

THE TIP OF GAMING MAGAZINE







THE RIP OF GAMING MAGAZINE

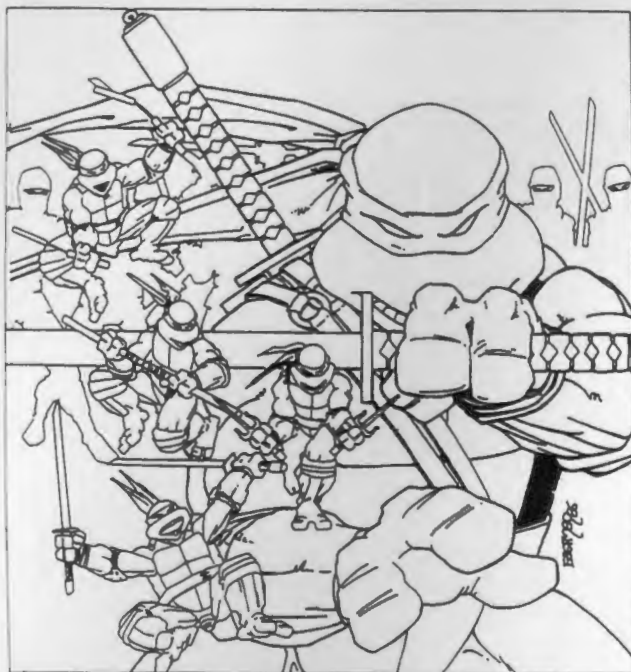
IN THIS ISSUE...

Mind War... Warlords of China...

Paranoia!... Good Sex... And More...

ISSUE #4
JULY/AUGUST
\$3⁵⁰

TURTLE MANIA RAGES ON!



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Artwork includes the never before published Noble Comics J.M. cover #6 by Paul Gulacy (introducing Ms. Liberty) and a never before published Justice Machine splash page by Jack Kirby. Other contributing artists include John Byrne, Bill Sienkiewicz, Mike Grell, Bill Willingham, Terry Austin, Mike Vosburg, Bob Layton, Mike Zeck and page after page of inspired artwork by Mike Gustovich.

A must for collectors and Justice Machine enthusiasts!

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Cover courtesy of West End Games
 Designed by James Holloway

"But Seriously, Folks..."

"Hello, newswatchers. This is Big Bob Smedley coming to you from the site of the 1986 Origins Convention. I have with me the winner of the Napoleonic Wargame Tournament."

"Mr. Peterson, you are the winner."

"Yes, I am, Big Bob."

"It's great that you're able to talk to us. I'm really interested in this sort of thing. History and all that."

"Yes, well it's been a hobby of mine a long time."

I'm sure it has. Do you enjoy killing your fellow man?"

"Whaaa...??"

"I happen to know you commanded the French forces. Do you deny it?"

"Deny it? I..."

"Napoleon! You were Napoleon! Deny it."

"Well, I didn't exactly believe..."

"And, Mr. Peterson, you know where people who think they're Napoleon end up, don't you?"

"End up?"

"In a nut house, you weirdo! In a nut house!"

"But I don't actually believe..."

"I bet it feels great killing all those men, and leading others to their deaths. Doesn't it?"

"They're cardboard counters. They don't actually..."

"I bet you can't wait to take your Napoleon complex on to bigger and bigger fields."

"Napoleon complex?"

Machine guns! Rockets! Atom bombs! Bet you can't wait to get your hands on one of these babies."

"I..."

"Sure, push the button. Blow a hundred million innocent children to hell."

"....."

"You pinkos are all alike. You can't wait to destroy the world. Well, let me tell you one thing you weirdo Commie scum. No one wins in wars!"

Have a fun Origins, and try to win in war— P.F.

BREAKOUT MAGAZINE'S

GAMING NEWS DOWN UNDER

Welcome to what we hope is the first of a regular series of exchange news pages between V.I.P. and **Breakout**. The idea for this page was Alan Emrich's. Alan will be providing **Breakout** with a similar page of US news for **Breakout's** readers.

What is Breakout?

Breakout is Australia's oldest surviving games magazine and covers all types of gaming. To a limited extent we also cover some 'non-war' games. Our broad coverage is unique in the region: the three other professional standard magazines each addresses a specialist target audience. *Pandora* covers science fiction, modelling and role-playing; *Multiverse* covers role-playing while the most recent, *Run 5* is basically a house magazine for Strategic Studies Games of Sydney.

Gaming is more expensive 'Down Under'

The strong US dollar has made gaming in Australia a steadily more expensive hobby in recent years. Freight, import duties and Federal sales taxes mean US games retail for roughly double their American price e.g. *Beyond Valour* has just been released here at \$A99.95! Given roughly equivalent spending power, dollar for dollar, gamers are becoming very selective. By the way, most Australians find the expression 'Down Under' bemusing and quaint. Frankly we don't see ourselves as under anything.

Australian Games

Game publishing in Australia has a long but erratic history. The most prolific publisher was **Jedko Games**, which started with the now-classic *Russian Campaign* (which in its Avalon Hill version won a "Charlie" at Origins '75). *African Campaign*, *Field Marshall*, *Fortress Europa*, and *War at Sea* followed through the '70s. Jedko also published *Dungeon*—the firm's only attempt at a fantasy boardgame.

Breakout is published by Conflict Simulations of Australia, a partnership formed in December 1980 by six gamers. Four of the original six partners remain with the magazine and two more have joined. The staff are as follows:

Editor:

Paul B Trunoff

Assistant Editor:

Adrian J Pett

Associate (and founding) Editor:

Nigel I A G Brand

Reviews Coordinator and Production assistant:

Paul B Garnham

Advertising Manager and Production Coordinator:

Geoffrey R Wilson

Business and Promotions Manager:

Grant D Garraway

Contributing Editor:

Nigel Slater

The flow ceased when Jedko's founder and designer John Edwards turned to building his business. Recently Jedko published *Europe at War* and two general market games, *The Alan Jones Car Racing Game* and *Rock Star*. We understand Jedko has no plans to release any new wargames but is examining the feasibility of publishing US-designed titles.

Australia's game publishing renaissance began with *Reach for the Stars*, a computer science-fiction game, by the Strategic Studies Group. Programmer/designer Roger Keating (who had several SSI titles under his belt) demonstrated remarkable skill with Apple machine code and as a result players got state-of-the-art complexity and speed. RFTS was as successful as any first-time publisher could hope for, and a valuable learning experience both technically and commercially for the pair of former school teachers who formed the company. SSG's *Carriers at War*, a WWII Pacific theatre operational level carrier game won the coveted **Best Game Charlie** at Origins '85.

SSG's latest release is *Europe Ablaze*, a WWII operational air warfare game, which in some ways is even better than CAW; whether the later game will enjoy the same commercial success remains to be seen. SSG is believed to be working on a WWII North West Europe division level game which sounds a little like a WW2 *NATO Division Commander*, and a computer game tentatively titled *Appomattox*.

In the meantime the Canberra-based **Australian Design Group** released the highly-acclaimed strategic Napoleonic boardgame *Empires in Arms* which recently has been re-released by Avalon Hill. ADG's latest effort is *World in Flames*, a WWII grand strategic game. Greg Pinder and Harry Rowland are the leading lights in ADG.

The national capital is also the home of **Panther Games** which has released an innovative WWII Eastern Front boardgame titled *Trial of Strength*. TOS recently was named **Breakout's Australian Game of the Year**. The firm followed TOS with *Warlords*, a diplomatic/military board game set in China 1916-1950 and hopes to release a *Junta*-style game titled *Shanghai Trader* at Origins '86. David O'Connor is Panther's chief designer.

A Melbourne-based group of role-players led by Joe Italiano formed **Adventure Simulations** to publish a role-playing game titled *Super Squadron* and followed this with a supplement known as *The Tome*. Many of the same people have been involved in publishing *Multiverse*, and in organising some of Australia's largest conventions.

New publishers include **Monash Games** and **Hydra Design**, more on which in later news pages.

Conventions Important

As in the US conventions are an important part of the game scene in Australia.

Role-playing is the most popular gaming activity in Australia. As elsewhere *AD&D* is by far the favourite system but *Traveller*, the various "Super Hero"

systems, and *Car Wars* all enjoy substantial support. Historical miniatures are very strong in Australia and even more so in New Zealand. WRG rules are universally used in Ancients period competitions. Boardgame competitions are not as well-attended; our boardgames championship is decided over several game titles on a highest points scored basis. The major conventions are traditionally held in the nation's capital, Canberra, in January, in Melbourne over Easter and in Sydney on a long weekend in early June.

Play-By-Mail

The Play-By-Mail scene is also substantial. Several firms run US or British-designed games as a post box. In some cases they actually moderate the game here. Eight firms run Australian-designed games. One, **Australian Wizard**, has had two titles picked up by overseas firms: *Midgard* in the UK (as *Warlords of Chaos*) and *Spiral Arm* in both the US and UK. *Spiral Arm*, a computer-moderated strategic space game, will be featured in **Breakout** #22 (to be released at Origins). *Midgard* is a human moderated game and is completely different to the similarly-named *Time Space* offering.

At least one other Australian PBM firm is negotiating to sell its games overseas. We will also have more details next issue.

Australian Magazines

Breakout
c/o CSA
PO Box 162
Mooroolbark VIC 3138

Multiverse
c/o The Ghostwriters
PO Box 182
Mitcham VIC 3132

Pandora
c/o Kim Books
82 Alexander St
Crows Nest NSW 2065

Run 5
c/o SSG
336 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000.

Australian Games Publishers

Adventure Simulations
PO Box 182
Mitcham VIC 3132

Australian Design Group
PO Box 1009
Woden ACT 2606

Jedko Games Pty Ltd
134 Cochranes Rd
Moorabbin VIC 3189

Panther Games
PO Box 8
Hughes ACT 2605

Strategic Studies Group Pty Ltd
336 Pitt St
Sydney NSW 2000.

The Olympus Enquirer

An Insider's Report about the "Gods" of Gaming



LATEST ORIGINS NEWS!! Low air fares and a holiday weekend have made this year's Origins accessible to a lot of gamers. Origins, traditionally held in the Eastern Time Zone of the United States, has moved this year to Los Angeles. Origins' regular attendees (consisting largely of gamers in that same Time Zone) have found the lower transportation costs making all of the difference in keeping their "string" of consecutive attended Origins going uninterrupted.

Pre-registration figures are strong and steady, and room bookings are described by the convention site (the Los Angeles Airport Hilton Hotel) as "phenomenal." The Disneyland junket set for the day after the show is even filling up comfortably. All in all, the omens look good for this year's show.

Even better for this year's attendees will be the wide variety of exhibitors attending. As you all know, Origins is the show at which many companies premiere new releases, and this year's Origins will be no exception. Among some of the companies planning to attend are:

Game Designers Workshop: Look for Command Decision (WWII miniatures rules), Red Star/Lone Star (Twilight 2000, Russians in Texas), issue #28 of Challenge magazine, Robots (Traveller rules supplement), Battle for Moscow (introductory wargame), Johnny Reb (Civil war miniature rules) and Harpoon II, too!

TSR, Inc.: While vague as to some

specifics, TSR indicates that at least one new D&D hard cover book should be released, plus their SPI games Terrible Swift Sword and Barbarossa. At least three other undisclosed products are likely to appear, probably modules and supplements.

Steve Jackson Games: Either GURPS or Fractured Fantasy and Car Wars Expansion set #9. Also, Son of TOON may be appearing.

Milton Bradley: Will add Fortress America to their Game Master series. Fortress America pits the USA under siege from three other major superpowers, counting on her partisans as she is invaded.

Diverse Talents, Inc.: Should have F&M's ten year anniversary issue available, as well as The Beginner's Guide To Strategy Gaming. Their International Simulations division should have the Japanese game The Fighting General Patton from Ad Technos available. This is a "quad" game built around four battles fought by George S. Patton during World War II.

FASA: For Battletech; a set of blueprint posters, two paperback novels, a "technical readout" (sketchbook) and MechWarrior (a Battletech role-playing system). For Dr. Who; four more figure sets and the Dr. Who adventure City of Gold and Cyberman rules supplement. New Star Trek ship figures; Romulan nova class battleship and bright-one destroyer starship miniatures, USS Baker class starship, Gorn BH-2 battleship class, Klingon L-4 battleship and D-2 destroyer. Plus the Star Trek role-playing

adventures Conflict of Interest Klingon Intelligence Briefing and Old Soldiers Never Die The Romulan War.

The Avalon Hill Game Company: Empires in Arms (Napoleonic wargame), Paratrooper (Squad Leader mini-module - one mapboard and two counter sheets covering the Allied D-Day airborne landings), and Flight Leader (modern tactical air wargame).

Victory Games: France 1944 — The Allied Crusade in Europe (low level complexity, a real "players" game).

Iron Crown Enterprises: Hero System's Hero Bestiary, New 2nd Edition Middle Earth role-playing system (booklet \$10, and boxed set, \$15).

Mayfair Games: Legion of Superheroes Sourcebook (for DC Heroes), and Role-Aids' Pinnacle (32 page adventure).

Other bits of fascination from Olympus include **Victory Game's** releases of Battle Hymn (Pacific Ambush game), Aegean Strike (based on Gulf Strike system), and Bond Assault (commando board which may be used with their James Bond role-playing system). A new Play-by-Mail magazine is hoping to launch soon, entitled Juggernaut (7322 Kingsgate way, West Chester, OH 45069), and another has started, the D2 Report (450 E. Street, Colma, CA 94014).

Those are the scandals this issue from the Olympus Enquirer, where the "Gods" of gaming make all the news that fits. Stay tuned for Seven-Eleven Mini-Marts.

- Alan Emrich



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Summer, 1986.

MK1101

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MK1201

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MK1301



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Fantasy Gamer

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Editor	Jeff Albanese

c/o P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808

Contributing Editors Mike Mullen, Michael De Wolfe, Lawrence Person, Bob Kindel, and Lisa Cohen

CHILL

“Death on Tour”

(Pacesetter): \$6.00.

by Lisa Cohen

This is another adventure module for **Chill**. The game contains six maps of different floorplans, 8 pre-rolled characters, and player aids to be used throughout the game. The module is 32 pages. It is ideal for eight players. The playing time can vary since it can be stopped to be played at a later date which is new for this type of game. Copyright is 1985.

The module starts out about a bunch of murders that have been happening when the famous (or infamous) band, Van Helsing, plays their concerts. The story takes the players to various big cities in the U.S., to rid the world of certain musicians that are not what they are supposed to be. There are four chapters which are mini-scenarios in themselves. The game provides players with research tables, two player aids, two New Evil disciplines, all ready-made dreams for the characters, and explanation of skills should be used.

First of all, I will start off with some helpful criticisms. The title of this book

might mislead some people and could be a turn off. My first impression was that it might be corny, but the most obvious criticism is that the writer assumes the players have a lower-than-normal intelligence and that the players will almost always fall into the booby traps of the monsters. So there are no rules for exceptions to this. I think that because of this thinking, S.A.V.E., the player characters organization, must always come to the rescue to bail out the characters. I think that the organization should help, but not all the time.

Some suggestions for this module would be for the person who runs this game to be very creative and to be imaginative in the event the players happen to be also. Also, when reading the descriptions to rooms and such, the CM should be very enthusiastic about it because there is a lot to describe. I find that if a CM is not, the players become bored and forget many important details.

Now for the good points to this module. I love the way the pre-rolled characters are always minorities. This is something that I find in all **Chill** modules. Jim Holloway's art is always excellent. He has a notable sense for the



unknown and for humor. The dream descriptions are very imaginative and bizarre to lead into the rest of the plot of the story like a well written mystery should. The rest of the descriptions are very comprehensive and I liked the detail of the explanations. I like the way the stats are moved throughout the module for easy access, and the way the non-player characters all have uniform ability scores of fifty.

Overall, the game is enjoyable. It is interesting reading for the CM. It is a good module for beginning players and will keep them in suspense for a good chase around the U.S. The game is worth its price and is entertaining for light hearted people who also like to SAVE the world from the horrible UNKNOWN.

The Compleat Alchemist, Reviewed

By Dennis Parizek

I chose to review this book because it is an example of the kind of thing my group would like to see published more often. As an aid to creativity rather than a source of enforceable rules, it liberates gamers rather than limiting them, as supplements from the major companies so often do.

The Compleat Alchemist (\$7.95, from Bard Games, P.O. Box 7424, Greenwich, CT 06836) is, as far as I know, the most complete set of alchemy rules ever published for FRP games. The large softcover book is of average physical quality, with print that looks like it came straight out of a typewriter, but with some good illustrations.

It begins with a section on the alchemist as a character, even as a player-character. It is difficult to imagine many people being ready for alchemist PCs, but it is nice to see it, if only for the sake of completeness. The rules in this section are heavily slanted toward AD&D (probably not a bad assumption on the authors' part), but other systems are supported to a sufficient degree.

Part two covers measures, symbols, ingredients, and equipment. Much of this section is historically accurate, and the majority of the plants mentioned are actual herbs. Only twelve types of gemstones are used, common varieties that should be present in any game. The animal ingredients are from mythological monsters that are all present in AD&D, and largely so in other games. Included in this section are charts that players can photocopy and use to keep track of ingredients and experiments.

Part three details the actual recipes that alchemists may concoct. They are grouped into twelve levels of difficulty, as follows - elixirs, toxic powders, compounds and venoms, devices, talismans, potions, dusts, solvents, gasses, essences and the Philosopher's Stone, constructs, homunculi and advanced operations. This is a truly impressive array, on all levels of power, and would serve any game as a list of alchemical items.

Even a poor alchemist can make many of these items, as the ingredients do not get consistently expensive until the fifth level is reached. Also, enough detail is given for the procedures to

make real role-playing possible, rather than the "O.K., I'll make another batch of potion X," syndrome.

Finally, part four contains the secret gamemaster's notes, which cover buying and selling, laboratories, Masters, hirelings and apprentices, cooperation with wizards, research and experimentation, and explosions. This information should be sufficient to answer, or at least give significant help with, most questions.

All in all, **The Compleat Alchemist** is a multi-level supplement, readily adaptable to any FRP system, and would be a good investment for anyone wishing to add color, detail, and realism to his campaign.

THE STAR SNATCHERS No adults need apply.

By Bob Kindel

Published By: TSR Inc.

Designed By: Linda Lowery

Price: \$2.25

Complexity: Introductory

Rules Clarity: Good

Graphics Quality: Fair

THE STAR SNATCHERS is the sixth in a series of "Pick a Path to Adventure" series based on the Dungeon and Dragons cartoon show. These books present the reader with a situation and then sends the reader to different pages depending on which of the presented options that the reader chooses. No game system is used. Knowledge of the cartoon show is not required.

Actually, if you're under ten and like the cartoon show, you'll probably like this book. If not, you won't.

I'm not sure why these "Pick a Path" (or "Endless Quest", "Choose Your Own Adventure", etc.) books are considered games. Most don't even try to introduce an element of chance. If you choose X, then Y will occur. I don't particularly like them, but then, very few adults seem to. Interest in them seems to peter out at about age 13. The "Pick a Path to Adventure" series in particular is aimed at an even younger market - say 7 to 11.

In **THE STAR SNATCHERS** the reader assumes the role of Diana the Acrobat. Her friends are captured by the Shrieker, an evil ex-pixie who steals the stars from the sky to augment her arcane powers. The stars, which in this book are baseball-sized items that can

be returned to the sky almost as easily as they're removed, have been an item of contention in the world. The cartoon characters are seen as enemies of the Shrieker and so she also tries to capture Diana. The adventure revolves around Diana avoiding capture as she tries to free her friends.

As these things go, this one isn't bad. The plot is patently absurd, or course, but no more so than the Little Engine Who Could. The author is apparently trying to get her readers to think. The reader must solve a variety of puzzles to get clues to help her on her quest. Mirror writing, scrambled words, crosswords, all come into play. They're simple - but they're meant for ten year olds, not experienced gamers. Also, a case could be made for the book serving to interest kids too young to game in gaming.

The graphics are based on the cartoon show drawings. I don't particularly like Saturday morning cartoon art, but someone obviously does. Jeffrey Butler and Keith Parkinson's cover and Gary Williams interior art is every bit as good as the show's (faint praise that).

I wouldn't recommend the book to anyone over eleven. but if you've got a young niece, nephew, son, daughter, etc., it would make a good gift. At least it requires a little thought.

VIKINGS

Published By: The Avalon Hill Game Company

Designers: Greg Stafford and Sandy Petersen

Developers: Charlie Krank

Price: \$21.00

Complexity: Moderate

Rules Quality: Good

Graphics Quality: Fair

Reviewed by: Galan Akin

Vikings is the first of a planned series of "culture packs" for **Runequest**, set on an alternate fantasy earth. This boxed supplement contains a 38 page Players Book, a 30 page Gamemaster Book, a 47 page scenarios book, a Viking Digest booklet, Viking adventurer sheets, and a players map, which has plans for a Viking stead and longship on the reverse side. It covers various aspects of Viking culture, and is derived from

both historical and mythological sources.

The Players Book contains all the pertinent information for creating Nordic adventurers and includes previous experience and backgrounds for Viking characters, notes on Viking society and roleplaying Vikings, rules for drinking, information on Viking ships, and a section on religion and magic. Other player items are a map of Scandinavia, the world known to beginning characters, plans for a Viking stead and longship, diagrams of various boats, and a booklet of adventurer sheets especially tailored to Viking characters.

The Gamemaster Book briefly describes the world from a Viking point of view, including all the lands known to the Vikings, and provides a map for the gamemaster (which covers more area than the players' map and gives mythical lands). This section also has a timeline for major events from Viking prehistory to the eleventh century, providing a great amount of flexibility for a gamemaster to develop his campaign in the age of his choice. The bulk of the material in this book is made up of the section on Norse creatures. This includes stats and descriptions of new monsters, and new altered versions of creatures found in the RQ creatures book. At the end of the gamemaster book is a reading list for further inspiration, which is quite complete.

The Scenarios Book is the best feature of the set. Since the 3rd edition **Runequest** came out, Avalon Hill has been much too slow in bringing out supplements of any kind, and published adventures are especially needed. The first few pages of this book covers suggestions on starting a Viking campaign. The first and third scenarios are short, and need a little more information than the statistics provided in the Viking Digest. The second scenario, Ting, covers aspects of Viking social customs, including the resolution of legal cases. It is good, and contains numerous opportunities for roleplaying, character interaction, and character development. However, it is too sketchy and requires considerable work by the gamemaster to make it realize its potential. Thing and Hunt are reuseable, and it is suggested they be used several times in a campaign. The last three scenarios, Gone Viking, Trade, and Tule are of a wider scope and more interesting than the first three.

Gone Viking covers the adventures of a band of Vikings setting out to raid and pillage. The Trade scenario opens up a lot of possibilities for adventure, but is short in itself. Tule is the most interesting and dangerous of the adventures, and though original, is more of a traditional adventure; it could easily be played with non-viking characters. This scenario includes a new race, the Wind Children.

The inclusion of the more generic statistics for use with the scenarios in the Viking Digest booklet was a good idea. These statistics can easily be used in gamemaster-improvised scenarios, and provide a valuable play aid for **Runequest**, a game where generating the statistics for scenarios is often more time-consuming than designing the scenarios themselves.

The information in the Players' Book is very complete, and the data on Norse society is particularly useful. The minor alterations to the **Runequest** magic system to fit Norse mythology is well done, and is just one of the many factors that combine to make the Viking adventurer unique in the world, and more than just archetypical barbarians. The new creatures are true to Norse mythology, and I especially liked the Alfr (Norse fairies) and the various types of giants. The format for presentation of information is very good.

The bad points in **Vikings** are minor. The artwork in some places could be better. I would like to have seen more professional maps, especially the large players map. The "Mistaken Identity" table in the Gamemaster Book takes up more than a page and is practically useless. Despite the fact that it is set in a fantasy world, I think the majority of Viking warriors should have less access to magic. A magic rich campaign (e.g. Gloranta) is fine if handled right, but doesn't seem to fit well in a warrior Viking society.

All around, **Vikings** is very good. If you play **Runequest**, and like the idea of playing in this type of environment, this is exactly what you want. The Viking Digest and Scenarios Book are useful to most **Runequest** campaigns. It is moderately useful as a generic sourcebook for other games, but is somewhat expensive for this. It is, however, of little use to gamemasters who already have their own campaigns in full swing; it is most useful to gamemasters wishing to start a campaign.

The Temple Of Elemental Evil

AD&D Module T1-4: The Temple Of Elemental Evil

Written By: Gary Gygax & Frank Mentzer

Published By: TSR

Price: \$15.00

Complexity Level: Introductory to Moderate

Graphics Quality: Good

Reviewed By JEFF ALBANESE

THE TEMPLE OF ELEMENTAL EVIL is the long-awaited (6 years!) second half to module T1, THE VILLAGE OF HOMMLET, which was published back in 1979. In TEMPLE, TSR includes HOMMLET, along with the village of Nulb, for a 128 page adventure for character levels 1 thru 8. Also included is a 16 page booklet of map for the adventure, thereby giving you 144 pages for your money.

In terms of complexity, TEMPLE starts off at the intro level with the HOMMLET adventure, but by the time you have reached the inner levels of the temple, the level of play has hit the moderate part of the scale. As for rules and graphics quality, TEMPLE is on about the same level as other TSR modules; one will find typos and errors, such as a person's armor class. But these mistakes will not ruin the play of the adventure.

Now, on to the story. For those few of you who have never played THE VILLAGE OF HOMMLET, let me give you some info that is going to be re-run time for others. Hommlet was at one time under the control of an evil group based out of a vile place called the Temple of Elemental Evil (Where have I heard that name before?). The temple was stormed and put to ruin, and even sealed up to prevent the return of evil to the area. However, problems have returned to the area, and it's up to the characters to find out what and where it is.

After all of this, the big question is: Was it worth the wait and the price? Yes. I felt that TEMPLE is worth the money in that you are getting 4½ modules (page-wise) for the price of 2. This adventure will take you about 5 sittings to complete, depending on the size of your group, and how much roleplaying goes on. Also, even veteran players will enjoy the thrill of what lies in the temple (and beyond, for that matter!), for this module is no pushover!

SLAYER-OF-DRAGONS

A New Non-Player Character for Runequest

By Michael DeWolfe

Slayer-Of-Dragons is a hero and a legend. He is a famous warrior who roams the lands in search of adventure. He arrives in the nick of time to do a good deed and then leave. He is rarely seen in cities, except when he has to save someone. Many people know of this drifting spirit, though few have seen him. His age is indeterminate. Some think of him as a young man, but others

see him as an ageless being, at least a century old.

Slayer-Of-Dragons actually had the name handed down to him. As a boy, he wandered into the forest near his town. He soon became lost and several days later, was on the brink of death. Slayer-Of-Dragons found him and raised him. The boy became a skilled fighter and later took on the name of his master. He

did this because his master was mortally wounded. The first Slayer-Of-Dragons was able to make it back to his pupil and hand over all of his possessions; his enchanted sword, his talisman and enchanted suit of armor. Slayer-Of-Dragons is now the Champion of the weak and oppressed.

STR 17	MOVE 3	RIGHT LEG 3/6	WEAPON	SR	ATTACK %	DAMAGE	PARRY %	PTS.
CON 18	HIT POINTS 18	LEFT LEG 3/6	Greatsword	6	95%	2D8+1D6	90%	15
SIZ	FATIGUE 35	ABDOMEN 7/8	Punch	8	75%	1D3+1D6	45%	—
INT 14	MAGIC POINTS 18	CHEST 7/8	Spells: None. The Talisman casts Darkness 80%, at his command.					
POW 16	DEX SR 2	RIGHT ARM 3/5						
DEX 19		LEFT ARM 3/5						
APP 17		HEAD 0/6						

PIT TRAP

A Scenario for Runequest

By Galan Akin

In this scenario the characters are traveling along an old unused road when they unwittingly stumble across a small scale war between halflings and broos. The halflings have been raided by broo war parties for some time and have finally taken the offensive. Unbeknownst to the PC's, the halflings have set up a trap on a road, which is frequently used by the broos, but rarely by anyone else.

The trap is a pit trap, and works as follows: The pit is disguised and the opening is large enough so that 6 people can stand on it at once. The trigger mechanism is located on the far end, and as soon as it is activated the trap will open, causing all creatures on the opening to tumble down a 10 meter chute, and fall an additional 3 meters to the bottom of a cavern. There is a secret tunnel leading from the hillside to the cavern that is used by the halflings once their captives have been weakened by several days in the trap. There are currently 7 live broo in the trap. Halfling guards are always watching the trap in hiding, waiting to attack any broos who don't fall down the trap.

Assuming that the characters are

walking on the road, the first six will fall down the trap (unless they are walking far apart). Each will take 1D6 damage from the fall, and then have the broos to contend with. The broos will not necessarily attack the adventurers right off, but they will attempt to gain some advantage by their arrival. Any PC's left on the surface will have to explain their position to the suspicious halflings.

While the characters are conversing with the halflings, a band of broos attack. There are 6 of them, and 8 halflings. If the characters help the halflings in the fight, they will gain their trust and the halflings will help them. If the characters run away and then come back, the halflings will be very hostile. Of course if all of the adventurers fell down the trap, this battle has no effect on them.

Unless the adventurers left on the surface can provide outside help, the characters stuck in the pit will be trapped there with the broos until the next morning. At that time a group of 14 halflings will come to their rescue. The secret passage is cut off from the rest of the cavern by iron bars set in the rock.

The halflings will try to kill the broos as easily as possible, and any help given by the PC's will be appreciated. If, by some chance, the adventurers have allied with the broos, they will have a somewhat tougher time.

Once all these conflicts have been resolved, the characters will be escorted to the halfling camp (see map). If the halflings are still suspicious of the characters, they will question them until they are satisfied that they mean no harm, after which they will let them go.

If the characters wish to stay and help fight the broo menace, they will be welcome. The halflings will pay 8 pennies per day, plus food and lodging. This amount is negotiable, and if the adventurers prove to be an outstanding asset against the broos, they will certainly be paid more.

The characters will most often be used to patrol the region. The broos generally attack at irregular intervals, 1-2 times per day, in groups of 2D8+3. The broo attacks will lessen considerably if they are consistently defeated for one week straight. If the adventurers prove to be highly

formidable and a cause for the broos to become demoralized, the attacks may stop altogether as they look for weaker folk to prey upon.

Eventually, the halflings will wish to get rid of the broo menace for good. They will march into the wild lands inhabited by the broos with or without the characters' aid. There are 200 halflings

in the camp, and of these 120 will go. The halfling army will be attacked by broos occasionally, although most broos encountered will be in small groups and flee on sight.

The closest large group of broos inhabit a ruined castle ten days march into the wilderness. 70 broo live here, although not all will be present at any

one time. If these broos are defeated, the raids will stop forever. Because the halflings are much more organized than the broos, the odds are in their favor. Any characters who kill at least five broos will make a noticeable impact on the battle, and will be suitably rewarded.

Typical Broo warrior

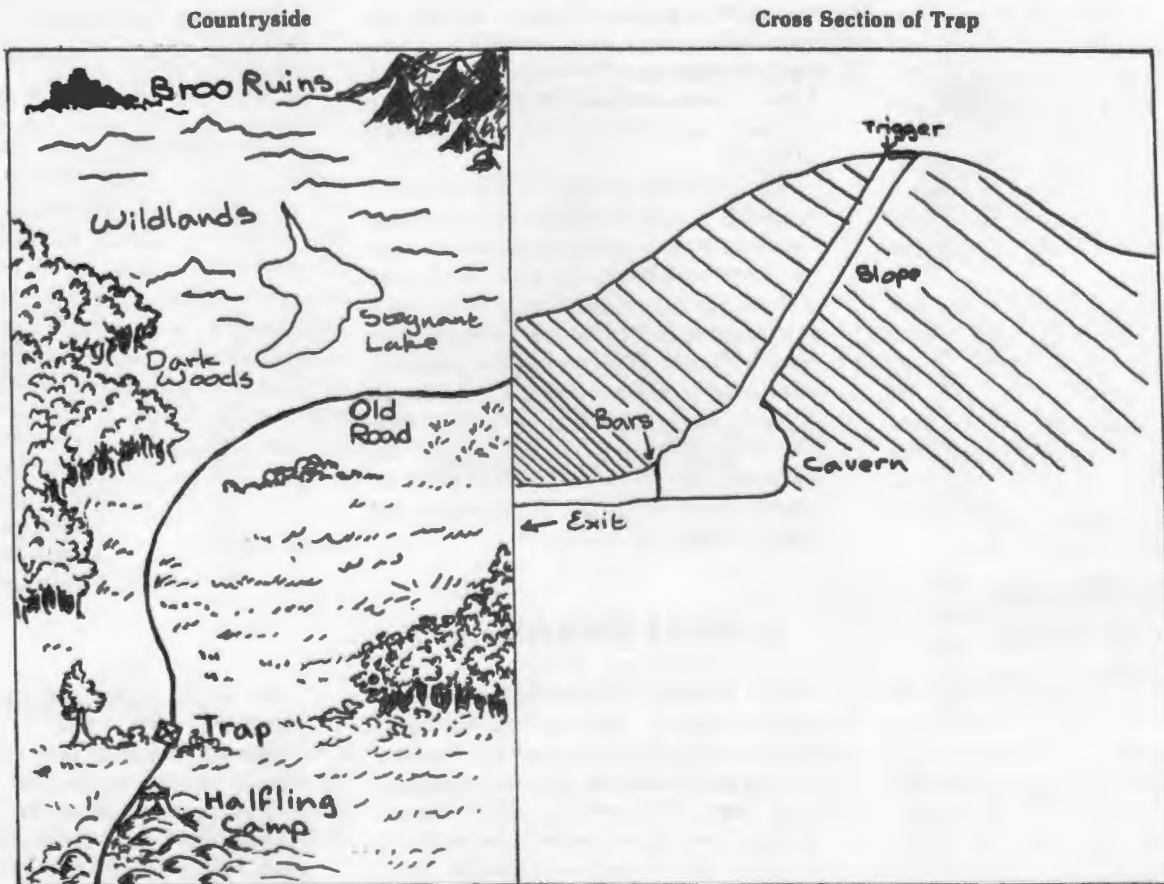
STR 12 _____	Move 4	R Leg 1/5 _____	Weapon	SR	ATTACK %	Damage	PARRY %	PTS
CON 14 _____	Hit Points 15 _____	L Leg 1/5 _____	Head Butt	9	48%	1D6+1D4	—	—
SIZ 16 _____	Fatigue 26 _____	Abdomen 2/5 _____	Club	6	52%	1D10+1D4	40%	10
INT 10 _____	Magic Points 9 _____	Chest 2/6 _____	(or) Spear	6	50%	1D8+1+1D4	30%	10
POW 9 _____	DEX SR 3	R Arm 0/4 _____						
DEX 13		L Arm 0/4 _____						
APP 5		Head 3/5 _____						

Notes: wears 1-point leather on legs, 1-point on torso

Typical halfling warrior

STR 10 _____	Move 2	R Leg 2/5 _____	Weapon	SR	Attack %	Damage	PARRY %	PTS
CON 21 _____	Hit Points 13 _____	L Leg 2/5 _____	Shortsword	7	50%	1D6+1	55%	10
SIZ 5 _____	Fatigue 31 _____	Abdomen 3/5 _____	Sling	2/7	75%	1D8	—	—
INT 13 _____	Magic Points 10 _____	Chest 3/6 _____	Rock	2/7	80%	1D4	—	—
POW 10 _____	DEX SR 2 _____	R Arm 2/4 _____						
DEX 18 _____		L Arm 2/4 _____						
APP 11 _____		Head 4/5 _____						

Notes: Wears leather on limbs, cuirboilli on torso, bezaunted on head.



NEW SPELLS FOR RUNEQUEST

Alter Light (Sorcery Spell)

Passive, Ranged, Temporal

The Alter Light spell alters the brightness of light. It affects a one meter radius and can be projected a maximum of ten meters. These limitations can be altered through the expenditure of Magic Points. The difference in light occurs through a spherical area. The spell can be used to both brighten and dim light. The alteration is visible from a distance.

Alter Light is cast on a tangible object and remains there for the duration of the spell. The object can be a wand, a hand, air or anything that the caster chooses. If the object is completely enveloped in an opaque substance, the benefit will not be noticeable. Therefore, if a coin had the spell cast upon it, and was placed in a black sachel, it would give off light or draw it in.

To establish the cost of a casting of this spell, you have to define difference in light. There are seven levels of light, 0 to 6, the lowest level is absolute darkness and level six is brighter than pure sunlight. A character must judge what level the present light is at and then judge the level he wishes to create. The difference is the number of Magic Points spent for the spell. For example, moonlight is classed as level one in brightness, the caster wishes to create a sphere that is as bright as sunlight, level five, so the difference is four. The cost in Magic Points is four.

Duration, range and area of effect can be altered by expending extra Magic Points. For every extra Magic Point expended, the spell range can be doubled. Each additional point spent can double the duration of the spell. The base duration is ten minutes. The area of effect is doubled for each point that is additionally used.

Create Munyeti (Sorcery Spell)

Ritual (Enchanting)

The Create Munyeti spell brings an incomplete human being into existence for the caster's uses. The Munyeti is a potential familiar, but it requires the spell of Create Familiar INT to be cast.

Before casting this spell, the caster has to create a mental image of the

Munyeti's appearance and personality; this concentration costs eight points of Free INT. When created, it will have all of the desired traits, within the confines of the abilities. The Munyeti will act just as a familiar would, in regards to loyalty and magic use.

A Munyeti costs six points of POW to create. Its INT is fixed at ten and its APP can be anything the caster chooses. The other abilities are generated using the formula $1D4+7$. If the caster wants to enhance one of the Munyeti's abilities by 1D4, he may use an extra point of POW. Munyeti begin without skills.

Diminish Sound

1 point

Passive, Temporal, Ranged

This spell diminishes sound in a localized area. The spell basically stops sound from emanating from within an area less than SIZ 20. This spell does not work when an exceptionally loud noise or when a Listen roll is performed. This can be overcome if the spell is cast and twice the number of Magic Points are used. The range and duration of the spell can be modified according to the rules of the Magic Book. The cost normally is one Magic Point per five SIZ affected.

An example of use: A character is wearing a suit of armor and carrying two pouches of coins. Needless to say, he can be well heard. So, a sorcerer casts a Diminish Sound spell on him. Because the target is SIZ 14, he must spend three Magic Points. This way, the armored character is silent, though if someone were to use a Listen skill successfully the character would be heard. To prevent this, the caster would have to spend six points. In ten minutes the spell's effect will disperse.

Diminish Encumbrance

Passive, Temporal, Touch

The Diminish ENC spell makes an object lighter and easier to carry without affecting its size or function. Living organisms, as well as any object, can be affected by this spell. Encumbrance can be affected at a rate of three points for each magic Point

used. The duration of the spell is ten minutes. Encumbrance cannot be reduced to less than 20% normal. Unwilling living organisms can only be affected if the caster matches his Magic Points against the target's POW in a resistance check. The main purpose of power is to make an object easier to lift, levitate, or fly.

Terry Paul

Aging Enchantment

Ritual (enchanting)

An aging enchantment can be used by a sorcerer to cause his enemy to age unnaturally. The sorcerer must perform the ritual by first designating a victim, and enchanting some item as he would normally enchant an object. The object holds the magic for the spell and if it is broken the victim will return to the age (and ability scores) he had before. The item is generally hidden somewhere by the spell caster.

Once the spell is cast, the victim will begin to age unnaturally. To determine the exact effect of the aging, consult the following table.

POW expended	Aging
1	1 year per 6 months
2	1 year per 3 months
3	1 year per 6 weeks
4	1 year per 3 weeks
5	1 year per 11 days
6	1 year per 6 days
7	1 year per 3 days
8	1 year per 36 hours
9	1 year per 18 hours
10	1 year per 9 hours
11	1 year per 4½ hours
12	1 year per 2¼ hours
13	1 year per 68 minutes
14	1 year per 34 minutes
15	1 year per 17 minutes

For every additional point of POW expended, the time it takes the character to age 1 year is halved. The effects of this aging are determined normally (see page 82, Runequest Players Book), as if the character had aged naturally. Note that the aging will

not cause any losses to the character's ability scores until he reaches the (magical) age of 40.

Obviously, this is a curse an afflicted character will want to get rid of as soon as possible. One way, as mentioned above, is to destroy the object that contains the enchantment for the spell. The gamemaster may devise other ways, and an interesting quest may be fun with this goal in mind. An immortality spell will, at least for the duration of the spell, halt the effects of aging. When the spell wears out, however, the aging will continue as described above, unless the victim has found a cure in the interim.

Invisibility

Touch, Passive, Temporal

This spell causes 2 SIZ to become invisible to normal vision (for every level of intensity of the spell.). The caster must be able to touch the object or being, so the subject of this spell cannot be immaterial. A character attacking an invisible being will be at -75 percentiles unless he makes a successful Listen, Smell, or other sense roll, in which case he will be at -50 percentiles. Because of their special senses, trolls and dwarves have no penalty to their attack rolls when attacking an invisible character.

A sorcerer who becomes invisible does not necessarily make his clothes and other carried possessions invisible. For this case, convert the ENC carried into SIZ to be turned invisible; for example, a SIZ 14 character carrying 12 ENC would have to either spend 7 magic points and have his possessions (including his clothes) remain visible (in which case he would be no harder to hit), or spend 8 magic points and become totally invisible, carried possessions and all.

Galan Akin

Gift

Ranged, Passive, Temporal

This sorcery spell has the ability to boost a character's percentage in one skill. The single skill is raised ten percentiles per Magic Point used. This

means that if a character has Dodge at 47% and the caster uses this spell with three Magic Points, the target's Dodge goes to 77% for ten minutes. This spell cannot affect spell percentages.

Translate

Ranged, Active, Temporal

This spell is able to translate a foreign language into an intelligible tongue. This allows a party of one language to understand one other language while the spell is in effect. So, if one character spoke French to six Englishmen and two Germans, and the caster had the spell translate French to English, the Englishmen could hear French as if it were English but the French and Germans would be mystified. In such cases, multiple Magic Points could be spent so more than one group could be understood. Two sets of translations cannot be handled simultaneously. This means that in the example, the sorcerer can use six Magic Points, so everyone could be understood, but he could not cast the spell twice so, say, Germans could only understand French and French could only understand English. If you wish to calculate the number of Magic Points used by a multi-lingual translation, use this formula; multiply the number of languages involved by the same number less one.

Languages Involved	Magic Point Use
2	2
3	6
4	12
5	20

The spell caster need not know the languages he is translating.

HATEBLADES

The Hateblades are a pair of enchanted swords. The long swords each contain the spirit of a feuding opponent. A sorcerer locked them within their swords to stop them from fighting. When only one sword is

wielded, it acts as if it were enchanted. When both are in the hands of a wielder, they cause the wielders to battle each other.

Both swords have a POW of 15. When used individually, they add ten percent to a character's long sword weapon skill. Its POW may be drawn in the form of magic points, but spirit combat must be engaged to draw POW itself. When two characters, each with a Hateblade, meet, the enchantment changes severely. The weapons affect the attack and parry skill, by halving it and adding sixty percentiles. Next, if the possessor of a Hateblade does not make a percentile die roll less than his POW, he becomes possessed by the blade. After such, the Hateblade pushes the character into combat with the other character.

Combat takes place on two levels; mental and physical. On the physical level, the characters only attack and parry, until one is either dead or affected by outside forces. A character being dragged from battle is affected by an outside force. Once a character is dead, both swords break their spells and lose their enchantment; they become normal long swords once again.

The mental level of combat is taken care of, using spirit combat. The POW of a Hateblade and its user is pitted against that of the other. Simultaneously, with physical combat, spirit combat ensues. When the POW of either of the swords or their users reach zero, combat is ended, on both levels. Neither the swords, nor the combatants, can stop the spirit combat, until it has run its course.

The swords exhibit no intelligence or spells. They cause 2D6+2 points of damage, the minimum STR and DEX required are nine and eleven, respectively, and SR is two. Their ENC is five each. A Hateblade has twenty-five Armor Pts. and a length of one meter.

These weapons may be found alone or together. If they are found separately, they would eventually cross paths. The blades may be part of a magician's or rich man's hoarde, or they may be individually possessed by swordsmen who value their enchantment.

Michael De Wolfe

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Counter-Terrorist Operations

by Greg Porter

Most governments have special teams for dealing with crisis situations such as hijackings or terrorist attacks. The capabilities of a counter-terrorist team or its members are not widely advertised, just to keep the advantage of an unknown quantity. However, with a little digging through the library and various merc magazines, you can get some idea of what these guys can do. The GIGN recently got a bit of press in the Winter 1985 issue of **Gung-HO**, and I will use them as an example of these elite units.

All are in excellent physical condition for starters. The training involves every kind of physical activity that could be mission related (running, swimming, climbing, martial arts, etc.). They are also excellent marksmen. Reputedly they can put a lethal shot in each of six targets at 25 meters in 5 seconds or less. This accuracy is from any position, including firing with one hand while hanging from a wall with the other. I've read this figure and similar ones in other sources. If correct, this is impressive. To translate this to game terms, in **Concrete Jungle**, they have an adjusted skill of 13+. In **Danger International**, their OCV with weapon is an 11 or better, and in **James Bond**, their base chance is a 25 or better. If there are still any **Top Secret** fans out there, you need an Offense of 125 or better to reliably do this. For those who consider number of bullets more important than accuracy for this sort of work, the standard GIGN sidearm is the Manhurin MR73 revolver (.357 Mag or 9mm). Yes Virginia, that's 6 shots, then reload. As good as they are reputed to be, 6 shots, should be enough. If you don't care about bystanders or survivors (as is occasionally the case), automatic weapons are recommended.

Tactics - The tactics that are usually used in an assault seem to work in several RPG's, which is comforting to see. Depending on the situation, there may be different objectives. If you are trying to kill everyone there, your

weapons and tactics will be different that if you have hostages or need to minimize property damage. Some guidelines for **Concrete Jungle** and **Danger International** follow. Quite different systems, but a few rules remain the same:

Don't do anything alone unless you can help it. Two man groups are nice, and three man groups are better.

Use the right weapon for the situation. Indoors especially, longarms take longer to bring to bear.

Always have a backup plan if things go wrong.

Getting in the front door

Concrete Jungle — Avoid the doors if possible. Use window entry if you can afford it, and from the same level or above an enemy position. If you must enter by the main doors, use at least two different entrances to split enemy attention. One unit should open the door, and allow a dummy unit in to "scout" the area. Next turn, real units should enter slowly, getting to cover while other units remain stationary to provide covering fire if necessary. If hostile fire is encountered and the doorway must still be entered, one or more units should provide covering fire to keep heads down while the others go for a covered position.

Danger International — One character should open the door from a covered position, while another is holding action, ready to shoot. All characters involved should arrange for the Sequence Chart to be advantageous to them (Segment 2 for Speed 4, Segment 3 for Speed 3, etc.) Depending on situation, the GM may allow Setting without a visible target (like on a doorway, a specific corner, etc.). If so, take advantage of this, even with the delays it may cause. That extra +1 could come in handy if someone does a Snap Shot from cover.

Moving down a hallway

Concrete Jungle — Leapfrogging seems to work best. One unit remains stationary, setting or bracing as the

opportunity arises. The other unit moves forward up 2 or 3MP, and kneels. The next turn, this unit sets or braces, and following that, the other unit moves forward and does the same. Units alternate, always with one or more units stationary when the other is moving. Make sure the stationary unit acts first in the turn to make sure that it is not penalized for the movement of the turn before.

Danger International — Same thing. Characters should always move in half-moves, with another character Set if possible, and holding an action. Kneeling lowers your silhouette, and should give a +1 to DCV, much needed if there is no other cover. Characters should be on opposite sides of the hallway so any spray fire does not hit both. This is dependent on a hallway two or more hexes wide or a GM call on positioning.

Room Clearing

Concrete Jungle — One unit should open the door from a dot diagonal from the door for maximum cover. Another unit should be looking in the room from a different angle. This provides a better view in large rooms, and splits any spray fire or damage from booby traps. Again, one unit expends MP while the other remains stationary for the Initiative bonus. Optimally, there should also be a covering unit for the pair opening the door, since they are not focusing their full attention on anything except the room and doorway. If a hostage situation, the covering unit should be ready to make a called shot to a vital area on any terrorist units in the room. Alternately, a stun grenade can be primed and tossed in when the door is opened. Make sure this is late in the turn to reduce the possibility of escape or evasion by units in the room. If a simple house clearing, a primed grenade should be tossed in at the end of the turn. At the beginning of the next turn, a spray fire burst of 5 rounds per dot in the room should be fired. At the point blank range in small or medium rooms,

this should clear any defenders the grenade left. If a locked door is encountered, a small burst at range 0 should clear it (10 rounds for DV 2, 5 rounds for DV 3 or 4, 1 shot for DV 5).

Danger International — Again, a situation where you don't want to be alone. You will usually be facing the wall rather than down a hall, and about to enter an area of unknown threat level. As before, one character should cover the doorway, while another opens the door from a covered position. Even if just sticking a hand into the potential line of fire, it is a good idea to kneel. Normal interior walls are DEF 3 and 3

BODY, and some wise guy with an auto rifle might take some pot shots through the wall at you. If you have a grenade to toss in, go ahead, but make sure it will go off before it can be picked up. If you don't care who's inside, open up with autofire or auto burst as soon as the door is open, just to make sure you get the first shots. Of course, if your DEX is high enough, you can always hope the person who might be inside wasn't holding his action. Just because a door is locked doesn't mean there is no one inside, as you will eventually discover if you pass them all up. A normal door lock is DEF 3, 1 BODY, and is -6 OCV to

hit. Any weapon of 1d6+1 or better will reliably kill the lock. The door jamb may range from DEF 1 for cheap doors to DEF 4 for a steel fire door, with a BODY of 1. Sometimes it is just as easy to kick the door in, but remember that it will be your only attack for the phase.

Other situations like stairways are similar enough that they don't need a separate case, and by now you should have an idea what to do anyway.

GIGN Unit — Here is a sample GIGN unit for **Concrete Jungle** and **Danger International**, with equipment.

GIGN Unit, **Concrete Jungle**

Unit Cost: 69(!) Weapon Cost: See below
BP — 4, BR — 5, Reaction Level -2

Armor — Torso: 3

Skills — Pistol: 13, Longarm — 11,
Grenade Launcher — 10, Hand to Hand:
10, Thrown Weapon: 10

Weapons: Manhurin MR73 Revolver
and/or FR-F1 sniping rifle

Cost Weapon DV IA Skill Shots ROF
ENC

6 Manhurin MR73 (.357 Mag) 3+1 Pistol
6 3 1

19 FR-F1 Sniping Rifle 5+3* Longarm 10
1 2

* The IA is only for the person to whom
the weapon was custom fitted. All
others get an IA of 1 less. Weapon comes
with scope.

Reduced cost unit — Lower all skills by
one. Unit cost is now 45.

GIGN Unit, **Danger International**

	CHA	COST
STR	14	4
DEX	18	24
CON	16	12
BOD	12	4
INT	14	4
EGO	14	8
PRE	18	8
COM	10	0
PD	5	2
ED	4	1
SPD	4	12
REC	6	0
END	32	0
STUN	27	0
TOTAL		79

Skills

Skills	Cost
Familiarity with all firearms	3
+2 with all firearms	16
Additional +2 with all French military firearms	10
Martial Arts, +1/2 Damage Mult. (5 1/2d6 Punch, 7d6 Kick)	21
+2 with Martial Maneuvers	10
Climbing, 14/less	7
+2 at coordinating attacks	6
Familiarity as per service background	2
Total	75

Standard Equipment

Manhurin MR73

Caliber — .357 Mag, OCV +1, RNG MOD
-1/3", Damage 1 1/2d6,

STN MOD 0, STR MIN 11, Shots 6,
Made in France

FR-F1 Sniping Rifle

Caliber — 7.5mm, OCV #1, RNG MOD -
1/5", Damage 2d6, STN MOD +0,

STR MIN 10, shots 10, Size 14, Made in
France, has high powered scope

DEF 4 partial vest (locations 10-13),
hardened

Other mission related equipment
(grenades, climbing gear, etc.)

Disadvantages

Disadvantages	Points
Monitored, full time by branch of French Government	6
Code to uphold law	5
Total	11

CHA Cost + Skill Cost = 154 Disad Total ÷ 11 Hero Bonus = 93

Get Even!

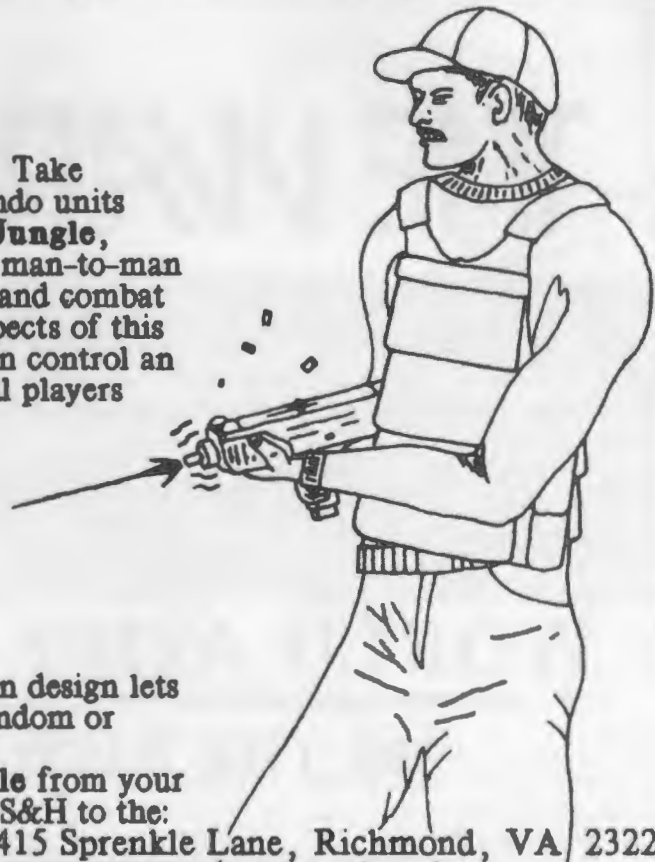
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O'CONNOR'S

OFFENSIVE

The advertisement features a central illustration within a decorative border. At the top, the title 'KNIGHTS of JUSTICE' is written in a large, stylized font, with a shield containing a cross over the word 'of'. Below the title, there is a large, detailed portrait of General George Armstrong Custer. To the right of the portrait is a smaller illustration of a soldier in 19th-century attire holding a rifle. To the left is another smaller illustration of a soldier. In the foreground, there is a detailed drawing of a steam-powered military vehicle, possibly a tank or a self-propelled gun. The text 'Custer's Luck' is written in a bold, outlined font across the middle of the illustration. Below it, 'O'CONNOR'S' is written in a similar bold, outlined font, and 'OFFENSIVE' is written in a smaller, spaced-out font at the bottom. A small signature 'Roger Moore' is visible in the bottom left corner of the illustration area.

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The Skirmish Line

Reviews of Products for the War, Miniatures, and Adventure Gamer
by Robert L. Trimble

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Editor	Norm Flam
335 N. Golden Mall, Burbank, CA 91502	
Contributing Editor	Robert L. Trimble

PISTOLS AND CUTLASSES, MR. BUSH! 1/1200TH SAILING SHIPS, BY GHQ MICRO ARMOUR (PRICES VARY)

121 80-Gun Ship of the Line	6.00
111 120-Gun Ship of the Line	6.50

All of the Micro Nauts are cleanly cast, with extremely sharp detail and minimal flash on all parts but the one-piece masts and sails, which will take a bit of work with the flush-cutting nippers and files to clean up. Transoms for all but the schooner and brig are separate parts, as are the ship's boats, and the detail is the best I've yet seen, begging for the attentions of a steady hand and fine paint brush, even the head and deck gratings being crisply reproduced. Admirably clear assembly instructions are provided, the sheet also including simplified rigging diagrams and coloring notes for the British, French, Spanish and Dutch navies during the Napoleonic Wars.

References are plentiful, one being Valley Plaza Hobbies (12160 Hamlin Street, North Hollywood), and there is no shortage of information available to the wargamer who cares to look for it. The Sterling Publishing Company has just released an English-language translation of a splendid German book on the subject, Wolfram zu Mondfeld's **Historic Ship Models**, an encyclopedic treatment of the hobby which is a very real bargain at \$24.95. Rules for this period are far less numerous, the most readily available being Fantasy Games Unlimited's "Heart of Oak," sold separately and as part of the boxed "Privateers and Gentlemen" set; "Wooden Ships and Iron Men," an Avalon Hill board game eminently suitable for use with miniatures and incorporating every reasonable factor which could affect sailing ships; Tabletop Games' "Age of Sail," which incorporates variations for four major periods; and "Ship of the Line," published by Juggernaut and one of the older titles, but still competitive. "The Courier" magazine has made this subject its theme for the 1985-86 volume year, and naval wargames aficionados would be wise to add these six

Naval wargames have been popular since the latter years of the 19th Century, when Fred. T. Jane (who would become famous thanks to the annual technological surveys which bear his name) formulated and published his own set of rules for these, joining H.G. Wells as one of the wargaming hobbies' most important pioneers.

Until the mid-1940s naval wargames were the province of the scratch-builder, for commercial models were either crude toys or expensive imported models from England and Germany. In 1946 Comet Metal Products, under the Authenticast name, hit the ravenous postwar civilian market with its extensive range of former military ship recognition models, designed to the internationally accepted scale of 1 inch to 100 prototype feet (1/1200th); eventually these molds passed into the hands of Superior Models as the hobby grew in strength until it could support specialist manufacturers who did little else but cater to the needs of its proponents.

However, while 1/1200th models could incorporate extensive detail and splendidly rewarded the efforts of the skilled painter, a game played with them did require a great deal of floor space. Author and wargamer Fletcher Pratt of necessity and used a gymnasium floor for his imbroglios. In answer to this, manufacturers first halved the then-standard scale to 1/2400th (1 inch to 200 feet), then added 1/3000th (1 inch to 250 feet) for those who, unlike Pratt, couldn't oust the local basketball team from its natural habitat.

When GHQ set about producing a line of sailing warships several years ago, however, the company decided to stay with 1/1200th models, naval actions during the 18th and

early 19th Centuries being fought at virtual musket range as a matter of course and making it possible to play on a tabletop quite easily. This scale also makes it possible to reproduce small details practically, requires fewer design concessions, is easier to paint, and offers the superdetailer ample rewards if he or she chooses to go just that extra step and add rigging, flags, and similar fiddly bits which, while they might not add to the model's effectiveness in battle, make it look so much better. Marketed under the trade name "Micro Nauts," these models now incorporate sails and masts cast in one piece, making them much more attractive products, since scratch-building these parts would not be a great deal of fun for the average gamer.

The Micro Nauts are generic versions of their classes rather than models of specific prototypes, incorporating features found throughout the world's navies during the Napoleonic era, shipbuilding techniques being virtually identical in all nations, since their naval architects studied friend and foe alike in pains-taking detail in order to copy whatever features they felt could improve the performance of their own navy's warships. By accepting the models on this basis it will be an easy task to build up a satisfying naval force in the colors of any major European nation.

At present, the line consists of eight fairly complex models:

#262 8-Gun Schooner	\$3.25
251 18-Gun Brig	3.50
252 20-Gun Sloop	3.50
241 32-Gun Frigate	4.00
141 40-Gun Frigate	4.50
131 74-Gun Ship of the Line	5.50

issues to their libraries while they are still available.

So, if you've read C. S. Forester's books until the pages are falling out, stay up until 3 a.m. to catch "The Sea Hawk" one more time, and react to sea air as a cat does to catnip, GHQ's Micro Nauts are for you, and may you always have the weather gauge of your opponent.

Johnny Reb and Bill Yank

15MM AMERICAN CIVIL WAR FIGURES, BY DONNINGTON MINIATURES (\$2.49 PER PACK OF 10 FOOT OR 5 MOUNTED; COMMAND SET AND ARTILLERY CREWS \$1.50 PER PACK OF FOUR)

Let me say at the outset that Donnington Miniatures' American Civil War line appears to have been sculpted with an axe, that figures and firearms are made to two different scales, and that if these measure 15mm sole to crown I'll eat them. But read on, Old Son, read on; it's not all bad news.

Now, with these caveats out of the way, I will also say that the miniatures possess a great deal of visual appeal specifically because of their rugged appearance, poses are generally well done (although the prone figures are useless for anything but casualties), detail is crisp and quite clean, and they should present an excellent appearance when painted and based. Because of their size, they can't be mixed with other ranges, which is painfully typical of the thinking in this shortsighted industry, since they stand almost a full head taller than even Miniature Figurines, which are already approximately 10 percent oversize. Flash is heavy, albeit not thick, and buyers are in for some serious knife-and-rifle work before the figures are ready for priming.

Despite sculpting idiosyncracies and a liberal interpretation of scale, a gamer coming fresh to our Civil War could do much worse than to select Donnington Miniatures figures for his army, a careful paint job and some file work on their bases going far to camouflage their variants from the norm. Painting ACW lead is one of the easier and more rewarding activities available to the wargamer, since Federals and Confederates wore uniforms which, with some colorful exceptions, were similar in cut, making it possible to use figures for either side regardless of how the manufacturer has labelled them. Zouaves add a splash of color to both armies, and no two members of a Confederate regiment have to be absolutely identical; for that matter, they do not even have to wear a recognizable military

uniform, civilian clothing and homemade versions of the official patterns outnumbering regulation dress by a wide margin. References are too numerous to make anything but the most cursory pass at the iceberg's tip practical, the following items being closest to hand at the moment.

Elting, Col. John R., USA (Ret). **Long Endure: The Civil War (Period, 1952-1867.** Presidio Press, Novato, CA; 1982.

Funcken, Liliane and Fresd. **L'Uniforme et les Armes des Soldats des Etats-Unis.** Casterman, S.A., Tournai, Belgium; 1980, two volumes.

Haythornthwaite, Philip; illustrated by Michael Chappell. **Uniforms of the American Civil War.** Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset, England; 1975, reprinted in a paperback edition 1985.

Katcher, Philip R. N.; illustrated by Michael Youens. **The Army of Northern Virginia.** Osprey Publications, London, England; 1975, reprinted 1985.

..... **Army of the Potomac.** Osprey; 1975, reprinted 1985.

.....; illustrated by Ron Volstad. **American Civil War Armies (I): Confederate Artillery, Cavalry and Infantry.** Osprey; 1986.

Todd, Frederic P. **American Military Equipment 1851-1872.** Volume I: Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, NY; 1980. Volume II: Chatham Square Press, 401 Broadway, New York, NY 10013; \$75.00 direct from the publisher.

Donnington's ACW range currently consists of 25 foot and 10 mounted figures, although only three versions of a walking horse are offered. The miniatures are cast in an excellent alloy, which reproduces fine details crisply and remains flexible enough to survive extensive handling, one sample figure arriving with a rifle barrel bent right back on itself but coming through the necessary straightening process unfazed. Johnson Hood's Wargames (1410 Promenade Bank Center, Richardson, TX 75080) distributes this line, as well as many others, in the United States, and \$2.00 will bring you a current catalog and samples. Should you decide that Donningtons are for you, I recommend that you ask to have your orders shipped via UPS rather than entrusting them to the dubious skill of the Postal Service. The costs are virtually identical and your chances of getting what you have paid for are noticeably better.



THEIR EYES ON HEAVEN, THEIR FEET IN THE MUD

15MM RENAISSANCE WARGAMING FIGURES, BY JACOBITE MINIATURES (AVAILABLE DIRECTLY FROM THE MANUFACTURER: PRICES VARY)

Western Europe's Renaissance offers wargamers one of the most colorful periods in history, with personalities who have become the embodiment of unlimited power (and its abuse) and events whose shock waves are still felt after five centuries. Its potential has been appreciated by

manufacturers since the latter Sixties, when wargaming began gaining in popularity thanks to increased press coverage, and most now include a range of appropriate figures and equipment in their catalog. The period is especially popular with devotees of the 25mm figure, since units do not have to number in the hundreds to be able to put up a good fight, costume colors are diverse enough to please the most demanding tastes, and armor is still common enough to provide the necessary martial touch. However, we

are gathered here today to sing the praises of the Jacobite Miniatures' 15s (we'll tackle 25s in another column, never fear).

Jacobite figures are, with the exception of the Napoleonic range, only available directly from England, but overseas orders are welcomed and handled with the same care and efficiency English buyers can expect to receive. The Renaissance and 17th Century ranges — the English Civil War and Thirty Years War — are far too extensive to make even a list of all items practical, a catalog being an essential investment; I imagine that \$2.00 will prove sufficient, and may even cover air-mail postage for the return leg. Orders can be placed for anything from individual figures to pre-packaged armies, organized according to Wargames Research Group guidelines, prices varying according to a system laid out on the page which gives all of the information necessary to make a purchase.

Renaissance German, French, Italian and Spanish figures are offered, with appropriate artillery and some of the nicest 15mm horses I've yet seen, armor barding being particularly well done. Pikemen, standard bearers and riders are cast with open hands, flags and lances being provided as separate pieces while lengths of steel wire serve as spears (a bit of work with pliers and a file will ensure that no one will make a grab for your figures more than once!). Details are uniformly sharp, cleanly cast and extensive, the use of washes bringing these features out handily. Figure size varies, as does physique, the older miniatures being, quite honestly, large, although not excessively, while newer ones are generally comparable with Minifigs, never a bad point to keep in mind when building a new army or adding to an existing one. A bit of touch-up with a needle file and you can swap Miniature Figurines ("Minifigs" has come to be used for both the company and its products, so check the context whenever it appears to know which is being referred to) and Jacobite riders freely to add variety to your cavalry units, infantry benefitting just as much from a bit of mix-and-match. The two companies' products neatly complement each other, prices are competitive, and with a bit of planning at the outset splendidly varied armies can be put on the table for no added effort or expense.

References are not as plentiful for the Renaissance as is the case with other periods, but information can be found in most general histories of costume and weapons. Osprey's Medieval books overlap the first years of the Renaissance, but to date only two titles in the "Men-at-Arms" series are devoted specifically to this era.

Burgkmair, Hans. **Turnier-Buch**. Harenberg Kommunikation, Dortmund, Germany; 1981. Reprint of 16th Century original.

....., and Albrecht Durer. **The Triumph of Maximilian** Funcken, Liliane



Harenberg Kommunikation, Dortmund, Germany; 1981. Reprint of 16th Century original.

....., and Albrecht Durer. **The Triumph of Maximilian** I. Dover Publication, Inc., New York; 1962.

Funcken, Liliane and Fred. **The Age of Chivalry**. Casterman s.a., Tournai, Belgium; 1980. 3 Volumes, in paperback.

Gush, George. **Renaissance Armies 1480-1650**. Patrick Stevens Ltd., Cambridge, England; 1975, second edition 1982.

Miller, Douglas; illustrated by Gerald Embelton. **The Landsknechts**. Osprey; 1976.

Montuega, Carlos; illustrated by Delfin Sales. **Los Tercios Espanoles**. Ediciones Barreira, Madrid, Spain; 1984.

Nicholle, David; illustrated by Angus McBride. **Armies of the Ottoman Turks 1300-1774**. Osprey; 1983.

Norman, A.V.B., and Don Pottinger. **English Weapons and Warfare 449-1660**. Arms & Armour Press, London, England; 1979.

Saxtorph, Niels; illustrated by Stig Bramsen. **Warriors and Weapons 3000 B.C. to A.D. 1700 in Colour**. Blandford; 1972.

Wise, Terence; illustrated by Angus McBride. **The Conquistadores**. Osprey; 1980.

Jacobite's Renaissance figures are available direct from the company, at System House, 65 Byfield Road, Woodford Halse, Nr. Daventry, Northants., England. Until next issue, watch your flanks, and good luck with the dice.

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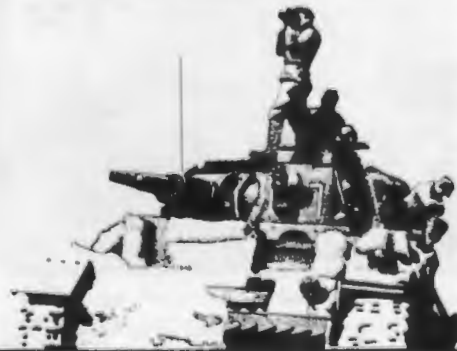
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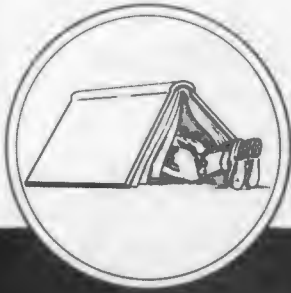
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UNDER COVER

A Selection of Previews and Reviews

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c/o P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808

Death of a Nazi Army:

The Falaise Pocket

by William B. Breuer

Published by: Stein and Day
Copyright 1985
Price: \$12.95
Reviewed by: G.E. Smith

For as long as people study and dissect the battles of WW II, the Falaise Pocket will remain one of those "might-have-been" engagements that could have changed the course of the war. With over 100,000 Germans trapped between Patton's 3rd Army and Monty's Commonwealth troops, it

seemed an easy catch. But, high level bickering, power politics and stubborn anger left a hole in the trap. Thousands of Germans, less their equipment, made it out. The British would rue the fact that they couldn't plug the gap, as many of these Germans went to Arnhem to refit, just a bridge too far to be caught, for now.

William Breuer examines the entire Cobra operation, putting Falaise into the overall context of Allied improvised planning, once the breakout occurred. The German counterattack at Mortain, subject of the new

games by Task Force and West End, is also covered in some depth.

Breuer does not go into much depth on OB's, which is a shame for gamers. Nor are may maps given to help diagram the text. However, I would recommend this book for those of you interested in the big picture of what was going on in France during this hectic time. Certainly, knowing the upper level whys and wherefores should help explain what your game is trying to simulate. Not many hard facts here, but a useful background text for students of the time.

The Dungeon Master

by Russell Grant Collins

THE DUNGEON MASTER: THE DISAPPEARANCE OF JAMES DALLAS EGBERT III by William Dear; Balentine Books, 1984; 333 pages.

James Dallas Egbert III is the teenager who disappeared at Michigan State University in 1979, allegedly while playing a live action variant of *Dungeons & Dragons* in the steam tunnels beneath the university. William Dear is the private investigator hired to locate him.

This case garnered a lot of publicity at the time, especially its ties to *D&D*. Many people recall the case, but not the outcome. Therefore, anti-gamers are likely to bring it up as proof that *D&D* can be harmful, so it pays to pick up this book in order to be able to refute these people with the facts (like that Egbert had a number of problems unrelated to gaming as far as any two facets of one person's life can be, including drug abuse).

Dungeons and Dragons purists may scoff at some of the details in the chapter relating Dear's foray into gaming to try to understand how Egbert thought (for example, Dear played a third level Magic-User with a 16 Constitution but only 6 hitpoints), but these can be overlooked for a number of reasons: (a) Dear probably did not take extensive notes on the experience, at least while it was going on, (b) he may have knowingly collapsed events in order to cut the chapter down to size, and (c) it's a relatively minor part of the book. I find that much of it reads like adventures on which I've gone, but due to the total lack of cooperation between the players, it doesn't serve as a good example of role-playing for non-gamers.

Despite the cover blurb, Dear does not strike me as a "real-life James Bond", but rather as a real life P.I. A gamer in that area (or a gamemaster) might get a few ideas from it, and it makes a darn good story as well.

Product Review

Gameware: counter trays, clear lids and storage boxes.

P.O. Box 5252 Hamden, CT 06518

6 trays and boxes: \$15.00

6 trays, no boxes: \$12.00

At last, an answer to the question of where & how to store those punched out magazine games, the myriad of counters in monster games, or the odd game lacking any storage at all. Gameware is offering a standard 1" bookcase format plastic tray with a clear lid for \$2.00 ea in a group of six, or \$2.50 ea gets you a white 1" chipboard box to store the tray in.

Your order comes with 1 page of instructions (it's big print with pictures, so don't worry) on how to assemble the boxes. Those of you clever enough will photocopy (or color photocopy) the cover of your magazine game and, by using glue, tape or rubber cement, dress up your boxes accordingly. The rest of us will use marker pens.

A standard tray will hold at least 1400 counters, and with 20 individual compartments, these trays will allow most game counters to be separated into very adequate groupings. The clear tops fit snugly into the tray and two trays will fit the standard 2" bookcase format, keeping all your men safely under cover.

These were a godsend to me, and I highly recommend them to you.

CORRECT COUNTER CONTEST

Yes, **VIP** gives you, our loyal readers, a chance to showcase your knowledge of games. This is the 1st annual Games Contest. **VIP** wants to see just what you know about the games you're playing. More specifically, can you correctly identify a game by viewing only a single counter from it? Tricky, don't you think?

In issue #5, **VIP** will display 30 counters from various Science Fiction and Fantasy games. (Wargames will appear in issue #6). All the games will have been published, though their lives on the market may have been, well, brief. You must give us the correct and accurate title that each counter comes from. (Example, if the counter is from *Rommel at Bay* and you say *Rommel's War*, wrong!) **VIP** shall classify each group of 30 into 3 classes: *Easy*, *Tricky* and *Hard*. Your victory point schedule is: 1 pt for each correct *Easy*, 3 pts for each correct *Tricky* and 5 pts for each correct *Hard* answer.

The prizes will be awarded to the entrants who get the highest scores. Ties will get duplicate prizes, but there can be only two people tied for each place awarded prizes. Postmark date will cut off the first two tied people. All entries for Section I (SF & FRPG) must be postmarked by DEC. 1. 1st place will receive a free one year subscription to **VIP** (or a one year extension of their subscription), plus a FREE GAME from the *Intersim* game line. The 2nd place finalist will receive either a free 1 year subscription (or extension) or a free game from the *Intersim* line, your choice. The 3rd place winner will receive a \$12.00 discount on any DTI product, or a 3 issue subscription or extension to **VIP** of Gaming.

To enter, take a clean sheet of 8 x 11" paper and entitle it Section I SF/FRPG (or Section II Wargames, as necessary). Then put the numbers 1-30 on the page in sequence. This represents the numbering of the counters in

VIP. Now, just write the name of the game you know the counter is from, next to the number representing the counter. And mail it to: DTI, ATTN CCC, PO Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808. Rude comments in the margins will not be appreciated, thank you. Spelling doesn't count (much), but if you mean *Car Wars* and put *Star Wars* though, you blew it.

Gary Smith, (Associate Editor) and Alan Emrich, (Publisher) will be the only judges (they'll drink first.) Obviously, no one from Diverse Talents, **VIP**, **F&M**, *Intersim*, *Strategicon*, or the People's Republic of Libya, (employee, lackey or indentured servant) may enter. Good luck, and get those entries, **1 PER PERSON**, in by DEC. 1 for Section I. Please include your address, so that we might contact you. No address, no win.

by Gary Smith

Space Gamer

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Editor	Allen Varney
c/o Steve Jackson Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760	

Experimental Devices for

PARANOIA

by Michael E. Iacca

This article is security clearance ULTRAVIOLET. To deal with traitorous Troubleshooters reading it, I have provided a second model of each device, which is exactly identical to the first — except for the noted modifications (heh, heh). You can use second models of some devices while keeping first models of others; thus, your Troubleshooters can never be sure what this equipment will do. You can even avoid deciding which model is used until the heat of the moment. Players are sure to admire such quick-witted spontaneity. If they don't, terminate them.

Destructor Gauntlets: DFH-R&D-47-28 (Dennis-B):

Two bulky, blue metal gloves with protruding studs at the knuckles. These studs contain high explosives which will detonate with any significant impact. An aquamarine button in the palm of each glove arms the explosives. The gloves are intended for use as melee weapons: They do damage on column 7 if the explosives aren't armed, and column 11 if they are.

The explosion of the studs will destroy the gloves. Since they are designed to protect the wearer from their explosion, the poor jerk takes only a column 7 blast.

Model II: The gloves are always armed. The aquamarine button **disarms** them.

A.P.H.I.D.: (Anti-Personnel, Highly Infectious Disease): LJP-R&D-91-34 (Lori-Y):

****Safe Use Requires Chemical Weapons Skill****

This is a sleek, yellow conerifle shell. It carries a deadly virus which does damage on column 16. This virus dies when it hits air, so there is no risk of contaminating an area with it. If it doesn't kill its victim, the victim's immune system has destroyed it.

However, if the virus manages to kill its victim, it will multiply at an incredible rate. In ten minutes it drastically decomposes the corpse and grows the tissue necessary to reanimate it. The zombie tries to bite all organic beings it finds, thus passing on the disease.

The only way to kill the virus is to vaporize the corpse. Stun results have no effect; Wound results stun it; Incapacitate results wound it for five minutes; Kill results incapacitate it for 10 minutes.

Strain II: This strain won't take over the corpse, but if a corpse it occupies is vaporized, it will throw out spores and contaminate everything in a 250-meter radius.

Nose Gun: MEI-R&D-11-40 (Mike-I):

This is an elaborate helmet that completely encases the head. A blaster protrudes from the nose area (column 10, range 50 meters, 10 blasts). It is fired by exhaling through the nose; make an easy attribute check vs. Endurance to prevent accidental firing at times of stress.

The visor of this helmet is equipped with an infrared lens and computer-assisted targeting (+20% to hit), but each time the blaster is fired, the computer has a 10% chance of breaking down. When it does, the visor turns black and an ear-piercing buzzer goes off. This qualifies as "times of stress." The blaster will still function. The helmet requires a minute to take off leisurely, or two stress-filled rounds with a difficult check vs. Manual Dexterity.

Model II: The computer adds 40% to accuracy. If it breaks down, the blaster will malfunction like any other energy weapon.

Fuel Thrower: PRQ-R&D-44-71 (Patsy-G):

This is a large tank of liquid fuel, carried on the back (20 meter range, 10 squirts). You can squirt fuel and then allow the fuel to soak in, receiving +1 shift on the damage table for every round the fuel is allowed to soak prior to its ignition (up to three rounds). After

three rounds you get -1 per round, due to fuel evaporation. The damage starts on column 11 and is shifted from there.

Incidentally, any heat-producing weapon or high-velocity projectile that hits the carrier of the fuel thrower has a 25% chance of hitting the tank, causing a five-meter, column 13 fireball.

Model II: Carries 5 squirts and has a 15% chance of explosion.

Ripper Drone: FTM-R&O-92-49 (Fritz-Y):

This is a 1.5-meter cylinder that hovers 1.5 meters off the ground with the aid of two rotors. It is voice controlled, but only understands the commands "ATTACK," "HEEL," and "RETREAT." When told to attack, the drone flies to the nearest antagonist at 10 meters per round. When it reaches its target, the front end opens up and a robotic arm grasping a knife (column 7) stabs its target (75% chance to hit). It has the equivalent of combat suit armor.

Unfortunately, the drone has a 10% chance per attack order of mistaking a member of the controller's party for an antagonist, and a 50% chance of ignoring any heel or retreat orders.

Model II: Has a chainsaw (column 11) instead of a knife, and a 20% chance of misunderstanding an attack order.

Cerebral Integrity Cap: DFH-R&D-192-45 (Dennis-B):

A half-sphere cap with lots of wires dangling from it.

It is supposed to help thinking processes.

After it is placed on a person's head, it will sit there for one minute, then graft itself to the poor slob's central nervous system. It sends incessant patriotic messages such as "Serve The Computer" and "The Computer is your friend." This will make it impossible for the victim to commit any treasonous act unless he succeeds in a difficult attribute check vs. Chutzpah.

The device can be removed by any medic or do-bot that can make two successive medical skill rolls — one to figure out how to remove it, and one to remove it. Failure on the second roll means death or brain damage for the Troubleshooter.

Model II: This one won't graft itself to anyone's brain, and it doesn't send mind-influencing messages. It increases the wearer's Moxie bonus by 20% and transmits all information received by the wearer to the computer (10-kilometer range).

Pong Grenades: LJP-R&D-912-30 (Lott-Y):

These are spherical, bright orange grenades. They explode, throwing hundreds of smaller bright orange spheres (called "ping-pong balls" in Old Reckoning) which affect a five-meter radius (column 1).

Model II: The ping-pong balls contain a powerful nerve gas which causes severe bleeding (column 15, 10-meter radius).

Mangler Shells: PRQ-R&D-524-18 (Patsy-G):

Dark green conerifle shells (column 8, range 15 meters, radius 20 meters). These shells have elaborate fins all over them. This,

unfortunately, decreases their maximum range so that anyone using them will be caught in the blast.

Model II: Has a range of 300 meters (due to the elaborate fins).

Reviews of Two New PARANOIA Products

Acute Paranoia

By: The Usual Gang of Suspects

Published by West End Games

Price: \$9.95

Value: Good

Review by Phillip Rice

Well, what can one say? **Paranoia** supplements are starting to be written more for reading than playing, though they are indeed very good reading! **Acute Paranoia** gives the owner (and GM) one mega adventure, 3 minor adventures and 9 short sketch "ideas," which enterprising GM's can turn into complete adventures.

These sketches are probably overall a good idea, but after all, anyone can come up with good "ideas." Coming up with the details is what makes or breaks the mission. Don't forget, you get to pay your \$9.95 for an 80 page magazine (in effect), or 12.4¢ per page. This copy of **VIP** runs you about 5.5¢ per page, in case you wanted to compare.

For what you do get, "Me and My Shadow, Mk IV" is easily the best, with "Warriors of the Night Cycle" a distant second. Of the sketches, look at "Whitewash" and "Outlandish." If you always wanted to be a bot, you can play one. West End even throws in more Secret Societies!

Acute Paranoia is well written and an interesting addition to the **Paranoia** genre. It's not as, well, silly as some of the other offerings, you do get a lot of material, and you can't beat that cover for truth in advertising! Recommended with the reservations noted.

Send In The Clones: Adventure for Paranoia role-playing game

Published by: West End Games, Inc.

Designers: Allen Varney & Warren Spector

Developer: Ken Rolston

Price: \$8

Complexity Level: Low

Rules Clarity: Good

Graphics Quality: Good

Review by J. Michael Caparula

Send In The Clones is a side-splitting, gut-wrenching, laugh-a-minute riot of hilarity, delivered tongue-firmly-planted-in-cheek by Allen "GLOBBO" Varney and Warren "TOON" Spector, both of Steve Jackson Games. For gamers who are down in the role-playing dumps after just completing D&D module XZ-647, this may just be what the doctor ordered. For those seeking a more intellectual challenge, this is definitely one to pass up.

Rumor has it (remember, these are just rumors!) that Teela O'Malley, video heroine of Alpha Complex citizens everywhere, is suspected of being a Commie traitor. The Troubleshooters' mission is a simple one: Find and apprehend Teela.

This is beer 'n' pretzels gaming at its ultimate. The action is loud, fast, and furious. Not surprisingly, a session of **Send In The Clones** is much like a **TOON** adventure. The GM is expected to be very theatrical; he will sing traitorous songs ("I'm an Alpha Complex Dandy..."), MC a game show (complete with cue cards), be a stand-up comedian, talk like a Southern Californian ("Let's do lunch some time..."), etc. Passive, unboisterous gamers are advised to stay away.

The events and situations of **Send In The Clones** are spelled out well, almost too well. Players may object to being blindly led into disastrous encounters, there is little decision-making or problem-solving on the part of the PCs. As a subplot, the characters are all involved in a memory-wipe drug scandal. Each player only knows a small part of the big picture, and tensions are supposed to surface during play. That didn't happen when I ran the adventure; the players were too distracted and forgot all about the scandal. I would suggest heavy note-passing on the GM's part if he wants the subplot played out.

This doesn't detract, however, from the adventure's overall enjoyment. This is pizza-munching gaming with a vengeance, and I would strongly advise having plenty of alcoholic consumables around to loosen up the participants. Like any Varney Spector production, the zany theatrics and loudmouth player interaction are what make it fun.

Return with Article Submissions:

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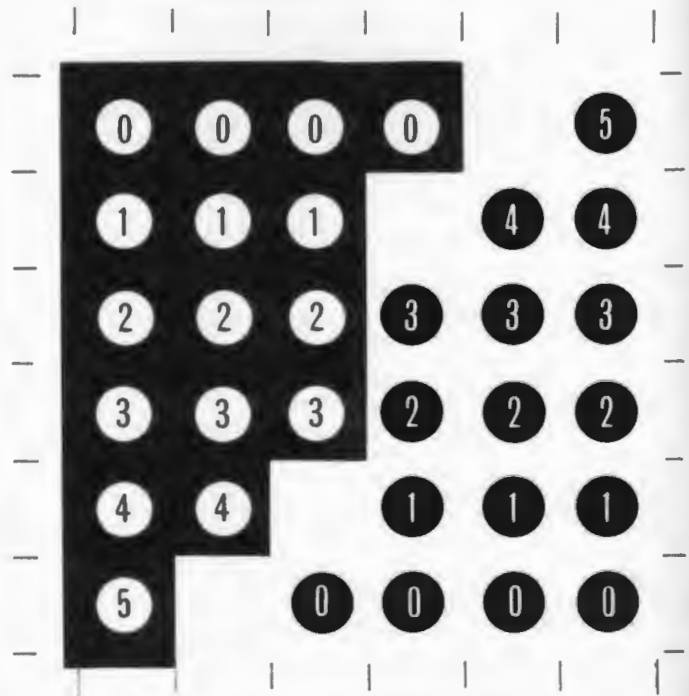
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COUNTERS FOR MIND DUEL



STARSHIP PERSONALITY GENERATOR

by Greg Porter

All pieces of equipment have personalities. They are termed cranky, erratic, delicate, sensitive, and a lot of other words not fit to print. This includes starships.

When characters in any SF RPG first get a ship of their own, odds are it isn't new or in the best of condition. It may have a hull tens to hundreds of years old, with internal fittings to match. Tubs like this are likely to have idiosyncrasies that the characters won't find out about (if the seller is smart) until after money has changed hands and the former owner has booked passage to points unknown. In other words, they get stuck with a space lemon.

Even if characters are rich enough to get a

new ship, it probably won't be a standard design, and may have some bugs that take months or years to work out. Broken-in ships are perhaps the best, but problems can still crop up now and then.

Little idiosyncrasies make things more fun for the GM, and can be used at strategic moments to "guide" the characters. "Whoops! Looks like the maneuver drive needs to be repaired. You'll probably have to set down on the planet to do it right." Etcetera, ad nauseum.

Here is a starship personality generator. Whenever characters acquire a starship, roll for its characteristics on the tables.

The first roll is to determine whether or not

there are any problems, and how many if there are. Larger ships get modifiers to the roll, and there is a modifier for the age of the ship.

If there are problems, roll on the second table to determine their location, and on the third table to determine the magnitude. If you roll the same location twice, drop the roll unless there is more than one of that system.

Following the tables is an explanation of the various results. Note that any level of problem automatically includes the levels below it. A system with major problems will also have minor ones, and a system with severe problems will have major and minor ones also.

STEP 1

"Is There a Problem?" (1d20)

Ships 100 tons and less get 1 roll. For each doubling of size over 100 tons (round up), add 1 to the roll. Old ships add 3, new ships add 0, and broken in ships subtract 1. If the ship is an exceptionally good design, you may subtract 3, and if a poor design, add 2.

Roll	Result
1-10	No problems (you lucky sods)
11-15	1 problem
16-19	2 problems
20-22	3 problems
23-24	4 problems
25+	Jackpot! 5 problems

STEP 2

"Where is it?" (1d20)

Roll	Location
1-4	Structure
5-8	Maneuver drive
9-10	FTL drive
11-12	Life support
13-14	Power generation
15-16	Sensors
17-18	Computer
19-20	Weapon station

STEP 3

"How bad is it?" (1d20)

Old ships add 0, new ships subtract 3, and broken-in ships subtract 1.

Roll	Result
1-16	Minor
17-19	Major
20+	Severe

KEY

Structure Problems

Minor - Ship creaks, moans, and groans under any sort of acceleration or load. These noises are disconcerting, but harmless. Under these conditions, any given hatch or door will jam on a roll of 1 on 1d6.

Major - Ship hull is old and fatigued. Under full acceleration, there is a 1 in 6 chance of minor hull failure. This will result in pressure loss to a random section of hull. In addition, most internal bulkheads are not airtight, and this will eventually cause total pressure loss in the ship over 1d6 hours.

Severe - Hull is not spaceworthy. There is a 1 in 6 chance that the hull will rupture under full acceleration, with appropriate results.

Maneuver Drive Problems

Minor - Drive has fits and spurts and will vary its acceleration suddenly under normal conditions, the amount inversely proportional to the maintenance done. This can range from annoying to dangerous.

Major - Drive needs excessive maintenance and tends to burn out components frequently. The drive has a 1 in 6 chance of a malfunction requiring repair any time it is turned on, off, or used at full capacity. This repair could be anything from a kick to a complete overhaul.

Severe - Drive is unsafe. It has a 1 in 6 chance of exploding or catastrophically failing whenever it fails to work.

FTL Drive Problems

Minor - FTL drive is overly susceptible to subspace anomalies, and as a result will be 1AU (Astronomical Unit, 93 million miles)

NEW EQUIPMENT FOR TRAVELLER®

by Scott Hedrick

SHIP LABORATORIES

The role of the laboratory in *Traveller* has never been stated. Laboratories allow on-the-spot investigations that the characters, left to their own abilities, would not be able to perform.

Labs are based on mass. The base lab size is ten tons. This includes working space, calculators, equipment, etc. The greater the tonnage of the lab, the more equipment available. This will improve the chance of finding whatever fact is being looked for.

Labs can't make major research breakthroughs; they won't discover teleportation or develop a "doomsday device." They can be used to isolate a poison, analyze a mineral specimen, or find a way to overcome radio jamming. The referee must decide whether or not a task can be performed with the limited abilities aboard ship, how long it will take, and any appropriate modifiers.

Labs are considered general-purpose — i.e., they can be used for any science, unless designated "special purpose." A special-purpose lab can only be used for one particular science, but gets improved chances for success.

Labs cost MCr 0.1 per ton. They require no power (there may be exceptions for special equipment; check with the referee).

The basic chance to perform a task or discover a fact is 12+. The throw has the following modifiers:

- +1 per ship's computer over model/3
 - +1 per level in skill related to task at hand
 - +½ per level in Jack-of-All-Trades, if a specific skill is not available
 - +2 Education D+; +1 Education 9+; -1 Education 6-
 - +1 Intelligence A+; -1 Intelligence 7-
 - +1 per 10 tons of lab if specific for task at hand
 - 6 if using specific lab for another purpose
- More than one person can assist in the laboratory, but they will become less effective. The second person adds half the applicable modifiers, the third person 1/3, the fourth person 1/4, etc. This reflects the

law of diminishing returns. In other words, too many cooks spoil the stew.

This table shows some specific skills and their uses in a lab:

Skill	Time Period	Example of Use:
Chemistry	1 hr	Analyze poison, mineral specimen, metal
Physics	1 hr	Analyze radiation, gravity effects, motion
Biology	2 hr	Analyze living things, perform dissections
Linguistics	6 hr	Analyze languages, both written and spoken
Astronomy	2 hr	Plot jump routes, analyze stars, planetary bodies
Engineering	2 hr	Analyze the operation of an alien device
Cultural Anthropology	1 week	Analyze the social structure of a new society

"Time Period" is the minimum amount of investigation time before a success throw can be made. This can be adjusted by the referee; less time for simple tasks, more for difficult tasks. The more time spent on an investigation, the greater the chance for success. For every time period after the second spent researching, you get +1 to the throw. You must do the research *before* the throw is made.

The throw should be kept secret. It is possible for a linguist to spend the requisite time studying a language, make a throw, and discover that the peace offering he thought he had made was instead a deadly insult. If a throw is blown, the referee should decide whether any information was gained. A character will know when no information is gained; he may not know that he has wrong information.

Only basic information can be gained on the first throw; a linguist might translate a few repeated phrases. If he researches again after the throw, he may discover enough to communicate haltingly, like a traveller studying a Berlitz book. He might need a third

or fourth try before he learns enough to speak the language fluently. This is not to say the character will have learned the language; rather, the computer will know enough grammar and vocabulary to translate it at the research level.

With these rules, it is now possible for characters to do things that skills alone cannot accomplish. A survey ship can make full reports on a planet; a scout could contact and analyze a new race or culture. The possibilities are endless.

EMERGENCY BATTERIES

More than once, I've been in the situation where just one more EP would have made the difference between losing and winning a battle. I simply considered it wishful thinking, until I watched a movie in which the ship had been crippled, but drew from its battery reserves to discourage the enemy long enough to make repairs. Why not have an emergency reserve in *Traveller*?

A battery is designed to store power for long periods of time. It is charged when there is excess power available, such as when the ship is in jumpspace, and is drained when needed, such as in combat or when the ship's power plant has been damaged. A battery shouldn't be considered a cheat or a crutch, because it is only a temporary solution. A captain who relies on batteries too much may find them useless when they are needed.

One battery holds one EP, masses one ton, and costs Cr 50000. Battery power can be used for any purpose except jump and maneuver drives. Every fourth power plant hit knocks out one battery; divide 100 by the available number of batteries to find the chance that any given battery is knocked out. Once used, a battery cannot provide any more power until it is recharged. It cannot be discharged and recharged in the same turn. Most ships also have small emergency batteries that run the lights and life support, but they are far too small to use for weapons or other heavy uses.

Now, the next time that pirate has crippled your power plant, you can still give him something to think about!

NEW CARDS FOR

ILLUMINATI

by Mike Cunningham and Kevin A. Ross, with special thanks to the gang at the Madhouse.

(Editor's note: This is an unofficial variant for Steve Jackson Games' card game *Illuminati*.)

Okay, so you're still trying to adjust to the new rules for Propaganda, Brainwashing, and group strengthening in *Illuminati* Expansion Set, #3. Maybe you're even starting to feel comfortable with that nice, full-color gameboard. Heh, heh, guess what?

Yes, that's right, more new cards. Some of the most insidious groups acting in (and on) the world today are here. The sinister Highway Patrol. The cryptic Psychics. Those foul-weather fiends, the Meteorological Meddlers. The equally evil Seismic Agitators. And, last but not least, the truly terrible... **Iowans**. (You really don't want to know what goes in your corn flakes, believe me!)

And special cards have not been overlooked. Commit a Copycat Crime, pull off a Covert Operation, Sabotage your opponent! But be careful — you might run into Technical Difficulties, or get hit with a letter from the bank claiming Insufficient Funds.

And finally, introducing a new *Illuminati* group: The Fourth Seal. You've feared them since you were a kid. Now learn the truth behind the surgeon's mask. You'll never trust your doctor again.

They're all here, 32 new control groups, 8 new special cards, and the new *Illuminati*. If you don't like a group or special card, don't use it. As the preacher-man says, "Take what you need, brothers and sisters!"

NEW SPECIAL CARDS

#1 "Copycat Crime": Usable once, this special card duplicates the power of the last special card played. This card is playable at any time, unless the card being duplicated indicates a specific time it has to be played (such as the Market Manipulation card, which must be played at the beginning of the player's turn before his income phase). Does not count as an action (again, if the duplicated card specifies otherwise, the original card must be obeyed).

#2 "Forced Bankruptcy": Usable once, this special card removes from play and replaces at the bottom of the deck any one uncontrolled group. This card is playable at any time and does not count as an action.

#3 "Covert Operation": Usable once, this special card gives its user one extra action (attack, money transfer, group realignment, etc.) for this turn only. It can be played at any time prior to that player's two free money transfers and does not count as an action.

#4 "Optimal Resource Utilization": Usable

once, this special card allows its user to double the power of his *Illuminati* group for this turn only. It can be played at any time during its user's turn **BEFORE** his *Illuminati*'s power has been committed to an attack. Note that this card cannot be used to fulfill the victory conditions of the Bavarians or the Network, although it can still be used normally by these groups. Does not count as an action.

#5 "Embezzlement": Usable once, this card allows its user to take 10MB from the treasury of any other player's *Illuminati* group and place it in his own *Illuminati*'s treasury. It is playable at any time and does not count as an action.

#6 "Technical Difficulties": Usable once, this special card must be played during another player's turn, **before the action portion of his turn**. The card then prohibits that player from using any of his transferable power for that turn only. Does not count as an action.

#7 "Sabotage!": Usable once, this card may be played at any time during another player's turn before he has performed his second action. That player can then perform only one action this turn. Note that **an action begins with the statement of intent**, so the holder of this card must pay especially close attention to the movements of the other players to use it correctly.

THE NEW ILLUMINATI GROUP:

"THE FOURTH SEAL"

The Fourth Seal was inspired by the Karl Edward Wagner short story of the same name, in the collection *In a Lonely Place*. The title refers to the opening of the seven seals in Chapter 6 of the Book of Revelation. When the first four seals were opened, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (Conquest, War, Famine, and - the fourth - Death) were released. The Wagner story deals with a group of physicians who have secretly discovered the cures for many of the world's fatal diseases. These villains use their medical knowledge as a political weapon.

Extrapolating from the story, we have set the Fourth Seal's victory conditions as follows: They must control Conservative groups while destroying Liberal groups, in some combination adding to eight groups. At least one of each condition must be fulfilled (i.e., at least one Conservative group must be controlled or one Liberal group destroyed; it

is **not** a victory if eight Conservative groups are controlled and no Liberals have been destroyed, and vice versa).

The special ability of the Fourth Seal: These demented doctors and sinister surgeons can **raise the dead** (i.e., they can attack — to control only — destroyed groups with privilege, once per turn). Their Power is 8/8 and their Income is 10.

THE FOURTH SEAL: SUMMARY

POWER: 8/8

INCOME: 10

SPECIAL ABILITY: The Fourth Seal can make a privileged attack once per turn against destroyed groups only. Note that this privilege must be used only on an attack to control.

VICTORY CONDITION: Must control Conservative groups while destroying Liberal groups, in some combination adding to eight.

#8 "Insufficient Funds": Usable once, this card is played at any time during another player's turn. That player then cannot transfer any money at all for the rest of that turn. This includes automatic and free transfers, as well as the Gnomes' special ability.

NEW GROUPS

A.L.P.O. (ANIMAL LOVERS' PROTECTION ORGANIZATION): Fanatic; +2 on any attempt to destroy or neutralize the Cattle Mutilators, +2 on any attempt to control the Goldfish Fanciers. P:1; R:4, CA:1.

BACKMASKERS: Weird, Fanatic; +1 on any attempt to brainwash any group. P:1, R:5, I:1, CA:1.

BIG BANKS: Conservative, Straight; player who holds the Big Banks gets one extra money transfer at the end of his turn. P:5/2, R:5, I:6, CA:3.

C.L.U.A. (CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF AMERICA): Liberal, Fanatic; +1 on any attempt to neutralize any group, and +3 on any attempt to control the Supreme Court. P:1/1, R:4, I:1, CA:1.

COMPUTER HACKERS: Fanatic; income (2MB) must be taken from the treasury of any group owned by another player (cannot be used on the same player twice in a row). P:2/2, R:4, I:2*, CA:1.

CONGRESS: Government; +2 on any attempt to control or neutralize any Government group. P:7, R:8, I:7, CA:3.

COUCH POTATOES: Peaceful. P:0, R:0, I:1, CA:0.

CREATIONISTS: Conservative, Fanatic; +1 for direct control of the Moral Minority, +1 on any attempt to destroy the Evolutionists. P:1, R:8, I:1, CA:1.

DeBREWS DIAMONDS: Straight. P:2, R:5, I:4, I:1.

DEFENSE CONTRACTORS: Conservative Fanatic; +1 for direct control of the Moral Minority, +1 on any attempt to destroy the Evolutionists. P:1, R:8, I:1, CA:1.

DEPARTMENT STORES: Peaceful, Straight; +2 for direct control of any Straight group. P:1, R:3, I:3, CA:1.

EVOLUTIONISTS: Liberal; +2 on any attempt to neutralize the Creationists. P:1, R:6, I:1, CA:1.

FLORIDA: Criminal, Violent, Government; Resistance is 0 vs. International Cocaine Smugglers. P:4, R:5, I:4, CA:3.

FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION: Government, Straight; +4 on any attempt to do anything to the Fast Food Chains or the Tobacco & Liquor Companies. P:3/2, R:4, I:2, CA:2.

F.O.O.T. (FEDERATION OF OVERLOADED TRUCKERS): Fanatic. P:2, R:6, I:1, CA:1.

GAMBLING CASINOS: Resistance is 0 vs. any Criminal groups. P:1, R:2, I:3, CA:1.

HIGHWAY PATROL: Government, Violent, Straight; +2 on any attempt to do anything to the American Autoduel Association or the Cycle Gangs. P:3, R:8, I:1, CA:2.

HITMEN: Criminal, Violent; +2 on any attempt to destroy or neutralize any group. P:0/1, R:4, I:2, CA:0.

ILLEGAL ALIENS: Criminal. P:0, R:3, I:1, CA:0.

IOWA: Government, Straight, Conservative, Peaceful. P:3, R:5, I:3, CA:3.

METEOROLOGICAL MEDDLERS: Communist, fanatic; can use an action to completely nullify any group owned by another player (the group gains no income, cannot attack, transfer money, or even be moved, and does not count as an alignment or group in propaganda attacks) for that player's next turn only (cannot be used on the

same player twice in a row); usable only once per turn. P:2, R:5, I:1, CA:1.

NASA: Government; +4 on any attempt to do anything to the Orbital Mind Control Lasers. P:2, R:4, I:2, CA:1.

NUCLEAR TERRORISTS: Violent, Criminal, Fanatic; +2 on any attempt to destroy. P:2, R:5, I:0, CA:1.

PRO-LIFERS: Fanatic, Conservative. P:1, R:5, I:1, CA:1.

PROSTITUTES: Criminal; +1 on any attempt to control or neutralize the Republicans. P:1, R:3, I:3, CA:1.

PSYCHICS: Weird; +1 on any attempt to control any Weird group; holder can "foresee the future" by looking at other players' special cards. Counts as an action, usable once per turn. P:0, R:3, I:1, CA:0.

RECORDING INDUSTRY: Weird, Liberal; +1 for direct control of the Punk Rockers. P:2, R:1, I:4, CA:1.

SEISMIC AGITATORS: Communist, Violent; +1 on any attempt to control the Mad Scientists, +8 on any attempt to destroy California. P:4, R:6, I:1, CA:1.

SUPREME COURT: Government; +3 on any attempt to neutralize. P:6/4, R:8, I:0, CA:3.

T-MEN: Government, Straight; +4 on any attempt to neutralize the Mafia, the International Cocaine Smugglers, or the Loan Sharks. P:4/3, R:6, I:0, CA:2.

YUCCIES (Young Urbane Conspicuous Consumers): Peaceful; money can be transferred into the Yuccies, but never out of them for any purpose. P:2, R:3, I:4, CA:2.

P-Power/Transferable Power; R-Resistance; I-Income; CA-Control Arrows.

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- New rules!
- New shticks!
- New adventures!
- New charts & tables!
- And the *cartoon series!*

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MIND DUEL

Psionic Combat for Two Players

A Game by Lester W. Smith

Playtesters: Jim Cotton, Joe Kaul, Pat Lowrey, Robert Mohr, Jenny Smith, Steve Wagner, Allen Varney, Warren Spector.

D'vreet relaxed on his bunk, focused his concentration, and let his awareness expand beyond his cabin walls. Somewhere on his ship was an alien assassin — a telepath, entering untrained minds and shutting down their autonomic nervous systems. So far three of the ten crewmembers were dead... but now another trained telepath was hunting the hunter.

D'vreet's search had reached the aft cabins when he felt the sudden shock of contact — and suddenly he was fighting for his life!

Mind Duel is a game of psychic combat between two trained telepaths. You attack your opponent's mind, and defend your own, with focused bits of psionic energy. Resistance builds as you press your attack closer to the foe, and the web of force between your linked minds pulsates and shifts as you wrestle for control.

By invading your opponent's mind, you may stun your enemy, or pinch a pressure point and cause the loss of those focused bits of psi-power. Your object is to occupy the opponent's conscious mind, whereupon the enemy will black out, never to awaken again.

To play **Mind Duel** you will need these rules, the gameboard and counters bound into this magazine, and two six-sided dice.

1. SETUP

The gameboard represents the telepaths' minds and the area of mental struggle between them. Each mind is divided into conscious, subconscious, and unconscious levels; these are called **mental arcs**.

The area between the battling minds is divided into a series of **wavelength arcs**.

Both mental and wavelength arcs are numbered with **reference numbers** which affect movement of the playing pieces. Each wavelength arc has two different reference numbers; each player uses the set to his or her right.

Superimposed on the wavelength arcs is a pattern of dots which regulate movement. The mental arcs are divided into spaces which serve the same function.

The playing pieces come in two colors. Choose a color and take five pieces, numbered consecutively from 0 (zero) to 4. Place the pieces on the center spaces of your own mental arcs in any order. Put only one piece on each space.

For example, you could put the "4" piece in the "0" (conscious) area, the "1" in the "1" (subconscious) arc, then the "3," "2," and "0" pieces in various arcs of the unconscious. The order and spacing are up to you.

2. HOW TO PLAY

Each player rolls the dice; high roller moves first. Players take turns, following this sequence of steps:

A. Announce Attacking Piece. Roll two dice and choose which piece(s) you will move this turn. Apply each die roll to a different piece (or both dice to the same piece). The numbers can't be divided in any other way. **Don't move the piece(s) yet.**

B. Decay. All your other pieces in the wavelength arcs only now "decay," or fall backward due to lack of support. It is possible to lose pieces permanently here. Decay is explained under "Movement."

C. Move Attacking Piece(s) and Shift. Now you move the piece(s) you chose in the first step. You can "shift" the same or another piece within a mental arc (not a wavelength arc) of either mind, either before or after you move the piece. ("Shifting" is explained in Section 3.)

You don't have to shift a piece, but you must move the attacking piece(s) the full amount dictated by the dice. You must decay all your other pieces.

Apply any attack results (see "Effects of Attack"). Now it's the opponent's turn.

3. MOVEMENT

Movement in MIND DUEL is based on "movement points" and "decay points." These don't necessarily match one-for-one with the number of spaces a piece moves. This is because of "acceleration," explained below.

Each playing piece is numbered from 0 to 4. The arcs are also numbered, from 0 to 5. When you apply a die roll to a piece, subtract both the piece's number and its arc's number from the die roll to get that piece's movement points.

If the result is positive, the piece moves forward. If it's negative, the piece moves backward. If it's zero, the piece stands still that turn.

Examples: Your 4 piece is on a 3 arc. You roll a 3 and a 2. You apply both rolls (total 5) to the 4 piece. Subtracting 4 (the piece number) and 3 (the arc number) from 5 leaves -2 (negative two) movement points for the 4 piece. It moves backwards.

Your 3 piece and your 1 piece are both on a 0 (zero) wavelength arc. You roll double 6s. The 3 piece gets one 6, giving it (6-3-) 3 movement points. The 1 gets the other 6, giving it 5 movement points. Both pieces move forward.

Forward is defined as toward your opponent's conscious area. A piece in your own mind or a wavelength arc would move away from your mind to go forward; but a piece in your opponent's subconscious or unconscious areas would move toward you to go "forward." Backward is always the opposite direction from forward.

See diagram #1 for an example.

You determine a piece's "forward" and "backward" directions at the beginning of its movement. They stay the same even if it passes the opponent's conscious area during movement. So a piece could move forward into the opponent's mind on one turn, then move forward out into the wavelength arcs the next turn, and then forward once again into the opponent's mind on the following turn. A piece can never reverse direction in one turn.

Decay. If you don't apply a die roll to a piece in a wavelength arc in your turn, it must decay — move backward with "decay points." (Pieces in mental arcs are not affected by decay.)

A piece's decay points equal its number plus the reference number of its arc.

Pieces in a mental arc are "stable"; they do not suffer decay even if you don't apply die rolls to them.

Movement. You move pieces from space to space in a mind, and from dot to dot in the

DIAGRAM #1

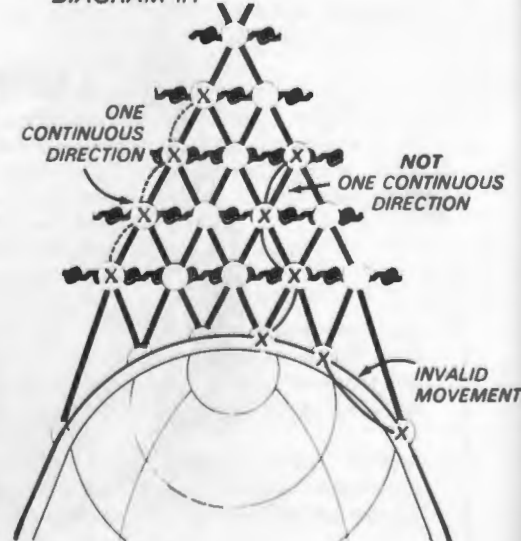
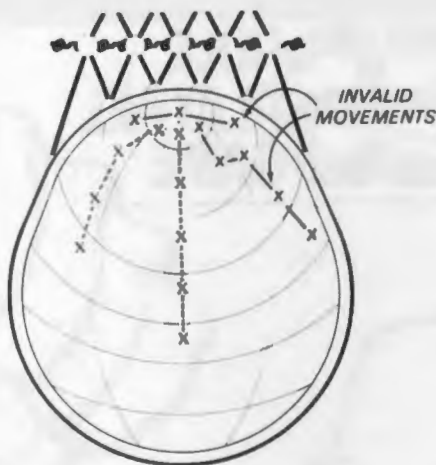


DIAGRAM #2

TWO EXAMPLES OF ONE CONTINUOUS DIRECTION



wavelength arcs. The boundary between mental and wavelength arcs is marked by half-dots that intersect the mental spaces. You can move from a half-dot to either of the spaces it intersects, or vice versa. This counts as a regular dot-to-dot move.

A space or dot holds only one piece; if another piece (your own or the opponent's) enters the same space or dot, the lower-numbered piece is destroyed in the collision. The other piece is unaffected; if it was moving, it continues to move. Pieces of equal number are both destroyed.

You can't move from the subconscious into the conscious and back out to the subconscious in the same turn. (See diagram #2) A move through the conscious must be a transition from wavelength to mental arcs, or vice versa.

You can't move further into the unconscious than the 6 arc. If movement would carry a piece beyond the 6 arc, it stops in that arc instead.

You move forward or backward only, from one arc to another. You can't move

diagonally, from the end of a mental arc to the center of the next one (or vice versa).

You can't move sideways across a wavelength arc. Moving sideways in a mental arc is "shifting." You can shift one piece per turn, either before or after (but not during) movement. You can shift the piece that you move, or another piece.

To shift, you move a piece from the center space of a mental arc to one of the end spaces, or from one end to the center.

Acceleration. A piece tends to gain momentum and cover more distance when moving in one continuous direction.

In the wavelength arcs, a "continuous direction" is straight-line movement from dot to dot. Deviating from a straight path is a change in direction.

In mental arcs a "continuous direction" is any movement from arc to arc.

To move in a continuous direction from mental to wavelength arcs, you must keep moving in a straight line as you enter or exit the mind. If you're moving up the right side of the mental arcs, you must bear left onto the

wavelength arcs to move continuously. If you're moving up the left side, you must bear right. If you're moving up the center, you can bear left or right and still move continuously. The same holds true for moving from the wavelength arcs to the mental arcs.

See diagrams #1-3 for examples.

Effect of Acceleration. The first movement point you spend on a piece moves it one space or dot. If you keep moving in the same direction, the second point moves the piece two spaces further; the third (same turn, same direction) moves it three; and so on.

If you change direction during movement, acceleration starts over from "one" in the new direction. You can change directions any number of times in a turn.

IMPORTANT: You can only change direction when you've fully expended a movement point. For example, if you move your piece's second point in the same direction as its first, it would go two spaces — and you have to move **both** those spaces in the same direction before you can change the direction. See the examples in diagram #4.

Note that acceleration begins afresh with each new turn, even if you're moving the same piece you moved last turn.

Backward Acceleration. Pieces moving backward or decaying accelerate like pieces moving forward. The original direction of decay or backward movement is up to you. The only difference from forward movement is that **you can't change direction unless the piece's present direction would carry it off the side of a wavelength arc.**

If you have to change the direction of a backward-moving piece, you still have to make the change after a movement point is fully expended. This may mean you change direction before actually reaching the side of the board, but you change on the last possible movement point before exiting.

If you have to move off the side of a wavelength arc, that piece is lost permanently. If its decay path forces it to collide with another piece, the lower-number piece is lost.

4. EFFECTS OF ATTACKS

Sending a piece into the opponent's mind is an attack. Effects of attacks vary according to which portion of the mind you attack. You attack a given part of the mind when one of your pieces finishes its movement in one of its arcs.

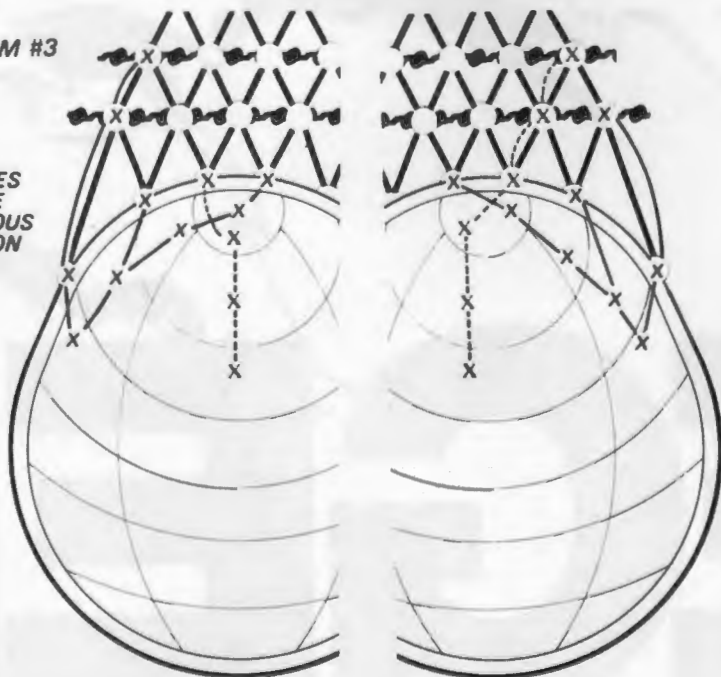
To attack the opponent's unconscious, your piece must begin your turn **outside** the mind and end movement in one of the unconscious arcs. Beginning a turn within the opponent's mind means that piece can't attack the unconscious.

There are no restrictions on attacking the conscious or subconscious. You can attack these arcs with any piece by moving it from anywhere into the arcs.

Attacking the Unconscious stuns your opponent for one turn. A stunned opponent

DIAGRAM #3

EXAMPLES OF ONE CONTINUOUS DIRECTION





HEROES

ROLE
PLAYING
GAME

"Mayfair did an outstanding job on this one."

—Fantasy Book

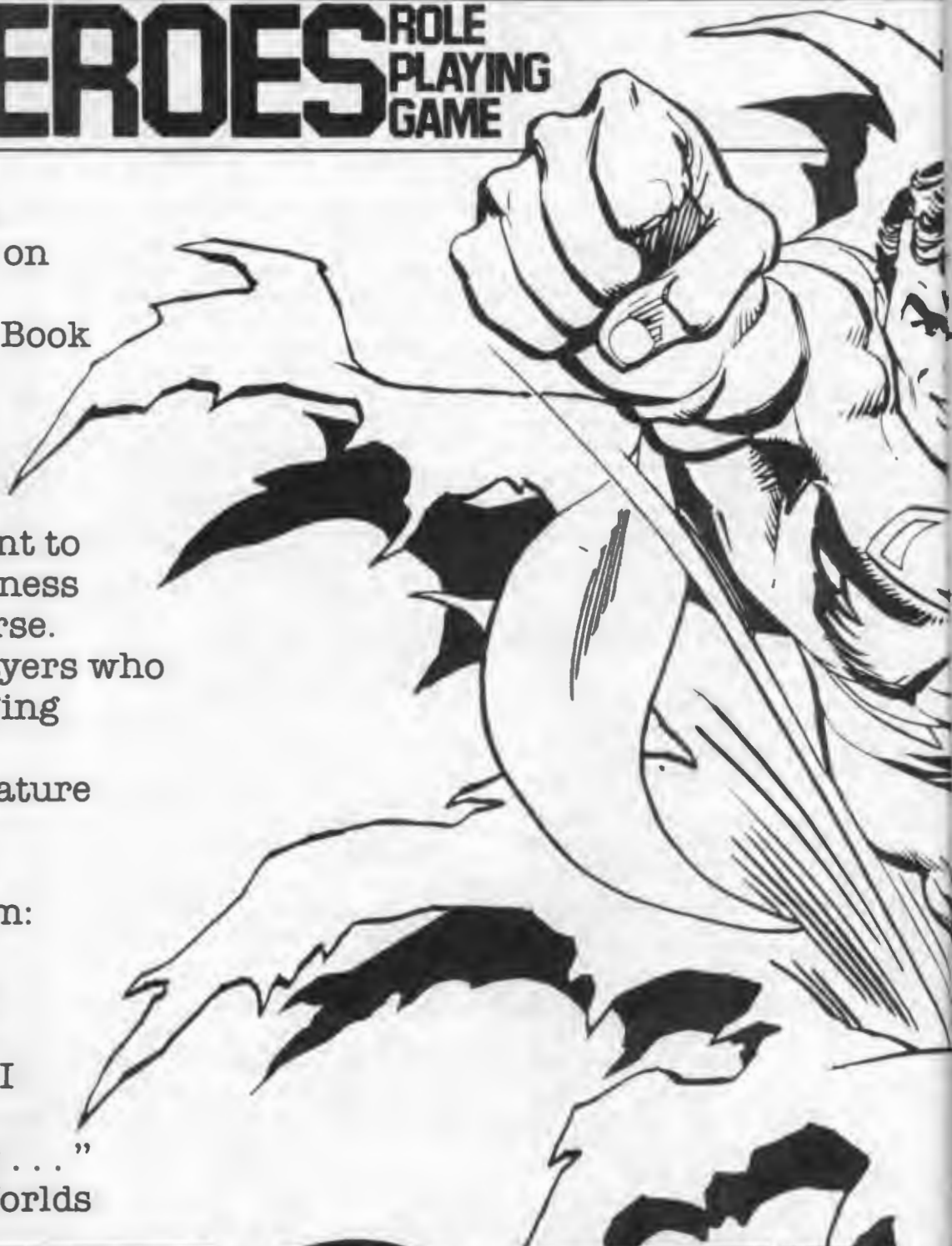
"DC HEROES is a must-buy for long time gamers who want to sample the richness of the DC Universe. And for new players who want a challenging game . . ."

—Comics Feature

★★★★

The game system: A minor miracle . . . the system doesn't break down . . . I recommend it unconditionally . . ."

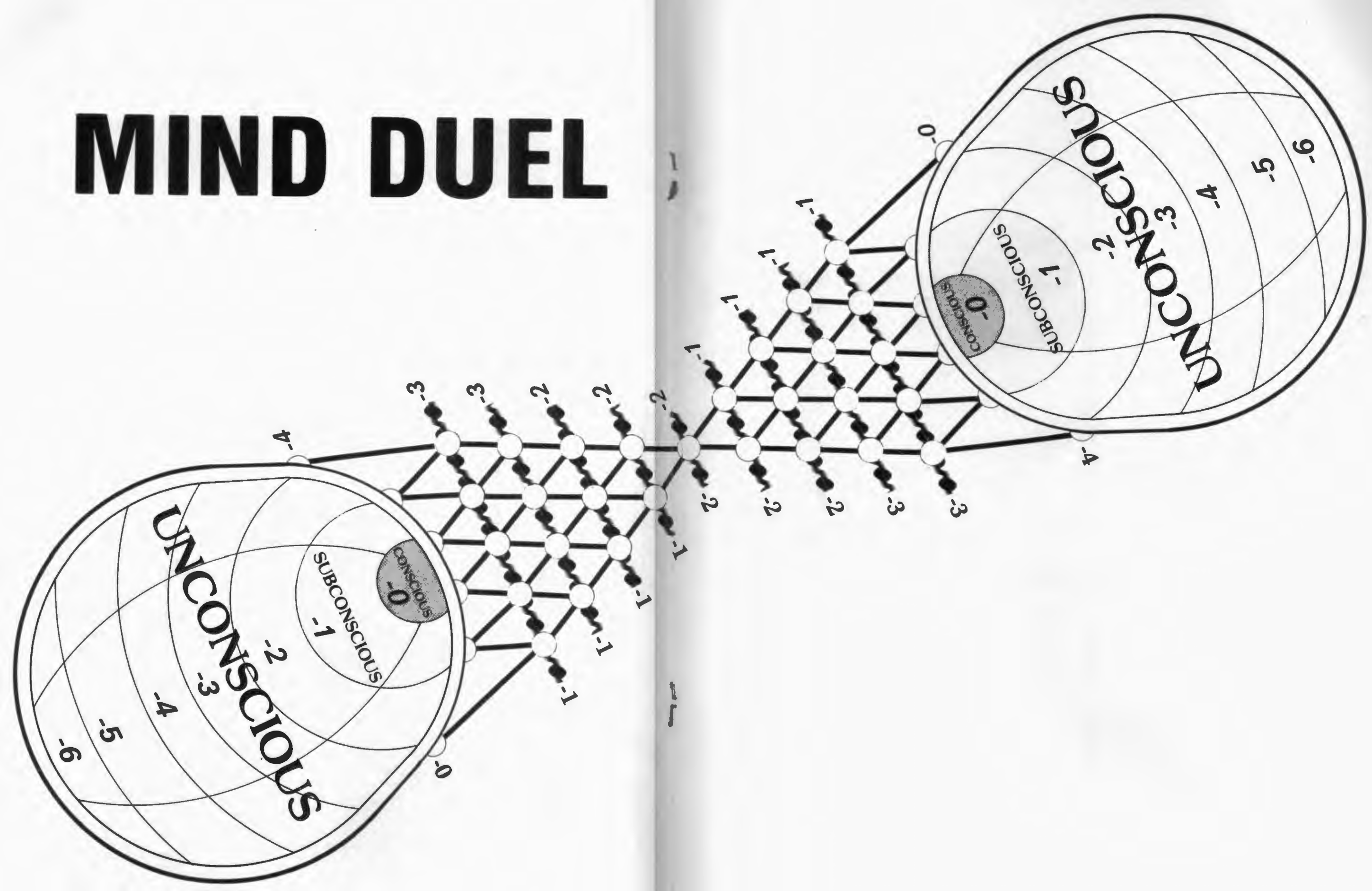
—Different Worlds

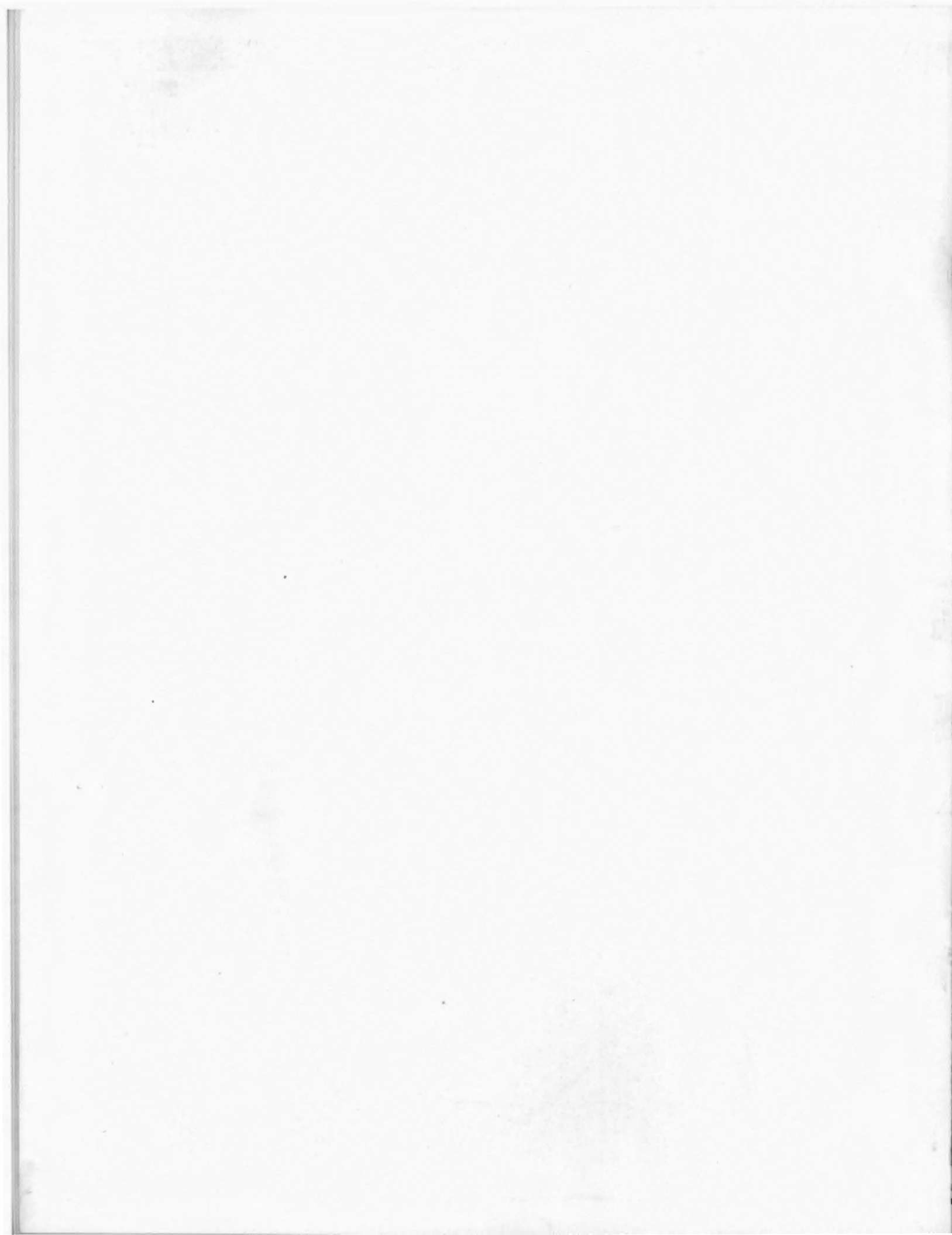


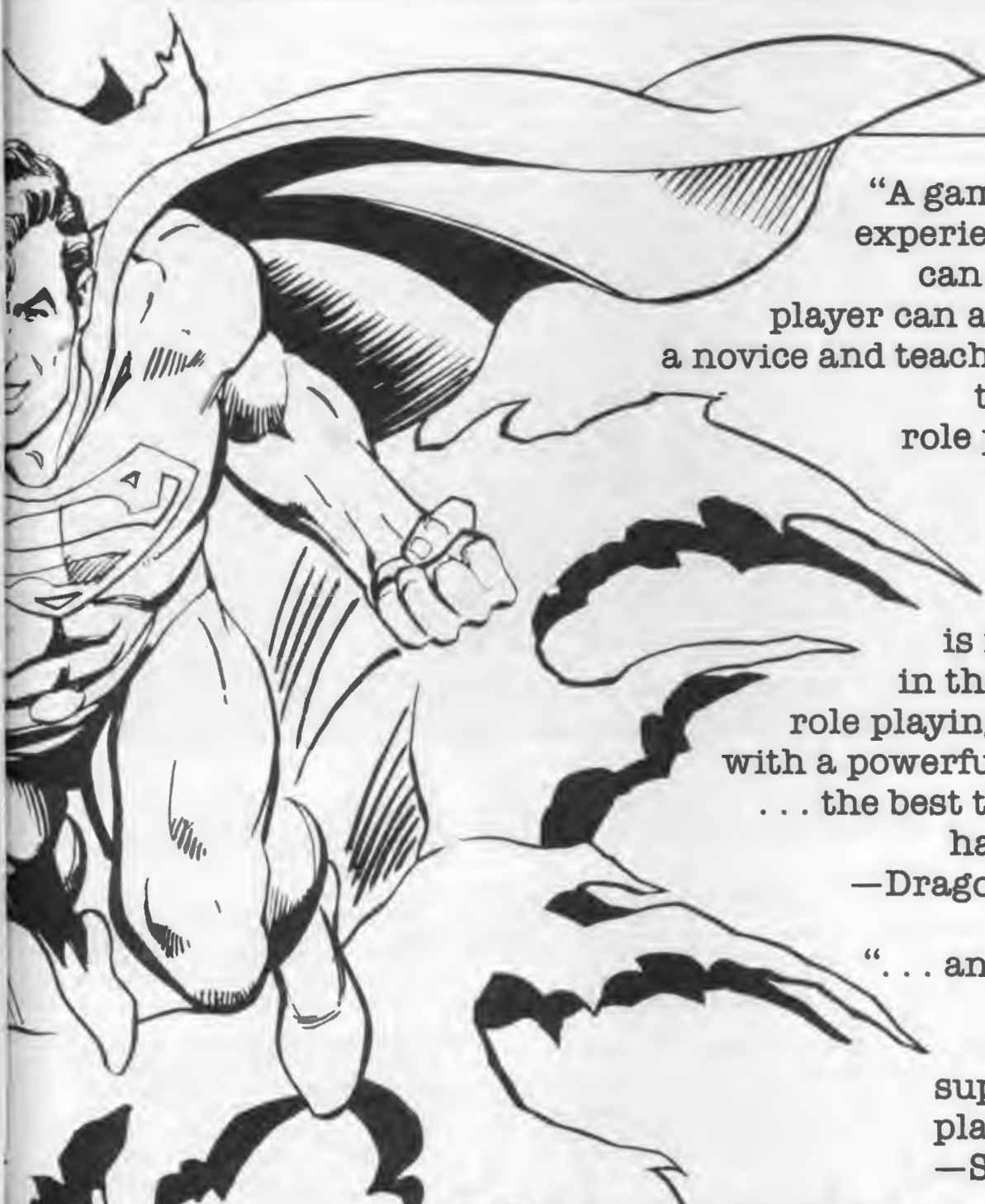
LEGEND



MIND DUEL







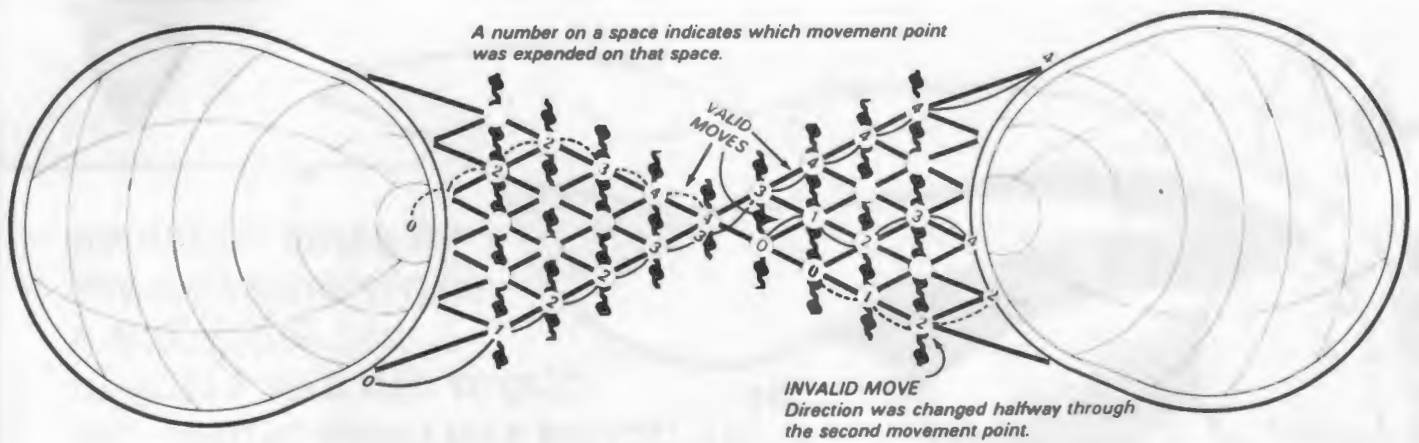
“A game which an experienced player can enjoy, but a player can also bring in a novice and teach him or her the basics of role playing . . .”
—Comics Collector

“DC Comics is represented in the superhero role playing game field with a powerful new entry . . . the best that Mayfair has done yet.”
—Dragon Magazine

“... an innovative, thoughtful, respectable superhero role playing game.”
—Space Gamer

INDIARY

DIAGRAM #4



does not roll the dice, and all of his or her pieces in the wavelength arcs decay.

Attacking the subconscious permanently eliminates your opponent's furthest advanced piece — that is, the piece closest to your own conscious area. If two pieces are equally close, you choose which one is removed from play.

Attacking the conscious area defeats the opponent and wins the game.

5. LOSING AND GENERATING PIECES

You can generate a new piece in a turn to replace a lost one. At the start of your turn, don't roll the dice; decay all your pieces normally. Then place a new "0" (zero) piece in your conscious area. If your conscious is already occupied, place an appropriately-numbered piece in any of the empty spaces nearest the conscious space.

The number of the piece is the number of the arc it's generated in. In your conscious area you generate a zero piece; in you subconscious, a 1 piece; and so on. You can't "skip over" vacant spaces to place a higher-number piece in a higher-number mental arc. **You have to choose the mental arc closest to your conscious area.**

You can't generate a piece in a wavelength arc.

6. STACKING (Optional Rule)

This is an optional rule for *Mind Duel*. The game is easier to learn without it, but it adds even more strategic decisions.

You can put any number of your pieces on the same dot or space. When two pieces finish a turn on the same dot or space, you can treat them as a single piece for strength and movement purposes from then on. Pieces moving through other pieces still suffer collision results.

You can "stack" pieces by shifting, ordinary movement, or decay. Pieces of opposite sides can never occupy the same dot or space.

Stacked pieces add their number values together. Zero pieces in a stack count as a value of 1/2 (one half). When you figure a stack's movement or decay, round down fractions. But when you figure a stack's strength, **keep** all fractions.

For example, a stack of two 3s and one 0 would have a strength of 6 1/2; when you figure the stack's movement or decay, this counts as 6. Two zeroes together have a strength of 1, and decay or move as a 1.

If you attack the opponent's subconscious

and his or her furthest advanced "piece" is a stack, the entire stack is lost.

Movement. Stacked pieces can move separately or as a stack, as you wish. When shifting, you can shift a stack or a single piece of that stack. You can shift the pieces onto an empty space or another stack.

Stacked pieces must decay as a single piece.

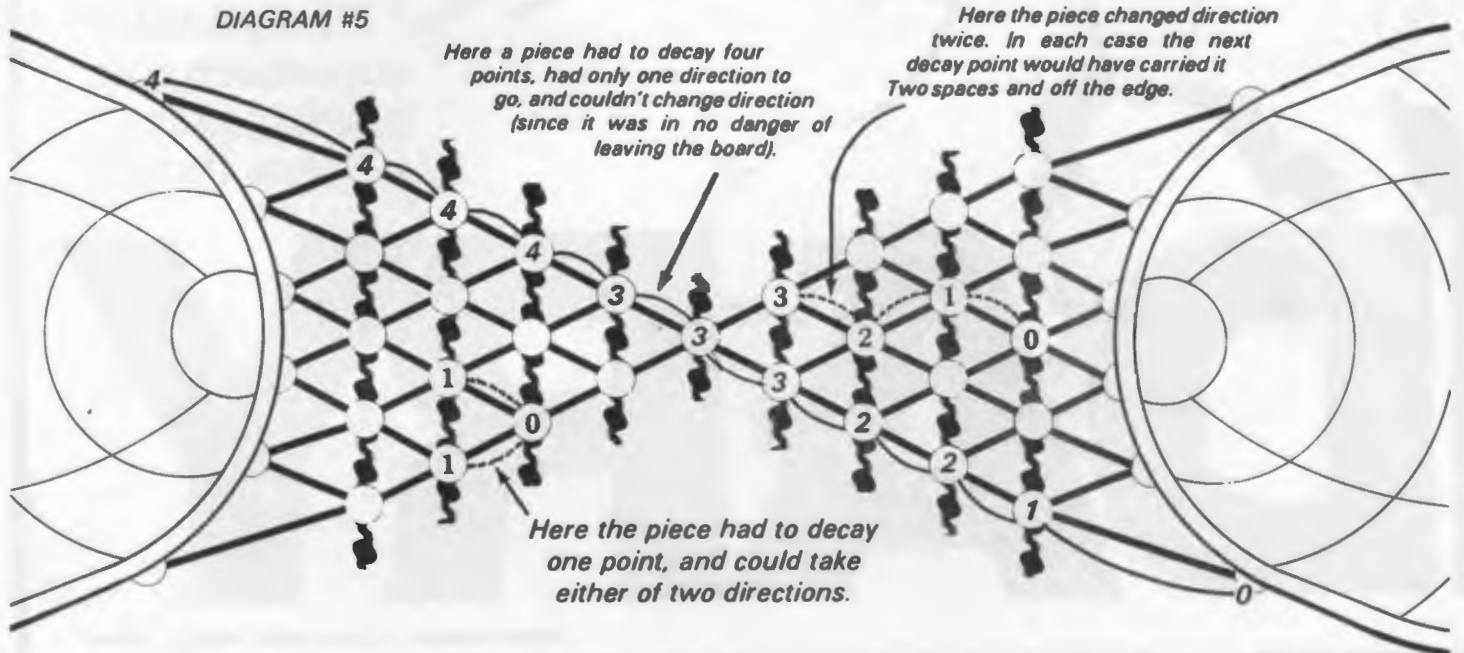
Collisions. In a collision involving a stack or stacks, the stack with the lower total value is destroyed. The value of the other piece or stack is reduced by the value of the destroyed stack. Equal-value stacks are both destroyed.

For example, two stacked 2s collide with a 3. The 3 is destroyed and the stack of 2s is reduced by its value, down to 1. A 4 collides with a 0; the 0 is destroyed, and the 4 becomes a 3 stacked with a 0 (total value 3 1/2, because the 4 was reduced by 1/2).

Setup. Setup rules are unaffected. No more than one piece can occupy a space at the beginning of the game.

Regeneration. You can generate a piece onto an occupied space, as long as no lower-numbered vacant space is available. The newly-generated piece has the value of the arc it's generated in. ●

DIAGRAM #5





BATTLEPLAN

Board Wargaming Magazine Supplement

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Editor

Gary E. Smith

c/o P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808

Contributing Editors

Alan Emrich, Marion Bates, Ron Morley

WARLORDS: China in Disarray, 1916-1950

Design/Development: Dave O Connor, Steve Barnes and Peter Wyche

Published by Panther Games

256 Counter, 1 19" x 23" map of eastern China

Price: \$32.00

Reviewed by Alan Emrich, Gary Smith and the VIP Test Crew

In what seems to be an interesting trend, a few new diplomatic/negotiation games are appearing on the market. **Warlords** is the latest, coming in from Panther Games in Australia. Panther has done their homework; the game is very attractively packaged in a standard bookcase box, the counters are colorful without being garish, the map likewise, though the terrain is kept very simple. The rules run about 13 pages.

In picking nits, we only have two or three. The game itself aside, the time period and era are not those that make gamers drool to try and the rules are not laid out to easily allow beginners to pick up the game and get going. A lot of page turning and searching was necessary for us to crawl through the first turn cycle. **Warlords** needs a rules read-through, simple though the game is, to get started.

Warlords the game is a winner. It combines

elements of **Risk** and **Diplomacy**, mixes in the necessary Chinese political overtones and adds the special circumstance rules to tie it all together. As per **Diplomacy**, players are not going to have to worry about detailed combat, as it is very straight-forward, favoring the attacker with a stronger force. Also, per **Diplomacy**, players will have to keep notes, logs and roster sheets on their forces to know just what strength each army is, supply, etc.

Victory is accorded by ranking each player according to their military, resource and political power. Each separate rank (say 1st-4th) is assigned victory points and the player with the most VP's overall wins.

Each player attempts (as a political faction in China) to control as many of the 28 provinces of China as possible. Each province produces income (resource points) which are used to raise, feed, equip and move

armies. Armies used in attacks are the most direct way to acquire provinces, though negotiations can produce such "conquests". Players who win military victories, gain or lose provinces, declare or break formal alliances, or move a capital out of a province gain or lose Political points as noted. The player with the most PP's moves first (or can pass), the second highest moves second, etc.

Warlords is crafted so that players will simply have to negotiate, ally or beg their way to victory (or mere survival!). Generally, the starting provinces for each faction are strung out hither and yon (or tightly bunched out of the way) and players simply must come to terms with their neighbors (quickly!) to prevent death by absorption. With combat favoring the attacker so that losers must retreat (and give up provinces), factions do not want to be on the receiving end of a determined onslaught. Only the fact that players conceal (by the roster) the true strength of each of their armies will save the initially weak player from ruin.

And negotiate you will. You will have to

fib, make threats, pay bribes, "cajole, lie, cheat and at times resort to unabashed grovelling" as well as kowtow, to avoid combat, or strike a concerted blow against placated "friends". Even more so than **Risk** or **Diplomacy**, because, as stated, players can start out in perilous straits right off the bat, with the jackals sniffing at their very heels. Money (ie RPs), like oil, lubes the action, so bribes often can pull you out of the fire (for awhile).

Only two rule quirks mar the action. One is easily solved by common sense, the other is apparently a concession to ease of play. The first involves building armies and raising troop strengths. The rules are not clear as to

whether the new troops raised in each province can be added to existing armies, or if new armies must be created to use them. It seems obvious that either would do, so we allowed both to occur. The other quirk is that one must pay to feed excess armies in provinces if the number of armies exceeds the province forage value. Fine, but in practice this means that you must pay to feed the second of two separate 1 strength armies (5000 men per point) in a 1 Foraging Value province, while in another 1 FV province, a 10 strength army (50,000 men—eats for free! In other words, you pay for excess armies, not mouths. Simple, but why not just count mouths?

Summing up, **Warlords** appears to be a high play-value game. If you go in for diplomatic games, you'll want to bring out **Warlords** time and again. It won't sit on your shelf collecting dust. Beginners may want to use this game as a start to try diplomatic games. While it's early, there doesn't seem to be any hidden strategies to employ that will guarantee success. The set-ups are too unstable for subtle play.

Panther Games is to be congratulated. This being their second game, though very different from the first, (**Trial of Strength**), they have continued to produce quality items which serve them well.

STORE FRONT SIGN:

'GOOD SEX' SOLD HERE!

(Just try asking for it!)

Victory Games
New York, New York
Design: Michael Moore
Review: Christopher Cummins, M.A., Clinical Psychology
Price: \$24
Not suitable for solitaire play. (I tried)

The jokes abound but the game is serious. As honorary staff psychologist at Diverse Talents (and finishing a Ph.D. in the subject at present), I was asked to review "**Dr. Ruth's Game of Good Sex**" from my unique perspective. The first thing noted about this game is that it requires 2-4 couples. This means that gamers are going to have to remember who their "significant other" is, if they have one, and convince them that this could be fun and it's not some perverse wargame (shades of Westheimer Conflict!). Course, while this game is enjoyable, it is not a truly competitive game. There is a movement phase, a resource allocation phase of sorts, and the possibility of a conflict phase (sorry, no breakthrough and exploitation phase, at least not during the game).



It is a good educational game somewhat akin to **Trivial Pursuit**. As for the flow of the game, couples move around four concentric tracks, answering questions about the mechanics as well as the social aspects of 'good sex' and collecting 'arousal points' for correct responses. When both partners collect various critical amounts, the couple is allowed to move into the next inner track, increasing the difficulty of their questions, but also increasing the average number

points for correct answers. Near the end, the questions go from true/false and multiple choice to matching partner responses.

The game is definitely good psychology, with the right touch of fun and education. Gamers and their spouses might get to know each other a little better and that's good for all of us. "See, honey, there are games made for both of us. After this game, maybe we can try a double-blind game. That's where we turn out the lights and..."

Man-to-Man Combat

Dragoon vs Hussar

by Thomas R. Coveney
Published by Balboa Games
Price: \$15.00
Reviewed by Peter Flynn

Having moved my 8th Army Corps counter into Stalingrad adjacent to 2 enemy counters totaling 350,000 men, I waited breathlessly as my opponent rolled the dice.

"Exchange," he exclaimed as all three counters were removed from play. Stalingrad had seen 750,000 men slaughtered in the twinkling of an eye. Since it was summer, the next turn could see another half million men move into the area. Somehow, it seemed that I was becoming somehow "removed" from the day-to-day feeling of my troops. Especially since the day-to-day feelings were clipping along at 90 days per turn. Where is the agony of defeat? Or, more direct, the joy of victory? What about the eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation factor?

Alas, Squad Leader...I am the master of my fate. Even here, with twenty squads of twelve men each, at three per hex, the feeling of man-to-man seems a bit far. "Offboard artillery" my opponent calls out. I slump over my pieces in bitter dejection. I can't relate to this mysterious force. Where's the sense of combat bloodlust?

Wandering into my local hobby store, all set to commit suicide by clubbing myself repeatedly with a copy of *The Longest Day*, I saw IT.



THE BOX!

Dragoon vs Hussar, "Man-to-Man Cavalry Combat Game no. 1"

Was this a trick? Is it a lie? Was it expensive? At this point, holding *The Longest Day*, did I care? No! I bought the game. It was not expensive.

What I got was 25 pages of rules and charts, two unique plastic discs, two full-color cardboard horses and two riders to mount the horses. Miniatures, so to speak, but cardboard and very impressive.

The designer, Thomas R. Coveney, (better know to his friends as Thomas R. Coveney) has been a student and scholar of the "Horse and Musket" era for over 20 years. He can discuss the most trivial aspect of a grenadiers uniform. In short, he knows his stuff. If he says a shako decreases the chance

of being killed by one point, then you know it damn well does.

The point of this note is to say that the rules are a bit cumbersome in action. But this is only due to their completeness of detail. Bear in mind that this game deals with only two horsemen trying to kill one another. Detail is fine, but so is brevity. Thomas R. Coveney hopefully will keep this in mind for expansions or additions.

If you want to play with two horsemen per side, or more, you will have to buy more copies of the game, or draw your own men. If not, then its four sets of charts, eight dics, etc, etc.

Yes folks, this game gets better when you add more men into it. Though nobody needs two or more copies of *DvH*, (though Thomas R. Coveney would be delighted), you can solve your dilemma by simply changing to metal figures and adjusting the scale. The

game is designed for 54mm figures, so a change to say 30mm won't cause any major upheavals.

The game is great fun, with lots of tactics and handling points to consider in skewering your enemy. Each figure is, of course, one man, so the game can go quickly. With three on a side, the game can go over an hour, so be prepared to spend, oh, say 6 months if you want to recreate the Scots Greys' charge at the Lancers at Waterloo. It's still better than losing 250,000 men in 2.6 seconds rolling an exchange.

If you like more personalized battles, then this is for you. I don't recommend it for solitary play, but two or more players will have a great time. Who knows, you may even get an urge to try metal miniatures and discover the glory of melee, grapeshot and breaking squares.

BITTER END

Bitter End: A Design Review
 Game Design by Rick Spence
 Published by Hobby Japan
 Marketed in US by Quarterdeck
 Games

400 counters, one 22" x 31" map
 Price: \$30.00
 Review: Perry Moore

Bitter End is Hobby Japan's game on the desperate counterattack to relieve trapped German forces in Budapest during January of 1945. The game is not currently available from Quarterdeck, but sold very well and deserves to be reissued here in the US. Write to Quarterdeck if you are interested.

Designed by Rick Spence, the rules are well written and the game is moderately complex. There are no new game systems, but it is a good clone of the excellent OSG **Dark December** game, with a few new twists. The most innovative of which is the Exploitative phase. Here, the player must decide whether to move or attack. Attacks are followed by units choosing to move. Attacking units, however, cannot move. Simple but effective for decision making.

The physical game quality is superb (as are most games from Japan that Quarterdeck imports), the only exception being that the English rules are merely typed and photocopied. The game is colorful and detailed (the counters are great), although many units in the battle area seem to have been left out.

The campaign game lasts 25 turns, with each turn covering one day. Each hex is 3.2 Km. while the units are battalions and regiments. The rules are 18 pages long.

Having done so much research on this battle for my own design (**Operation Konrad**, published by Close Simulations, Ed.) one knows what to look for not only in OB data but the overall flow of the battle. There appears to be some design distortions in several spots, which makes for an interesting look at reality versus simulation.

Many of the units belonging to the 57th Panzer corps are missing. Some of the ones present are assigned to the wrong corps. A couple of the reinforcement dates are suspect, and the flow of battle seldom follows its historical counterpart. Granted, **Bitter End** covers a battle difficult to simulate as a whole without putting rule constraints on the players, but without them, there is an "ahistorical" gameplay here.

The designer decided to put few if any constraints on the players, especially the Germans, thus, there are no distinct operation phases, no Hitler withdrawal order for the 4SS Corps to move south, and hence no 3rd phase can really occur.

Operation Konrad had three distinct phases:

1) 4SS attempts to breakthrough at

Bisceke/Dorog until Jan. 12, when Hitler ordered it to withdraw and move south near Lake Balaton for a southern drive.

2) 3rd PzCorps attacks from the Mor area Jan 6-11.

3) 4SS strikes from Balaton Jan 18-27.

Without these phases, the Axis player becomes Hitler with no constraints as to historical moves/motives. No rules cover the withdrawal order or prohibit Germans north of the Danube from going south. The entire 57th PzCorps could move south of the Danube, for example, when in history it never would have. Thus, the game appears too loose in historical terms. It simulates, but not recreates, this battle.

On a more tactical level, the artillery is very abstract. The Russians only receive artillery points for attacking Budapest, while the Germans get five artillery points on turns 1&2 and 17-18. These hardly compensate for the German 403 Art. Bde (89 guns) or the 17th & 19th Rocket bdes, which are not in the counter mix.

Another question would be the optional German fuel shortage rule, which takes effect on Turn 15. The net effect is that historically, this is when the big German advance to the Danube starts. The Germans got there on the 21st and records don't show any fuel shortages until the 25th! As an option, roll a die each turn starting with turn 15. On a 1 or 2 roll on the Fuel Shortage Table. After Turn 20, a 1-4 makes you roll on the FST.

Overall, **Bitter End** is a very basic wargame with simple but effective rules. The game, as shown, could have been better had the designer obtained better research materials.

You can get historical insight and correct battle flow with the rules as is, but more often than not the players will get an ahistorical game. **Bitter End** plays fast and tense. It is well put together. Despite the negative vibes, it is worth owning, with the reservations noted.

Bitter End Amendments

by Perry Moore

Below are some rules that need to be in the game to add to the historicity.

All 57th Corp units may set up anywhere 10 hexes west of the start line, north of the Danube. These units may not move until Turn 8.

From Turns 1-6, only the 4SS Corps may attack. From Turns 7-11, both the 4SS and 3Pz Corps plus the 1st Cav. Corps may attack. From Turn 12 onward, only the 4SS, 3rd, 23rd, 1st Panzer Divisions plus 3 Cav. Division may attack.

Russian units north of the Danube may only attack from Jan 6-11, unless any Axis unit is within 5 hexes of Komarno.

Specific Unit Set-Ups: (Some of these units must be created, see Missing Units)

98th division sets up along the north Danube shore

882 btn plus FHH units are all 57th Corps units and must also set up north of the Danube.

3rd Panzer division was not ever a part of the 4SS Corps. Instead, it belongs with the 3rd Pz Corps. Start it there.

303 StG is part of the 4SS Corps.

219 StG is not a reinforcement. Start it with the 3 Pz Corp.

2nd Hungarian division sets up within 3 hexes of Komarno. It may move south of the Danube after Jan. 11.

All other 57th corps (except 2nd Hngrn) may never move south of the Danube.

325 StG and 19th Rocket enter area C or B. 403 Art enters area B. Artillery/rocket units must be adjacent to enemy units to attack

them.

711 division enters area B.

25th Hngrn division enters area C.

20th & 153 divisions enter on Jan 9th.

44th division enters in area A and must move north of the Danube IF a Soviet unit is within 10 hexes of Komarno.

Unless the 4SS Corps is not within 5 hexes of Budapest, it must be withdrawn from enemy ZOCs beginning Jan 12th.

Soviet 5th & 9th Gds enter on Jan 6th.

MISSING UNITS

Unit	Front	Back	Parent Corp	Start Date
6th Recon Bn	2-1-7	0-1-7	57th	Initial
13th Stg Bn	2-2-7	1-1-7	57th	Initial
F.H. Pz Bn	3-2-7	2-1-7	57th	Initial
721st StG Bn	2-2-7	1-1-7	57th	Initial
208th Pz Bn	1-2-7	0-1-7	3rd	Initial
239th Pz BN	2-1-7	0-1-7	4SS	Initial
504th SS Rkt Bn	2-1-5	1-1-5	4SS	Initial
17th Rkt Bde	3-1-5	2-1-5	4SS	Initial
403 Art Bde	6-2-4	3-1-4	4SS	1/4
325th Pz Bn	2-3-7	1-2-7	4SS	1/16
19th Rkt Bde	3-1-5	2-1-5	4SS	1/16

Rommel's War (RW)

by Vance Von Borries
Published by Quarterdeck Games
400 counters, 2-22" x 33" maps,
24 page rulebook
Price: \$25.00
Reviewed by Preston Kraemer



For those of you interested in night-light boxes, the box for **Rommel's War** is for you! Well, OK, so the box is only a bright orange/desert yellow. You sure won't lose this game in your collection. Seriously, **RW** is a nicely done campaign game on the war in North Africa from Sept. 1940 up to Dec. 1942. Traditionally, the map runs from Alexandria to Tripoli. I guess Tunisia is going to have to be an expansion. Somewhat curiously, the designer includes units for the '41 Syria campaign, but as noted, the map doesn't cover Syria. An expansion for Syria is mentioned. Seems as though Tunisia might have come first as opposed to the sideshow of Syria.

The physical components are quite good, though Quarterdeck has two irksome points here. First, to store those 400 counters, they give you 3" x 5 1/2" plastic bags. This is not acceptable. I put mine in a spare tray as this game needs one. Second, the rules are not bound, they are held together by one staple. Flipping through the pages will cause that staple to pop and mess up the works. Otherwise, you get 6 Unit Organization cards, 2 Combat Results charts and 2 Time Record charts. Vance/Quarterdeck do give you quite a lot of material for your money. Maybe that's why they omitted the counter tray. The rules are easy to use and are laid out well. Errata is minimal (but there). Short campaign scenarios and optional rules are provided.

The game itself has no startlingly new systems, but uses what it has well. It's regiment/bde level with some divisions and battalions marching around. The set-up is standard: Move and Attack. Certain recon units can disengage from combat before attacks are made on them. Overruns are

allowed and everything is geared to being in supply. Trucks and supply units are provided.

The overall system, while being created by Vance Von Borries, shows only a passing likeness to his **Decision at Kassarine** system. **RW** is more closely matched with his earlier **Drive on Damascus** or **Air Assault on Crete**, at least in feel. However, **DaK** is meant to cover specific battles or short campaigns, while **RW** covers it all. As such, its system must be more clean and "user friendly" to keep the action going and players fighting each other, not the rules.

A very nice touch is Tobruk. Most NA games on this scale have Tobruk as a one hex fortified supply point. **RW** creates an inset map of Tobruk, giving players 40 hexes to fight over! Combat goes three rounds as opposed to one on the regular map. Artillery becomes a major factor in the smaller scale. Special rules are provided for this special case and this sub-game comes over as a very neat piece of work.

RW is also recommended by Vance as a PBM game. He gives the potential players some suggestions on how to number and order the hexes for this. Nice to see a design that addresses the PBMs out here!

Conclusion: **Rommel's War**, aside from some production/expansion quirks, is a good addition to the litany of North Africa games. It is a neat, workmanship design with potential for expansion. Should it indeed expand, Quarterdeck could have a very attractive Middle East game on its hands. Keep an eye out.

High Risk!

Published by Intriguing Games
500 Counters, 1-34" x 22" map
Price: \$27.99
Reviewed by Gary Smith
& Alan Emrich

If you ever wanted to play a game about world politics that was every bit as accurate as newspaper headlines, then **High Risk! (HR)** is for you. Occupying a middle ground between **Cold War** and **Risk**, **HR** allows four players (an expansion for six is due) to run part of the world their way. Players can choose what area to start with (North America, Europe, Russia, the Oil Nations, Pan Asia, Commonwealth), what government to have, (Republic, Democracy, Socialist, Communist, Fascist or Revolutionary) and what kind of victory to strive for (Economic, Political or Military). Each area and type of government has special traits that set it apart from the rest (it's harder to get treaties past Congress than the Politburo, for example). There is no perfect combination, but stick with the US for a good balance.

The name of the game of **HR** is resources. You must get treaties with unaligned nations, trade export goods, or militarily take them, in order to grow and expand. Resources fuel your factories, pay for your military, allow you to get income to pay to make treaties and keep your population happy. Unhappy people revolt on you. You can't win with revolting people (?). Players are dealing with 5 basic resources; oil, fuel, light metals, heavy metals, alloy metals, and one international staple, uranium. The resource that you have the least of determines your national income for that turn.

Players start off with \$1000 ala Monopoly and then move through three turn phases (Economic, Political and Military) each with various sub-phases. Any player able to achieve the victory conditions of that turn phase can instantly win the game, so players are cautioned to keep an eye on each other carefully. One can almost sneak into a victory.

Combat is simple and bloody. Overwhelming odds are necessary to get clear-cut victories and major wars are to be avoided. Frankly, of all the systems used in **HR**, combat appears to be the one given the least thought.

No game of this type is complete without Event cards (ruins the best plans) as well as Advantage cards, which can be used to help the owner or played against (or traded to) other players. These add to the game without being obtrusive. Players can gang up on one victim to do some very nasty damage, so don't make too many enemies, at least on the same turn!

Drawbacks are few, but have significance. Some of the rules are not clear on the first reading, so read carefully. Second, only four people can play at a sitting. It seems that six could have been planned for instead. Third, there are 14 phases to go through each turn, of which 8 or 9 involve work on the part of the players. **High Risk!** is not a fast-play game (though familiarity breeds speed) due partly to the fact that some phases require players to do things one player at a time. Lastly, while Intriguing Games gives you 500 counters, 150+ pieces of money, along with a map, charts, etc, they went and put all this lumpy material in a ziplock bag. **High Risk!** deserves a box to adequately store things in. However, the box would have added about \$5.00 to the retail price, so owners save money in that respect.

So what if it's a bagged game, an indifferent (but coated) map, or suffers from some hazy rules. This is a fun game (especially if one does the accent for your area right) that doesn't take too long to set up and get into. It is not as clean as **Junta**, nor as fun, but it does come close. Read the rules carefully and walk slowly through the first turn or two. Some decisions that you make early on in error will stick around to haunt you through the rest of the game.

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OPERATION THUNDERCLAP

OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS

Designed by Perry Moore
Developed by Don Conklins
1-17" x 22" map, 238 counters
Bookcase sized game
Published by Strategic Games
Publications
Price: \$17.95

Designer Perry Moore has graciously agreed to give you VIP readers some practical gaming tips on playing OT, as well as the most recent errata available. **Operation Thunderclap** simulates the final desperate drive by Von Manstein to break through to the surrounded German 6th Army at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942.

OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

If there is one thing I try to do in a design, it is to put subtle (as well as obvious) strategy in it. In OT, the subtle strategy is in the initial set up of the German units and the composition of the stacks. Part of the buying of a game is to uncover this strategy and with

that said, I will leave that strategy for you to learn.

As far as obvious strategy is concerned, there are three main avenues to select from when striking toward the Stalingrad pocket:

1. Along the Don River
2. Up the middle (historical choice)
3. Around the eastern edge.

Striking along the Don River has the benefit of securing your left flank against that river, but lacks the vital roads for quick movement of troops, supplies, etc. The assault, as you head north, will certainly activate the Russians more quickly, which is something no German needs.

Going up the middle is what most gamers have used. It is logical and seems quicker. The needed roads are there, although the high ground can hamper any off-road movement. There are no real drawbacks (aside from predictability) except that the road network tends to steer the assault off center, away from the pocket. Benefits include not activating many Russian units and forcing the Russian reinforcements to move farther away from entrance JA. This can buy time, which the Germans sorely

need.

The eastern approach strikes past the numerous lakes along the east map area. It is a backdoor approach worthy of consideration. The drawbacks are that your thin forces will have much further to move to get into position, the roads are few, affecting supply and it is a longer way to go. The benefits are that the Russians are weaker here and any reinforcements will have to travel awhile to meet the drive head on. But this can be negated by a Russian which hits you on your western flank!

Since the Germans have so few forces, they must keep their Panzer Divisions somewhat concentrated to achieve success. With that point made, the middle route is the one that I prefer, overall.

BATTLE STRATEGY

Given that you use the middle route, here are some tips on how to do it right.

The Germans should use the 6th PZ Div. and the 85th Tiger Btn to open the route up. A portion of the 6th should be used to attack the 85th Russian Bde to either destroy it or

force it to retreat. Forcing it to retreat will enable the Germans to surround part of the 302 Div. and make it willfully retreat. If you can destroy part of the 302 Div. do so, for if it escapes it can cause a lot of delays if deployed right.

The 23rd PZ Div. is a much weaker unit as is the adjacent Russian 126 Div. The German should set up some of the 23rd PZ in a hex not adjacent to a Russian so that it can envelope the 126 Div. The 23rd PZ could also help the 6th PZ with the 302 Div. Moving some of the 23rd to hex 3917 will give the attack on the 126 Div much more punch. You should be able to dislodge the 126 Div. and hopefully move towards Shutaw, while the 6th PZ heads to Salinaski and Krugljakoff.

The Rumanians along the Don River can also do some moving and attacking on the Russian 81 cav Divs., but don't push your luck. In general, the Rumanians should be used to secure your flanks so that enemy units can filter through.

Another move the 23rd PZ could make is to isolate the Russian 91 cav. Div. with help from the Rumanian 5th ca. Div. This would eliminate one more Russian at the cost of a slight delay. The question is, of course, whether you can afford such a delay.

As the Germans move towards the pocket, the Russian player will try to toss everything available in their way. The Panzers can generally deal with this, given normal die throws. Another Panzer unit, the 17th PZ, arrives on the 16th or so. Its arrival is very beneficial, as Russian resistance starts to stiffen along the Mischowa River. At this point, when the Germans are crossing this river, the Russians start to get heavy reinforcements.

What we are talking about here are the elite 2nd Guards Army and 2nd Guard Mech Corps. These arrive about Dec. 17th-18th. While it does take a few turns to feel their effect, the German will feel it. These units alone will stop a German advance cold. As the game continues, these Russians can throw the Germans into disarray.

The Germans must have at least reached and occupied Wassilawa or hex 2516, for a successful 6th Army breakout attempt and even this is not at good odds. It is here most German advances will grind to a halt in the historical game. Staying north of the Mischowa will consume nearly all future German plans and these may have to be aborted as more Russians arrive.

As for the 6th Army, they just sit at the start and defend while accumulating supplies. If the correct time presents itself, given luck, a breakout will occur. Assuming that it does, the best route is down the road which leads south of Iwanoka. Since this is a real gamble, select your Panzer divisions for the attack. Don't get frustrated if your advance fails to gain much. Most breakouts gain only 4-5 hexes at most and, Russians will be attracted to it like steel chips to a magnet.

CUSTER'S LUCK

Designed by Wayne Close
Published by World Wide Wargames
(3W) in Wargamer #45
Price: \$9.95
Reviewed by W. A. Salieri



Custer's Luck (CL) is not the Battle of the Little Big Horn. It is the entire campaign against the Sioux of which the Little Big Horn was the culmination. World Wide Wargames ought to have made this a bit more clear on the cover, as some folks might have expected a different game.

The rules cover three and a half pages, which is really a half page too short. **CL**, as done, just misses being a very good "intro" game. The Indian movement is totally dependent on die rolling, no thinking necessary. The players only have to concern themselves with two Bluecoat commands (intro scenario). However, the rules are overly abbreviated. A bit of fleshing out on the fundamentals would have allowed a new recruit a better chance to pick up the game and get started. After all, kids play cowpersons and Indians, and who hasn't heard of Custer? For example, you have to get into the body of the rules to understand the set-up, as it is not clear whether one deploys unit strengths or numbers of units.

As stated, the Indians move randomly by die throws. Combat is mandatory with adjacent enemy units. The 12 Indian stacks are run inverted, with all strengths concealed until combat. The Bluecoats use standard movement and can actually get "lost" unless scouts or leaders are present. There can be three players for the Bluecoats (and totally new recruits could run the Indians, making four), though with such a small density of counters usually only two people will play.

The major Bluecoat commands (Custer and Gibbon/Terry (GT)) vie against one another for victory points (VP), killing Indians and their leaders

being how one acquires them. Bluecoat deaths cause a loss of VPs, giving those VPs to the Indians. The Custer player has speed and a good leader, which somewhat offsets the GT players' greater strength and supply. If players choose the campaign game, General Crook and his forces come into play. Crook is 40% stronger than Gibbon/Terry, so the Custer force is definitely the small guy here.

Bluecoat strategy is fairly simple. Custer should not close the camps until they break up into travelling bands. If he does close, he can get swamped by two or even three stacks on turn one. Custer needs to dance around until he can drop on a hopefully weak group. With only 7 offensive strength points, Custer needs to be careful. With 10 SPs, the GT player needs only to get in close, catch one group, and hope it stays around long enough to be annihilated. Both should use rivers and rough as they give column shifts for the defense.

All in all, **CL** is a fair game covering a campaign mostly passed over in the past. It plays well as a solitary game, (Bluecoats vs Hostiles), is not complicated, but is also not a cliffhanger account of one of the Indian Wars. As an introductory game it would do better with a bit more explanation and some "get acquainted" lines for beginners. Recommended, but do not expect to glean any tactical information on how to deal with marauding Indians.



THE COMPUTER GAMER

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c/o P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808	
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LORD BRITISH RIDES AGAIN

Ultima IV: Quest of the Avatar by Eric Guy

Published by: Origin Systems Inc.
Designed by: Richard Garriott
Price: \$49.95
Complexity Level: High
Rules Clarity: Excellent
Apple version reviewed
Commodore version available

Well, Lord British (alias Richard Garriott) has done it again. Just when you thought that *Ultima III* was the pinnacle of his career, he went and surpassed himself. *Quest of the Avatar* is not only a work of art to look at, but a clever and fiendish plot to solve as well. Sixteen times bigger than its predecessor, *Ultima IV* is a giant of a game.

When we last left Britannia, the evil trio of Mondain, Minax and Exodous had been destroyed and Lord British's realm left in peace. Now the problem is for you as the hero to discover the path to eternal peace and happiness. You must explore the world and hunt for clues - and answers - which will allow the people of Britannia to raise their ethical standards. This path will lead you to

become what no other person has been able to: The Avatar, a paragon of virtue.

The adventure starts with you being asked some tough moral questions about hypothetical situations. Your answers determine whether you will be a Ranger, Bard, Tinker, Paladin, Mage, Druid, Fighter or Shepherd. While you are allowed to have up to eight characters in your party (and you will want every one of them, believe me), it isn't that easy. You will have to search throughout Britannia for your companions who will represent each of the classes listed above. And it means quite a bit of careful playing to be able to assemble a full party.

As this adventure does not emphasize destroying evil (a nice change of pace from the traditional adventure game), but discovering good, your behavior is watched very carefully by the powers that be. Slaying innocent creatures, robbing merchants, lying to others about your deeds, and stealing from blind women is a definite no-no in this game. Not only will your future companions shun you, but achieving Avatarhood will become impossible until you repent and mend your ways through good behavior. The reward for good behavior (and persistent questioning) is the achievement of the Eight Virtues: Justice, Humility, Sacrifice, Valor, Honor, Compassion, Spirituality, and Honesty.

The search for Avatarhood by you and your companions requires meticulous play and patience. Each village, town, and castle is full of people who may have the clues you are looking for, or the red herring you are trying to avoid. You must also make use of those famous moon gates (teleporting pads) and enter the dungeons to find the many items to put together this gigantic puzzle. The dungeons themselves now include chambers where events take place and monsters guard valuable artifacts. You will need to defeat pirates to get a ship, but then again the hot air balloon hidden in one of the castles provides a better view when you figure out how to steer it!

The new wrinkles in this game show up in the magic system as well. Before you can throw a spell, you must have the proper material components (called 'reagents') mixed in the proper amounts. Each spell has its own formula based on herbs such as ginseng and garlic, or exotic items like spider silk or black pearls. Unfortunately these all cost money and you will find yourself scrambling to keep your pouches filled.

Ultima IV comes beautifully packaged, including the traditional cloth map and two books on the history of Britannia and the spell lists and formulas. Player aid cards are

also included with a list of commands and instructions for getting into quick play. The graphics are the same as **Ultima III** and combat is carried out in the same fashion as before, with the added dimension of blocking terrain such as boulders and bushes, which help give a more tactical flair to the whole process. Music is provided as an added bonus, although the Apple version requires a Mockingboard.

Richard Garriott has come up with another superb product that manages to elude following in the footsteps of traditional role-playing games while keeping the best of his system. It would be nice to see an option for joystick input rather than relying on the keyboard to enter commands that are repeated over and over. Perhaps **Ultima V** (yes, rumors have it, he's at work on it already) will include such an option. In the meantime **Ultima IV: Quest of the Avatar** is what adventuring is all about.

The Bard's Tale

**Tales of the Unknown:
Volume I: The Bard's Tale
by Steve Fuelleman.**

Published by: Interplay Productions

Distributed by: Electronic Arts

Designed by: Michael Carnford and Brian Fargo

Price: \$39.95

Complexity Level: Moderate

Rules Clarity: Good

Graphics Quality: Excellent

"REJOICE WIZARDRY* FANS!" So declares this newest entry into electronic role playing games. **The Bard's Tale**, from Electronic Arts. I was pleasantly surprised to find that **The Bard's Tale** makes good on this claim. The game looks to be very much like **Wizardry** in both theme and appearance, and even allows **Wizardry** characters to be transferred and used in this game. (It also allows characters from **Ultima III**** to be used).

More interesting than the similarities between **Bard's Tale** and **Wizardry** are the differences: The graphics in **Bard's Tale** are excellent, giving texture to the various dungeon walls and doors, and some animation to the monsters that you will meet. The town is part of the adventuring world in **Bard's Tale**, and there are several different areas to explore. These include the sewers beneath the city, the ancient catacombs beneath one of the temples, a castle, and two towers. In exploring the town, I advise that low level parties remain aware of the time and be careful to return to the Adventurer's

Inn before nightfall. Anyone wandering the streets in **Bard's Tale** is likely to get mugged, and it's even worse at night (I'm serious).

The party is the familiar six member team, but with a twist. There is a seventh, "Special" character position in the party roster. This position may be filled by recruiting a wandering creature, by magically summoning a monster or an illusion, or by charming an opponent to surrender and join you. There is nothing quite as comforting as having a red dragon leading the way into battle!

The character classes available to play with are familiar, but with a few additions. The most prominent addition is the character known as the Bard. The Bard is a fighter who also makes music. This music creates many magical effects, and the Bard has a variety of songs that he may sing. The only limitation to this ability is that the Bard must occasionally moisten his throat at an inn before he can play any more ("When the going gets tough, the Bard gets drinking.") Magic is divided into four separate classes, the Sorcerer, the Conjurer, the Mage, and the Wizard. Each of these has their own unique spells and abilities, and the variety gives the game a greater richness and depth, and makes it a greater challenge. From an artistic point of view, this game is a gem, and can bring many hours of playing enjoyment (many, many hours).

From a technical standpoint the game is equally impressive. Written in assembly language (the "native tongue" of computers), it is so fast that you can play it without any awareness of its speed. You don't realize how fast it is until you go back to playing a slower, "normal speed" game, and realize that you have been spoiled.

On an Apple, which is the machine that I tested the game on, **Bard's Tale** is smart enough to recognize when the computer has expanded memory (128K) and takes advantage of it to increase speed and give better visual effects. It can also take advantage of systems with several disk drives, cutting down on troublesome disk swapping during play.

I have only a few complaints about this game. One is that transferring characters from other games is tedious, and requires many disk swaps. Hopefully future productions from this artist will allow us to use multiple disk drives for this process. Another is what I call "The Immortal Bard" bug: If a Bard character is reduced to EXACTLY zero hit points, you will be told that he has been killed. However, the Bard lives on (and on, and on, and on). He is not listed as dead in your party roster, and continues to function normally. In addition to this, he will never be killed when in this state, no matter how much more damage is done to him, since the computer thinks that he is already dead. One other picky complaint is that the perspective from which

the world is seen is different in town than it is in a dungeon: In town you can see the building next to you at the edge of your screen, but in the dungeon the area next to you is just off the screen.

In summary, **The Bard's Tale** is a gem (500 gp.); Beautiful, only slightly flawed, and well worth having.

ARCADE DUNGEON

**Gemstone Warrior
by Robbie Robberson
Published by Strategic
Simulations, Inc.**

Designed by: Peter Lount & Trouba Gossen

Development: Chuck Droegel & Micahel Kawahara

Price: \$29.95

Complexity Level: Low

Rule Clarity: Good

Graphics Quality: Excellent

Commodore version reviewed.

Apple and Macintosh versions available.

If you have time to roll up a character or to ponder over meaningless clues, and all you really want to do is hack and slash and pick up loot, then **Gemstone Warrior** is what you're looking for. No fancy character generators or elaborate combat systems here; just old-fashioned push-button reflexes and a quick eye are all that are needed. But you are going to have to use a little brain work if you want to win....

As the **Gemstone Warrior**, armed only with a cross bow and fireball spells, you must descend into the mazes of the Underworld where the evil Demons reign and recover the **Gemstone**, a five piece artifact that protects the earth. Along the way you will find magic items that will augment your natural abilities, arrows to replenish your dwindling supply, healing potions, and unidentified ones that can harm or help when you see them. Of course, you will also encounter the monsters and the Demons that they serve.

The first several times out will be rough until you have figured a way through the maze and back out. And I assure you that the path back is quite different from the one you took in! But after mastering it a few times, you will be able to run in and out quite quickly. Since **Gemstone Warrior** is an arcade game, you can compete against yourself or your friends to see who can run up the highest score in the allotted time. Finishing

early gets a bigger bonus as well as picking up treasure and magic in the maze.

The playing is smooth, and you have a choice of selecting a difficulty level from Beginner to Kamikaze (expert mode) in case you become overconfident in your play. Joystick or keyboard input is allowed, although you will find it much easier to use the joystick.

And when you finish, brave warrior, and have placed the Gemstone in its rightful home, don't relax yet. For after all that hard work, a demon will appear and steal the artifact, disappearing into the maze again. No one said that being a hero was easy.

GENERIC ADVENTURING

Adventure Construction Set
by Robbie Robberson

Published by: Electric Arts

Designed by: Stuart Smith

Price: \$39.95

Complexity Level: Moderate

Rules Clarity: Excellent

Graphics Quality: Good

Commodore version reviewed

Apple version available

Joystick required

If you are tired of going into the same dungeons of *Wizardy* for the umpteenth time, or simply bored with trying to come up with new ways of solving *Zork*, then you are probably ready for a stab at designing your own epics. And *Adventure Construction Set* is the next best thing to hiring a programmer to do the work for you.

ACS is really a set of mini-programs which aid you in designing an overall adventure in the world of your choice, whether it be fantasy, science fiction, or historical. Each of the five sections of this program is dedicated to a certain design function and which allows interface of the finished design with the other sections. The World Map section allows you to select from sixteen different kinds of terrain and to place them on a 40x40 grid or to place 'doors' which lead to the individual 'dungeons' where the main adventure will take place. The Region Editor allows you to lay the floor plans for dungeons, laboratories, castles, fortresses, or whatever you are designing. It also allows you to fill your creation with treasure and traps, monsters and animals, and clues and puzzles.

But it is the last three sections of ACS that give it the endless combinations and variety that any good adventure needs. The Master Creature List and Master Thing List are basically data bases that allow you to create the items and monsters that inhabit your world. You are allowed to choose the name

and habitat of the monster, its possessions and personality, and its traits, combat, and magical skills. Items are allowed to range from a weapon to a pile of gold, or a piece of armor to a magical staff. But the Master Thing List also allows you to create special items such as traps, magic zones, and custom floor spaces which will produce a certain item when another item is dropped on it, play music, or produce other special effects as you see fit. The Master Graphics Set contains all the pictures of objects and creatures of the other two sets. Again, this section allows you to modify the present items or draw new ones.

Although ACS comes complete with a database of objects and creatures for fantasy, science fiction, and historical milieus, it is possible for you to design your own custom sets from scratch (although it would take quite a while to do). In reality, the sets which are included should be able to satisfy any hard-boiled adventurer and are very easy to modify if needed to be. It is no exaggeration to say that ACS allows an infinite number of designs to be used.

For those who are not completely confident at creating their own adventures for fear they won't work, ACS also comes with example games to show what ACS is capable of doing. The Land of Adventuria is a set of seven vignettes which show off each of the different functions of ACS while taking you on a gamut from Alice in Wonderland to a

Nazi Castle. You are encouraged to use the section editors to see how the different effects in each region were accomplished, and to inspire ideas for your own adventures. The other offering is Stuart Smith's own creation, "Rivers of Light", an odyssey set in early Mesopotamia. This game you should try to play and solve without peeking. Both games are entertaining and not too difficult as to discourage adventurers of any age.

There are two minor flaws that I detected in this program. The first flaw ACS is not to blame for. The program requires you to initialize a disk to save games and your designs. As this was reviewed on C-64 (the operating system is ridiculously slow), this meant spending quite a bit of time each time you switch from one section to another or save your work. I'm sure the Apple version doesn't suffer from this problem and is peculiar only to C-64's. The second flaw is that movement of your character is slow, especially if there are other moving creatures on the screen at the same time. You have to wait until each decides where to move in relation to you and if there are several creatures involved, this could take a couple of minutes to resolve. Fortunately this occasion happens rarely.

A final word: A really good adventure will take lots of time and planning on your part and won't just fall together. But *Adventure Construction Set* will help certainly make your job that much easier.

Fantastic Fantasy:

RINGS OF ZILFIN

by Tom Dworscak

From: Strategic Simulations, Inc.

Designed by: Ali N. Atabek

Developed by: Jeffrey A. Johnson

Price: \$39.95

Contents: Two 5¼" floppy disks

One sixteen-page rulebook

Complexity level: Introductory

Rules Clarity: Excellent

Graphics Quality: Excellent

Apple version reviewed; 48K

required. Commodore version available.

I don't usually like fantasy games — but I like *Rings of Zilfin* a lot.

You are Reis of the village Sham, part of the Realm of Batiniq, a mythical land which labors under the tyrannical rule of the evil Lord Dragos. Lord Dragos has used his powers to subdue the Zilfins, a great race from the past whose rule had brought peace

and prosperity to the land. And now Lord Dragos stands poised to obliterate the forces of good once and for all: He already has one of the famed Rings of Zilfin, and if he should acquire the other, he will acquire supernatural force and become invincible. Only Reis can stop him, and although the task is an immense one which can only be completed by an individual who is part Rambo, part Rockefeller, and part David Copperfield, your character begins his journey as the proverbial 98-pound weakling, lacking in weapons and money and unskilled in the ways of magic. Only lightly armed but possessing a rough map of Batiniq, you are on your way.

Rings of Zilfin plays in two distinct phases, a travel phase and a village phase. In the travel phase, Reis moves horizontally across the screen against a scrolling background, and in the course of his journey he can pluck various mushrooms and herbs which increase his endurance, reduce his fatigue, provide nourishment, or afford

temporary but extraordinary combat skills. A plethora of monks who roam the countryside often have bits of advice to offer should you care to stop and talk. A variety of evil opponents, most commonly axe-wielding Goblins, also appear at irregular intervals. When night falls, Reis must set up camp and rest, although frequently his sleep is interrupted by airborne intruders which must be dispatched with bow and arrow.

After several days of overland travel you will reach the next road intersection, which in most cases includes a village and its assorted shops. Here you will encounter a bedazzling array of denizens: Arms merchants, witches, assorted passers-by, fortune tellers, healers, beggars, fanatic worshippers of Lord Dragos, and various merchants who sell food, drink, and a safe place to rest, pass on tidbits of gossip about what lies ahead, and trade in various commodities. This latter function is perhaps the most important, for you won't last long unless you can obtain enough gold to purchase the various weapons and supplies necessary to survive your journey, and the safest, fastest, and most lucrative way to get gold is to discover how much which merchants are paying for what. After you have dealt with all the creatures you care to,

you can exit the village, at which time the overall map of Batinig is displayed along with an option to save the game or to proceed along any of the available roads.

In the course of your journeys your character will gradually become more proficient in the use of weapons and magic as well as accumulate more clues about the location of the rings. Because **Rings of Zilfin** is an introductory game, actually completing the quest does not require solving difficult Infocom-like riddles, but is instead more akin to patiently collecting all the pieces to a puzzle.

What makes **Rings of Zilfin** so simple to play is the uncluttered game system. Numerous screen prompts inform the player of his current options for movement, and a tap on the Escape key, besides freezing the game, instantly informs the player of his character's supplies, weapons, and attributes. During combat, the player need only use two keys, one which selects the kind of weapon or spell employed and the second that indicates which assailant you wish to attack; the only time any kind of arcade-type aiming skill is required is when you are dueling with flying enemies.

What makes **Rings of Zilfin** so enjoyable to play are the spectacular graphics. The

vibrant, multi-colored displays of towns are truly spectacular; even more enthralling are the detailed depictions of combat, complete with charging figures and spells and arrows hurtling through the air. These graphics are fully employed by designer Ali Atabek: Bombat will involve struggles with among others, Mina the man-eating spider; Sumagin, the death-ray demon whose eyes shine with a light that burns whatever it touches; Bargs, who use their electrically charged tentacle tips to kill; K-Plants, who slay for pleasure with poison pins; and Gorgons, metallic skinned relatives of dragons whose strong jaws chew rocks and humans with similar ease. All of these encounters are accompanied by vivid sound effects.

Although **Rings of Zilfin** is strongly recommended — especially for individuals who don't usually care for games of this nature — a word of warning is necessary. There is only one scenario, a full-length struggle to acquire both rings. SSI claims that playing time is 30 to 40 hours, but I found that it took nearly 100 hours to finally reach the concluding encounter with Lord Dragos. But if you can find the time, **Rings of Zilfin** is a delightful game full of challenges, amusement, and intrigue.

CONVENTION WARFARE

Below are listed game conventions who's schedules prominently include wargames, as covered by this magazine. We present it as a service to our readership in hopes to better support the future of this hobby.

GAME CONVENTIONS: To be listed in our various convention calendars, please send your convention information (preferably in the format below) to: DTI Convention Calendars, PO Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808. Convention announcements must be received at least four months prior to opening day.

ABBREVIATIONS DEFINED:

- ATD— "At the Door" registration fee
- AUC— Auctions
- BG— Board Games (including wargames)
- CC— Costume Contest
- CG— Computer Gaming
- DEM— Demonstration Games
- DLR— Dealers
- FG— "Family" Games (like Monopoly)
- FM— Flea Market
- FPC— Figure Painting Competition
- LRP— Live Role-Playing Events
- MIN— Miniatures Events
- MOV— Movies
- MST— Manufacturer Supported Tourneys
- PRE— Pre-registration fee
- RPG— Role-Playing Games (usually D&D)
- SF— Science-Fiction con stuff
- SEM— Seminars
- SCS— Special Guest Speakers
- WG— Wargames

Knoxville, TN

July 25-27, 1986

SECON -86

For more information write:

SECON

c/o Atlanticon

PO box 15405

Baltimore, MD 21220

Los Angeles, CA

August 29 - Sept. 1, 1986

GATEWAY 1986

For more information write:

DTI

Dept. GATEWAY '86

PO box 8399

Long Beach, CA 90808

(213) 420-3675

\$16 PRE, \$20 ATD, no separate event fees.

RPG, BG, WG, MIN, Computer events, DLR.

Tampa, FL

October 3-5, 1986

SUNCOAST SKIRMISHES '86

For more information write:

Suncoast Skirmishes

c/o Skirmishes, Inc.

2550 34th Ave. N.

St. Petersburg, FL 33713

Held at the Ashley Plaza Hotel.

MIN, RPG, BG, Killer Tournament.

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A Complete Strategy and Adventure Game Convention featuring three full days of tournaments, demonstrations, seminars, exhibitors, prizes and other gaming activities.

GATEWAY 1986 will be held at the Los Angeles Airport Hyatt Hotel, August 29th - September 1st, Labor Day Weekend. Pre-registration is only \$16.00 if postmarked by August 16th, 1986. Note that there are no separate charges for individual events (a **STRATEGICON** tradition).

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FIRST CLASS GAMING

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Editor	Nolan Bond

c/o 2925 Fair Meadows Drive, Garland, TX 75042

EDITORIAL

WHAT THE HELL IS PBM?

To many of you who pass through our little enchanted land on your way to the RPG materials, etc., PBM may seem to be one of the lesser arcane mysteries in the already arcane world of gaming. Why — you ask yourself— would anyone want to play a game through the mail? What's wrong with those jerks? Are they anti-social? Are they cursed with some type of unspeakable skin condition? Why PBM?

First of all, let me say that we are as "normal" as any of our other brothers/sisters out there who have chosen to devote their minds to their hobby rather than their bowling arms. Most of us PBMs also are heavily involved in other aspects of gaming. In fact, it is the level of involvement in gaming and in life itself that makes PBM so appealing. PBM lets you play when you want to play — or when you have the time to play. For those of us with families and/or careers, getting together worthy opponents can be a scheduling nightmare. With PBM, all you need is the time. Also, those devoted gamers in East Jesus, Nebraska who have to go into the next county to find someone who has even heard of games can appreciate the convenience of PBM.

But PBM is more than just convenience. It is an additional facet of our hobby to be experienced. I can honestly say that there is nothing in all of our hobby that can compare to the suspense and mystery of feeling your way around a new world — all alone. Consider the pleasure of discovering another fellow adventurer and contacting them to exchange information, gossip, and questions. Where else can you find a better

simulation of command control problems than when one of your commanders lives in California and the other lives in Maine? Add to that what is possibly the highest standard of "power diplomacy" to be found anywhere and you have the world of PBM.

I realize that many of you are reluctant to part with some of your carefully hoarded gaming budget to try something new. That's why I am very excited about what V.I.P. and Software Doctors, Inc. have come up with. In this issue, you will find the complete rules for a PBM and a card for getting a free set-up and two free turns in that game. This is not a "special", bare bones giveaway. This is your

chance to play in an ongoing, professional PBM game — FREE! Give it a try. You will never know what you are missing until you try. I can't guarantee that you will like the subject matter, or the level of complexity, or anything else for that matter. What I can guarantee is that you will be exposed to all of the various elements of PBMinig. Who knows? While this may not be your "cup of tea", it may very well whet your interest for one of Software Doctors other games or one of their competitors. Where else can you get exposed to something new for the price of two stamps?



LOOK WHAT THEY'VE DONE TO MY GAME...

by Steve Jackson

I've known Draper Kauffman for several years, by letter and phone. He was one of the original blindtesters for **The Fantasy Trip** — in fact, a lot of the TFT economic system is Draper's work. He's a very creative gamemaster, and he thinks **big**. After TFT was finished, Draper and I kept in touch in a tenuous sort of way. But in 1983, Draper hit me with a business proposition. He wanted to start a PBM company...and for his first game, he wanted to work up a PBM version of **Illuminati**.

(If you've never played it: **Illuminati** is a game about secret conspiracies. The object is to take over the world. But instead of military force, you use bribery, guile, and broken promises to control groups like the Democrats, the Mafia, the Cattle Mutilators, and the International Communist Conspiracy...making deals with the other players when you must, and breaking them when you can. It's even more backstabbing than **Diplomacy**.)

The idea of playing **Illuminati** by mail sounded **very** interesting. "Tell me more," I said.

It turned out that, as usual, Draper was thinking **big**. He wanted an entirely computer-moderated game. Instead of 6 or 8 players, as in the board game, there would be 24. Instead of some 50 'subject' groups to be controlled, there would be a couple of hundred. And instead of the limited interactions possible in the board game, there would be a **lot** of ways for groups to affect each other. Best of all, the computer game would allow something that the board game, by its nature, can't...you can **change** the basic characteristics, or "alignments," of any group you control. If the Vatican isn't quite criminal enough for your purposes, you can do something about it...and if the enemy Cycle Gangs are giving you trouble, you can try to make them more peaceful! And so on.

Preliminary Plotting

Fairly quickly, as these things go, we came to a formal licensing agreement. Then I sat back and waited. And waited...As often happens, various problems (programming and otherwise) were slowing the game's development. We talked from time to time, sharing ideas for new, strange groups and for different game subsystems. Since I wanted to be in the playtest game, Draper couldn't tell me **too** much — it would have given me an unfair advantage. (And, after all, this IS **Illuminati**. I would have taken any advantage I could get, **especially** if it was unfair. That's the whole idea!)

Finally, in early February, I got the word...the program was almost ready. Four playtest games were being set up. About a dozen SJ Games employees and friends signed up. Most of us wound up in the same game, which made things interesting! On February 28, I got my setup turn. My move was in the mail the next day.

As the first few turns developed, I stayed in close touch with Draper. (We usually wrote each other long letters on the bottom of turns and printouts.) Not only did I have a financial interest in the project...I was having a **LOT** of fun, even at the start. And, like any PBMer, I wanted to harass the gamemaster with suggestions.

Certainly the program wasn't bug-free. Some of the initial problems were pretty funny. Attrition (the reduction in your groups' memberships through death, boredom, etc.) kept getting out of control for the first few turns, killing off lots of my leaders and cadre and I did some **stupid** things the first few turns (as did we all). The rulebook that players get now is actually the third edition; the first two versions got played to death!

As the playtest went on, changes were made. By popular demand, the "key" group for each player — the **Illuminati** group itself — was allowed to give six orders per turn, instead of four. A "Superprobe" order was introduced, to let players spend a **LOT** of megabucks and find out who controlled a **LOT** of groups, all at once. A "Withdraw" order was created to let you get your spies out of an enemy group once they had served their purpose.

Best of all, the printout evolved from a rather confusing mass of information to a well-organized, easy-to-read report. The results are written out in plain English, rather than some sort of cryptic code:

We infiltrated 2 of our agents into Group 210's cadre!

We did not uncover any spies in our leaders and cadre.

We subverted 30 of the leaders and 12 of the cadre in Group 166!

We are proud to inform you that we have seized control of Group 166!

Another nice thing about the printout: The heading is not "Illuminati Play-By-Mail Game." It says "**TOP SECRET! To: Illuminati Leader of the (whatever). From: Chief of Intelligence.**" I guarantee that if you leave it lying around your house, you'll get some raised eyebrows from anyone who picks it up.

Office Politics

With so many SJ Games staffers in the same game, some funny things happened. About a month into play, one of the editors made the mistake of leaving his **Illuminati** file in plain sight on his desk. When he returned the next morning, there was a little note attached, saying "Thank you very much!". Each word had been typed on a different typewriter...For a while, black-market copies of his data were

circulating freely, until everybody had one. So it goes.

Some of the staffers have really gotten into it. Our office manager is in two games now — the playtest, and a full-price game. Her husband is in two more. They have worked out an order-planning form, a detailed record-keeping system, and I don't know what all else. I think they really ARE going to take over the world...

I expected that the people around the office would either form a bloc and go after "outsiders," or immediately attack each other. I was wrong on both counts. There has been very little fighting, but the only cooperation — so far — has been a certain sharing of information and agreement not to attack the same groups. That will probably change later in the game. Right now, it's more profitable to go after uncontrolled groups than it is to harass other Illuminati. Everyone still has room to expand. Later, though, when all the good groups are taken and even the weak ones are getting hard to find... THEN the knives will really come out.

Of course, there has been conflict. I remember, about turn 6, seeing a

message from one of my groups that "We caught some agents from Group #20 trying to steal from us." Oh, no, I thought. **It's started. Somebody is after me.** But apparently the initial failure discouraged my unknown foe, because that was the last of that. And, several turns later, my Illuminati group itself was the object of a concerted attack from five other groups — all of which, I knew from a Superprobe I had just done, were controlled by the same player. All the attacks were unsuccessful (it's not easy to hurt the central group!). I wrote the attacker a letter, giving her a choice: Back off, or get burned. (Okay — a diplomat I'm not.) She backed off. But I'm watching her very closely...

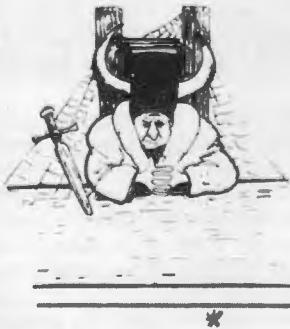
The Game That Takes Over Your Mind

I think this is likely to be one of the big winners in PBM. I know that, personally, I'm having more fun than I've ever had with a PBM game. As soon as my turn comes in, I sit down, call up the "ilumin8" file on my computer, and get to work. (No, I don't have a computer-generated strategy — but I use my word processor to keep track of my standing orders, probe results, et

cetera.) I haven't turned around my moves so fast in ANY game since I first got into **Starweb**, years ago. Actually, this game reminds me a little bit of **Starweb** — except that there's no map. Anyone can attack anywhere at any time. Pretty hairy.

That's not to say that I think the game is perfect. I know Draper is still making little changes here and there. I'd like to see some graphics, or even COLOR, on the printouts. I'd like to see more data from a really successful probe of an enemy group (like, for instance, being able to learn what their standing orders are). I'd like to see a provision for automatic execution of standing orders if you don't get your turn in within a specific time. I'd like to see it up and running on a play-by-modem system, so I could make a move every day or so instead of once a week!

It's been very interesting to watch my game get translated to PBM — and I'm very pleased at the way it turned out. I think **PBM Illuminati** captures all the spirit of the original boardgame...maybe even improves on it. And now, Draper is working on a PBM version of **Car Wars**. I can't wait to see what he does to **that!**



PAPER MAYHEM

"The Informative PBM Magazine"

Having a hard time getting enough players together for your favorite role playing or boardgame? Eliminate this problem by joining the world of play-by-mail gaming.

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EARTHWARS

TM



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P.O. Box 171, Graves End Station, Brooklyn, NY 11223

INTRODUCTION

Earthwars is the play-by-mail game which brings to life all the greatest civilizations and war machines of earth's history and fables. By combined use of your armies, magicians, spies, and economy, you will attempt to bring one of these great powers to world domination.

Each game has up to 15 players, with the other countries being controlled by the computer. Each turn represents three months of the Lunar calendar. Players should submit their turns on or before the due date specified on each printout. If a turn is missed, the computer will select production for the country.

VICTORY

A player wins when he eliminates all other players. A player is eliminated from the game when his home country is occupied by another player. Computer countries cannot eliminate a player, but they can reduce his armed forces to zero. The winner of each game gets a free set-up in another game.

THE MAP AND THE COUNTRY

The map depicts the major civilizations and war machines that have existed from beginning-earth through middle-earth through modern-earth. The dashes connect countries over water. If there are no dashes connecting 2 water-adjacent countries, then

movement between these countries is not allowed.

The country you start the game with is considered your Home Country. Your Home Country serves as the income and military base for each player. It produces market revenue which can be spent on military, magical or economical development. It is where all production is bought and received.

Each country you own produces eight Gold Pieces (GP) of market revenue in addition to any revenue it may receive from markets.

BEGINNING OF PLAY

The game starts with up to 15 players. Each player's country starts with 12

markets, 12 infantry and 32 Gold Pieces of market revenue ready to be spent on the first turn. Each computer country starts with 5 markets, 8 infantry and 16 Gold Pieces of revenue.

MARKETS

Markets are the economic units of the game. They are factories, farms, mills, etc. Each market produces 2 Gold Pieces of revenue each turn. It costs 4 GP to build a new market. There is no limit to the number of markets a country can build. However, you can only build markets in your own country. The revenue can be used to buy more troops, markets, or magic. Any money not spent is carried over to the next turn.

THE MILITARY

Each military unit has an attack strength, defense strength, movement allowance and cost to build the unit. Some have special attributes. The use of military units as an occupying force is the only way to take over another country.

Troop Type	Attack Strength	Defense Strength	Movement Allowance	GP Cost
Archers	8	0/4	1	2
Cavalry	6	2	1	2
Dragons	25	10	2	9
Infantry	5	3	1	2

Cavalry: are mounted units. They cost 2 gp per new unit. Their attack strength is 6, defense is 2, and movement is 1 country per turn.

Infantry: are heavily armored foot soldiers. They cost 2 gp per unit. Their attack is 5, defense 3 and move 1 country per turn.

Archers: are longbow and crossbow soldiers. They cost 2 gp per unit. Their attack is 8, defense 0, move 1. In addition, when in their home country and not ordered to move, their attack strength becomes zero and their defense becomes 4. Archers cannot attack without cavalry and/or infantry included in the attack. They must equal the total number of archers in the attack.

Ex.

- 11 inf, 10 arc — OK
- 5 cavalry, 5 inf, 10 arc — OK
- 1 inf, 2 arc NO GOOD
- 2 inf, 2 cavl, 5 arc NO GOOD

Dragons: are huge beasts that breathe fire from their mouths. They cost 9 gp per new beast. Their attack is 25, defense 10, movement is 2 gp per new beast. Their attack is 25, defense 10, movement is 2 countries per turn. In addition, every 5 Dragons, cumulative in a battle, increase the morale; thus the fighting strength of its allies.

MAGIC

Magic in this game consists of 2 types of spells that can be cast. They can be used for military and economic attacks. Each spell can be used once (i.e. a spell is bought, then assigned, then used). A new spell must then be bought. There is no limit to the number of magic spells created and stored in your home country for future use.

Fireball Spell: is a hail-storm of fireballs that rains down on the opposing forces. Each spell costs 3 gp to cast. Fireballs add their strength to your troops in a given battle or they can be cast alone at a country to do damage on the enemy ground forces. All fireballs are kept in your home country until assigned (cast) at another country. They have a strength of 10 and can be cast at any country on the map. There is no movement restriction.

Lightning Bolts: are huge bolts of electric energy called forth from the sky. They cost 2 gp per spell and can strike any country on the map. When assigned, they will destroy 1 market per lightning bolt cast at a country.

Globes of Resistance: are magic shields that protect your markets from lightning bolts. Each costs 2 gp and will negate the effect of one bolt fired at your home country or/then any country you own.

SPIES

Each player has 4 spies which can be sent to any country on the map. They will report the following information, troop strength, markets, globes, bolts and countries owned.

MOVEMENT

Movement is from one country to another. Countries not connected by land, but connected by dashes, can have movement between them. Countries not connected by land or dashes cannot have movement between them.

Movement is at the rate specified for the unit. Only Dragons can move more than one country per turn. This order is written from starting country to the next country, then to the last country. Each country involved must be mentioned. Movement through a country you do not own is not allowed. If you try to move a Dragon through a country you do not own, it will stop at that country and fight whomever is there.

EX. You own 32 and 33. To move you would write your order: 32-11-33. However, since you do not own 11, your Dragons stop at 11 and fight.

With magic, no movement is actually made. Magic attacks are one time spells cast at a specific country. In effect, they have unlimited movement.

Spies are not hindered by country borders. They magically teleport to the country they are assigned to, gather the info, and teleport

back. If a spy is about to be captured (a random occurrence) he will instantly teleport back. This is why, at times, you will receive less info than usual about countries you spied on.

Movement orders are given for each type of military unit, in groups. Only one movement order is allowed for each type of group leaving a country.

EX. Cavalry units from 12 wish to move to 7 and 19, and infantry to 35.

unit type	from	to	number of units
infantry	12	35	38
cavalry	12	19	29
xxxxxxxxxx	xxxx	xxx	xxxx
x cavalry x	x 12 x	x 7 x	x 10 x
xxxxxxxxxx	xxxx	xxx	xxxx
dragons	12	7-17	10

The second cavalry order is not allowed and is aborted. The Dragons are moved from 12 to 7 to 17, providing all countries are owned by the owner of the Dragons.

COMBAT

Combat occurs when one country's forces enter an area occupied by another country's forces. Computer countries never attack first. They only attack countries that have attacked them in the past.

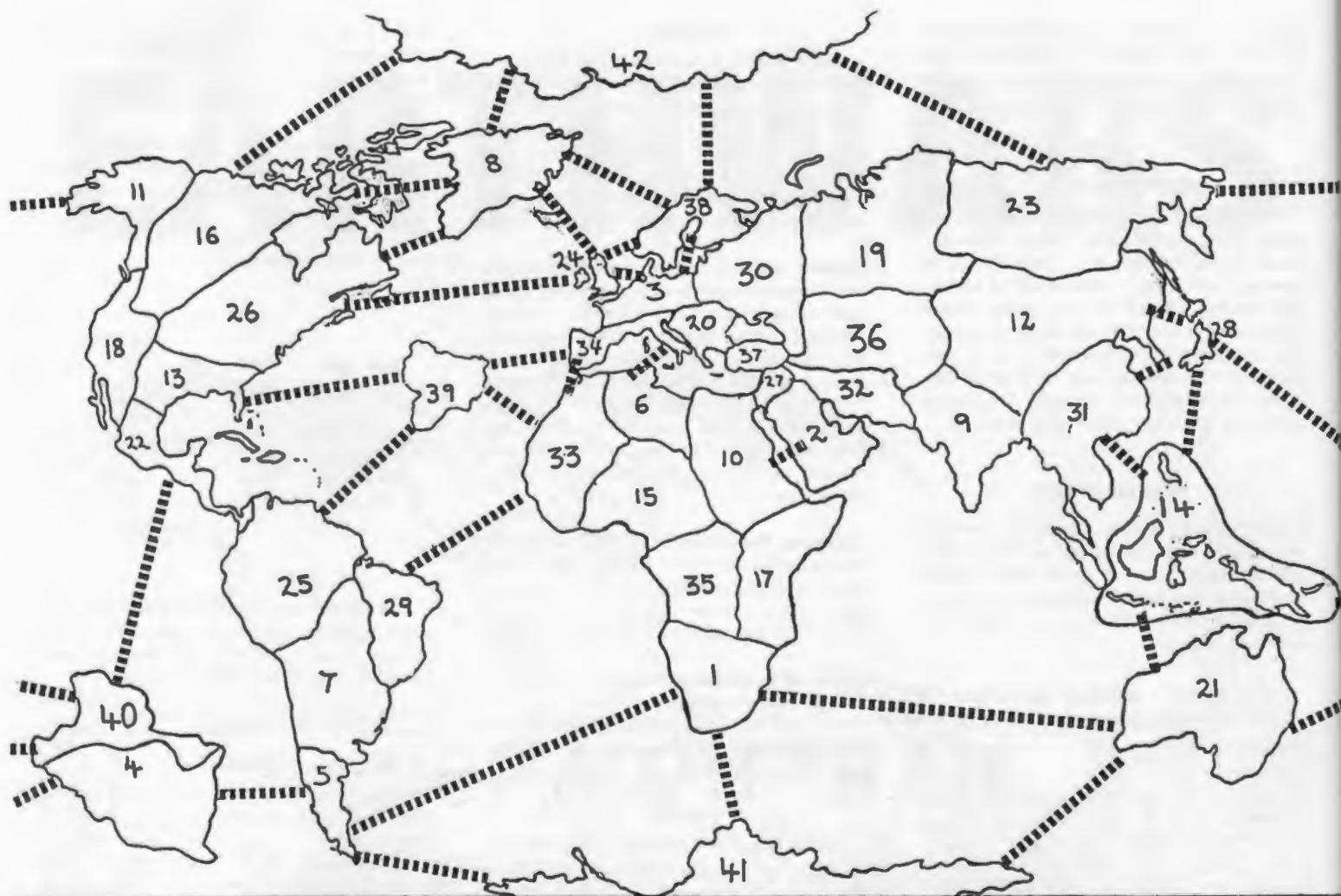
After all movement, opposing forces in the same country do battle. The losing attacker, if there are survivors, will return to the country he came from. Attacker and defender are based on who owns the country and who has entered it. Forces are added up, morale modifiers made, then unit losses and battle outcome are determined.

Home Countries get a 10% defense modifier to their troop strength. The losses are determined randomly based on the odds of the attack/defense ratio. When all the defending units are destroyed, the attacker controls that country.

Once a country is taken over, all Magic and Market Revenue goes to the new owner. If a player is eliminated, all military units occupying other countries become independent mercenary troops of that country.

DIPLOMATIC MESSAGES

Each turn, players may submit 256 character blocks of message that will appear on all players' turn sheets. These messages are called Proclamations, and cost 50 cents per block for that turn, additional to the turn fee. Also, index cards will be passed on to the player(s) you specify. This allows for individual as well as public press releases.



Countries of Earthwars

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1 — Zulus | 15 — Minotaurs | 29 — Kobolds |
| 2 — Arabians | 16 — Ogres | 30 — Orcs |
| 3 — Arians | 17 — Gnolls | 31 — Dragonland |
| 4 — Dark Elves | 18 — Gnomes | 32 — Persians |
| 5 — Centaurs | 19 — Goblins | 33 — Pirates |
| 6 — Carthage | 20 — Greeks | 34 — Romans |
| 7 — Wood Elves | 21 — Halflings | 35 — Gray Elves |
| 8 — Yeti | 22 — Aztecs | 36 — Trolls |
| 9 — Dwarves | 23 — Huns | 37 — Trojans |
| 10 — Egyptians | 24 — Imperials | 38 — Vikings |
| 11 — Eskimos | 25 — Inca | 39 — Atlantis |
| 12 — Shoa-Lings | 26 — Iroquois | 40 — Hobgoblins |
| 13 — Tolk Elves | 27 — Israelites | 41 — Demons |
| 14 — Marine Elves | 28 — Samurais | 42 — Frost Giants |

THE TURN SHEET

Filling in the turn sheet is very simple: 1) Complete the first two lines with your general game info; 2) Under productions — fill in the new units you wish to purchase, make sure all costs add up correctly — remember that units purchased in a turn can be used in that turn; 3) Specify the countries you wish to spy on; 4) Cast any magic you would like; 5) Move your troops.

SAMPLE TURN SHEET

A/C # _____ Game # _____ Turn # xx _____
 Name _____ Date turn due back _____

Production: Markets Infantry Cavalry Archers Dragons Fireballs Lightning Bolts Globes of Resistance
 Movement: from-amount-to _____
 Lightning Bolts Cast: from-amount-at _____ list of all players casting
 Fireballs: from-amount-at _____ list of your castings
 Economic conditions starting turn: xx+1
 Countries owned: mkts-inf-cavl-arc-dra-fb-lb-gr
 Empires of Terra: Players in game and what countries they own
 Spy Reports: mkts-inf-arc-dra-fb-lb-gr _____ four of them

EARTHWARSTM

A new game has begun and you are in it!

The first turn is an economic (build-up) turn, NO MOVEMENT or MAGIC ORDERS are to be issued this turn - it is a peace year, the calm before the storm. Therefore, you may only issue production orders.

From the game map enclosed in the rules, please pick 3 countries you would like to play. ONE of these will be the country you actually play. This country is called your Home country and is where your orders originate. It is the country all your production will take place in throughout the game. If you are knocked out of this country, you are out of the game.

No two players will border each other, at least one computer country will separate each player.

Player _____ Acct # _____ to be in the next game, return by _____

The countries I prefer to play are _____

First Turns Production: 32 G.P. available

Markets (4gp) _____	Dragons (9gp) _____
Archers (2gp) _____	Cavalry (2gp) _____
Lightning Bolts (2gp) _____	Fireballs (3gp) _____
Infantry (2gp) _____	Globes of Resistance (2gp) _____

The "Earthwars Special Offer" FREE set-up and turn expires Sept. 30th, 1986.



THE SCROLL



The newsletter direct from Hell

New Player Issue

This Newsletter will be published quarterly and cover tips, hints, policies and game information about Dukes of Hell, and Earthwars

In case you didn't know ...

Policy

Join the RPGA

That you can join the RPGA (role player gaming association), the officially recognized Dungeons and Dragons club of TSR., thru Software Doctors. When you do, you receive a certificate, pin, card, and a 10-15% discount on all products you buy from the RPGA. This is only available to Software Doctors' players. To join, you must join through us. If you are already a member, you can transfer your status from a single player to a club player (our club) and receive all the benefits we offer. Write us today for complete information.

- That John Vaccarro, the 5th ranked AD&D player in America is a member of our staff and that he will be writing articles in The Scroll and answering questions on AD&D that you may have.

- That every player in Dukes of Hell who finishes the game they are in and is on the winning side receives a Certificate stating their achievements.

- That the winner of each Dukes of Hell game receives a wall plaque stating his achievements.

- That the winner of each Earthwars game receives a Certificate of Victory.

You may ask all the questions you want, we are trained to be "user friendly"

We can be reached at 718-336-4149, and you can leave a message during non-business hours. Tell us exactly when to call and we will, if possible (message must be 60 secs or shorter, please wait for the beep). ORDERS WILL NOT BE TAKEN OVER THE PHONE, at this time. They must be pre-paid, unless you have been a paying customer more than one year.

Errors rarely occur, but if they do, we need to know about them please let us know!

THE TROUBLE WITH TRIBALS

by Steve Jackson

Why do you suppose it is that the most popular and successful type of PBM game is also the source of the most contention? Accusations of fraud, laziness, and general incompetence are — sadly — nothing new to the industry. But a disproportionate amount of the griping seems to center around one sort of game. How come?

Considerably more than half of the PBM games currently running are of one type; the "tribal" game. In its purest form, this is **exactly** what the name implies. The player controls a primitive clan, trekking across the face of some desolate world or another, trying to win battles and influence people. The paradigmatic tribal game, of course, is Schubel & Son's **Tribes of Creane**. And there are others... oh, my, yes, there are others.

But a great many other games really fall into the same classification. Only the window-dressing is different. For "tribe," read "spaceship," "mob," "country," "robot alliance." The idea is the same.

The essence of the tribal game is not the background; that doesn't matter. A tribal game, as I see it, must meet two criteria:

- (a) The player represents a group (or a single person) which can **change and grow**;
- (b) The game is not fully computerized; an active part is taken by the moderator(s).

Most of these games share a third characteristic: The player can travel and explore within a game-world so large that no single player can ever control any significant portion of the known territory, and player interaction is necessary. I don't think this characteristic is **vital** to the genre, but it's common.

Obviously, any number of good games don't fall into this category. **Starweb** and **Illuminati** fail on all three criteria. You might argue that a **Starweb** player can change and grow. Not really. Grow, yes, but not change; a first-turn **Starweb** player has, in miniature, all the capabilities he will ever have.

But, as I said, more than half the games now on the market would qualify as "tribals." It's easy to understand why this is true. The genre allows for a wide variety of moderating styles and capabilities. If you're a skilled programmer, you can write detailed rules in advance, run most of your game on a computer, and intervene only for very special actions - like **Universe II/III**. If long rulebooks aren't your thing, you can limit yourself to a description of the world, and let players ask to do **anything they want**. The only rules are the moderator's common sense. If the moderator's common sense differs too much from the players' you'll have bad feelings; a perfect example is Forrest Johnson's frustration with **Lords of**

the Dark Horse, chronicled in GU #2. But **anything** can work, if you're just organized about it.

So what's the problem?

EXPECTATION VS. REALITY

The problem with tribal games is one of **moderator involvement**. It is essential to the genre. A "tribal" game that is 100% computer-controlled is **different**. It loses the flexibility... the ability to change... the ability to develop. That is the real essence of this style of game. And for that (at least right now) you need a moderator. Someday computer programs will be sophisticated enough to handle it. Not right now.

But moderator involvement is a two-edged sword. Too much involvement can break you. Too little involvement is equally destructive. And (here's the real problem) no two players agree on what is "too much" or "too little." If you expect a great deal of intervention, you will feel slighted by brief moderator replies. If you expect minimum intervention, you will feel **cheated** when the moderators "favor" a player who writes them long letters. Either way, the failure does not necessarily lie in the game — only in the clash of expectations with reality.

TOO LITTLE?

One popular approach to the moderated PBM is to maximize the computerization of the game, and minimize the human involvement. Or, in the words of one successful moderator: "The players are supposed to mess with each other enough to keep them interested. That way I don't have to mess with them as much." That's fine... when it works. **Beyond the Stellar Empire** is a classic example of players "messing with" each other and having a great time. The moderators in **BSE** don't know half of what's **really** going on in the game. That's OK. It works!

But the chemistry isn't there for everybody. I recently had a long talk with a game-company owner who is afraid his players are losing interest. Some of them are dropping; the ones that are still playing are sending in fewer turns; and new sign-ups are down, too. The players are looking to the moderator to provide action... but the moderator depended on the **players** to provide the action. Not good. Exploration gets boring after a while; two-line responses to special actions are disappointing. If interesting alliances and wars don't develop in a low-moderator-involvement game, it seems to go downhill.

This particular game is at the crossroads. Either the designer can go in and provide

more detailed backgrounds, longer responses, etc. — taking more of his time — or he can accept the fact that the market for his game is limited. Not an easy decision.

TOO MUCH?

"You can't have too much moderator involvement," you say. "That's the whole spirit of this kind of game." Well, maybe. From a player's point of view, the more personal attention his turn gets, the better!

But PBM moderators have to eat. If a moderator is going to spend an hour analyzing each turn and writing the response (the **minimum** time I'd allow to think through, and respond to, and interesting "special action" in a high-involvement game) that moderator has to earn an absolute **minimum** of \$4.00 for his time. That's over and above the normal PBM fees for overhead, advertising, "regular" turn processing, postage, and a reasonable profit. All of a sudden we're talking about \$7.00 or \$8.00 per turn! That will price many players right out of the market.

Of course, it's possible to charge a basic fee for the turn, and add extra "special action" costs. That's exactly the way some big PBM companies operate. But it's a system that causes a lot of bad feelings, especially when (as has happened) the game system is set up so "extra" fees are totally unavoidable if you ever want to accomplish anything. The bottom line is the same; \$7.00 or \$8.00 per turn. (and if I get any letters quibbling about what a "turn" is, I'll file them under "T" in the round cabinet beside my desk.)

We won't even go into the gross unfairness of encouraging unlimited expensive special actions, thus handing the game to the wealthiest player. Ecccch.

Again, it's a problem of expectations. If you know in advance what you're paying for, that's fine. If the extra cost comes as a surprise, you'll be very unhappy, and justifiably so.

And then there's the problem of moderator consistency. The more detailed a game's special actions can get, the more important it is that all moderators make the same sort of rulings. The difference between a skilled moderator and a clumsy one, or between a stingy one and an open-handed one, can make the difference between a successful, enjoyable game and a frustrating disaster. Players have the right to expect consistent arbitration, whether the game is football or PBM.

JUST RIGHT?

So what do we do? Trapped between high costs on the one side and boring play on the

other, where does the happy medium lie? It doesn't exist.

There is a whole spectrum of "acceptable" solutions, each with its own set of drawbacks... and each with its own set of loyal fans. For some gamers, the low price and fast turnaround of a low-involvement game make up for the limited action. For others, the richness of detail of a high-involvement game make up for the errors, frustration, and expense of a heavily moderated system.

The bottom line is this; we don't have one unified genre here, after all! We have several related types of games, differentiated not by content but by type and degree of moderator involvement. And the "play" of the various types is so very different that a player can like one sort and hate another. And that leads to bad feelings whenever a player gets something he didn't expect.

The solution is, quite simply, better communications. PBM is diverse enough to offer something for everyone. Nothing will be achieved by eliminating some types of games. The problem is not "bad games" as much as simple misunderstandings.

It's not enough to say whether a game is computer-controlled or human-moderated.

You have to define:

Degree of moderator involvement. When a player submits a query or special action, does he get two pages of response, or one line?

Degree of game-world interaction. Does the environment react only when a player pokes it, or do the "non-player characters" initiate events on their own?

Level of consistency. How many moderators are there? If there are several different moderators, are they trained and consistent? and how are they assigned to turns?

And, of course, **cost.** How much does a turn cost; what "special auctions," if any, incur extra charges; and how well can you play without paying for any special actions at all?

It's probably not reasonable to expect advertisements to answer all these questions — but rulebooks, handouts, and reviews certainly should. The information gap needs to be filled. Maybe that way people will get what they expect... and there'll be less trouble with tribals.

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OUT TIME DAYS



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OBSERVATION POINT

GUEST EDITORIAL

by Marion Bates

Marion Bates is familiar to you as a staff writer for numerous hobby magazines.

When I was offered the opportunity of this forum, I must admit I was quite puzzled where to start. I certainly have no lack of opinions on a variety of matters and I have rarely been shy about expressing them. Nonetheless, I am disturbed by some of the trends I have seen in the hobby in recent years. I have a few ideas about what can be done about them.

There has been some discussion but little alarm about women in the hobby. There are a few, granted, but damn few and there is little evidence at this point that the number is growing. Now perhaps this is all right. That the hobby of Simulation Gaming (you will, I hope, forgive me if my word processor is not comfortable with the term "Adventure Gaming") is male dominated may not be perceived on all fronts as a necessarily evil thing. After all, who needs women? Am I being glib? Perhaps I am.

The fact is that our hobby is made better and stronger by diversity, be this in terms of race (perhaps issue for another column) or gender. Without such diversity the hobby will, and to a certain extent, has stagnated. We are talking about a hobby that is dominated by white middle class males just like the model railroad and radio control hobbies. I believe it is arguable whether these latter could be characterized as fast growing, vital hobbies. The problem is without some kind of diversity, there is little impetus for change and growth. This is the particularly important in our hobby which is so dependent on creativity.

So why aren't there more women in gaming? One reason we hear is that women aren't as competitive as men. It is amazing how many people, mostly men, who believe such nonsense. I'm sure Billie Jean King would be stunned to hear it. Then, of course, there is the assertion that women have no interest in the subjects with which we deal, like history and conflict. I'll bet Maggie Thatcher and Indira Gandhi would argue with that. While it is true that such things have not traditionally been areas that have interested women in the past, times have changed. Women are no longer limiting themselves to macrame and needle point, thank goodness.

Instead, women are seeking new challenges without much regard for the old traditions. This has great potential for our hobby in terms of the diversity it could bring. That is, if we can keep from alienating the people that can bring in this diversity.

It is almost a cliché to cite the garbage that passes for art on many role playing game boxes and magazines, featuring impossibly proportioned women in the most impractical of clothing. This kind of artwork is, unfortunately, targeted at oversexed adolescent males and succeeds in alienating those who might improve the hobby while attracting those who have the least to offer.

This particular problem is the product of some tremendously short-sighted marketing on the part of game and magazine publishers. They have engineered their products to appeal to a certain market rather than attempting to expand into new markets. This is unfortunately doubly harmful. It contributes to the stagnation of the hobby and reinforces the view that we are all a bunch of horny fifteen year old boys.

It is important to note that there are companies who have shown more sense. GDW's *Traveller* and *Twilight 2000* as well as West End's *Paranoia* typically are not marketed in this patently offensive manner. Other companies could take a few lessons. This kind of marketing stupidity is not limited to the role playing field either.

A major wargame publisher recently sent out a flyer to "wargame widows" encouraging them to buy products for their "wargame men." There is a rather unhealthy assumption here that women do not wargame and that there is no hope that they will. In fact, I know quite a few who play board and miniatures wargames avidly and two who received this flyer were quite offended by it. One has twenty-five year old son whom she introduced to wargaming at an early age. Surely a company with a marketing strategy that takes women into account as potential customers (that, after all, is the language that business understands) would not commit such a faux pas.

Then, of course, there are the attitudes of those who have become comfortable in a male-dominated hobby who are not interested in diversity. Those for whom gaming is an escape from the day-to-day reality of relating to humans as flesh and blood rather than lead or cardboard. The

biggest problem we face though is one of apathy.

Most hobbyists really don't seem to notice or care what direction their hobby is taking unless it results in a price increase or the obsolescence of the game system on which they spent \$200. And the way to deal with that is to promote a little dialogue on the subject. Hopefully this column may make some small contribution.

Can we attract women to all aspects of gaming? Why not? As stated before, women are not confining themselves to traditional social/feminine interests. Certainly, the areas of adventure and history are not devoid of interest to women. This is demonstrably so. Yet these are the very interests which attract men to the hobby. So why shouldn't women with the same such interests be attracted as well?

There are those who dismiss this as a minor problem, hardly worthy of consideration. This is a serious mistake. Simulation Gaming as a hobby is not necessarily destined to survive forever. Without a certain amount of effort, it could suffer a death similar to the CB craze of a few years back. It may be that there is no similarity but it is all too possible. Surely, an influx of women gamers into the hobby will not guarantee the health and survival of the hobby. Unfortunately, we will still have to deal with problems such as complacency on the part of game publishers and the negativism of some elements of the hobby press. However, the introduction of new points of view would be invaluable to our perspective on ourselves and could lead to a certain amount of self examination and reform.

But, the bottom line is whether or not a problem is perceived by most people. As mentioned earlier, I see little sign at present of alarm either in my acquaintances (with a few notable exceptions) or in the hobby press. Unfortunately, many fail to recognise a problem until it becomes critical. One hopes that the problem is not insoluble by then.

Finally, I should reassure everybody that I am not predicting the end of the hobby. It is relatively healthy at the moment and still seems to be growing, though slowly. In general, I am fairly optimistic and look forward to the future. Still I hope that we do not become complacent. There is little I find more dangerous.

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Game News

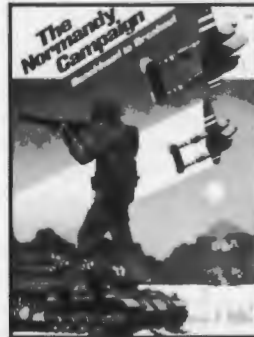


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Fire and Movement

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Fire in the East

"The state-of-the-art simulation of Operation Barbarossa. There is no game readily available that can even be compared to it. Previously available offerings cannot stand against it."

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The Grenadier

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Fire and Movement



8th Army

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S&T

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"Extremely playable."

"Great fun and a super introductory game."

The Grenadier

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INTERVIEW VIP Talks with Rick Loomis

Rick should need little introduction to our readers. So here's the little introduction. Founder and owner of Flying Buffalo Inc., Rick covers a lot of territory in gaming: Star Web BPM game, Nuclear War card game and Tunnels and Trolls. Just how does a rational man get into all these different, diverse product lines? We don't know how the rational ones do it, but Rick will tell us how he did.

VIP: Well, Rick, it's my understanding that you've been in adventure gaming since the Assyrians took Babylon. When did you get started in our hobby?

RFL: I have always been interested in games of all kinds, and also in history, especially American Civil War history. Sometime around 1963 or 1964, I was in a local toy store and saw a GAME about GETTYSBURG! I couldn't believe my luck. I bought it and since have played it with every relative or friend who could be browbeaten into trying it! (Plus hundreds of times solitaire after everyone within reach was 'played out'.) Civil War games remain my favorite.

VIP: Were you always into game designing also?

RFL: Yes. Just like nearly everyone else, I used to always make up my own variant rules for Risk, Monopoly and other games. When I was in high school I invented my own wargame for my friends, that involved six or more players, hidden movement, hundreds of units, complicated rules, and tons of paperwork. We called it "The Game". It took forever to play and especially to referee. About this time I had my first brush with a computer too. I found out that a local utility had a computer business simulation game which they would allow "groups" to play. So I got together with some friends and formed a local chapter of the Future Business Leaders of America club at our high school, primarily to be able to play this game!

VIP: So, did you get to play it?

RFL: Yep. Had a great time, too. This gave me

the idea of eventually computerizing my own game. If I could get "The Game" programmed for a computer, it could be even MORE complicated, and I could play instead of just being the referee! Unfortunately at this time computers were very big and expensive. The only people who had computers were big corporations and universities, and they had to be kept in large air-conditioned rooms. No one had even dreamed of PCs and Apples were something you ate to keep the doctor away. This was around 1965.

VIP: What happened next?

RFL: After a bit of college (and a couple computer courses) I went away to war. I got stationed on an island in the Pacific. You may have heard of it: Oahu? I was at Fort Shafter, which was a 25 cent bus ride from Waikiki Beach.

VIP: Tough duty!

RFL: Yeah, but I managed to survive. This was where I invented my first PBM game, Nuclear Destruction. I had some ideas I wanted to try out, so I started writing postcards to people who had advertised for PBM opponents in the back of the Avalon Hill GENERAL. At first I offered to referee the games for the cost of a postage stamp. After awhile I started charging a bit to cover expenses. The first turns of ND were run for 10 cents each. (This was when postage was 8 cents). It wasn't long before I was having trouble keeping up with things, so I found a computer center not far from the fort and started renting time on a Control Data Corp computer.

VIP: Did you write the programs?

RFL: No, this was where I met Steve MacGregor, my senior programmer and oldest employee. I love to design games, and he loves to program, so it worked out great. By the time I got out of the Army, I think I had about 200 customers, so I decided to go ahead and make a real business out of it. Steve agreed to come to Arizona and join me, and Flying Buffalo was officially incorporated.

VIP: Ok, ok, you know I have to ask: Where did you get the name?

RFL: Actually, when I was in the Army I had intended to start a Stamp & Coin shop when I got out. But "Rick's Coins" just doesn't DO it as a name. So I made up Flying Buffalo

Stamps & Coins from "Flying Eagle pennies" and "Buffalo nickels". I had mentioned this to Steve, so when I needed to give a name to the secretary at the Control Data Computer Center, Steve suggested I use "Flying Buffalo". It turned out to be very useful having an unusual name that everyone remembered.

VIP: Tell us about some of the boardgames that Flying Buffalo has done.

RFL: Our most popular game, of course, is Nuclear War. I used to go to game conventions with my play-by-mail games, and people would see the Nuclear Destruction game and ask me if it had anything to do with that "really neat card game I used to play in college". I knew which game they were talking about, since I had played it in college too. When people started telling me they had played the game so many times they had actually worn out the pieces, I knew I had to get this game. I started hunting around for the inventor, but there was no address on my copy of the game. Just "Doug Malewicki, Los Angeles"! I started advertising in various gaming magazines asking Doug to get in contact with me, but no luck. Finally a friend of mine was looking up phone books in the library, and found a Doug Malewicki in an LA area phone book. I called the number and figured I had the right guy when an answering machine answered the phone with ominous organ music and a dracula-voice came on and said "Doug is not in at the moment, but if you will leave your name, phone number, and blood type, he will get back to you."

VIP: What about some of the other games?

RFL: Tunnels & Trolls amply demonstrates how much I know about what makes a good game! Ken St. Andre had read through the rules for Dungeons & Dragons™ once, and didn't understand how to play the game. So he sat down and invented his own game. He got 100 copies printed up and sold a few to his freinds in Phoenix. Then he asked me to take the remaining copies to Origins that July. I knew no one would want to buy this silly thing — it had no board, no pieces, nothing. It was just a rulebook. But I'm just a softy at heart, so I told Ken I'd take it with me. When I sold all the copies, I figured out

that maybe there was something to this game after all!

VIP: T&T has had a lot of success with solitaire adventuring, has it not?

RFI: Yes. A bunch of us were sitting around in a coffee shop after a science fiction convention, and Steve McAllister said "Someone ought to make a dungeon like a programmed text." That sounded good to me, so I did. I wrote **Buffalo Castle**, and it was instantly popular. Now it's in three languages and I think it will soon be in Japanese!

VIP: Let's get back to play-by-mail, since I understand that's the biggest part of your business. For the unenlightened, just what is a play-by-mail game?

RFL: A PBM game is generally a multi-player game with hidden movement and a neutral referee who keeps track of things. You tell us what game you want to play, and we assign you to a game with 14 other people from all over the country (or the world) who you've probably never met before. Once every two weeks (usually) you write us and tell us what you want to do for the next turn, using the official forms we send you. We take all the moves received and type them into our computer. The computer decides what happened that turn, and makes an individual printout for each player. We mail these printouts to the players, and charge them a turn fee. We have a space game where the object is to build the biggest space empire, a war game where the object is to conquer all of Europe, a business game where the object is to make the most money, a medieval game where the object is to become King of England, and a fantasy game where the object is to find magical prizes and build your characters up so they will survive the deeper "levels".

VIP: Why would someone pick play-by-mail games instead of face-to-face games?

RFL: I would pick them in ADDITION to face-to-face games rather than INSTEAD of face-to-face. But with PBM, we provide the opponents (it's not easy to find 14 people who all have time to sit down and play the same game at the same time); you get lots of NEW opponents (there are over 1000 different people playing **Starweb** — you don't have to worry about playing against the same guys all the time); you can have genuine hidden movement where you only get to see what you are supposed to be able to see; and you can take as long as you like to plan your moves (my opponents in wargames always get very restless before I finish moving!) With computers running things you can have REALLY complicated games with LOTS of opponents (I am still planning to have THE GAME someday before long).

VIP: How fast is play-by-mail gaming growing right now, and how big a percentage do you think it is in relation to all of adventure gaming?

RFL: I don't think anyone knows just how big PBM is right now. I would estimate that there are at least 6,000 people involved in some commercial PBM game right now, and maybe 30,000 who have ever been involved in one. I don't know how many people are involved in adventure gaming, but I think I heard an estimate once that there are 200,000 wargamers, and there must be at least 300,000 people who are actually playing role-playing games. That would make PBM about five or six percent of adventure gaming. But it is growing rapidly now. Every week I read an ad from at least one new PBM company.

VIP: Speaking of new companies, occasionally one hears horror stories about rip-offs in play-by-mail gaming in particular. To counter this bad image, many play-by-mail companies have joined together to do something about it. Can you tell us more about this?

RFL: You are of course speaking of the Play-By-Mail Association. One problem with PBM is that it is a mail order business, and you have to do business with people you have never met face-to-face. As with any other mail order business, it is VERY easy for someone to set up and start doing business. All you have to do is place an ad somewhere. Don't misunderstand me. All companies have to start out new sometime, and there is nothing wrong with being new and small.

Some of the best new games and ideas will be brought out by new, small companies. But at the same time, most of the companies who fail will be in their first year. So we have formed the PBMA and one requirement for being a full member is that you have to be a provisional member of PBMA for one year.

VIP: So the PBMA represents firms that have proven themselves by longevity, and are therefore safer play-by-mail investments.

RFL: Right. At least, that's the theory. Of course we can't guarantee that a company's games are "worth the money" or that you won't have problems with a member company. But at least if you have a problem with a member company, you can complain to the PBMA and we will try to do something about it. By the way, I don't want to try to tell everyone that they shouldn't play PBM games with companies who are not members of PBMA. There are several good companies who have not joined for one reason or another. But if you have not played any PBM before and are planning to join your first game, you really should pick a company that has been around for awhile. Pick one whose ads have been appearing consistently for at least a year in some major magazine like **VIP**, or one who is a member of the PBMA. If you

VIP: Thanks, Rick. Say "hello" to all the buffalos back home and keep 'em flying!

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The Counter Mix

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Humor Counter Mix Editor Alan Emrich
c/o P.O. Box 8399, Long Beach, CA 90808

NUT CALLS or Staffing the phones L.A. ORIGINS '86

by Alan Emrich

Ah, spring! All the ingredients are there to screw up one's natural bio-rhythm. Daylight savings throwing your body's internal clock off by an hour, pollen aggravating your allergies, and "love" ruining everything in between.

Spring is also the season for nuts or, more appropriately if you've ever staffed the telephones for the summer's largest game convention, Origins, nut **calls**. Yes, "nut callers" seem to be blooming everywhere. They are obviously out of their respective trees, defying the fruit of knowledge as they fall into the shallow mud of stupidity.

What? You've never experienced the complete lack of rapture entitled to those saints, the Origins telephone staff members? Oh, ye of blind faith! Allow this brief transcribed rapport to enlighten you as to the labor pains involved in the birth of a national game convention. To wit:

(Rrrring!)

Diverse Talents, Inc. Origins phone staffer: "DTI."

Nut Caller: "Hello. Is this Diversified Talents?"

DTI: "Diverse Talents, yes."

NC: "Are you guys doing that L.A. Origins convention?"

DTI: "Yes, sir. July 3rd through 6th."

NC: "Where is that being held at?"

DTI: "The Airport Hilton, sir."

NC: "No, I mean what city."

DTI: "Los Angeles, sir. That's how it got the name 'L.A. Origins'."

NC: "Oh. When is it?"

DTI: "July 3rd through 6th sir. Do you have a flyer?"

NC: "Yes."

DTI: "All of this information is in the flyer. Is there something it doesn't say that I can help you with?"

NC: "Umm. I guess I'd better read this flyer."

DTI: "Good idea, sir. See you in L.A."

Here we have your first classic variety nut caller, "the ignoramus." This nut caller has been armed with all of the information to answer his questions yet, even while holding the answers in his very hand, continues to grope in ignorance. While failing completely to read the English language, he has managed to read as far as the information phone number and dial it up. One wonders if such people would call "time" rather than look at their watches.

DTI: "DTI."

NC: "I have a question about the convention."

DTI: "Yes, may I help you?"

NC: "I'd like to go, but Los Angeles is too far away."

DTI: "Where are you living now?"

NC: "D.C."

DTI: "Did you go to last year's show in Baltimore?"

NC: "I went the last two times it was in Baltimore."

DTI: "Did it ever occur to you that the distance from D.C. to L.A. is the same as from L.A. to Baltimore, yet we Angelinos are expected to make it every year."

NC: "Well, that's because the show belongs in Baltimore."

DTI: "I see. You'll be glad to hear that it will be returning there again next year. You

said you had a question about the show?"

NC: "Huh? I did?"

DTI: "Is that your question?"

NC: "No. I just wanted to tell you guys to leave the show in Baltimore."

DTI: "The GAMA site selection committee makes that decision. Don't worry though, because your opinion is well represented among GAMA members."

NC: "Good, as long as they leave the show in Baltimore."

DTI: "Enjoy your cold weather."

This is your second classic nut caller, "the complainer." The complainer is unaccepting of any change of circumstance. Since L.A. Origins charges no separate event fees for **anything**, there have, incredibly, been complaints. Since next year's Baltimore Origins does charge extra money for each separate event, they'll probably get complaints from people who thought this year's "no event fees" was a pretty good idea. You can't win!

The complainer in the above example, however, is certainly tomorrow's dinosaur. As population in this country continues to shift westward and southward unabated (as it has in every census since 1790), the stuck-up, Philistine, Eastern chauvanistic authoritarian siege mentality loses more and more credibility every year. GAMA, rightly, bills Origins as a national show, and so it continues to travel around the states, making itself accessible to gamers across the nation.

Other types of nut callers include "the cheat," looking for inside tournament information; "the braggart," who recants in detail past wins at game conventions as if the people running this year's show were interested; and "the parent," who calls on their child's behalf and keeps yelling across the room to the child to relay information and get new questions to ask while still on the phone usually, in frustration, the parent hands the phone to the child and says: "Here, you talk to them!"

Ah, spring. Pollen in the air, love in our hearts, and nuts on the phones. Let's hear it for those Origines phone staff volunteers! Surely, they must have learned their patience at the game table.

WHAT THE



@!¢%*#

IS

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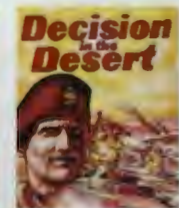
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OPPONENTS WANTED FORM**

Please PRINT (neatly), as appropriate, on the form below.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 Province/State: _____ PC/Zip: _____
 Home Phone: () _____
 Work Phone (opt): () _____ Extension: _____

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which the copy above will follow. You might wish to include your skill level, preferred hours and ages of opponents, ability to travel, favorite games, etc. Buy/Sell/Trade copy will not be accepted with this form.

The cost for your listing is a flat 50¢, please add an additional 25¢ for each additional consecutive issue you want this same, identical ad to run in.

**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
Game Club Listing Form**

Please PRINT (neatly), as appropriate, on the form below.

Club Name: _____
 Location Name: _____
 Meeting Address: _____
 City: _____
 "For more information contact:"
 Name of Contact Person: _____
 Contact Person's Home Phone: () _____
 Work Phone Number (opt): () _____ Extension: _____

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which will appear after the Club's City and before the "For more information contact" section. You might wish to include meeting times, types of games played and how much any dues or fees are.

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**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
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(Newsletters and Magazines)**

Please PRINT (neatly), as appropriate, on the form below.

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 Address: _____
 City: _____
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The cost for your listing is a flat \$2.00, please add an additional \$1.00 for each additional consecutive issue you want this same, identical ad to run in.

**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
Retail Sales Listing Form**

Please PRINT (neatly), as appropriate, on the form below.

Business Name: _____
 "For more information, write or visit us at"
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 Province/State: _____ PC/Zip: _____
 Phone Number () _____

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which the copy will follow. "For more information..." will follow. You might wish to include the types of games and other supplies you carry, store hours, and whether people should send for a complete store catalog.

The cost for your listing is a flat \$4.00, please add an additional \$2.00 for each additional consecutive issue you want this same, identical ad to run in.

**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
BUY, SELL, TRADE AD FORM**

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 City: _____
 Province/State: _____ PC/Zip: _____
 Home Phone: () _____
 Work Phone (opt): () _____ Extension: _____

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which the copy above will follow. You might wish to include whether you're buying, selling (or both) the types of games, their conditions, prices (perhaps), or whether people should send for a complete listing of your stuff.

The cost for your listing is a flat \$1.00, please add an additional 50¢ for each additional consecutive issue you want this same, identical ad to run in.

**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
Convention and Event Ad Listing**

Please PRINT (neatly), as appropriate, on the form below.

Event Name: _____
 Event Dates: _____
 Event Site: _____
 "For more information contact:"
 Information Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 or call: "More information phone number: () _____"

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which will be written between event Site and "For more information contact:". You may want to mention the type of event, what types of games will be played there and what the fees are.

This is a FREE listing provided as a service and will be run in all appropriate issues automatically.

**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
Play-by-Mail Game Listing Form**

Please PRINT (neatly), as appropriate, on the form below.

Business Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 Province/State: _____ PC/Zip: _____
 Phone Number () _____ (optional)

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which the copy will follow. You might wish to include a description, set-up, rules, and first turn fees, or mention that they can write for further information about the types of PBM games you run.

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**THE GAMER'S GUIDE
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Business Name: _____
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 Address: _____
 City: _____
 Province/State: _____ PC/Zip: _____
 Phone Number () _____

On a separate sheet of paper, you may write up to thirty (30) words (yes, a, and, the, etc. are words) for your ad which the copy will follow. "For more information..." will follow. You might wish to include the types of games and other supplies you carry, store hours, and whether people should send for a complete wholesale catalog.

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