe's mass is dark matter, making regular matter rather insignificant.

Within this theory are 2 theorized configurations of dark matter. One is that it exists in huge spheres called MACHOs (massive compact halo objects). The other is that the universe is awash in a sea of dark matter that permeates everything. Called WIMPS (weakly interacting massive particles), these particles appear to parallel (not mimic) the ether once thought to permeate the universe, including the existence of currents.

My purpose in mentioning this is to share it as a medium of interstellar travel/propulsion much like S1889 uses the ether. It closes a gap in the science-fantasy tech space travel I've been working on (since before Spelljammer, relying on magic is cheating). I hope to detail it in these pages soon so learned comments or queries on the subject are welcome.

Rock-con XXI

As usual I was disappointed with the dealers room, no deals. I did, however, participate in the silent auction. I unloaded 50% of my excess material and received a nice bit of compensation for it too. I bid on a still shrink wrapped XXVc game but was out-bid at a level I would not pay. The same fate came to my bid on the XXVc Hardware supplement as well. I picked up a copy of The Lexicon, Atlas of the Lost World of Atlantis, by Bard games. It only

cost me \$1, now that's a baaaargain and a generic uses review is in the works. I am trying not to kick myself too hard over passing up a \$1 copy of Man, Myth & Magic. My sources say it stank but I'm sure I could squeeze a \$'s worth of useful material from it.

I did win 2 door prizes, one with my entrance ticket and another from a stack some kid handed my wife as she waited for me to finish my business at the auction. I picked up Dragon Strike (which will make a fine Xmas gift) and Shadowrun 2nd ed hardcover (which I will offer in trade for a new or near-new XXVc boxed set).

I hit up the attending retailers for Sage Lore/The Scroll, Ragnarok/Abyss, A&E and my own Papyrus (looking to be an ad media for store owners).

While I was dragging my irate toddler from the auction room Saturday, I thought I saw Jonathan Tweet. I found him Sunday "playing with someone else's toy soldiers" in a Warhammer 40K (spiky bits of futuristic chaos) game. He was absorbed deeply into the action, I think he was about to have his butt kicked. After exchanging pleasantries, and the observation that the Magic card game had spread like wildfire, I gave him my extra prize tickets and called it quits.

I also managed to meet Tom Wham, as we both hurriedly tagged our stuff for the auction. Like everyone else, I eventually saw him engaged in a Magic game too. Is it really that good?

NON-CON Acquisitions

I recently received a new RPG from my friend in England, Gareth Jones. Gareth is the publisher of the Black Mole fanzine and the new, all Arthurian, Beaumains magazine. "All-Adventure Action Roleplay Game!" (or AAARG!) is the name and it's a multi-genre action oriented game. The goal seems to be to re-create the swashbuckling feel of old movies and serials of any genre. I'll do a complete review when I have finished it.

My new friends at Mega-Mag sent me a stack of back issues including the rules to their KAPOW! shrp (no hit points). Mag and RPG reviews to follow.

I won a random survey answer prize from The Gamer's Connection fanzine. Mark sent me a copy of TORG Infiniverse, Campaign Update, vol 2. It made interesting reading (a toon cosm?!) but I don't use the system, so it's available for trade (still lookin' for those items mentioned in #218, the XXVc Hardware supplement perhaps).

My mail box was graced with Daniel

Gallant's first issue of Knight Notes, his fanzine. Nicely done, varied in subject and useful. Yet another way to get yourself published (don't forget my Papyrus fanzine! Daniel and I are not above dual publishing as our readership is different).

Deja Vou: Last year I reported that the December Consumer Reports listed Heroquest as a "Best Buy" Christmas gift. This December's issue lists Mattel's Dark World (Heroquest clone) in the same category. I've seen Dark World on sale for 1/2 its cover price, I thought that was a statement of its quality but maybe the demand was low.

STILL LOOKING TO MAKE A TRADE: The search for a copy of the XXVc Buck Rogers RPG boxed set (new or used) continues. In case you just tuned in I am offering 2 different packages in trade:

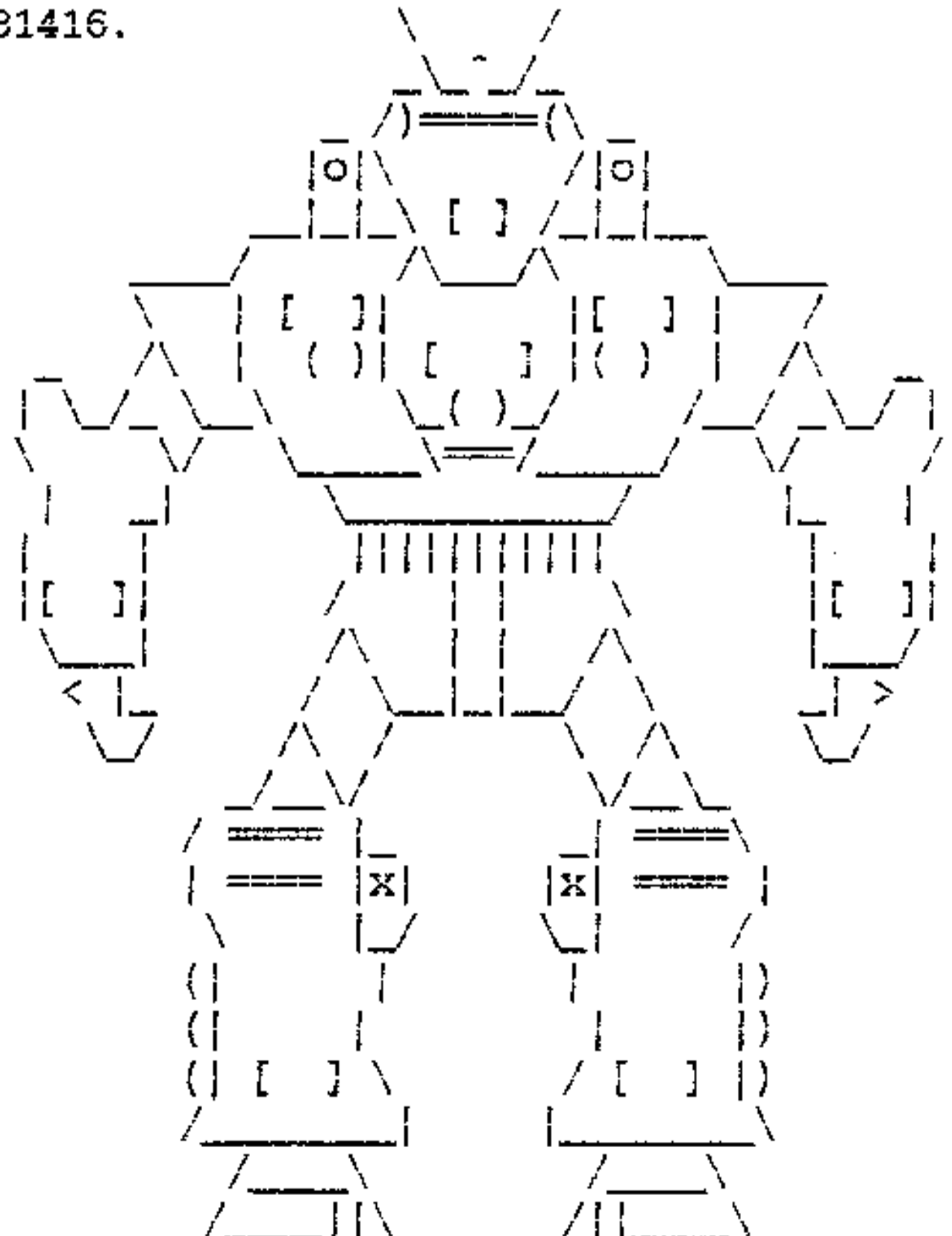
1. A brand new copy of Shadowrun 2nd ed. (hardcover) rules and a brand new copy of the TORG Infiniverse, Campaign Update, vol 2.

-or-

2. A never used copy of GURPS basic 3rd ed, soft cover, and about 250 pages of official and unofficial support material from magazines, BBSs and fanzines. Anyone out there going to bite?

A (CONTINUED) LOOK AT LIGHT MECHS

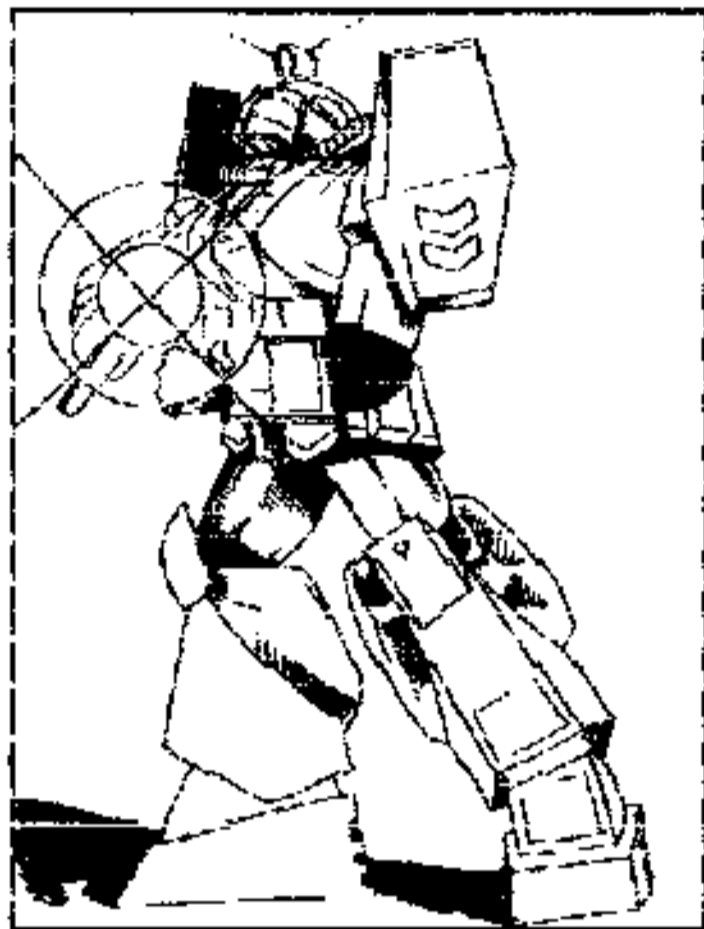
by Tali, originally appeared in Tales of a Minstrel #11, the newsletter of The Guild of the Green Dragon, PO Box 13562, Savannah, GA 31416.



VLK-QA Valkyrie

I'd like to start by saying that this mech has great armor for a mech of its size. Better armor than an urbanmech but less in the rear.

Better weaponry, in my opinion, than an urbanmech considering range and the effects of being ammo-less. Since I'd rather be left a med. laser than a sma. laser especially after I've already picked off a few shots at long range. Just beware of getting to close a to a target, since the LRM has a vicious minimum range.



FS9-H Firestarter

Well, to be honest, I've never been in the cockpit of a Firestarter so I can't be the best judge of this mech. I'm also not a fire buff so I'll try to do my best.

This mech has good armor, but I would watch out for the legs. I don't understand the extra armor that's on the

rear of this mech but its there for whatever purpose.

It's got good firepower with two med. lasers, two mg, and 4 flamers which (since they're placed in all directions) would be for starting fires.

Another benefit to this mech is good movement, which includes jumping.

JR7-D Jenner

Now this may be the best light mech that is mass produced. It's got great damage possibilities since it packs 4 med. lasers and a SRM 4. It's got fair armor and a good movement rate, including 5 movement points of jumps that can get you out of plenty of jams. I once lost a Warhammer because I was stuck between a huge hill and a hard place. The point is, a Jenner probably could have escaped.

OTT-7J Ostscout

If your a pilot of this mech, you'll probably rely on the quickness of it. Great speed, great jumping ability, good armor, but light weaponry with only a med. laser (a Locust packs more).

PNT-9R Panther

Well the Panther is a good mech. I'm not sure, but I think it's got the best armor in the light mech handful. It's got good armament, with a PPC and a SRM 4, and it's

got average speed with jumps. Don't let the name fool you, it's not all that fast. It's got a rather good heat system even though it has a PPC, a real heat eater, just watch it if you jump around a lot.

HeavenTech Bloodline Series

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From: CSE0735@DESIRE.WRIGHT.EDU

Newsgroups: rec.games.mecha

Subject: HeavenTech Industries Bloodline

HeavenTech Industries

1. Theory behind the Bloodline

2. Current Bloodline mechs in the series

3. The Bloodline

Theory and Mechanics

The Bloodline series was originally created by HeavenTech in an attempt to create a new kind of Arena mech. And, while the Arena version of the Bloodline mechs perform their duties admirably, the potential of the technology was still vastly underestimated. In an attempt to expand the uses for Bloodline technology, the Arena triad was removed from it's scheduled release date of Summer 3051. Over the past years the technology has been expanded and improved, and now, with the Summer of 3056 fast approaching the Bloodline battlemechs will be the most fearsome war machines the Inner Sphere has seen.

The Bloodline theory is simple. Multiple units acting as one. This is something every military commander has wished for since the very beginning of time.

But while the human mind is individual enough that it can never entirely act as a whole with the rest of their unit, advances in technology have made it more and more possible. In fact, one of the most important aspects of the Bloodline series was discovered when a HeavenTech Resource team happened upon a Star League science lab. The technology and research papers found there, as well as the actual hardware that had already been built has provided HeavenTech with a leading edge over the competition.

All Bloodline Battlemechs are dependant on a piece of equipment built into the head unit, and tied into all of the Battlemech's systems. This unit is called the Advanced Network Node (ANN). With the ANN, it is possible for any number of mechs to be inter-linked. This inter-linking can take place on several levels, but as the levels go higher, the unit cohesion is increased to such a point that all of the Battlemechs in the

Papyrus

Bloodline network are acting as one.

Unfortunately, the Bloodline network is not very flexible. Because of the need to fit the ANN into the head unit, all variables must be hardwired directly into the unit. This means that a Bloodline 3 mech unit cannot be upgraded to a Bloodline 5 mech unit, and that a Bloodline 5 mech unit that has lost a mech cannot be down-graded to a 3 mech unit.

Because of the hard-wiring involved, the Bloodline network leader must also be designated when the mechs are being built. The network leader acts as a guide to the other Bloodline units.

With the ANN installed, and the Bloodline network designated, the cockpit of the mechs must be upgraded to handle the additional electronics. Dependant on the level of ANN networking wished, the Neurohelm controller and designator are modified. The changes made to the helm and sub-sequent electronics are listed below, and matched to a similar piece of hardware if applicable:

- Level 1: Approximately the same as a C³
- Level 2: Controller enhanced and slaved to ANN. Effect is that pilot "wants" to follow the action of the Bloodline network leader.
- Level 3: Controller and designator both enhanced and slaved to the ANN.
- Level 4: Neurohelm modified to rewrite pilot's neural network. Effect eader.
- Level 5: Neurohelm modified as above, as well as modified to pick up emotional phases. ANN transmits them to other Bloodline network members. Effect is that not only do the pilots begin to think like each other, they actually begin to "feel" like each other.
- Level 6: Level six is only achievable with a clone! The helm is modified as above, but to the point where the ANN is also transmitting thoughts.

At level six, all members of the Bloodline network act, move, think and breath as one.

As one can plainly see, the differences between the various levels is simply staggering. At level six, the Bloodline mechs move, fire, and are one. The pilots loose none of their genius, however, because although they think, act, and move as one, they still are able to communicate. This allows for several options to be offered, although whichever one the network leader picks will be used.

Here are the charts as it pertains to the

game:

Bloodline ANN statistics		
Level	Weight	Critical
1	1 ton	1 in head
2	1 ton & 1 ton added to cockpit	1 in head
3	same as lvl2	1 in head
4	1 ton & 2 tons added to cockpit	1 in head
5	same as lvl 4	1 in head 1 in CT
6	same as lvl 4	1 in head 2 in CT

Combat Modifiers		
Level	To-hit	Initiative Mod
Level 1	Range of closest mech to target	---
Level 2	-1 to hit target designated by the network leader. +1 to hit all others.	---
Level 3	as level 2	+1
Level 4	-2 to hit target designated by net- work leader. +1 to hit all others.	+1
Level 5	same as level 4	+2
Level 6	-4 to hit target designated by net- work leader. Impossible to tar- get any others.	+3

Effects of ANN destruction		
Level	Effect (regular)	Effect (network leader)
1	Nothing; unit continues w/o trouble	Network destroyed. All bonuses and penalties lost.
2	same as lvl 1	same as lvl 1
3	same as lvl 1	Disorientation; +1 to hit, -1 to Init for five rounds.
4	same as lvl 1	Disorientation; +2 to hit, -3 to Init for five rounds.
5	Disorientation; +1 to hit, -1 to Init for 3 rounds.	same as lvl 4
6	Disorientation; +3 to hit, and -3 to Init for 5 rounds.	Disorientation; +5 to hit, and -3 Init for 5 rounds.

Gaming with Bloodline mechs:

When gaming with Bloodline mechs, the networks must always be designated, along with their network leaders at the time of construction.

Example:

A Crab is being modified along with two Locusts into a three node Bloodline. The player decides that he wants the ANNs to operate at level 3. He then modifies the mechs, and a month or two later, HeavenTech has returned the new Triad Bloodline.

If one of the mechs should happen to be destroyed, a new ANN, as well as a new mech must be bought in order for the network to work.

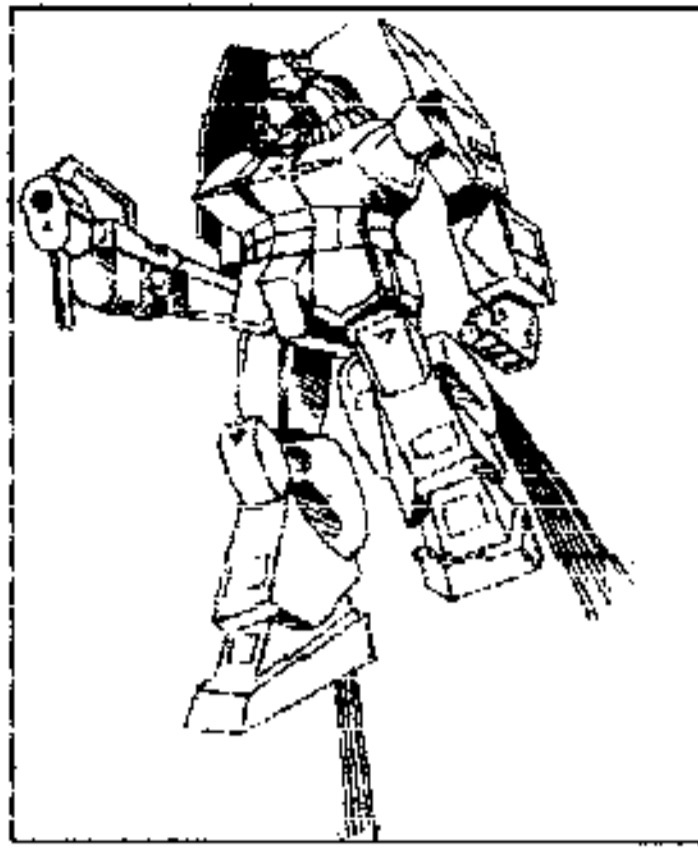
End of Section One

NOTE: I need someone who actually has a BT group to test this for me. If your willing to test send me mail at John.Janek%bbs@dmapub.dma.org. You'll get all the latest greatest Bloodline mechs, as well as have your names up there with mine in the copyright. :)

MORE DUNGEON FOR YOUR \$ THE XXVc INSTALLMENT

As usual, I was wandering a local hobby store in search of a deal. While rifling through the 1/2 price rack, I came across some of TSR's, Buck Rogers XXVc stuff. I had heard that it was very D&D/AD&D and decided to take a look. I chose "Mars in the 25th Century" figuring at least I could pirate the unique desert fauna. What I found was a surprise, the setting is dark and negative but interesting, full of intrigue and purpose. I also found the system material extremely D&D/AD&D. After purchasing "Earth in the 25th Century" I began to wonder why XXVc isn't just campaign material for GW4. Finally I worked up the courage to buy something full price (very rare occasion for me), "No Humans Allowed", which is an accessory dealing with genetics and altered life forms (which advertises its compatibility with AD&D on the back cover).

In this campaign universe the solar system is dominated by a megacorp called RAM (formally the Russo-American Mercantile company) which is based on Mars. RAM is the most powerful organization but the other



planets constitute or contain pockets of resistance and/or independence. Genetic engineering has created RAM's super-soldiers, and races that exploit environments too harsh for regular humans (asteroid belt, Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, ocean depths and orbital space). Terra-forming and enclosed environments have made other planets more habitable but even so the Martian citizens of RAM are not without low gravity and cosmetic (genetic) improvements.

After a devastating nuclear conflict and a second devastation at the hands of RAM, earth is a very Gamma World-like environment. There are areas of high radiation, mutants, primitive/natural areas of recovery, open urban environments (called orgs) and enclosed urban city-states completely independent from the outside (Omegakron, lastish, fits this Earth very well. It even contains a megacorp that could easily be substituted with RAM). RAM continues to exploit earth for its own gain and there are many revolutionary (terrorist?) organizations out to stop them. The New Earth Organization (NEO) is intended to be the most politically correct.

Gamma World players will find XXVc material extremely useful, especially those mentioned above and likely the other accessories concerning planets and hardware. Actually, XXVc players should seriously consider getting the GW4 rules, the mutated PC creation rules surpass the mutation rules in "Earth in the XXVc" and the general guidelines of "gennie" (term for genetically altered races) creation in "No Humans Allowed". All of the gennies in No Humans Allowed come with stats for use as characters that make for easy use with: GW4, V&V, AD&D or D&D. A little work and LoA, Hero, Palladium (please don't sue me Kevin!) and CoC can also use these gennies.

I don't know what TSR's plans are for this game. My opinion is that, like Metamorphosis Alpha, it should become a campaign world for GW4 much like Dark Sun or Dragonlance is to AD&D. The benefits of combining the 2 are tremendous to players of both games, but who am I to second guess wiser folk. In any case, don't be afraid to check out any of the XXVc accessories (I don't know what the modules nor rules are like ... yet), but shop around for a deal lower than the \$10-\$15 cover price.

Earth Dawn, flyer 3 of 3, mini-rules

I found the Earth Dawn system, as it is presented in the flyer, nice but derivative. It gave me the feel of a house rules RPG that

combined AD&D with a simple skill based RPG, nifty but not innovative. Mechanically it's playable and could be enjoyable but probably not worth investing in if you already own a FRPG that you are familiar with and own support for.

The sample adventure had a fantastic build-up but the encounters fell flat. Just when the climax was reached, the adventure became an trite hack and slash dungeon romp.

It would be easy to use this adventure in an AD&D/D&D (or any other fantasy) campaign. It appears that AD&D/D&D supporting material could be easily used in an Earth Dawn campaign (intentional?). I'll be keeping the mini-rules as a diversion and the adventure for a side track. I'll also be keeping my eye on Earth Dawn's supporting material, if they show more consistent depth than this adventure, I could easily meld them into my AD&D gaming.

Ysgarth Minirules, 2nd ed, ver 3.2

I've been in and out of touch with Ragnarok since high school (Abyss #20 something). I've watched the YRS change from the sidelines and marveled at its detail, both in mechanics and campaign. I've adapted YRS material for AD&D and DQ. I downloaded a shareware copy of the rules once and was so overwhelmed by the tables and numbers I never finished reading it. These minirules are the best ad campaign Dave could have ever run.

Having been given the opportunity to distribute copies at Rock-Con, and receiving copies at Gen-Con and in TGC#16, I finally read them. I'm not so afraid anymore. YRS is detailed, comprehensive and complex but it's not complicated. As a matter of fact it makes a lot of sense, but there's still a lot of it to work with. Given the opportunity, I would be willing to obtain a (used) copy of Ysgarth but I would need a bargain as I own too many systems already. My remaining hesitation comes from its low proliferation, high shock value to the newly exposed, and its tight link to Ragnarok's campaign worlds. I may get over these.

Hero Gladiators, by Bluebird Toys (UK) Ltd.

As is my habit, a trip to the mall resulted in a cruise through the Everything's \$1 store. Hanging on the wall, a group of "army man" sized figures hung in individual blister packs. Reading the package I found they were part of a fantasy combat game. Moments later I was \$1 poorer and the owner of a Hero Gladiator named Bold Jazrax, a Conan looking fellow in armor with shield and

scimitar.

The figures are multi-colored and appear to have fallen out of some AD&D manual, handsome humans and ugly humanoids. The base of each has spokes, like a ships wheel, for mounting little plastic skulls. The skulls are collected from defeated opponents, each figure comes with 40 of them. The base is made to sit atop a "Power Tower".

Each figure's power tower is unique to them and reflects their strengths and weaknesses. The tower is a 1" cylinder with an octagonal base. At each flat side a power score is listed (1-8?) for each of the following characteristics: Cunning, Magic, Agility, Bravery, Brains, Skill, Speed and Strength. Competing players roll their towers and compare scores, the higher score wins. Competitions like: best of 7, first to win 15 and best of 101 are recommended but the combat remains that simple.

There are at least 12 individual gladiators plus 3 more that come with an elaborate arena. The value of this product depends on your intent. The simplicity of the rules supports the 4-9 year old age group advertised. I would imagine a collection of these could be used in an introductory RPG using the Hero Gladiators combat rules. The figures themselves could be useful in numerous RPGs, board games and or Heroquest-like role playing board games (Dragon Quest, Dragon Strike, Dark World, etc). I doubt they'd be worth their original price, but at \$1 a piece, I'm sure many people will find a use for at least one.

MEGA-MAG

I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of the scenarios presented in each MEGA-MAG. Especially due to their brevity. Each situation and NPC is detailed enough but not too much to prevent melding into any campaign. The campaign world they describe is riddled with real life intrigue and concerns (rape, gay rights, Rush and the ultra-conservatives, Beavis & Butthead, corrupt politicians, sex scandal, random acts of violence, drugs, talk show hosts, rock musicians, government conspiracy) as well as classic comic hero subjects (humorous villains, arch-rivals, death, cybernetics, mutants, aliens, Atlantis, mythological ties, ultimate evil, misunderstood heroes/villains, super science).

Every few issues contain a "No GMs Allowed" adventure for solo or group play without a Game Master. These are equally well done. Although the rhythm is always

comic book frame by frame action, the scenarios maintain a need for thought before action and deductive reasoning before reaction.

These guys deserve an award for providing the most impressive cross system support service in any genre. Any style, mood, era or humor will be able to use them. Every adventure includes stats for: Champions (or any Hero Sys), DC Heroes (or Batman RPG), GURPS Supers (or most any GURPS), Good Guys Finish Last (from Better Games), Guardians, Heroes Unlimited (or TMNT and any other Palladium game, most easily convertible to V&V), KAPOW! and Marvel Super Heroes.

KAPOW! is the SHRPG system that the publishers of MEGA-MAG debut in issue number 7. Characters use points to buy abilities and skills (there are no traditional attributes like Strength nor Agility), and may receive extra points by accepting challenges (read disadvantages). This seems all standard enough but there is one other deviation from the mainstream, aside from the lack of attribute/characteristics scores.

KAPOW! is a matrix game, there are no hit points. Abilities/gadgets/etc are entered on a matrix on the character sheet, their order and distribution is somewhat governed to prevent imbalances. These "powers" are divided into defence, attack and move categories. Each is described elsewhere on the character sheet but their categories help determine the characters combat and movement abilities. They are used to determine the pool of dice the player has at his disposal to perform attacking, defensive or movement actions. Much like the board game Risk (and admittedly so), multiple dice are rolled and the top few are compared. Damage is taken by removing access to the powers in the matrix and their associated dice from the players dice pool. Provisions are made for extreme results, knock-outs and death (intended to be rare).

All in all this is an refreshingly flexible little system that provides fast, high action, results. It keeps the emphasis on role playing and doesn't burden players with weighty rules nor a sluggish/slow combat system. My recommendation to anyone into or thinking of trying Super Hero RPGs is to send Exclamation Publishing a \$9 check. For your money you should: request a 3 issue/month trial subscription to MEGA-MAG, request a back issue copy of MEGA-MAG #7 (which provides the KAPOW! rules) and you should receive a copy of issue #0 as a gift for ordering a back issue. Otherwise: a single

issue is \$3, a 3 month trial sub is \$6, a full year of 12 mags is \$24 and most back issues are available for \$3 each. Write to: MEGA-MAG, c/o Exclamation Publishing, 7200 Montgomery NE #391, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

Military Races, a Fifth Cycle RPG supplement by Robert Bartels

Without access to the Fifth Cycle RPG rules, I cannot speak to the adherence of this supplement to the core system nor to any affect it has on the game. There is a small section in the back on system conversion for use with other games, so I will address its contents and their quality as a RPG supplement.

This supplement details 7 anthropomorphic races, created during the 3rd cycle as soldiers. Each race has its own chapter and includes game statistics for use as PC/NPCs. The text of each chapter describes the culture, temperament, habits and an adventure seed for each race. A chapter in the front provides an overview of the advent of these military races. The back of the book addresses Fifth Cycle rules changes and additions. A small chart is provided to convert 5th Cycle character stats to d20, 3d6 and d100 game systems, in an unadvertised and underpowered attempt to gain some crossover sales. The book is organized and type set well. The art is nice, not overwhelmingly bad nor exquisite.

I cannot say that this is a striking supplement in any way. It is, however, a good resource. Although races derived from animals is a trite concept, Military Races pulls it off better than most. Each race has character and an individuality that makes them interesting. It is disappointing that the mercenary dealings of these races predominates over all other aspects of their behavior.

There are no shockers here, the cultures and habits are derived from our own archetypes. The most original race being the Kytons, the first military race created. They are derived from crabs and are the least human. With their hive mentality, stoic manner, symbiotic weaponry and racial memory they carry an aura of originality unmatched by the remaining races.

Generically speaking, the conversion chart in the back does help. My opinion is that this supplement will work best with DragonQuest or the Ysgarth Rule System because the 5th Cycle rules share the skill/class combo system format with them. Conversions are made difficult because

abbreviations abound in the racial characteristics descriptions. FYI the following definitions are provided: ST=strength, AG=agility, HM=hand manipulation, EN=endurance, IN=intelligence, CS=common sense, MA=magic aptitude, EL=eloquence, CL=comeliness and FP=fatigue points (I think). In any case, it is not so spectacular that I would recommend spending more than \$5, even for a 5th Cycle campaign.

Enemy In Sight, a card game. Reviewed by Gareth Jones, originally published in Gareth's fanzine "Black Mole" #5, 69 Atherley Road, Shirley, Southampton, SO1 5DT, United Kingdom.

This one's from Avalon Hill, producers of many a fine game, including Squad Leader and the classic Circus Maximus. If you've ever played "Naval War", you'll quickly recognize the format, but the play has moved from WWII to Napoleonic times.

The rules for this one are a little more complicated at first sight, and several points require more than one reading before they become entirely clear. But, once you know what you're doing, it's easy enough.

Cards are divided into Ship and Action cards. The ships are of various Rates, controlling how much damage they can take before sinking and the amount of damage they can inflict. Ships take damage on Hull and Rigging. Rigging hits disable a ship, hull hits sink it. Disabled ships may be captured. Taking a ship back to the home port (by use of the appropriate card) allows it to be repaired. Other cards allow various complications, such as Breaking the Line, Fireship, Run Aground, Blockade, etc. The victor is he who gains the most points by sinking enemy ships or by capturing them and taking them as Prizes.



This is a quick, fun game with lots of action and not too much thought. I've never played it with more than two players, but I imagine that strategic considerations would come more into play if you did, if only in deciding who to target each turn. It costs around eleven or twelve quid, which isn't too bad for a game of any sort these days (ie, it's

worth the price). I can give no higher recommendation than to say that I'm about to buy the very similar "Naval War" and look forward to playing that too. Maybe next time I'll give you my ideas on a variant version of this one.

OTHER POINTS OF VIEW

Game Shop News, a newspaper format collection of news, reviews and press release previews. Free at game stores. Editorial Office: 2339 Milstead Circle, Marietta GA 30066.

NEWS FROM THE INDUSTRY

NEW PRODUCTS FROM STEVE JACKSON GAMES:

December Releases

GURPS Werewolf: The Apocalypse

SJ Games follows the record sales of GURPS Vampire: The Masquerade with the next installment in what is destined to become a classic series. We are proud to announce GURPS Werewolf: The Apocalypse, the chilling world background of savage lycanthropes and their battle with those who threaten their precious Earth.

Adapted from White Wolf's best-selling worldbook, GURPS Werewolf allows players to take on the character of a werewolf, one of the mysterious Garou, whose packs fight the depredations of humankind on Nature. Their chief foe is the Wyrms, a godlike entity of decay and destruction that with its minions tries to destroy life on the planet. Through their primitive strength and their arcane powers, they are Gaia's only hope.

GURPS Werewolf includes complete conversion notes for players who have Garou already designed for the Storyteller system. Complete character generation information is also provided, including special advantages and disadvantages unique to the GURPS Werewolf setting. An entire chapter is devoted to running Werewolf campaigns in the GURPS milieu, as well as new vignettes, art and a new cover by renowned fantasy artist Rowena.

Written by Robert M. Schroeck (Camelot, Robin Hood, and I.S.T.). Bob Schroeck also designed and wrote the lycanthrope construction rules that appeared in GURPS Bestiary, Second Edition. Based on the original game by Mark Rein Hagen. Stock #6077, ISBN 1-55634-276-4, 208 pages, \$19.95. GURPS Space and GURPS Magic (reprints)

Two of our best-selling books are back in print with the exciting new cover style. All known errata has been corrected. 128 pages each, \$16.95.

January Releases

GURPS Lensman

E.E. "Doc" Smith's Lensman books have sold hundreds of thousands of copies since their release in the 1930s. Now SJ Games brings you starkly astounding space opera at its finest with GURPS Lensman!

Before the creation of the myriad planets of the galaxies, two worlds and two races were already ancient and already locked in a war of extinction. Even Arisia's supreme powers of the mind cannot restrain the Eddorian lust for dominance. Quarter or compromise is inconceivable. The only possible outcome is complete, utter annihilation.

The prize: the entire universe. The pawns on this final battleground: the young races of the galaxies -- young races like humanity.

But pawns can be promoted. The Arisians have forged, eon by eon, a weapon of prodigious power the Lensmen of the Galactic Patrol, a hammer of war to smash Eddore and finally rid the universe of their transdimensional evil.

Eddore, too, has its playing pieces, arrayed in a network of drug dealers and crime lords. Their conspiracy has infiltrated every bastion of civilization with myriad tentacles of corruption and decay. Their reach is nearly universal, their power all but unstoppable, their ruthlessness and cruelty absolute. Many lives will be lost Lensmen's lives. But Lensmen are responsible for the defense of civilization itself. Lensmen always go in.

Such is the Lensman's Load. Welcome to the Universe of the Lens. Welcome to total war.

GURPS Lensman is stock #6067, ISBN 1-55634-283-7. Written by Sean Barrett. Cover by award-winning science fiction artist Kelly Freas. 128 pages, \$16.95.

GURPS Time Travel (reprint)

The Origins-Award winning supplement for all your transdimensional, crosstime campaigning needs is back in print with a new cover style and all errata fixed. 128 pages, \$16.95.

SPECIAL SUPERS SECTION

CORPORATE REPORT: M.A.G. Division

A powerful corporation for use in the Cyberpunk Genre, by Philip J. Reed, jr. and Ben Rhodes.

Note: M.A.G. Division and all of the corporations and names listed throughout this article are a part of a cyberpunk/superhero RPG system which will be released once we get

the time and energy to finish it. All of the information presented herein is (c) 1992, 1993 Philip J. Reed, jr. and Ben Rhodes. All rights reserved.

Mid-American Genetics Division: cloning and genetic engineering

World Headquarters: St. Louis, North America

Branch Offices: New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Berlin, Cape Town, Melbourne, Winnipeg

History: Formed in the early part of 2046 by Alexander Michaels, M.A.G. Division had become the leader in genetic engineering and research by 2051. The first few years of the corporation's life were shaky, as most of their resources were spent clearing out the dregs and punks that had dominated the St. Louis area for over fifteen years.

In 2053, M.A.G. Division purchased cloning material and technical data from the EUROTECH subsidiary corporation of French Medical, and began experimentation on enhancing the DNA composition of the clone test subjects.

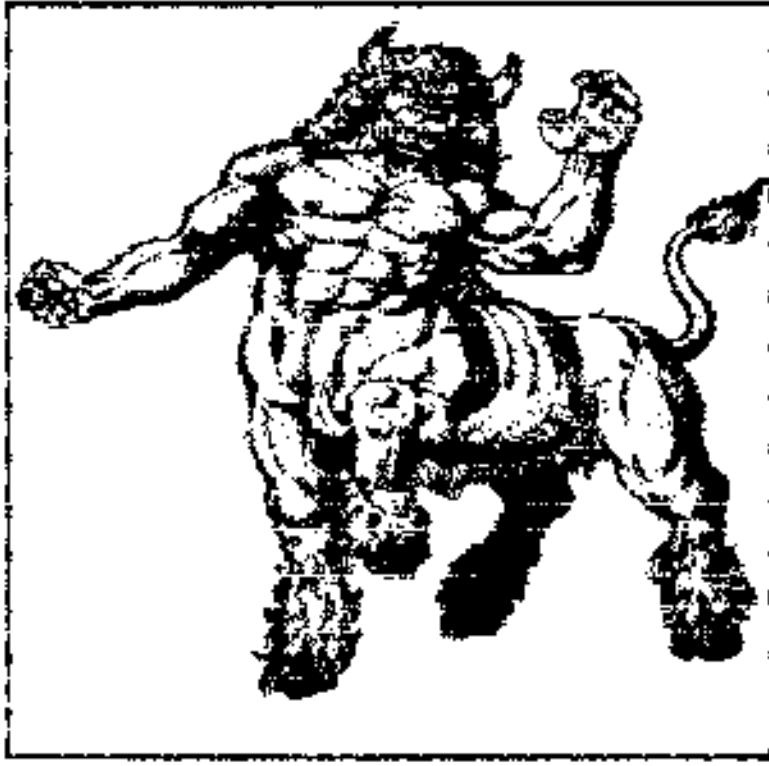
By 2055, M.A.G. Division began offering guaranteed cloning services with DNA imperfections genetically enhanced and repaired. As a side project, they began growing clones and using nanotech reconstructions on them from "birth" to "maturity" with surprising affects.

A second project started in 2060, entitled "Project: MANTICORE", dealt with the genetic modifications to animal and human subjects. Their first subject, a human male with DNA gene splices from an adult leopard, died at "birth". M.A.G. Division continued research on human/animal gene splicing techniques.



Red Star military troops attacked and destroyed the M.A.G. Division cloning offices in London in early 2064, killing over seventy genetic engineers and employees. At that time, a greater importance was placed on Project: MANTICORE and funds to the program were increased to over \$500 million annually.

2068 marked the first public sighting of M.A.G. Division genetic forces, as half-horse/half-man "Centaur" troops attacked and destroyed a Red Star cloning facility in Paris. NightSky Media declared the M.A.G. Division Centaur troops, "the wave of future



corporate conflict, Mid-American Genetics Division will be the corporation to contact for elite soldiers." By 2077, M.A.G. Division Project: MANTICORE troops made up almost 30% of their military and security

forces; consisting of Centaur troops, Leopard scouts, and nanotech/genetic augmented Eagle scouts.

Today, in 2083, M.A.G. Division is the world leader in genetics and is currently working on an information trade with French Medical that is being negotiated through Trans-World Banking. If this trade takes place, French Medical and M.A.G. Division may look closely at a corporate merger, essentially consisting of M.A.G. Division buying out the French Medical holdings and personnel from EUROTECH.

CODE AGAINST KILLING

by Mark Arsenault, originally published in The Gamer's Connection #6.

In Champions, characters can have disadvantages to gain extra points for building character. One in particular has been giving my gaming group more than a few headaches lately in our Champions campaign, a psychological disadvantage called; Code Against Killing.

Since there are so many different types of psychological traits a character can have, the Champions rules allow points for them based on how often the situation arises, as well as, how much it affects the character (eg; does it merely influence their actions and/or behavior, or totally dominate them allowing no reasoning nor choice for the character). Code Against Killing is no different. In fact it's used as one of the examples in the rules.

What many players seem to have a hard time with, however, is the fact that their own character's disadvantages do not always affect the others. Case in point; Hero1 and Hero2 are both members of the same hero group. Hero2 has a Code vs. Killing. Hero1 is attacked and retaliates with his weapon, a "killing" attack. Hero2 sees this and becomes infuriated to the point of dropping the fight with a villain and attacking Hero1! What's wrong with this picture? I see plenty

(unfortunately this actually happened in our Champions campaign).

Character disadvantages have been a major factor in more than a few character disputes, as well the should be (after all, true role-playing allows for inter-character bickering). However, it has gotten to the point that it is affecting the game in a negative way. Two PCs argue (or actually fight) it out over some moral issue, while the rest wait. Bored players are the GM's worst nightmare (second only to a gaming group with a massive case of the munchies!).

Better to let characters go around killing people? I think not. However, players need to keep something in mind; Their PCs' disadvantages are just that, their disadvantages and no one else's'. A character with a full 20 point Code vs. Killing would likely try to keep others from killing. However, any character playing that guideline to the hilt by constantly lecturing his teammates and the authorities is an unlikely candidate for "most popular hero" in any but the most goodie-two-shoes campaigns.

My suggestion? Tone it down. This is a violent world we live (game) in; some people have killing attacks. Does that mean your PC must argue with them? How would that same character treat the local police or the military? Imagine a hero grabbing a cop's gun and telling him about his moral obligations to humanity! It may be humorous at first, but would get old real fast.

Secondly, if you want a character to harangue other characters about his own psych-lims, then buy another disadvantage, like "Lectures others about killing" or "Hates anyone who uses a killing attack".

No classic hero should kill, but not all Champions characters are classic heroes! My own White Dragon, for example, is a Chinese immigrant with traditional values. He witnessed a villain killing a hero and remove his heart! Did my character go berserk? You bet! While other heroes were treating the wounded, White Dragon feigned first aid on the bad guy and actually killed him! The embarrassing part came later when he discovered the heart incident was actually an illusion (oops).

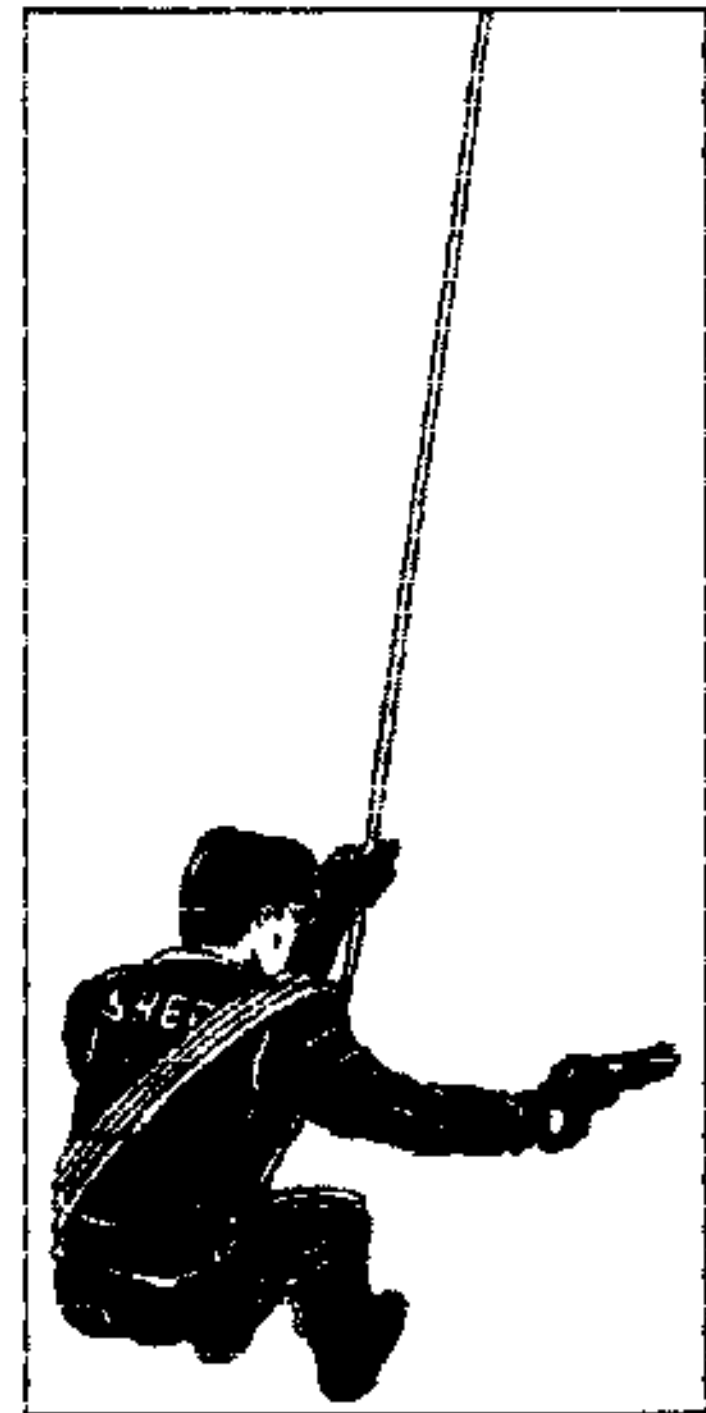
If the PCs' disadvantages are going to interfere with game play, whether it be incompatibility with the team or they just plain can't get along with anybody, then consider losing the character or re-writing his disadvantages. Everybody should have fun. Personality conflicts are fine, but don't overdo it.

FIRE POWER, by John Fraser, originally published in GAREMAG #2.

For TOP SECRET players, the weapon listing in the handbook is fine for starting up, but advanced players will find that the list has grown stale, predictable and even a little dated. Since some interest was shown, we have some information on the British Bren Gun and the OSS Flare Projector along with the stats for these two and eight other weapons, posted in TOP SECRET format.

The British Bren is a light machine gun, sturdy and dependable, used extensively by Commonwealth forces in WWII particularly in Australia and India. The fitted, top-curved magazine was one of its weak points, since it was essential that each round was fed with its rim directly behind the round in front. Failure to do this gave rise to stoppages although they were easily cleared. If the Bren ever jams in combat (roll of 00) the character can clear as normal, with a +20% on the first round, +30% on the second, etc.

The OSS Flare Projector (or "Liberator") is a cheap, one-shot, short range pistol used for combat in close quarters, especially by resistance groups, formal and informal. It was developed by the Strategic Service, precursor to the CIA. Its range and ammo limitations made it important for the user to make his first round count, usually firing at point blank. It could be reloaded and sometimes was, but it took some time to eject the cartridge by hand, twisting and pulling back the breech lock, inserting the cartridge then closing and locking the breech. This took an average of eight seconds to complete.



Weapon	PVW	PB	S	M	L	WS	RATE	AMMO	COST	HWV	CLSN	
.303 Bren (UK)		80	5	-21	-67	-250	S	4	30	300	13	SMG
5.56mm AR-18 (US)		76	5	-25	-80	-220	S	3	20	325	12	SMG
9mm Astra 400 (Sp)	46		0	-50	-140		x VF	1	8	310	4	PISTOL
.38 Webley Rev(UK)	37		0	-40	-150		x F	1	6	300	4	PISTOL
9mm M35 (FIN)		47	0	-45	-155		x VF	1	8	325	4	PISTOL
9mm M31 (FIN)		78	5	-25	-100	-285	BA	5	*20	300	12	SMG
.45 Flare Gun (US)	32		5	-75			x VF	1	1	100	3	PISTOL
9mm P-220 (GER)		39	0	-50	-150		x VF	1	9	350	4	PISTOL
9mm P-230 (GER)		36	0	-40	-155		x VF	1	7	325	4	PISTOL
7.62mm AVS-36(USSR)	77		0	-3	-30	-120	S	2	15	295	16	RIFLE

*The M31 also has 36, 40, 50 and 71 round drums.

Weapon (full name)	DECP	A	C	F	P	R	WP	WK
Bren Mark I	NC	18	0	6	4	2	22.3	10.15
Armalite AR-18	NC	12	0	6	3	2	5.8	2.6
Astra model 400	-6	6	3	5	4	6	2.5	1.15
Webley Mark IV	-4	4	4	4	4	6	2.5	1.13
Lahti, Pistooli Malli 35	-4	3	4	5	4	6	2.7	1.22
Suomi-konepistooli M31	NC	13	0	6	4	1	10.8	4.87
OSS/Liberator/.45 Flare	0	1	6	1	5	4	1.0	0.45
ProjectorSIG - Sauer P-220	-4	5	4	5	4	6	1.6	0.75
SIG - Sauer P-230	-2	4	5	5	4	6	1.2	0.54
Simonov AVS-36	NC	24	0	5	4	4	9.7	4.40

TRANSLATION FROM CHIVALRY AND SORCERY (1st ed.) to GURPS, 7-05-88, by Brett Slocum. Downloaded from SJG's Illuminati BBS, 512-447-4449, printed here with permission.

Experience

PC Character points = 100 + 2.5*(level - 1)
 NPC Character points = 20 + 5*min(level, 7) + 10*max(0, level-7)

(NPC formula gives 5 points per level from 1st to 7th level, and 10 from 8th on up.)

Players should design their characters at 100 points and then spend the extra points as if they received them during play. (Double cost for increasing attributes.)

Papyrus

Money

C&S Money=>625 copper = 25 silver = 1 gold.

GURPS Money=>100 copper= 20 silver = 1 gold.

Convert C&S money into silver pieces, then C&S silver = GURPS \$. See Wealth Advantages section below, if starting wealth (including possessions) exceeds \$1000.

Attributes

Since Chivalry and Sorcery uses randomly rolled attributes, the levels of ST, DX, IQ and HT given are guidelines, and therefore optional. Character points must still be spent normally. Since C&S has many more attributes than these four, exceptional levels (high or low) of the additional attributes are translated into GURPS advantages and disadvantages.

Attributes

C&S Statistic GURPS Attribute

C&S Statistic	GURPS Attribute
1	5
2-3	7
4-5	8
6-7	9
8-10	10
11-12	11
13-14	12
15-16	13
17-18	14
19	15
20	16
21	17
22	18
23	19
24	20
25	21

C&S Strength = GURPS ST
 C&S Dexterity = GURPS DX
 C&S Intelligence = GURPS IQ
 C&S Constitution = GURPS HT

GURPS Advantages and Disadvantages

As with Attributes, the advantages and disadvantages determined here are guidelines, and therefore optional.

C&S Wealth	GURPS Wealth
0-199 SP	Dead Broke
200-499 SP	Poor
500-999 SP	Struggling
1000-1999 SP	Average
2000-4999 SP	Comfortable
5000-19999 SP	Wealthy
20K-99K SP	Very Wealthy
>=100K SP	Filthy Rich

C&S Appearance	GURPS
Fair/Attractive (13-17)	Attractive Appearance
Handsome/Beautiful or Striking (18-19)	Handsome Appearance
Very Handsome or Beautiful (20)	Very Beautiful Appearance

Plain (5-7)	Unattractive Appearance
Ugly (4-6)	Ugly Appearance
Frightful or Hideous (1-2)	Hideous Appearance
C&S Bardic Voice	GURPS
Halting or Inarticulate (1-6)	Stuttering
Eloquent through Orphic (15-20)	Voice
C&S Wisdom	GURPS
Witless to Unwise (1-7)	Impulsive
Discerning to Astute (13-16)	Common Sense
Wise to Visionary (17-20)	Intuition
C&S Charisma	GURPS
Commanding (16-17)	Charisma +1
Dominant (18)	Charisma +2
Command Presence (19)	Charisma +3
Charismatic (20+)	Charisma +4
C&S Alignment	GURPS
Saintly or Devout (1-2) and class (priest or paladin) = Holy Advantage (see Fantasy)	
15-20 = Bully, Greed, Bloodlust, etc.	

Trained Fighters = Combat Reflexes (Knights, Sergeants, Men-at-arms)

Weapon Bonuses = Weapon skills
 Weapons that have C&S weapon bonuses should be considered as candidates for Weapon skills.

Phobias and Ailments = Physical and psychological disadvantages

Social Class GURPS Status

Serf	-3
Yeoman	
Freeman	0
Liveried	-1
Townsman	
Merchant	1
Shopowner	0
Employee	-1
Guildsman	
Guild Master	2
Master Craftsman	1
Journeyman Craftsman	0
Noble	
Unlanded Knight	2
Baron/Landed Knight/Banneret	3
Earl/Count	4
Marquis/Duke	5
Royal	
Prince/Princess/Councilor	6
King/Queen	7

Armor and Weapons

As an alternative to strictly translating various weapons and armor into their GURPS equivalents, the value in silver pieces for them can be converted into GURPS \$ and then equipment can be bought.

Weapons

In general, the conversion of weapons is very straight-forward. Some are a little

more tricky than that, since GURPS only specifies four sword types: Shortsword, Broadsword, Bastard Sword and Great Sword. Just find the closest weapon in the list.

Armor

None	none
Soft Leather	Light Leather
Hard Leather Cuirass	Heavy Leather
Brigantine/Splint	PD 3, DR 3
Banded/Scale	Scalemail
Chainmail Shirt	Chainmail torso armor
Plate Cuirass	Breastplate/Corselet
Chain Hauberk	Chainmail armor
Superior Chainmail	Chainmail w/Greaves and Vambraces
Plate and Chain	Half-Plate
Full Plate	Plate Armor

Helmets

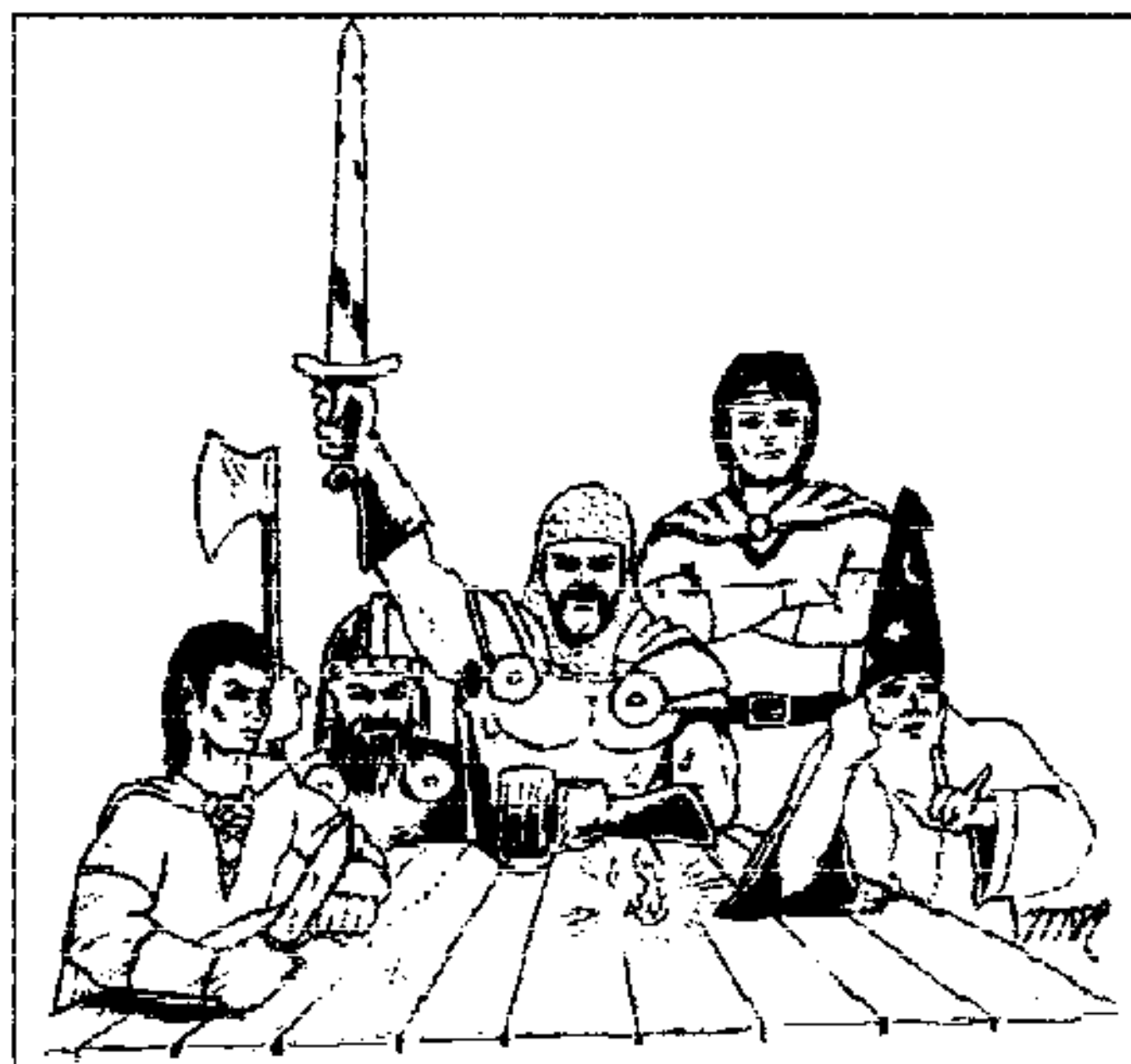
Leather Helmet	Leather helmet
Conical Helmet	Pot Helm
Norman Helm	Pot helm
Bascinet	Greathelm
Visored helm	Greathelm

Shields

Light Shield	Buckler
Buckler/Kite Shield	Small - Large Shield

Magic Weapons

Ego Swords	Loyal Weapon
Flaming Swords	Flaming Weapon Item
Dancing Sword	Dancing Weapon
Bane Sword	Bane Weapon



Magic Conversion

C&S spells not mentioned do not have GURPS equivalents. Either drop them, or create your own GURPS equivalents. Those spells marked with a question (?) are very loose equivalents.

C & S Spell

Words of Guard	GURPS equivalent spell
Circle of Protection	Ward, Great Ward
	Pentagram, Spell
	Shield, Missile Shield,
	Reverse Missles,
	Scrywall, Force Dome,
	Utter Dome?

Detection Spells

Detect Life	Sense Life
Detect Magick	Detect Magick
Detect Metal	Seek Earth
Detect Secret Door	See Secrets
Detect Traps	See Secrets
Measure Volume	Measurement
Detect Enemies	Sense Foes
Detect Poison	Test Food
See The Invisible	See Invisible
Sense The Hidden	See Secrets

Communication And Transportation

Astral Vision	Wizard Eye
Fly	Flight/Hawk Flight
Passwall	Body of Air
Telepathic Command	Soul Rider?
Telepathy	Telepathy
Teleport	Teleport/Teleport Others
Animal Messenger	Beast Speech?
Astral Connection	Link
Levitate	Levitate
Magick Carpet	Flight item
Rope Trick	Levitate item
Teleportal	Teleport item

Elements

Earth spells

Create	Create Earth
Detach	Shape Earth
Affix	Shape Earth
Concentrate	Earth To Stone
Remove	Earth To Air
Accelerate	Stone Missle

Water spells

Create	Create Water
Detach	Shape Water, Water Jet
Affix	Shape Water
Remove	Destroy Water
Create Rain, Fog	Fog, Clouds, Rain
Create, Accelerate Ice	Ice Sphere, Ice Dagger

Fire spells

Create Fire, Magick Fire	Create Fire, Essential Flame
Detach Fire	Shape Fire, Flame Jet, Breathe Fire
Affix Fire	Shape Fire
Remove Fire	Extinguish Fire
Accelerate Fire	Fireball, Explosive Fireball
Create Heat/Cold	Heat, Cold
Create Light/Dark	Light, Cont. Light, Darkness

Papyrus

Intensify Light	Flash		skill
Air spells		Astral Lock	Magelock?
Create	Create Air	Knock	Lockmaster, Locksmith
Detach	Shape Air, Air Jet	Silence	Silence
Remove	Destroy Air	Far Sight	Hawk Flight
Accelerate	Windstorm, Whirlwind	Healing	Minor Healing
Commands		Growth/Diminish	
Awaken	Awaken	Haste	Haste, Great Haste
Charm Person	Charm	Strength	Lend ST?
Sleep	Sleep	Water Breathing	Breathe Water
Charm Animals	Beast Soother	Legend Lore	History, Ancient History?
Clumsiness	Clumsiness	Reflection	Illusion?
Muscle Spasm	Spasm	Shape Change	Shapechange
Command Animals	Mammal, Bird, etc. Control	Gaseous Form	Body Of Air
Hold Person	Control Person	Weakness	Fatigue
Summon Animals	Hold Monster, Mammal,	Curse -	
Bird, etc. Control?		Non-Fatal Disease	Sickness
Power Word: Stun	Daze	Misfortune	Curse
Berserker Rage	Madness?	Fatal Disease	Pestilence
Bravery	Bravery	Create Poison	Poisons skill
Confusion	Foolishness	Create Antidote	Poisons skill
Demoralization	Fear	Inflict Grievous Wounds	Steal HT?
Hate	Madness?	Empathic Self Cure	Steal HT
Love	Madness?	Summon Werewolves	Beast Summoning?
Geas	Geas, Great Geas	Finger Of Death	Deathtouch?
Power Word: Weaken	Fatigue	Possession	Possess/Summon Demon
Forgetfulness	Forgetfulness	Specialties within Magician types	
Power Word: Blind	Strike Blind	Mechanical Artificers	
Enchanted Sleep	Mass Sleep?	Animate Object	Animation
Great Command	Enslave	Astrologers	
Power Word: Blast	Lightning	Locate Object	Seeker
Illusion		Locate Person	Seeker
Blurred Image	Blur	Legend Lore	History, Anc. History?
Detect Illusion	Know Illusion	Read Languages	Gift of Letters
Sleight Of Hand	Sleight Of Hand skill	Astrology	Divination: Astrology
Wall Of Fog	Simple Illusion	Divination	
Cloud Of Dust	Simple Illusion	Trace	History, Ancient History, Analyze Magic
Deafness	Strike Deaf?	Tarot Deck	Divination: Cartomancy
Dispell Fatigue	Lend ST?	Necromancers	
Diminish	Simple Illusion	Shadow Guide	Skull Spirit
Growth	Simple Illusion	Command Undead	Control Zombie
Hallucinatory Lanscape	Simple Illusion	Create Skeleton	Zombie
Mirror Self	Simple Illusion	Create Zombie	Zombie
Trustworthiness	Persuasion	Fear	Fear
Illusory Image	Complex Illusion	Speak with the Dead	Summon Spirit
Projected Image	Simple Illusion	Paralysis	Paralyze Limb/Total Paralysis
Hallucinatory Lanscape	Complex Illusion	Summon Demonic Warrior	Summon Demon
Dispell Illusion	Dispell Illusion	Clerical Miracles	
Disguise	Illusory Disguise	Cure Minor Wounds	Minor Healing
Phantasmal Landscape	Perfect Illusion	Purify Food	Purify Food
Shadow Forces	Phantom Flame	Remove Curse	Remove Curse
Djinn Creation	Create Object, Servant, Animal, Warrior?	Cure Disease	Cure Disease
Fairy Gold	Create Object?	Cure Serious Wounds	Major Healing
True Sight	Mage Sight	Strength of the Holy	Lend ST?
Night Vision	Night Vision	Cure Grievous Wounds	Major Healing
Hear	Keen Ears, Farhearing, Keen Hearing advantage	Summon Lawful Monster	Beast Summoning?
Ventriloquism	Voices?, Ventriloquism	Walls of Protection	Create Earth and Fire

Part the Waters	Shape Water
Strength of the Holy II	Lend ST?
The Great Cure	Restoration, Regeneration, Cure Disease

ENDORSEMENTS

Alarums & Excursions, the largest and predominant RPG Amateur Press Association (APA). Published by Lee Gold (ICE Vikings, GURPS Japan, Lands of Adventure, Land of the Rising Sun). Don't just read, participate! For more information send a SASE to, Lee Gold, 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066.

Silver Griffin, a pro, independent magazine on RPGs. For more information send a SASE to, Devlin Janax editor, Silver Griffin, P.O. Box 1751, St. Paul, MN 55101.

The Scroll, a bi-monthly RPG magazine by gamers, for gamers. For more information send a SASE to, Bob Anderson, The Scroll, Sage Lore Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 14616, Portland, OR 97214.

The Gamer's Connection, a small press publication looking for subscribers and writers. For more information, and writers guidelines, send a SASE to: The Gamer's Connection, P.O. Box 278331, Sacramento, CA 95827.

Abyss Quarterly, Ragnarok Enterprises magazine of RPGs. Coverage includes Ragnarok's Ysgarth and To Challenge Tomorrow RPGs and many others. For more info, send a SASE to: Abyss, Ragnarok, P.O. Box 140333, Austin, TX 78714.

The Guardsman, a small press fanzine looking for subscribers and submissions. For more info send a SASE to: The Guardsman, 21611 Park Green Drive, Katy, TX 77450.

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KNIGHT NOTES, a new bi-monthly gaming magazine started in Sep'93. For more info and guidelines, send a SASE to: Daniel Gallant, 167 Columbia Drive, Huron Park, Ontario, NOM 1Y0.

MEGA-MAG, a totally super hero RPG magazine. Each issue includes adventures with stats for: Champions (or any Hero Sys), DC Heroes (or Batman RPG), GURPS Supers (or

most any GURPS), Good Guys Finish Last (from Better Games), Guardians, Heroes Unlimited (or TMNT and any other Palladium game, most easily convertible to V&V), KAPOW! and Marvel Super Heroes. Write to: MEGA-MAG, c/o Exclamation Publishing, 7200 Montgomery NE #391, Albuquerque, NM 87109.

Smasher Land BBS, (614) 593-8359, 2400 Baud, 24 Hours A Day, 7 Days A Week. A Hard Core Gamer's Haven. If You Play RPG's, You Should Call This BBS.

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If You Have Any Questions Send Mail To system@smashland.nelsonville.oh.us

Smasher Land Currently Is Receiving The Following Groups... rec.games.frp.*, alt.pub.dragons-inn, alt.tasteless.jokes, alt.romance, alt.romance.chat and several others

The Following Internet Mailing Lists Have Been Diverted Into Newsgroups For Everyone To Read And Post..... Vampire, Ars-Magica, Amber, Forgotten Realms, Miniature Painting

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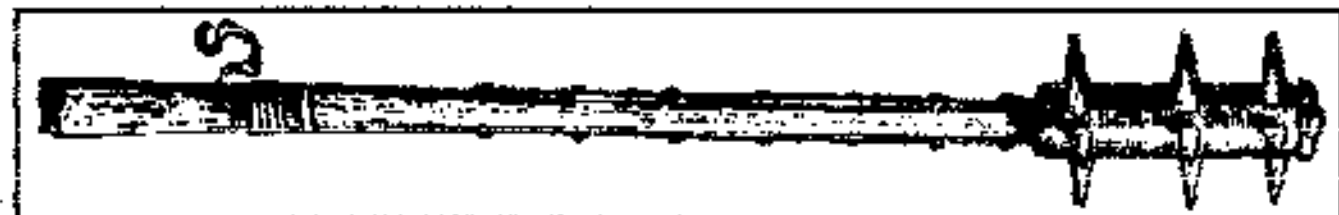
Next Issue (?)

Some useful reviews ...

Alternate uses for TSR's Gamma World (4th ed.) rulebook and XXVc No Humans Allowed sourcebook.

Gareth Jones new universal RPG system, AAARG! Support material for AAARG! is also being considered.

A unique and original Super Hero campaign background.



INGENIOUS ITEMS - Talismans: A Look At Historical Charms and Amulets, 8-89, by Steffan O'Sullivan. (This article originally appeared in Roleplayer #15 and was downloaded from SJG's Illuminati BBS, *ibid.*)

"A talisman is nothing else than the seal, figure, character, or image of a celestial omen, planet, or constellation; impressed, engraved, or sculptured upon a sympathetic stone or upon a metal corresponding to the planet; by a workman whose mind is settled and fixed upon his work and the end of his work without being distracted or dissipated in other unrelated thoughts; on the day and at the hour of the planet; in a fortunate place; during fair, calm weather, and when the planet is in the best aspect that may be in the heavens, the more strongly to attract the influences proper to an effect depending upon the power of the same and on the virtues of its influences." - Pierre de Bresche, in *Trait des Talismans*, 1671.

An amulet is a charm with protective powers. A talisman is a charm with empowering abilities. There is a long tradition of talismans and amulets made by alchemists (as well as shamans, witches, priests, etc.) and sold to the public throughout history. In fact, the odds are good that most of you reading this have some amulet or talisman at home, on your person, or in your car - just some little object that has a little extra meaning to you. It is a very human thing, this trusting of certain lucky objects, and these rules could easily be adapted to GURPS ICE AGE, GURPS SPACE, or any other campaign.

Alchemical charms have been sold throughout history, and we have descriptions of many of them. They were worn by kings and queens, popes and bishops, merchants and diplomats. Less expensive amulets, usually made by "witches", were worn or hung in the house by nearly everybody else. Unfortunately, the most frequently mentioned ones are not necessarily suitable for gaming. The most common amulets were those that protected against violence, plague, theft and bad luck - you could, according to the creator of one amulet, wear it in the toughest part of town with bulging moneybags and not be touched. Others promised to spring you from jail the next day - sort of a "Get out of jail free" card ... however, such powerful amulets might be out of place in many campaigns. Dishonest or deluded alchemists would certainly offer such charms, but whether they work or not is up to the GM.

Charms from Existing Elixirs: Some of the

historical charms are promising game material, though, having the same results as certain elixirs presented in GURPS Magic and in the last issue of Roleplayer. These include amulets of Aesculapius, Janus, Moly, Athena, and Artemis, and talismans of Orpheus, Prometheus, Ceres, Theseus, Tyche, Aphrodite, Kuoun, and others. Moly is particularly interesting, and will be covered in detail in this article.

Going beyond the bounds of history, the GM can easily apply these rules to any of the existing elixirs. Those that protect can be made into amulets; those that grant powers can be made into talismans. In general, there are very few references in alchemy to charms that caused unpleasant results. Such objects were made by witches, and are rife in voodoo lore, but alchemy seems to have limited such hostile powers to occasional elixirs. The GM may allow such objects to exist, of course, but they should be scarcer than the beneficial ones.

Moly Amulets: The elixir Moly, introduced in Roleplayer 13, is an excellent source for amulets. Many amulets purported to work against hostile magic - some were very specific as to the type of magic they would counter. This can be introduced into GURPS very easily as amulets that work against certain Magical Colleges.

The most common Moly amulets would be those that protect against Mind Control, Communication & Empathy, and Body Control spells. Those that protect against other colleges are possible, but amulets should not work against Missile spells, Jet spells or spells with similar control of the elements.

Each Moly amulet protects against the spells of one particular college. The level of protection varies - see Time and Cost to Make, below. This can be thought of as Magic Resistance that is specific in the type of magic it resists - which can be a very valuable asset! The GM is free to regulate such amulets in any way he sees fit. For instance, some amulets might only protect against a specific spell. Such amulets would be cheaper to make than those that protect against an entire college of magic.

Time and Cost to Make: The cost in materials to manufacture an alchemical charm is the same as for the elixir of the same property. The time to manufacture such an amulet or talisman is ten times that listed to manufacture the elixir. The GM may vary this time and cost to make charms more or less available in his world. Making a charm

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Temperate Forest
 FREQUENCY: Uncommon
 ORGANIZATION: Solitary
 ACTIVITY CYCLE: Day
 DIET: Herbivore
 INTELLIGENCE: Animal (1)
 TREASURE: nil
 ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 1, 1-20
 ARMOR CLASS: 8, wings 10
 MOVEMENT: Fl 15" (A)
 HIT DICE: 2
 THACO: 18
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 1-6
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: Nil
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: Nil
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: 100%, see below
 SIZE: L (10' wing span)
 MORALE: Elite (13)
 XP VALUE: 720

Description: An Elven Viceroy is simply a giant version of a viceroy butterfly that is of a magical nature. For ages they have been the steeds of elves, although not of elves that frequently are involved in warfare.

Combat: The elven viceroy is an extremely weak fighter. Its sole attack is a bite that does 1-6 points of damage.

The elven viceroy is also very vulnerable. Any damage done to its wings by fire will cause it to lose its flying ability. Also, any other damage to its wings over 8hp will have the same affect. This does no damage to the body however, for a wild elven viceroy this may mean eventual starvation.

The viceroy's greatest advantage is its magic resistance, which it shares with its rider. It is totally immune to any form of magic cast by non-elves. Non-drow, elven magic is effective.

Habitat/Society: Elven viceroy's are almost always the steeds of elven nations that are not warlike nor



prone to enter hostilities. It is true that they are beautiful, but they are not highly survivable of violence. Their only use in battle would be as "bombers", or high altitude reconnaissance, keeping them safe from most attacks.

There is a very rare number of viceroy that are wild. These creatures will not obey their elven masters and are set free to fend for themselves. This has kept the elves' breeding stocks rather domesticated. They are basically controlled as if under a charm monster spell, by the first elf who cares for them at birth.

Ecology: These creatures were magically created and bred by elves eons ago. Riders choose young (caterpillars) and raise them from birth.

Although elven viceroy's are non-poisonous, there are reports of wild, giant monarch butterflies which are. Hungry poachers should beware.

CLIMATE/TERRAIN: Swamp
 FREQUENCY: Rare
 ORGANIZATION: Solitary
 ACTIVITY CYCLE: Nil
 DIET: Water
 INTELLIGENCE: Non (0)
 TREASURE: nil
 ALIGNMENT: Neutral

NO. APPEARING: 1
 ARMOR CLASS: 6
 MOVEMENT: 9"
 HIT DICE: 12
 THACO: 9
 NO. OF ATTACKS: 1
 DAMAGE/ATTACK: 2-24
 SPECIAL ATTACKS: Lightning bolt
 SPECIAL DEFENSES: see below
 MAGIC RESISTANCE: Nil
 SIZE: L (12')
 MORALE: Fearless (20)
 XP VALUE: 6000



Description: A vegetable golem is an animated form of swampy vegetation molded into the shape of a humanoid. It can easily be mistaken for a shambling mound, as they appear the same. The vegetable golem has one greatly enlarged fist.

Combat: Vegetable golems have all of the natural abilities of minor golems. In addition to these abilities, the vegetable golem can also absorb lightning bolts (take no damage) just like a shambling mound. Unlike a shambling mound, it only uses the lightning bolts it absorbs to heal, not to grow.

If commanded by its creator, it can stop the bolt from healing (1HD=1hp) and save it to cast back at a later time. The amount of energy absorbed equals the amount of energy that the golem can be commanded to release, although it will lose 1HD of energy/turn stored.

Their other offensive capability is their immense fist (1.5' in diameter) which has a strength of 20 and does 2-24 points

of damage.

Habitat/Society: Being automatons, the vegetable golem has no society. They are used mainly as guardians, their lightning trick being very useful against wizards.

Ecology: Only a wizard of at least 16th level can create a vegetable golem. A body must be molded from swamp vegetation and mending must immediately be cast upon it. Following the mending, the following spells must be cast within 1 hour: Lightning bolt, Charm plants, Polymorph any object, Permanency and Limited Wish. The materials are cheap although lab equipment and other expenses can reach 50,000gps.

Vegetable golems are truly ideal guardians in swampy areas but are limited to certain environments. Unlike most golem, these require nourishment in the form of water or they lose 1HD//week.

is very hard work, requiring long hours and correct timing of the planetary influences to capture the essences desired. At the end of the time period, the alchemist makes his skill roll, applying any penalties as per the elixir of the same properties. A critical failure destroys the charm entirely, while an ordinary one wastes the work, but won't break any gem involved.

Talismans and amulets made of gems have always been valued more than those made of other materials. Any gem with an intrinsic value of \$2,500 or more gives a +1 bonus in some way to the power of the amulet. This might be 1d+1 hours of duration instead of 1d hours, +5 to Leadership instead of +4, and so on. This is up to the GM.

The GM does not have to allow PC alchemists the ability to make charms. Such knowledge may be limited to Guildmasters, for example, or even Grand Masters. All the other ways to limit magic item manufacture can also be used - see pg. M17.

Making Moly Amulets: Moly amulets are made in stages, like Powerstones. Each period of empowering the amulet produces +1 Magic Resistance, specific to whatever college is intended. This is an exception to the rule that charms have the same properties as the elixirs - Moly amulets may have less than 5 Magic Resistance benefits - or they may have more, if the GM permits it. (A GM may allow a sufficiently powerful Moly amulet to protect totally against spells of a given college. If it is allowed at all, though, this should be very rare and costly!) A level 1 Moly amulet must go through the whole empowering procedure again to become a level 2 amulet. Critical failures along the way destroy the amulet and any materials that have gone into it.

Detection and Analysis: Treat an alchemical charm as if it were an elixir for detection purposes - see pg. M88. In general, if an alchemist knows the formula for the elixir in question, he will be able to recognize it with five minutes examination and a successful Alchemy skill roll. If it has powers that he does not know the formula for, the GM may assign a penalty to the Alchemy roll, ranging from -1 to -10. As usual, the GM rolls for the player, and lies on any critical failures.

Using Charms: Amulets are treated as always-on magic items. There is no "time to cast", and they cost the user no fatigue. They protect the wearer at all times, whether the person knows what the amulet does or not.

Moly amulets add their level to the wearer's

Resistance roll, and subtract their level from the caster's spell skill roll - see Magic Resistance, pg. M13.

Alchemical talismans - empowering devices - should have limited time use. Treat such an item as a magic item with an exclusive powerstone. The time the effects last should be equal to the time the elixir lasts. After that, the power fades, and the talisman becomes dormant. It "recharges" at a rate equal in days to the time in weeks it would take to create the appropriate elixir. Thus, a talisman of Orpheus lasts 1d hours, and then takes three days to recharge before it can be used again. A talisman of Tyche lasts 2d hours, then needs six days to recharge, and so on. Count only the time that a talisman is worn; it could sit in a chest for centuries without losing power.

There is no "cost to cast" for a talisman - no fatigue is spent activating one. The wearer merely wills the talisman to have the specific effect - simply willing it to "Do something!" won't work. It is up to the GM whether a talisman works automatically if it is willed to, or if a roll is required against the alchemist's skill at the time of using it. If a roll is required, apply any penalties to skill that the alchemist needed to roll to create the charm.

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