Blood Wars

CARD GAME

ESCALATION PACK 11
FACTOLS & FACTIONS

GAMING IN A DEADLY NEW VEIN.

New cards! New Art! New strategies! May the luck of their secret societies help you when the Lady of Pain appears! All explodes on the scene in June.

FIND THE STORE NEAREST YOU CALL 1-800-364-4TSR • QUESTIONS CALL ROB TAYLOR 414-248-2902
ENTER A NEW WORLD AT WALDENBOOKS!

If you are serious about role-playing games, Waldenbooks has a serious selection of popular products from TSR.

Become a Waldenbooks Preferred Reader® and save 10% every day on challenging TSR products, plus earn valuable Purchase Points toward $5.00 certificates. Ask how you can join and start generating savings immediately!

Already a Preferred Reader? Renew your membership and get Double Points, plus roll over any points earned!

ENCYCLOPEDIA MAGICA™:
Volume III P-S
All magical items from the dawn of the AD&D® game to date are collected here, fully fleshed out for use in the 2nd Edition game. New material and clarifications make this a "must have" volume!
(TSR Product #2157) • Item #0814
Publisher’s Price: $25.00
Preferred Reader Price: $22.50

MASTER OF THE MAGIC
SPELLFIRE™ Reference Guide
The latest edition of the game rules, complete with diagrams and examples, strategies and tactics, plus rule variations and tournament rules. All 797 SPELLFIRE™ cards printed in 1994 are shown in full color with their rarity.
(TSR Product #1133) • Item #0815
Publisher’s Price: $12.95
Preferred Reader Price: $11.65

Featured titles available in June® at Waldenbooks.
Or call toll-free to order: 1-800-322-2000, Dept. 954.

Waldenbooks
Check the Yellow Pages for the Waldenbooks nearest you.

* Titles may not be available in all stores.

Waldenbooks welcomes the American Express® cards.
Tarazin the Gray — L. Richard Baker III
After a few thousand years, this dragon has learned a few tricks.

Dragon Intrigues — Gregory Detwiler
If you thought dragons were tough in combat, wait until they work against you behind the scenes.

Dragon Dweomers — Robert S. Mullin
Dragons claws, fangs, and breath weapons are potent weapons—and these new spells help make them more potent still. You have been warned.

The Time of Leaving — Ron Collins
When does an apprentice become a master?

Eye of the Monitor — David “Zeb” Cook and Paul Murphy
Astounding Oriental adventures and a dud raven.

Role-playing Reviews — Rick Swan
Undaunted, Rick dives into the card game maelstrom.

From the Forge — Ken Carpenter
Fantasy creatures great and small.
FEATURES

8 First Quest – Ed Greenwood
Wherein lies the first sentence ever written about the Realms.

32 The Spice of Life – Thomas Kane
Multiple plots add variety to any campaign—and give players more freedom.

39 The Game Wizards – Steven Schend
Presenting a checklist for the first BLOOD WARS™ expansion, and a sample deck to help you conquer the City of Doors.

45 The ORIGINS™ Ballot – The staff
Vote for the world’s best games of 1994.

56 Magic Resistance, Step by Step – Skip Williams
How to resolve the thorny knot of resistance—without losing friends.

66 The Nature of Evil – Michael T. Kuciak
What does it take to make a truly despicable villain?

72 Rumblings – Michelle Vuckovich
Catch up on all the latest news and gaming industry gossip.

75 Ecology of the Bird Maiden – Paul Culotta
Truth and treachery intertwine in this tale from the desert.

97 Sage Advice – Skip Williams
Answering the thorniest and most tangled game questions.

DEPARTMENTS

4 Letters
6 Editorial
43 Convention Calendar
46 Forum
103 Libram X
106 Dragonmirth
108 Gamers Guide
124 TSR Previews

Each subscriber’s copy of the magazine. Changes of address for the delivery of subscription copies must be received at least six weeks prior to the effective date of the change in order to assure uninterrupted delivery.

Back issues: A limited quantity of back issues is available from either the TSR Mail Order Hobby Shop (201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A.) or from TSR Ltd. For a free copy of the current catalog that lists available back issues, write to either of the above addresses.

Submissions: All material published in DRAGON Magazine becomes the exclusive property of the publisher, unless special arrangements to the contrary are made prior to publication. DRAGON Magazine welcomes unsolicited submissions of written material and artwork; however, no responsibility for such submissions can be assumed by the publisher in any event. Any submission accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope of sufficient size will be returned if it cannot be published. We strongly recommend that prospective authors write for our writers’ Guidelines, c/o DRAGON Magazine, as per the above address; include sufficient American postage or International Reply Coupons with the return envelope. In Europe, write: Writers’ Guidelines, c/o DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd; include sufficient return postage or IRCs with your SASE.

Advertising: For information on placing advertisements in DRAGON Magazine, ask for our rate card. All ads are subject to approval by TSR Inc. TSR reserves the right to reject any ad for any reason. In the United States and Canada, contact: Advertising Coordinator, TSR, Inc., 201 Sheridan Springs Road, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, contact: Advertising Coordinators, TSR Ltd.

Advertisers and/or agencies of advertisers agree to hold TSR, Inc. harmless from and against any loss or expense from any alleged wrongdoing that may arise out of the publication of such advertisements. TSR, Inc. has the right to reject or cancel any advertising contract for which the advertiser and/or agency of advertiser fails to comply with the business ethics set forth in such contract.

DRAGON is a registered trademark of TSR, Inc. Registration applied for in the United Kingdom. All rights to the contents of this publication are reserved, and nothing may be reproduced from it in whole or in part without first obtaining permission in writing from the publisher. Material published in DRAGON® Magazine does not necessarily reflect the opinions of TSR, Inc. Therefore, TSR will not be held accountable for opinions or misinformation contained in such material.

©1995 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All TSR characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. Most other product names are trademarks owned by the companies publishing those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status.

DRAGON 3
Letters

What did you think of this issue? Do you have a question about an article or have an idea for a new feature you’d like to see? In the United States and Canada, write to: Letters, DRAGON® Magazine, 201 Sheridan Springs Rd., Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Letters, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. If you want your letter to be published, you must sign it; we will not publish anonymous letters. We will withhold your name if you request it.

Critical Hits 1

Dear Dragon,

I thought that the new critical hit chart published in issue #216 was very good, but I have just one small problem with it. I don’t like the fact that a human with a long sword cannot possibly decapitate another human. That really makes no sense to me.

If this rule cannot be changed before publication I have suggestion. Perhaps the players could add all their “to hit” bonuses to their chart roll. This would allow them to reach the “decapitation” result normally reserved for larger weapons and creatures.

Mortarse
via e-mail

You’re always free to change the rules to suit your preferences. That said, I’d like to pass along the designer, Rick Baker’s, reasoning for this decision. Decapitation is a magical power of vorpal weapons; it detracts from their magic to say that any medium-size weapon can decapitate an opponent. In the critical hit system, doing so requires a two-handed sword, halberd, or other large-size weapon capable of overcoming armor and other protection. Being able to strike a two-handed blow is another factor; a generous DM might allow a bastard sword being used two-handed to inflict critical hits normally reserved for larger weapons.

We’re Calmer Now

Dear Dragon,

Has anyone but myself noticed that the MtG craze seems to have ebbed; not died out entirely, just sort of receded. It has now been relegated to a before/after the RPG pasttime instead of one that takes the place of it. This is greatly to my liking, I have to admit. And just as we have our board/war game nights, we also have our Magic/lyhad nights. Again, greatly to my liking.

Goodness, I may even think about picking up a deck—but don’t tell my friends I said that!

J.D. Carriker, Jr.
926847@utb.edu

Critical Hits 2

Dear Dragon,

I just got issue #216, and want to make a few remarks to Michelle Vuckovich. You have my complete support—what you said was well balanced, well phrased, and not strident or extreme in the slightest. I say this because I suspect some people will write in and claim just that.

I like “Paths of Power” but am confused by one point. On page 44, Table A: Number of Paths/Level gives low-level characters a higher number of paths than they can have 1st-level spells. Why?

While I’m glad to see TSR finally allowing AD&D® to have critical hits, I am saddened to see it so badly botched. The method for determining if a critical hit has occurred is good, but System I is too simplistic to be much fun, and the System II lists are horribly over-complicated. It almost makes me wonder if TSR’s aversion to criticals has led you to design an unworkable system.

In the same issue, the blurb on the cover of the Kill Zone box says there are two sets of brand new figures, but Ken Carpenter says that half the figures are new: which is right?

Christopher David Snoqualmie, Wa

Critical Hits 3

Dear Dragon,

A comment about issue #216’s article about critical hits. What is meant on the Bludgeoning vs. Humanoids table (as well as elsewhere) when a 13+ is rolled? A 12 is “skull crushed, immediate death.” A 13+ is “12 above with tripled damage dice.” What is the use of the 13+? The poor sap is already dead with most of his brains oozing out!

Ed Ogden
Zephyrhills, FL

The figures are all new at the time of the game’s release; five are exclusive to the box, the other five are available separately in blister packs.

Cthulhu by the Bay

Dear Dragon,

In issue #210, you reviewed an “Investigator’s Companion” for the CALL OF CTHULHU® game. It is published by Chaosium, Inc. I would appreciate the address for this company.

Matthew King
Inverurie, Scotland

Chaosium is the company responsible for the ELRIC®, NEPHILIM®, and PENDRAGON® role-playing games as well as the CALL OF CTHULHU® game. They can be reached at Chaosium, Inc., 950-A 56th Street, Oakland, CA, 94608-3129, USA.

Critical Hits 3

In answer to your question, low-level wizards have access to several paths to give them a range of spells to choose from when selecting their memorized spells each day. Similarly, under the original spell system, wizards begin with more spells in their spell book than they can actually use, for just the same reason.

While the official core rules still don’t allow critical hits, the optional system is a labor of love by a designer who enjoys criticals more than any other TSR staff designer Rich Baker Rest assured, it has undergone rigorous play-testing. As for the complicated tables, well, we’re confident that gamers can handle it.

Certainly the system is no more complicated than any other critical hit system, though some might contend that’s not saying much.

So, basically, what you are asking is, “How dead is he?” Surprisingly the victim of a 13+ might not be slain at all. The victim is entitled to a saving throw against all the special effects caused by a critical hit (such as “skull crushed”); if this saving throw is successful, he suffers only the additional damage. In the case of a 12, that’s double damage; for a 13+, it’s triple normal damage.
Encyclopedia Magica™
Volume III, P-S
On Sale Now

The most far-reaching and detailed compilation of magical items ever published for any role-playing game!

- Thousands of entries from A to Z!
- Each magical item completely detailed!
- Includes every magical item ever published by TSR!
- From every TSR campaign world, accessory, adventure, and magazine article, even *The Strategic Review* and *Imagine*!
- Volume III, P-S, features dozens of new color and B&W illustrations!

Volume I, A-D
On Sale Now
TSR #2141
ISBN 1-56076-842-8

Volume II, D-P
On Sale Now
TSR #2152
ISBN 0-7869-0124-1

Volume III, P-S
TSR #2157
416 Pages

Volume IV, S-Z + Index
Available December '95

Sug. Retail Each $29.95, CAN $32.00; £15.99 U.K.

© and ™ designate trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.
©1995 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
In the past few months, many editorials in DRAGON® Magazine have been devoted to the topic of change.

It’s probably time to put things into perspective . . . but first, a little side trip. Change can be good.

Change is evolution.
The dinosaurs did not evolve in the same way mammals did; they didn’t survive.

Change can be bad.

Change can be capricious, even disastrous.

“So why don’t we take the most popular soft drink in America and make it taste more like the competition? After all, ‘new’ is where it’s at.”

“What we really need is a new (insert name of your favorite superhero)! Let’s kill him and replace him with a new guy! How can we lose?”

To answer the previous question: “With great ease and speed.”

I remember a magazine called Argosy. It was one of the pulps catering to adventure fiction, cliffhangers, and heroes of the Doc Savage ilk. The covers were slightly more lurid than those of its science fiction counterparts, even though the raciness within was, at the best, slightly suggestive.

It disappeared with most of the other pulps but was resurrected in the sixties as a men’s magazine catering to high adventure, tales of the unknown, and other manly stuff. It was moderately successful, appealing to the Playboy and Esquire crowds, with a bit of True Adventure and One Step Beyond thrown in. Other magazines jumped on the band wagon, and the market soon became crowded. Some powers that be somewhere determined that Argosy must change in order to assure a bigger market share, sort of like the one enjoyed by Sports Illustrated, but for the participant rather than for the spectator. Thus, fiction and factual adventure features were cut back in favor of catamaraning and skiing. The new focus of the magazine would allow many more advertising opportunities with big-name accounts, thus assuring a healthy profit for all concerned. Unfortunately its readership declined. Long-time Argosy readers missed the healthy dose of fiction and far-off adventure and weren’t interested in dune-buggying and windsurfing. The active sports crowd already had magazines that catered to their interests and saw no need to add another one to the pile. (After all, who had time to read magazines when one was busy jet-setting around the slopes and surfing off Australia?)

Argosy died, a victim of nonproductive change. It had turned its back on its core audience in favor of one it perceived as more profitable.

All of this is a roundabout way of saying that it is not our intention to mutate the new and improved DRAGON Magazine into something radically different from its TSR and AD&D game roots. DRAGON Magazine is not Starlog, nor should it become Starlog or PC Gamer. Starlog is a wonderful magazine of science fiction and fantasy entertainment, while PC Gamer does an admirable job of covering the booming electronic market, but neither addresses the concerns covered in DRAGON Magazine. Likewise, Wizards of the Coast and White Wolf and their respective publications do not reflect TSR . . . nor should they.

DRAGON Magazine has been and always will be the magazine of fantasy role-playing, AD&D, and TSR. To change into some other “soft drink” is to meet the same bitter aftertaste as experienced by the drink that was heralded as “the New.”

Of course, there is always room for improvement. New graphics and design, new topics, new focuses, all will be taken into consideration as we design the new and improved magazine, but such alterations will not clog the lifeblood that has always been the magazine—material you want to read and material you want to play.

The new editor at the helm is Wolfgang Baur. Wolf is an accomplished designer and editor with credits too numerous to mention, and most importantly has a passion for the magazine only possibly equalled by his predecessor in the job, the inestimable Roger Moore.

Assisting Wolf (and helming the editorial laurels of DUNGEON® Adventures) will be Dave Gross, whose years of service to the RPGA® Network and POLYHEDRON® Newzine have more than trained him for the demanding tasks that lie ahead.

Veteran role-players both, they will transfuse new blood into both publications.

Brian Thomsen
Play with Me, She Breathed

The lamps were low as Elminster put me into the armor. "Ouch," I remarked intelligently.

"Belt up," he ordered gruffly. "If ye weren't crazed enough to spend entire days writing fancies about my world for those TSR folk, 'keyboard spread' wouldn't afflict ye quite so vigorously and ye just might still fit into this

Recalling what befell the last time I last got into a suit of armor, took sword in hand, and sallied forth to battle in the SCA, an inability to get into armor might not be a bad thing.

Whenever I think of getting into armor, my mind always leaps to that moment in a sun-dappled ravine in Don Mills, Ontario, on a fern-strewn, sandy bank of Wilket Creek. My friends and I were wont to take on a fern-strewn, sandy bank of Wilket Creek. My friends and I were wont to take away glorious weekend afternoons. We discussed Middle-earth and the works of Lord Dunsany, Clark Ashton Smith, Jack Vance, William Morris, and Fritz Leiber. We argued "what if this happened," and what hadn't we been told about what lay there, and longed to know more about things in Tolkien's Middle-earth, Lovecraft's Kadath, and many other fantasy worlds-longings that led, eventually, to the Realms. Later we discussed Roger Zelazny as one Amber novel after another came out and each was devouried. We dreamed of seeing his hard-to-find Dilvish stories published in a collection—and of all the other classics of fantasy, and, well, of girls. (More about that in a moment.)

Lin Carter at Ballantine was bringing all the great English-language fantasies back into print, culminating in the splendid guide called Imaginary Worlds (Ballantine, 1973), still required reading for anyone who wants to know what's what in fantasy. These, plus a steady diet of Conan and FANTASTIC® magazine (later amalgamated with its sister publication, AMAZING® Stories) kept me wallowing in worlds full of swords, spells, dragons, beautiful princesses, crumbling castles, and fell wizards—and also kept me (despite re-reading everything several score times) always hungry for more.

I'd been a reader and writer from my earliest days, growing up on A. Merritt's tales, Edgar Rice Burroughs, the Scarlet Pimpernel, and the like, and had even tried my hand (in 1967) at writing jaunty Three Musketeers/Fafhrd & Gray Mouser-style yarns wherein swordsmen exchange witty repartee as they carve up endless bad guys in the proto-Realms. The first sentence in which the Realms came to life: "Now in all the lands 'twixt bustling Waterdeep and the sparkling waves of The Sea of Fallen Stars, no men were more loved—and feared—than the stoic swordsman Durnan, the blustering old rogue Mirt, and the all-wise, ancient wizard Elminster." A pretty good summation of the heart of the Realms even today, and not bad for an eight-year-old, eh? Once Carter published New Worlds For Old, I was hooked.

Things might have gone along just fine if it hadn't been for Gary Gygax—and for September.

Oh, I bought Chainmail, adding monsters to our knights-and-castles wargames—already, thanks to Featherstone, linked into an ongoing battle-by-battle history of several imaginary kingdoms. And I bought the original D&D® books, and played a game or two (in 1975, for those keeping score), but although we thought the rules were a great, nay, fascinating idea, they were still just sitting around together telling a fantasy story, which is what we'd already been doing, without rules.

Then the original Monster Manual came out . . . and September came to us. On reflection, the quality of this book (quantifying one mythological monster after another, and adding a lot of neat new ones to boot) and the brilliant Vancian magic of the Player's Handbook (explaining precisely what spells do) were what made me change the Realms from a nebulous place of pretty maps into an AD&D® game world. But what really got me hooked on the game was September.

She came to town to attend university, and she was quite the most beautiful being I'd ever laid eyes on. She loved fantasy and laughed heartily at the ungainly nerds she found fencing clumsily with homemade swords around the SF bookstores, quoting more fantasy writers than she'd ever read. September also saw in them someone to play her latest passion with: games of AD&D. And one of those nerds was me.

Three of us promised her a "great place to play" and loaded up a romantic cargo of pop, potato chips, and homemade dip (a tradition that continues to this day) before meeting her at the bus and taking her to (of course) our special spot in the woods. She loved it at first glance.

And we loved her. She stepped off the bus dragging a huge dunny bag and wearing swashbuckling boots and a cloak, and the moment we were in the woods, she announced that the trip had been long and that she had to go off by herself for a moment. Gallantly, we showed her the densest bushes, and a few minutes later we learned what had been in that bag.

September reappeared in splendid half-armor, cloak thrown back, leather gauntlets on her wrists. A real longsword gleamed in her hand.

"Come, play with me," she breathed huskily, reaching out her hand. All three of us stout lads fell over each other (and our steamed-up glasses) trying to kneel and kiss it.

Needless to say, she was the greatest Dungeon Master we've ever known, before or since. September believed in acting out all the NPCs, complete with funny voices, mannerisms, the works. Tears ran down her face when things grew sad, and she leaped around the clearing in glee when we tried witty repartee and clever battle-tricks—and ended up with slapstick accidents, just like the tales. Best of all, she believed in ending play sessions when we were still hungry for more, and she let us excitedly discuss plans and what might lie ahead (and thereby learned what we hoped for, so she could give it to us next time). She also allowed me to blossom slowly into our "idea man," shaping the

Continued on page 54
WHEN GREATNESS BY RIGHT IS THRUST UPON YOU,

IT IS BEST TO BE READY.

They say you never hear the one that gets you. They say it’s lonely at the top. They say life is too short to be little. People say all sorts of things. But when you’re King, better make sure they say it to your face.

BIRTHRIGHT™: Legacy of Kings

**Designers trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. 1990 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.**
Meet the eldest dragon of Cerilia

by Rich Baker

Illustration by Stephen Daniele

The dragons of Cerilia, the setting of the BIRTHRIGHT™ campaign, are a dying race. Once their kind filled the skies above Cerilia, but for millenia their numbers have declined. Today, 2,000 years after the coming of humankind to the continent, only six dragons are known to exist. No hatchlings have appeared in more than 500 years, and as the remaining dragons grow older they spend more and more of their time dreaming the days away in a deep slumber. More than 20 years have passed since the last time a dragon woke and flew.

Cerilia’s dragons are not divided by differences of coloration or size—they are all members of the same species. The few that remain have withdrawn to the wildest and most desolate lands, the stark and forbidding Drachenaur mountains. Once their strongholds and meeting places could be found throughout these great peaks, but now the places of dragons are empty and abandoned. Very few people can even guess at the location of the remaining dragons’ lairs.

While Cerilian dragons may be of any alignment, even the most destructive and malevolent of the great wyrms is still a creature of near-infinite patience and deliberation. All dragons are extremely intelligent—they were the first speaking creatures in all the world, after all—and possess a great store of racial knowledge and lore that shames even the elven scholars. This body of dragon lore is one of the very few reasons that lesser mortals might ever seek out a dragon; from time to time, the advice or aid of a dragon has helped a hero triumph over seemingly invincible foes or accomplish impossible tasks. However, as they say in the pragmatic lands of Brechtür: “Only a fool seeks a dragon’s favor.” The minds of dragons work differently from those of humans, elves, or dwarves, and as a race they seem capricious and inscrutable.

Of the two or three dozen dragons whose names are recorded in Cerilian history, Tarazin the Gray is perhaps the most famous. He is known as “the Eldest,” and he is the greatest and most powerful of Cerilia’s wyrms. Tarazin predates the human occupation of Cerilia by centuries, and his exact age can only be guessed at. As a young dragon, Tarazin befriended the elven scholar Ghaelfyd of the Sielwode some centuries before the human exodus, when refugees fled north from the evil of Azrai and his followers. Ghaelfyd later placed the date of their first meeting as more than 1,200 years before the battle of Deismaar (the defining battle of Cerilia’s history, in which the powers of good destroyed Azrai, god of darkness and corruption, and were themselves destroyed). If this date is accurate, Tarazin is somewhere near 3,000 years of age.

Tarazin’s fame begins with the wars of elves and humans for control of Cerilia’s forests, in the centuries immediately following the arrival of the first settlers on Cerilia’s shores. Ghaelfyd’s friends and family had suffered greatly at the hands of the human armies, and the scholarly elf sought Tarazin’s aid to turn back the tide of woodsmen and warriors moving into the western reaches of the Sielwode. Tarazin agreed and attacked the settlements and camps of the Elin,
the eighth house of the invading humans. Over a period of a century or so, Tarazin made dozens of raids into human lands, causing great loss of life and property.

It's interesting to note that Tarazin wasn't the only dragon to take part in this conflict. Several others allowed themselves to be drawn in on one side or the other, but most were either bribed or simply curious. Tarazin seems to have been the only dragon who took part out of loyalty; his friendship with Ghaelfyd led him to identify closely with the elven cause.

Despite Tarazin's efforts, the humans continued their inexorable advance, and the dragon tired of attacking homesteads and farmlands. His friend Ghaelfyd became angry and embittered, since most of his family had fallen to human warriors in the endless wars on the elven borders. Eventually, the former scholar joined the Cheuille Siide, the Hunt of the Elves, and engaged in a ruthless campaign of raiding and murdering humans wherever he encountered them. The noble and compassionate friend of Tarazin's youth became a coldhearted killer. Weary of conflict, the dragon chose to retreat to his fastness and answer Ghaelfyd's call no more. For 200 years before the great battle of Deismaar, nothing more was recorded of Tarazin's deeds.

The awful confrontation of good and evil at Mount Deismaar marked the next appearance of Tarazin, along with more than a dozen of his fellows. Dragons fought on both sides of the great battle. Like the elves, some dragons were ensnared by Azrai's false promises and joined the side of darkness; others chose to help the folk of Cerilia resist the Azrai's armies that threatened the land. Ghaelfyd called on Tarazin before the battle, and the dragon agreed to aid the elf one last time for the sake of their ancient friendship. The dragon and elf stood with Azrai's legions when the day of battle dawned, and Tarazin marched with the elven host to Deismaar to fight against the defenders of Cerilia. Deismaar marked the last time that dragons took the field in battle, and nine were destroyed that day. Tarazin himself killed a much older wyrm known as Azakadazar, who was defending the dwarfen host of Khurin Azur. Although he was gravely injured by the older dragon in turn, Tarazin went on to slay hundreds of dwarven warriors with his fearsome breath. To this day, the folk of Khurin Azur sing of the dragon's fury.

At the height of the battle, Ghaelfyd and most of the elven host changed sides and turned on the forces of darkness. This surprised Tarazin, and he withdrew from the thick of the fight while considering whom to attack. Ghaelfyd stood and fought, and died on an ogre's spear. Tarazin's retreat cost the life of his friend, but it probably saved the dragon from de-

---

**Tarazin**

**ALIGNMENT:** Neutral

**ARMOR CLASS:** 4

**MOVEMENT:** 9, Fl 30 (C)

**HIT DICE:** 23 (161 hp)

**THAC0:** 1

**NO. ATTACKS:** 3 + special

**DAMAGE:** 1d10 + 12/1d10 + 12/2d12 + 12

**SPECIAL ATTACKS:** Breath weapon, spells, dive

**SPECIAL DEFENSES:** Fear aura, gaze, spells

**MAGIC RESISTANCE:** 60%

**SIZE:** G (80' body, 120' wingspan)

**MORALE:** Fearless (19)

**XP VALUE:** 30,000

S: 25  D: 9  C: 22  I: 20  W: 17  Ch: 15

---

Tarazin’s scales are a dark, rusty gray in color, but age has faded the color along his snout, back, and wings. His belly is protected by thick folds of leathery hide, and his coat of iron-hard scales makes him nearly impervious to harm. Tarazin can attack with his claws and bite, or he can execute one of the special attacks described in the “Drag- on” entry of the *Monstrous Manual™* such as a dive, snatch, wing buffet, or tail lash.

Tarazin’s breath weapon is a foul liquid combining the worst properties of acid and fire; its corrosive power can destroy the finest tempered steel, or even solid stone. Tarazin can use his vitriolic breath once every six rounds; it affects a line 60’ long and 5’ wide, inflicting 20d6 +20 hp damage to anyone unfortunate enough to be caught in its area of effect. Objects caught in the deadly burning acid must make an item saving throw versus either magical fire or acid, whichever is worse.

Despite his great power in melee, Tarazin views claw and fang combat as a last resort, and he unleashes his breath weapon only if he believes that his life is in immediate danger. He has many more subtle weapons at his disposal.

Tarazin radiates an aura of *fear* in a 50-yard radius, just as described in the MM, with a -4 penalty to the saving throw because of his status as a great wyrm. If a creature should meet Tarazin’s gaze, it must save vs. spells at a -4 penalty or be paralyzed with terror for 2d4 turns. If Tarazin spends an entire round exerting his will against the victim, he can use the powers of *geas, suggestion, or feehemmind* on the victim with no saving throw. The dragon’s golden eyes can capture lesser beings with ease. This is one of Tarazin’s favorite tactics for dealing with heroes or creatures he doesn’t want to bother with; a moment’s thought is all it takes to send the most offensive creatures away in a blank daze.

Like most Cerilian dragons, Tarazin is a spellcaster of immense power. He memorizes and casts the full complement of spells commanded by a 17th-level wizard, including *polymorph self, power words,* and *death fog,* among many others. In addition, dragon magic includes a number of spells and abilities unknown to human sorcery, and the elder wyrm often experiment with new combinations of spells and effects. As a result, Tarazin knows a number of unique spells that a PC spellcaster would not know (See this issue’s “Dragon Dreamers” feature for details). Tarazin relies on his command of magic as his second line of defense against challengers, since he considers magic a more elegant weapon than crass physical attacks. Draconic magic allows use of spells only from the schools of abjuration, alteration, conjuration/summoning, and divination. Victims of Tarazin’s magic suffer a -4 penalty to their saving throws due to the great wyrm’s skill and power.

Role-playing notes: Tarazin is an extremely intelligent and well-educated opponent who has seen every trick in the book in his day. He is not a malicious or spiteful creature, but he is very proud and views no other creature in Cerilia as his equal. While he prefers to avoid confrontations altogether, he generally enters an encounter with a genuine desire to resolve the matter with the minimum amount of force possible. Despite this respect for lesser creatures’ lives, Tarazin is not a fool—if it becomes apparent that death is the only argument a hero will understand, the great wyrm will deal it as quickly and efficiently as possible. He may be slow to anger, but once blood has been shed, Tarazin can become an engine of destruction whose equal does not exist in all of Cerilia.
struction, for shortly after the elves’ change of heart, the great confrontation between Azrai and his divine brethren took place. The mountainside was levelled by the unimaginable energies of a pantheon’s death. Like the other surviving dragons, Tarazin was completely immune to the divine explosion that created bloodlines of power among humans and other survivors. Dazed, wounded, stunned by the death of his elven friend, Tarazin retreated to his cavern home and did not surface again for more than 100 years.

While Deismaar’s effects on the human, demihuman, and humanoid cultures of Cerilia are well documented elsewhere, very few people realized what Deismaar signified for Cerilia’s dragons. Ages ago, dragons had fiercely contended with each other for power, wealth, and courtship, but in more recent times the race had become wiser and slower to anger. The ancient contention among dragons had resurfaced at Deismaar, and the ghastly loss to the race—more than a third of all dragons living at the time—reignited the ancient draconic rivalries. The natural draconic tendencies toward paranoia, pride, and the memory of almost-forgotten feuds now poisoned the relations between the surviving dragons. Within two centuries of Deismaar, dragon society ceased to exist, and they became a race of recluses who desired no contact with each other. This more than anything led to the race’s long decline.

Tarazin himself was particularly ostracized by his fellows, since it was well-known that he had personally killed another dragon, and a more important one at that. This did not concern him for many centuries, since he was content to rest from his immense exertions and recover from the injuries he had sustained. During this time, he emerged from his caverns infrequently to feed. Meanwhile, the remaining dragons died off one by one. Several destroyed each other in the aftermath of Deismaar or in various schemes and plots. At least two fell victim to rising power of those warped by the magical explosion at Deismaar; it’s said that Prince Raesen, the Gorgon, slew the wyrms Raizhadik to claim the dragon’s stronghold of Kal-Saitharak. And mortal heroes slew a handful of the ancient wyrms, lured by legends of dragon-gold and magic. By the time Tarazin was prepared to resume his role in draconic society, less than a dozen of his race remained.

About 800 years after Deismaar, or 750 years ago (HC 813), Tarazin again entered recorded history when he met the Brecht warlord Eldracht Hoffstugart. Eldracht was a prince of Grevesmühl, one of the few Brecht nations not under the domination of the Anuirean Empire. He dreamed of creating an empire to rival Anuire, uniting the free Brecht states and then waging a war of liberation to free western Brechtür from Anuire. By all accounts, Eldracht was a man of immense energy, magnetism, and vision; in fact, he had already overthrown the Anuirean viceroy of Müden by the time he met Tarazin. Eldracht had scored his successes in the late fall of 813, and as the winter of 814 approached, he gained a brief reprieve from the wrath of Anuire as the great Krakennauricht bay froze and heavy snow blocked the passes of the Kiergard provinces that connect Anuire and Brechtür. Eldracht knew that the spring would bring the return
of the Imperial fleets to Brecht waters and fresh armies reinforcing the Anuirean hold on western Brechtür. Since he saw no way to stop this counterblow, Eldracht turned to a dragon for aid.

Prince Eldracht led a small expedition into the Drachenaur Mountains in the heart of winter, seeking Tarazin’s cavern. Tarazin was one of the older surviving dragons, and Eldracht probably decided that nothing short of the most powerful ally imaginable would suffice. By the use of powerful divinations, the prince discovered Tarazin’s lair and led his men into the dragon’s den. Regrettably, Eldracht angered Tarazin in the course of their discussions, and the dragon killed the prince and his party. Only a handful of squires—those who had remained outside watching the party’s horses—escaped to carry the tale back to Grevesmühl. Had he lived, Eldracht might have been able to achieve some great successes against Anuire, which was dealing with the resurgence of other conquered peoples at the time. Eldracht’s heirs carried on a feud against the dragon for over 70 years, and Tarazin was challenged no less than 11 times by various noblemen of Grevesmühl who sought to avenge their fallen prince. The last of these, a stealthy rogue named Witt, seriously injured the dragon by luring him into a nearby gorge and triggering a great rockfall that came within a handbreadth of crushing Tarazin. However, Witt met his end when he came down to gloat over his stunned foe, thinking him dead.

Following this last obnoxious intrusion, Tarazin relocated his lair to the extreme northern reaches of the Drachenurs, choosing an icebound peak in the region now called Drachenward. After concealing it with the most powerful spells he knew, the wyrm left Cerilia entirely for 30 years. He crossed the Sea of Dragons in search of the ancestral home of all dragons, the legendary isles at the end of the world. No human knows where they lie or what secrets they hold, but Tarazin later revealed that he had visited the elders of his race and studied under them. When he returned, Tarazin sought out the other surviving dragons one by one, traveling to their lairs and strongholds to hold counsel with them. He advised a truce and an end to the rivalries that had divided Cerilia’s dragons, and he also encouraged the other dragons to distance themselves from human affairs. Since he was now one of the oldest dragons in Cerilia, Tarazin’s words were taken very seriously, and his persistent efforts helped to restore a cool truce among the dragons of Cerilia (although many had let their feuds lapse through sheer weight of years long before Tarazin’s return). Regrettably, the wyrm Infyrna saw Tarazin’s travels as an opportunity to ambush him and settle an old score; over the plains of Merasaf, the two fought a spectacular duel that ended in Infyrna’s death.

On returning to his new stronghold, Tarazin entered a long dormancy that lasted until only 100 years ago. He awoke to find that some human of extraordinary daring and skill had entered his cave and removed various articles of Tarazin’s treasure, including unique scrolls and magical items older than mankind. Nothing is more insulting to a dragon than stealing from his lair while he is actually there, and Tarazin’s years of wisdom and patience disappeared in a storm of rage. The great wyrm embarked on a wild rampage throughout northern Cerilia that lasted for months before calming down enough to consider the situation rationally. When he recovered his wits, Tarazin returned to his cavern and made preparations to track down and catch the thief. Most notably, he used sorcery to alter his shape, taking on a human form to walk the cities and nations of Cerilia in search of his enemy.

Tarazin’s travels lasted for several years, and at first he had great difficulty in maintaining his cover. (Basic human behavior and courtesy took some time to learn.) Eventually, he tracked down a powerful mage named Beruile in the City of Anuire and determined that the wizard had indeed pilfered his hoard. Tarazin destroyed the wizard with draconic magics never before seen in Anuire, but he recovered only a handful of the stolen treasures—Beruile’s companions had scattered to the four winds, carrying the dragon’s treasures with them. Tarazin never tracked them all down, and he still occasionally searches for word of his lost baubles or the thieves’ descendants.

By now, the reader has undoubtedly noticed that Tarazin’s career is detailed to a remarkable degree for a dragon. No others are as well known as he. This is because of the efforts of a bard named Crisoebyr, a half-eleven minstrel who set out to record Tarazin’s story 10 years ago. She discovered the dragon’s cave and piqued the dragon’s interest by returning a ruby-bladed dagger that was part of his missing treasure. In exchange, she humbly requested one week of conversation with the great wyrm. Tarazin saw in her an image of the beauty, wit, and grace he had loved in the elves of old, and within a few days was completely charmed by her company. Most of the details of this account come from the works Crisoebyr composed after this meeting.

Unfortunately, the songstress vanished two years ago and has not been seen since. It has been suggested that Tarazin suddenly decided to silence her, that he took her away to his cave and imprisoned her to sing at his command, and also that the dragon took human form again to travel with her. Until someone else braves the dragon’s den, the truth of the matter will remain unknown.

Using Tarazin in a BIRTHRIGHT Campaign

Tarazin is a unique source of ancient lore and hidden knowledge who could come into play as the object of a great quest. Dragons remember much that has been forgotten by humankind, and a great hero may seek out Tarazin to humbly beg his assistance in such matters. Naturally, Tarazin is resentful of any intrusions, and the price he sets on his information could be quite high. For example, he might demand that a hero locate and return one of his missing treasures as the price of his help, or he might send a hero to bring him some unusual or valuable treasure before answering any questions.

Tarazin is not omnipotent or omniscient, but he is extremely powerful. Any PC party that decides to make a name for itself by taking on the greatest dragon in Cerilia should be prepared to face spells, traps, and deceit of diabolical cleverness before coming within sword’s reach of Tarazin. The great dragon is fully aware of just how dangerous humans and their kind can be, and he rarely underestimates an opponent. Most heroes will get only one shot at Tarazin; if he feels seriously threatened, he’ll use his magic to escape and live to fight another day. From that point on, those characters who forced his retreat will have to watch their backs for a long, long time.
Test your deck against the most powerful mages in the United States at Origins '95 in Philadelphia, PA on July 13-16! Don't miss the hottest event of the '94-'95 Duelists' Convocation™ national circuit!

This is your chance to take on the best and earn the right to represent the U.S. at the World Championships later this year!

Once you've vanquished all of your opponents, stop by the Wizards of the Coast booth for artist signings, new product demos, and some of the best games money can buy.

For Origins '95 registration information please contact Andon Unlimited at 1-800-529-EXPO (3976). If you're in Ohio, the number is (216) 673-2117.

For general information about the U.S. National Championships, contact the Duelists' Convocation at Wizards of the Coast, (206) 226-6500, Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 6 PM Pacific Time.

**Featuring**

A multiple-event National Championships, including both sealed- and constructed-deck tournaments, with the top four players advancing to represent the U.S. at the 1995 World Championships.

Top-level play against such opponents as the Duelists' Convocation Top 25 Members and U.S. Regional Champions.

Eight separate qualification tournaments to earn wild card slots in the finals.
In the AD&D® game, as in all other fantasy games, the dragon is a figure of direct attack and overwhelming power. It is a souped-up dinosaur, whose intelligence—when the DM chooses to display it—is restricted to clever battle tactics and the elaborate guarding and trapping of its lair. But dragons in all cultures and most fantasy tales are described as exceedingly clever; such creatures would not only defend their nests wisely upon discovery, but would take steps to eliminate potential threats even before anyone knew of its existence. I hope to demonstrate here that a sneaky dragon can be a versatile and dangerous threat to any party, and certainly more entertaining than the old, stereotypical reptile that only reacts when the party barges into its lair.

**Dragon Stealth**

Given their natural and magical powers, dragons have a wide variety of attacks at their disposal, some of which may be employed without anyone even realizing that there is a dragon within 100 miles of them. A traditional power of the dragon of folklore and of a few game systems is the ability to poison water supplies and wither the landscape by its very presence. Now, among the AD&D dragons, only black dragons gain the magical power to *corrupt water* on reaching the adult age category. However, other dragon types can certainly foul water supplies by shoving in garbage, soil, and poisonous plants. If the dragon finds a deposit of arsenic in his cave, he can really go to work!

The reader is no doubt considering the possibility of the dragon leaving a pool of poisoned water near its lair as a trap for would-be dragonslayers. Well, the dragon can do this, but I had something more elaborate and long-term in mind. All dragons prefer privacy, particularly if they have lots of treasure to protect. Suppose a dragon lives in a wild area upstream from the only human or demihuman settlements in the area; wouldn’t it be tempted to poison the river or stream at a point below its lair (and water supply), forcing those pesky two-leggers to pull out for good? This would considerably reduce the threat of anyone stumbling onto its lair—and hoard—by accident. In a totally wild region, it might do so at the first sign of colonization.

If the water in the local stream goes bad, the typical party of adventurers will probably regard it as a petty annoyance and move to another town. They would certainly consider an obvious sanitation problem beneath their dignity, unless they are doing so poorly at the adventuring game that they are literally starving. Even a land-owning player character might not take much notice at first, especially if the PC is a haughty lord. “The water in the stream’s bad? Dig a deep well and stop bothering me, you filthy peasant!” (The sound of a mailed gauntlet connecting with a grimy chin can be heard at the end of the conversation.) When even the wells go bad, however, he will have to take action.

Depending on what powers the dragon has, it may not be obvious that sabotage is taking place. After all, a mudslide into the river seems innocent enough, particularly after a heavy rain, and *corrupt water* in the wells leaves no clues. If the dragon
starts a physical mudslide, it might even avoid leaving any traces of its presence behind. Perhaps it can hover while starting the slide, leaving no tracks on the ground. If the river banks are heavily wooded, a green dragon at wyrm stage can pass without trace three times a day. All mature oriental dragons can turn invisible at will, and nonoriental dragons with the appropriate spell or magical item can do the same. Dragons with weather-control abilities are also prime candidates for this tactic.

Some of the gem dragons (the amethyst, sapphire, and topaz) have the psionic power telekinesis; perfect for hands-off manipulation of the environment. Juvenile or older sapphire dragons can cast stone shape three times a day, useful for starting avalanches, and emerald dragons of venerable age can do the same with animate rock. In addition, the sonic breath weapons of the emerald and sapphire dragons and the exploding breath weapon of the amethyst dragon could start rockslides or mudslides.

If the dragon can take human form, possibly with the aid of a magical item, it can stroll right into the town square at night and dump manmade poisons in. Even if someone sees him fleeing the area, how many people will suspect a dragon as the culprit? If a dragon is known to live nearby, then the villagers may assume that the poisoner is an evil or charmed agent, not the dragon itself. If the villain is cornered in human form, the town guard might even try to arrest the suspect.

Eventually, somebody will go upstream to find out just what is going on. If the initial investigators include one or more NPCs, the PC lord will wait forever for them to come back and report. A squad of low-level men-at-arms may follow eventually, with the same result. Finally, with a reluctant sigh, the noble PC fighter temporarily shelves his plans for a punitive expedition into the Abyss and crankily heads upstream himself. (“If you want something done right, you’ve gotta do it yourself. Just can’t get good help anymore.”) Surprise! The climactic battle of the adventure may be fought now, though it is just as likely he will be taken by surprise, falling back to re-equip and regroup (and summon reinforcements) for the final conflict.

Assume the enemy is a black dragon, lairing in a dismal marsh or swamp. With its aquatic powers, the dragon can wage a guerrilla war against any party that dares invade its realm. This is true all the time, of course, but what makes things really sticky in this case is that the PCs won’t even realize that they are up against a dragon until it is too late. Assuming the dragon has been using corrupt water, it must be at least of adult level, with bonus Hit Dice, greater size, and AC protection, a more potent breath weapon, and a greater radius of effect for its fear aura. Unlike the standard dragon hunt, your players won’t even know they will be fighting a dragon until the very last minute. The advantage of surprise can weigh heavily in this case.

If the dragon can control other monsters, it can destroy or turn back weaker groups of adventurers while still maintaining its anonymity. The black dragon, for instance, can summon insects and charm reptiles as it gets older, and most oriental dragons have the scaly command power. If the dragon turns the local water supply into a stagnant pool, mosquitos and
similar insects may swarm the area. Crocodiles will expand into any nearby swamp, so even their attacks won’t necessarily tip off the players that this is anything but a natural disaster.

In the above example, the PC lord was lucky even to have his fortress built in the first place—building a castle could be much more complicated if a dragon opposes the project. Assume the king has just granted a PC castle could be much more complicated if a dragon opposes the project. Assume the king has just granted a PC a new lord chooses to build his castle on a small hill with a commanding view of the surrounding area, contemptuously ignoring the superstitious tales that the hilltop is either cursed or sacred to some lightning god like Thor, who will punish any defilers with a bolt from the blue.

What’s Really Happening: A blue dragon (or a dragon with the lightning bolt spell) frequently patrols the area for any signs that someone is planning to settle down. When an enterprising PC settler starts building on the hill (the only natural defensive position in the area), the dragon takes advantage of the perpetual cloud cover and breathes away, quite invisible. Lighting without thunder; how eerie! Attempts to transport materials are met with sandstorms: blue dragons gain dust devil and control winds powers as they get older. Cursing his “bad luck” with the weather, the PC settler gives up in disgust, particularly if he has a hard time convincing superstitious peasants to settle in the area.

Red dragons (or other fire-breathing monsters with the brains to think of this tactic) who are not adverse to burning down an entire forest to drive out or destroy a party might try the “careless camper” approach. When the party leaves its campsite to continue its travels, the dragon sets that part of the woods on fire. With any luck, the PCs may think the fire was their fault, because they didn’t take enough care in putting out their campfire. If no animals witnessed the dragon’s perfidy—and dragons are very good at eliminating witnesses—the local druids, unicorns, dryads, and other forest folk might well think the same thing.

A green dragon with the burning hands spell could pull this stunt as a form of revenge on its neighbors; framing the party would just be a bonus. Other fire-producing spells or magical items could easily be substituted. If it has no magical spells or items, the dragon might dig up the old campfire site (assuming the party covered it with soil) in the hope of finding at least one still-glowing coal. And if the party really is lax in making sure its campfires are out, maybe the dragon will have someone to share the blame with.

Weather & Wildlife

Some would argue that dragons are themselves a form of natural disaster, but elder dragons can conjure up weather that even a great druid would have trouble taming. Most oriental dragons have some degree of weather control, as does the silver dragon, while the bronze dragon can use weather summoning when it gets old enough. (Good dragons, of course, would only use these tactics against evil communities and parties.) The blue, brass, and silver dragons can control winds at a certain age, while the white dragon can use gust of wind. The white dragon’s freezing fog can also seem natural, as does the wall of fog used by it and the silver, bronze, and sea dragons (the last being the oriental lung wang). The li lung (earth dragon) has the earthquake power, while both the chiang lung and tun mi lung (river and typhoon dragons, respectively) can create a tsunami. Hit the PCs with bad weather, and they’ll never know whether they’re under attack or not.

Dragons can wreak havoc with the local wildlife. I’ve already mentioned the black dragon’s powers over insects and reptiles. The scaly command ability of most oriental dragons can give a party endless grief. Since dragons naturally scare all wildlife out of an area, one lurking just out of sight of an adventuring band could frighten a large group of herd animals into stampeding in the party’s direction—or over a farming community’s fields. A big enough herd could stomp any but the most fantastically powerful parties flat, and peasants living a hand-to-mouth existence in the time-honored tradition might have to pull out or die after a single season of ruined crops. A dirty shame those animals just happened to choose that direction in which to stampede, isn’t it?

Clever dragons can force predatory animals and lesser monsters to roam an area, even without commanding them. Anyone who takes a look at the statistics of AD&D game dragons soon realizes that a dragon can move in anywhere it likes, forcing the previous inhabitants to flee or die. Predators and monsters wandering about in search of food and shelter are more of a threat than usual, and they will be blamed for their actions. If someone bothers to talk to a monster prisoner, using a speak with animals or speak with monsters spell, they may find out the truth behind the sudden influx of dangerous creatures, unless, of course, the local druid fell victim to an arranged “accident” beforehand.

What works on land works as well. Suppose a sea dragon sees the party gradually working its way through the area in an underwater adventure. After waiting for them to enter an underwater cave (which can house anything from a sahuagin tribe to a mottled worm), the dragon can kill one or more big fish and deposit them outside the cave mouth, letting the fresh blood draw every shark for miles around. Note that the lung Wang’s scaly command power works on fish as well as reptiles. When the party leaves the cavern, weakened and bloody after a hard fight, possibly with victorious foes in hot pursuit, they will blunder right into the middle of a feeding frenzy: the end of a perfect day.

Clever dragons may enter symbiotic relationships with other monsters or animals. For a real-life example, a small fish known as the clownfish is immune to the poison of sea anemones, and so lives among their deadly tentacles. When larger fish go after it, the anemone simultaneously defends its “boarder” and catches a meal for itself at the same time (the clownfish gets some of the anemone’s scraps). It doesn’t take too much imagination to come up with scenarios where lesser monsters live with the dragon as deliberate decoys to lure weak parties into an ambush, since both monsters benefit from the ensuing meal. Since dragons can eat virtually anything, perhaps his “agent” would get the parties’ flesh, while the dragon contents itself with their gems, money, and magical items.

Imagine a black dragon or lung wang coming to such an arrangement with an evil nereid or a kelpie. These siren-style monsters can lure lone men into their clutches, perfectly fitting into the dragon’s plan to pick off the party members one at a time. To provide the men with a further spur to action, both the dragon and its demi-
nine aide could appear at the surface
together, with the dragon clutching
her with one claw as if dragging her
away. This could well prompt even the
most cautious characters to attempt a
rescue. An evil and embittered mer-
man or triton who was exiled from his
tribe might do equally well, though
the exile’s own kind would be prefer-
red prey over humans. And all this is
in addition to the tactic of capturing a
truly innocent victim and holding her
hostage as bait for heroes.

Wilderness adventures have a ten-
dency to devolve into simple survival
scenarios, with none of the paranoia-
inducement of their urban or dungeon
counterparts. After the party has been
hit by one or more dragons who fight
primarily with “acts of nature,” they
will never feel secure in the howling
wilderness again.

Human Agents
All clever dragons will charm, bribe,
or threaten human agents into their
service. Even worse are the dragons
that can assume human form.
The “human agent” threat usually
takes the form of somebody spying on
the neighborhood, letting the dragon
know when dragonslayers are on its
trail. Said agent may betray both out-
siders and locals into the dragon’s
clutches. This works, but it doesn’t
even begin to cover the potential a
dragon has for manipulating human
society for its own ends.

First, consider an extension of the
bribery business. Many nobles and
would-be conquerors need financial
backing, and a dragon with a massive
treasure hoard certainly fits the bill
nicely. In return for services ren-
dered, the traitor does everything in
his power to discourage exploration of
any sort in the dragon’s territory.

“Don’t waste our time and money
roaming out there in the wilderness,
young man. We’ve got plenty of prob-
lems to keep us occupied here in the
shire.” If more than one stretch of
wilderness borders the civilized area,
the noble could also actively push for
exploration in some other direction,
effectively steering all adventuring
parties clear of the dragon’s realm.

“Don’t waste our time and money
roaming out there in the wilderness,
young man. We’ve got plenty of prob-
lems to keep us occupied here in the
shire.” If more than one stretch of
wilderness borders the civilized area,
the noble could also actively push for
exploration in some other direction,
effectively steering all adventuring
parties clear of the dragon’s realm.

Suppose the dragon is at odds with a
nearby tribe or kingdom of human-
oids; not all evil creatures work to-
gether in harmony, after all. Our
bought nobleman could agitate for a
campaign to “eliminate this threat to
our borders,” simultaneously removing
a thorn from his patron’s side. In fact,
as the main goblin army marches out
to confront the invaders, the dragon
could attack the goblins’ lair while
they’re gone and thoroughly plunder
it. Of course, this means the invaders
won’t get much loot, but—after all—
they were marching out primarily to
eliminate a threat; doing a good job is
a reward in itself. So, although the
mercenaries may stand around
scratching their heads, wondering
how those puny little humanoid wom-
en and children could have dragged
off and hidden the one-ton, jewel-
encrusted gold statue of their chief
deity before committing mass suicide
(“They burned themselves en masse
inside the cavern complex? How per-
fectly dreadful!”), no one in a position
of authority is going to do anything
about it.

Of course, since the mercenary life
is so lucrative in fantasy games that
the dragon itself could sell its services
to the highest bidder. A canny dragon
that secretly despises its neighbors
could play off one side against the
other, taking massive bribes from both
sides. It could even show up too late,
or not at all, at the final battle, letting
the rivals exterminate each other, or
at least weaken themselves so severely
that neither can withstand the drag-
on’s subsequent attacks. A dragon
who does this had better be thorough
in eliminating survivors, so that word
does not get around.

Better yet, the dragon could use its
considerable sabotage abilities to in-
duce two mutually suspicious
communities—dwarves and elves, for
example—into war. One side would
think the other was launching an in-
sidious sabotage campaign, the other
would think they were facing an un-
provoked attack. Again, the dragon
simply mops up any survivors and
takes all their treasure.

Now imagine the fun a dragon in
human form can have. Rather than
merely relying on an agent’s second-
hand reports, the dragon can strike
up an acquaintance with the members
of the party himself and get to know
all their strengths, weaknesses, and
quirks of personality firsthand. It may
also discover what magical items they
have (or at least make some shrewd
guesses). The dragon may even sell its
services to the party as a guide, leading them directly into one death trap after another. If the “guide” lets himself get separated from the party for even a minute, he can take dragon form in secret and fly off, leaving behind an agonized human scream that will make the PCs think their trusty guide has just become one more dragon victim that they must avenge. If the battle starts going against the dragon later, the “guide” might show up after a miraculous escape—and lead the party astray once more.

A spellcasting dragon can maintain his cover a little longer even if the party is suspicious and attacks him. After all, an old red dragon can cast spells like fireball and lightning bolt in human form, and thus can easily defend against the party’s attack while posing as a wizard. If he has the appropriate wand as part of his treasure, he’ll do even better. He might not be able to wield a wand made for humans in his talons, but he could easily use such a wand while in human form. If the bloody, bruised, and battered party survives the magical barrage, imagine their dismay as the spy turns into an ancient red dragon right before their eyes!

For that matter, a malicious (or merely mischievous) dragon could infiltrate society in human form, then terrify everyone by suddenly taking his natural shape again, just for the fun of it! Even a good dragon might feel like having a bit of fun now and then; how many DMs who create holidays for their specific worlds include a counterpart for April Fools’ Day? An evil dragon would enjoy seeing people crushed to death in the panic resulting from the initial shock and the dragon’s fear aura. Swarms of fleeing people and animals could trample the PCs as they try to get at the dragon, damaging them even before they engage it in combat.

For that matter, a dragon who can take human form can inflict great damage to a city. It can slip in among crowds of visitors, change its form in an open square or market, and play Godzilla among the flimsy homes of the citizens after infiltrating past the fortifications. How many designers of fantasy fortresses take that contingency seriously? Since the troops and artillery are stationed on the walls looking out, they will be out of position to attack a threat within the walls. On the streets, the town guard mainly deals with low-level criminals and rowdy adventurers—they certainly aren’t ready to face a dragon. Many commoners in ancient and medieval times were totally unarmed, able to wield only a club, knife, or agricultural implement in an emergency: not something to take on a dragon with. When the dragon has helped itself to the choicest merchants’ goods, it takes its leave by flying over the walls.

The “aliens among us” scenario is common in science fiction, but not as common in fantasy, dopplegangers and the like notwithstanding. The dragon in the marketplace is the ultimate “alien infiltrator” scenario, combining the plots of Godzilla and Invasion of the Body Snatchers. Have fun!

Sample Adventures

1) The Naughty Nereid

The party is hired by a lakeside fishing village for a job of middling difficulty. It seems that several of the town’s men have been disappearing when alone by the shore. A number of witnesses reported some time ago that a nereid haunts the shoreline, so it is a fair bet that she has enticed the men away, possibly to their doom. If the party is composed mostly of female adventurers, they shouldn’t be anticipating too many problems.

What the party doesn’t know is this: A black dragon recently moved into the area and proposed an alliance with the nereid. The nereid in question is of neutral alignment: selfish and vain, but not maliciously evil. She refused the dragon, who does not accept “No!” for an answer. Unfortunately, the cave mouth to her home is too small for the dragon to enter, and there are no dangerous aquatic reptiles in the area for it to send after her. Anxious about guarding its hoard, the dragon can’t lie in wait outside her lair for her to emerge—the nereid has a good idea of what’s going to happen the minute she steps outside, and she is staying put. Now the dragon is picking off stray men and pinning the blame for their disappearance on her.

When the PCs arrive at her underwater cave lair, they notice the skulls of the missing men, which the dragon thoughtfully arranged around the cave mouth in a decorative design. Since not even evil nereids commonly display trophies, this might make the PCs suspicious. Further cause for suspicion might come from the fact...
that the entrance to her otherwise pristine lair is melted and scarred as if from acid (the dragon tried to kill the nereid with his breath weapon, but his acid didn’t reach nearly far enough). The party must ask some clever questions to figure out what’s going on, and the courage to act on what they uncover. After all, who would you rather take on, a lone nereid (assuming you can avoid her charm), or a clever black dragon? I thought so.

2) The Cranky Kobolds
A large underground colony of kobolds is both a nuisance and a security threat to a neighboring blue dragon (and his treasure), so he has taken steps to eliminate them. The colony is dug in near a river running through mountainous terrain, and the dragon has used his strength and breath weapon to create rockslides that dam up the river, diverting its flow to flood the kobolds’ burrows. Banished from their own homes, the kobolds are now pushing into human-controlled territory, looking for a new home and coming into conflict with the locals. The PCs are part of an expedition sent against the kobolds, and must fight at least one battle with the creatures. If the PCs take any prisoners, interrogation reveals the true cause of the invasion and eventually leads the party to a confrontation with the dragon, who is quite adept at hit-and-run attacks. Any treasure the kobolds salvaged was stolen by the dragon, who “just happened along” as the humanoids were fleeing from the apparently unrelated flood.

3) Evil Is Its Own Reward
A group of players believes that a party of evil PCs is a viable gaming group (they may even have written to “The Forum” about it), and have created one. This particular group takes advantage of the Oriental Adventures game setting and is out to pillage their way to fame and profit. In particular, they have heard that a nearby valley is the site of a wealthy landowner, and so they begin traveling to the mountains, plundering as they go. As word of their impending arrival spreads, the locals flee into the hills, taking their treasure with them.

Frustrated and angry, the PCs leap at the opportunity offered when a ragged peasant shows up, offering to betray his fellows for a share of the loot. The group agrees, secretly planning to kill him later on. Their “guide” leads them right into an ambush, and as the characters turn on the treacherous fellow, before their eyes he transforms into a pan lung (coiled dragon). The ambushers are the dragon’s charmed servants and minions; whether any ambushers are local peasants depends on how well-armed the locals are. In any case, the coiled dragon’s own servants are sufficiently well-equipped to provide a stiff fight. With the dragon itself launching a simultaneous surprise attack from the rear, the party may not even live long enough to see the error of its ways.

Dragon deviousness is an excellent means to bring new challenge and life to your adventures. Combining the great strength of a dinosaur-sized opponent with the intelligence of a human foe makes for a deadly enemy indeed, one who is underestimated only at your peril. Tales tell us that dragons should be feared; craftiness guarantees that they will be.
AZTLAN
REVEALED!

THE MYSTERIOUS LAND "SOUTH OF THE BORDER" IS REVEALED IN AZTLAN!
A SHADOWRUN SOURCEBOOK - ON SALE IN JUNE!
The Magic of Scale and Claw

by Robert S. Mullin

Artwork by Scott Rosema

In the past, DRAGON® Magazine has featured several articles that discussed the subject of dragon magic (see “Closing Words” for a list). FOR1 The Draconomicon expanded on the basics of dragon magic by introducing a handful of new and unique wizard spells devised by dragons and for dragons.

This article describes original wizard spells to use in conjunction with those detailed in The Draconomicon. Like the spells in that work, the wizard spells that follow are assumed to have been created by and for dragons. A few comments on the nature and theory of dragon magic are also included, since some aspects of these draconic spells (for instance, the heavy reliance on verbal components) indicate that some of the basic principles of dragon magic differ from the magic of humans and demi-human spellcasters.

**Aerial acceleration** (Alteration)

- Level: 2
- Components: V
- Range: Touch
- CT: 2
- Dur.: 1 turn + 1/lvl
- Save: None
- Area of Effect: One creature

This spell reduces air friction, increasing a dragon’s flying Movement Rate by 50%. Thus, a dragon with a Movement Rate of 24 can fly at 36 for the spell’s duration. While flying at this increased speed, however, the dragon’s Maneuverability Class drops one step, and special aerial maneuvers (e.g., snatch) are impossible. However, the dragon is not required to move at the increased rate, and may slow to a familiar speed to overcome the spell’s drawbacks.

Although developed by dragons, aerial acceleration affects any single flying creature touched by the casting dragon (either natural or empowered by magic). However, since dragons eat or scare off most visitors, this spell is usually reserved for the dragon. At the DM’s discretion, dragons who employ this spell regularly could be considered expert flyers, even at the increased rate, and thus may retain their normal Maneuverability Class and special aerial tactics. This should be the exception, however, and not the rule.

Aerial acceleration cannot be cancelled by the caster’s (or recipient’s)
wishes, but a successful *dispel magic*, or a more powerful spell, can force it to end prematurely.

Dragons typically use this spell before an aerial battle to increase their odds of catching opponents by surprise or, if things go awry, as a way to outdistance pursuers. Of course, inventive dragons may find other uses for the spell.

Nondragon spellcasters may have converted *aerial acceleration* to a nondragon format, and versions unrelated to dragon magic have been devised independently by several wizards. These spells are of higher level, for the draconic version of *aerial acceleration* depends heavily on a dragon’s innate ability to visualize flight patterns and air currents.

### Aura of Terror (Illusion/Phantasm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Components: V</th>
<th>Range: 0</th>
<th>CT: 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dur.:</td>
<td>1 turn/lvl</td>
<td>Save: Special</td>
<td>Area of Effect: Caster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By using this spell, a dragon enhances its ability to strike terror in creatures subject to its *fear* aura. See the “Dragon, General” entry of the *Monstrous Manual* for an overview of the details of dragon fear.

When the spell is cast, the dragon weaves an illusion that enhances its image of rage and battle experience: multiple battle scars, altered or disfigured features, longer spine-spikes, fangs, and talons, and so on. All this makes the dragon seem even more menacing than usual. The illusion cannot change the dragon’s size or species, but the spell does make the dragon seem older.

Once the spell is cast, the dragon gains two age categories for purposes of determining the range, saving throw, and effect of its *fear* aura. Young and juvenile dragons gain a *fear* aura that they would normally not be entitled to; older dragons gain a more powerful aura. Because of the shift in effective age category, saving throws against the *fear* aura of dragons of "young adult" age and older suffer a -2 penalty. Thus, the usually unmodified saving throw for a dragon of old age becomes a saving throw with a -2 penalty, a wyrm dragon’s aura inflicts a -5 penalty, and so forth.

Furthermore, the enhanced power of the aura allows the dragon to strike panic into creatures of up to 2 Hit Dice and fear into creatures that would normally be unaffected (i.e., those with up to two more levels or Hit Dice than the dragon).

The dragon need not concentrate to maintain an *aura of terror*, and the caster may engage in other actions as desired (e.g., combat, using its breath weapon, or casting additional spells). The dragon can end the spell at will.

Creatures attempting to disbelieve the illusion gain a saving throw vs. spells to negate the *aura of terror*. Even if this is successful, however, normal saving throws against the dragon’s regular *fear* aura still apply. *Detect magic* can indicate the presence of an *aura of terror*, and a successful *dispel magic* can remove it.

This spell is popular among younger, weaker dragons, though dragons of all ages and types have been known to use it. While nondragon versions of this spell have yet to surface, other spellcasting creatures who produce a *fear* aura (e.g., liches) have shown interest in the *aura of terror* spell.

### Blast Jewel (Evocation, Alteration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Components: V,M</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range:</td>
<td>Touch</td>
<td>CT: 1 round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dur.:</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td>Save: Special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Effect:</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By means of this spell, a dragon traces an invisible glyph on a prized gemstone worth at least 500 gp. The gemstone used as the material component must be an individual, loose stone; it cannot be set into a piece of jewelry or embedded into a weapon. The symbol can only be seen by the dragon who traced it, though a *detect magic* will indicate a faint magical aura on the affected stone, and *detect invisibility*, *true seeing*, or similar magic will reveal the sigil to the viewer. A successful *dispel magic* negates the rune before its effects can be activated, without harming the jewel itself. Otherwise, the spell remains dormant until the casting dragon decides to activate it.

At the mental command of the dragon, the affected gemstone will explode with great force, showering a 20' radius spherical area with a hail of shrapnel. All creatures within the area suffer 5d4 hp damage, half that if a saving throw vs. breath weapon succeeds. If the jewel is held or carried by a creature when the explosion occurs, no saving throw is allowed. However, if the stone was carried within a chest, metal box, or a similar rigid and sturdy container, the explosion is contained, and no damage is inflicted on any creature, though objects inside the container (and the container itself) must save vs. crushing blow or be destroyed. If the blast jewel was inside a *bag of holding*, *portable hole*, or similar magical item when the explosion took place, the container is automatically destroyed (but further damage is prevented), and all other items within it are ejected into the Astral plane, if not destroyed themselves. The explosion is not fire-related, but its magical force is sufficient to shred pouches, sacks, backpacks, saddlebags, and so forth, even if such items are made of leather or other durable fabric.

The dragon can trigger the explosion from any distance, even if thousands of miles separate the dragon and the gem. If the jewel and the dragon are separated by a planar boundary, or the dragon is slain, however, the spell is immediately canceled, and the dragon cannot command the gem to explode.

The material component is the jewel itself, which is completely destroyed in the explosion. Any remaining shards or fragments are consumed by the magic within one round following the explosion; nothing but dust remains.

Dragons use this spell as the proverbial “last laugh” against thieves. When the dragon notices that one of its blast jewels is missing, it simply activates the magic, thus destroying the gem and sending a message to the creature that had the audacity to take it.

The exact origins of this spell are unknown, for most believe that all spellcasting races employ versions of this spell. In fact, many variants of this spell exist among dragonkind alone.

### Focus Fear (Alteration) Reversible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Components: V</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range:</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CT: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dur.:</td>
<td>1 nd/lvl</td>
<td>Save: Special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of Effect:</td>
<td>Special</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar in function to the *aura of terror* spell (q.v.), focus fear increases the potency of the dragon’s *panic* and *fear* auras. It is useful for all dragons of adult age or older, and it can be used in conjunction with an *aura of terror*.

By means of this spell, the dragon reduces the radius of its *fear* aura, which in turn, focuses the power of that fear. For every 5 yards the dragon reduces its aura, the saving throw modifier against the dragon fear gains an additional -1. However, a dragon
cannot reduce its fear aura to a radius of less than 15 yards in any case. An adult dragon, with a normal fear radius of 20 yards and a saving throw modifier of +2, can reduce its fear radius to 15 yards and change the modifier to +1. Likewise, a great wyrm could condense its fear radius to 15 yards from 50 yards, changing its usual -4 save modifier to -11!

The reverse of this spell, extend fear, allows the dragon to enlarge its fear radius to a maximum of 50 yards. An extended aura weakens when made larger, with saving throw modifiers changing in an opposite manner as that of focus fear. The reverse can be used by young adult dragons (if they possess the required spellcasting ability), but is useless to a great wyrm.

Both versions of this spell allow the dragon such fine control of the fear radius that it can alter the dimensions of its fear radius on a round-by-round basis. Of course, the aura can only be altered within the parameters of the version employed (i.e., any radius between the dragon’s normal radius and the limits of the appropriate version of the spell). To change the radius while the spell is in effect, the dragon must stop what it is doing and concentrate; it may not engage in other activities in that round. Otherwise, the dragon is free to cast spells, fight, fly, use its breath weapon, and so on, as the spell requires no concentration to be maintained. The dragon may cancel the spell at any time.

A dispel magic has no effect on either version of this spell, though spells such as wish, limited wish, and the like can end the dweomer immediately.

Both versions of this spell are fairly common among dragons capable of casting a spell of this level.

Hoardguard (Evocation, Abjuration)
Level: 4 Components: V
Range: 0 CT: 1 round Dur.: 1 hour/lvl Save: None
Area of Effect: Special

By means of this spell, a dragon can protect its hoard in such a way as to make theft virtually impossible. When the spell is cast, the dragon’s breath weapon temporarily changes. Instead of the usual fire, lightning, acid, and so on, the breath weapon becomes pure magical energy, which must be released by the dragon within 1 round following the spell’s casting, or the magic is wasted. The dragon breathes this energy (which conforms to the dimensions of the dragon’s usual breath weapon) over its hoard, attempting to encompass as much of the hoard as possible within the area of effect.

This energy bonds whatever parts of the hoard it touches into a solid mass. The spell does not harm the hoard in any way, nor does it alter its appearance or position; the items within the hoard remain loose and separate. Instead, the hoardguard magic fills in the spaces between the individual coins, gems, weapons, chests, ingots, and so forth, and holds them together as a solid mound of wealth. This invisible bond prevents the hoard from being sorted, separated for transport, scattered, or otherwise moved or manipulated as separate items. Because it has essentially become one single mass, lifting the hoard as a whole is impossible by any single creature, except through powerful magic.

Dispelling has no effect on a hoard protected by the spell, and an anti-magic shell frees only as much
from the hoard, the treasure as fits within its area of effect. (If freed treasure is not removed from the hoard, the hoardguard magic reasserts itself as soon as the shell expires or moves away.) A limited wish negates a hoardguard for one hour (and if the treasure is not separated in that time, the hoardguard will return as above), though a full wish destroys the spell permanently.

In addition, a hoard so protected cannot be harmed by physical or magical attacks without first removing the hoardguard. Therefore, it is impossible for intruders to break off pieces or sections of the hoard and carry them away.

Treasure added to a hoard already protected by this spell does not gain the spell’s benefits. New treasure requires a hoardguard of its own, though the dragon may include the new treasure after the first hoardguard’s duration expires and a new hoardguard is cast.

This spell only affects the dragon’s hoard. It does not function against creatures or the items they possess, unless the dragon acquires the items and adds them to its hoard.

This spell typically protects the dragon’s treasure while it is out hunting for food or seeking treasure. Some dragons arrange their hoards so that the entire amount can be warded with a single hoardguard spell. Others make several smaller piles, to use up an invader’s magical powers in repeatedly negating the spell, and thus minimizing the overall treasure loss.

Many dragons cannot use this spell due to its level, but all dragons who know of it seek magical items that can duplicate its effects.

Nondragons who somehow cast hoardguard (or a derivative thereof) instantly contract a form of insanity that combines paranoia with intense greed, for which there is no known cure, short of exceptionally powerful magic.

### Pseudodragon (Conj./Summoning)

**Level:** 3  
**Components:** V  
**Range:** 30 yards  
**CT:** 3  
**Dur.:** 2 rnds + 1/level  
**Save:** None  
**Area of Effect:** Special

This spell is a draconic version of the various monster summoning spells, but rather than calling random monsters to aid the dragon, the spell summons 2-8 pseudodragons within 1-4 rounds.

The summoned pseudodragons differ slightly from those usually encountered. Instead of resembling miniature red dragons, the summoned pseudodragons are tiny replicas of the summoner; that is, a green dragon conjures green pseudodragons, a blue dragon summons blue ones, and so forth. In addition, the pseudodragons share the alignment of the dragon who cast the spell. Regardless of alignment, however, the pseudodragons serve their summoner with complete loyalty (even evil pseudodragons cannot be forced to serve another creature, nor can they have their loyalty swayed by bribes or promises). Otherwise, these pseudodragons conform to the abilities and characteristics noted in the Monstrous Manual.

Once the pseudodragons arrive, they fight on the summoner’s behalf until they are slain, until the dragon commands them to stop fighting, or until the spell’s duration expires. If all opponents are slain, the summoner must grant the pseudodragons a portion of the kill.

If no opponents are available, the dragon can assign the pseudodragons other tasks (assuming communication is possible, and they are physically capable of performing such tasks). In return, the dragon must give each pseudodragon a gemstone (before aid is rendered) worth at least 50 gp. If no gems are forthcoming, the summoned dragons immediately return from whence they came. Similarly, the dragon must give each surviving pseudodragon a 50-gp gemstone after a battle with the dragon’s enemies. (If a dragon makes a habit of killing or refusing to pay the pseudodragons, the pseudodragons summoned by subsequent castings may refuse to assist or may simply refuse to answer the summons.)

Dispel magic has no effect on the pseudodragons called by this spell, but protection from evil functions normally against the summoned creatures.

Because all known specimens of pseudodragons look like miniature red dragons and are of neutral (good) alignment, most sages familiar with this spell believe that it either summons pseudodragons of variant colors and alignments from an as-yet-undiscovered draconic world, or the spell temporarily alters the nature of normal pseudodragons before transporting them to the summoner. Some sages even think that the spell simply creates the pseudodragons to ensure that they conform to the color and alignment of the casting dragon. Of these theories, the first seems the most probable.

### Razorfangs (Alteration)

**Level:** 5  
**Components:** V  
**Range:** 0  
**CT:** 5  
**Dur.:** 1 rnd/1 level  
**Save:** Special  
**Area of Effect:** Special

This spell is a highly improved version of the sharptooth spell (see below), for both use the same principles of operation. This version, of course, is a great deal more dangerous than its lesser cousin.

When a razorfangs spell is cast, the dragon’s teeth become exceptionally hard, strong, and sharp. Due to this alteration, any successful bite attack inflicts +2 hp damage/age category to each damage roll. Furthermore, on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20, the bite severs an opponent’s limb (or other extremity, as appropriate), just as if the victim had been struck with a magical weapon of sharpness. If the victim fails a saving throw vs. death magic, his head is severed as if by a vorpal blade.

As with the sharptooth spell, razorfangs is useless to nondragons.

### Shadow Scry (Divination)

**Level:** 1  
**Components:** V  
**Range:** Special  
**CT:** 1  
**Dur.:** 10 rnd. + 1/level  
**Save:** None  
**Area of Effect:** Special

By casting this spell, a dragon can use a shadow within its lair as a form of scrying device. The chosen shadow must be in the dragon’s line of sight, no more than 10 yards distant.

Once the spell is cast, the dragon may “contact” other shadows within its lair (only shadows outside the lair cannot be reached). DMs must use common sense when designating the extent of the dragon’s lair. For example, a dragon may claim an entire forest as its territory (and may well control such a large amount of terrain), but its lair should be regarded as the area where the dragon sleeps, keeps its treasure, and generally feels most comfortable and powerful. Using this spell, the dragon can see out of the contacted shadows as if the dragon were actually standing within the contacted shadow, regardless of the size or shape of the shadow, or the boundaries of the dragon’s lair. The dragon can see everything within sight of the contacted shadow, including the passage of invisible creatures—
CHRIS HARVEY GAMES

Summertime!!!

Time for fun & games...

- Blood Brothers 2
- Shadowzone
- Hero
- Hirnmaster
- Relicmaster
- Earth Dawn
- Zaghad
- Cosmic Encounter
- Superogy
- Ogre: 2002
- Battlefef
- Champions
- Andor
- Ragnarok
- Car Wars
- Ghostbusters
- International
- Legendary Lives
- Star Wars:
- Age of Magic
- ERT
- Cyberpark 2002
- Timepools
- Enchanted Trolls
- Trolls
- Living Star
- Perandor
- Over The Edge
- The Morrow Project
- Star Slant: Battles
- Cyber-Space
- Nightcity
- Eurofrist
- White Wolf
- Middle Earth Role Playing
- Mage
- Nightfall
- Dark Conspiracy
- Nuclear War
- Paranoia
- Twilight 2000: 2nd edition
- Dream Track REX
- Dies Irae: Nuclear Winter
- Airstrike
- The Gathering
- Talons of Azura
- Squads: Lander
- Visions
- Imperium Romanum
- Dark Space: O2W
- Tempest 2: The Burning Tree
- GURPS: Merc
- Edge On
- Mutant 2084
- Space: Master
- Beyond The Supernatural
- Worf
- Call of Cthulhu
- Harpoon
- Shadowrun
- Dixie
- Shadow World
- Challenge
- Traveller New Era
- Talons
- Etc...

Go and visit these:

- The Trading Post
  Unit 6 Bristol & West Arcade,
  Reading

- Banks RS1 1EX
  (01734) 505682

- Games Centre
  69 Tantine Street
  Folkestone
  Kent
  (01303) 209448

- Games Store
  Role Playing Specialists
  6A Lloyfer Street
  Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8EA
  (01228) 28161

- The Stamp Corner
  37 Netsham Road
  Doncaster
  Yorkshire DN1 2PG
  (01302) 325003

- Games Centre
  46 High Street
  Herne Bay
  Kent CT6 5JH
  (01172) 742824

- The Trading Post
  8 Duke Street Arcade
  Cardiff
  CF1 4AZ
  (01222) 343818

- Crackers Games Shop
  5 Bath Place
  Taunton
  Somerset TA1 4ER
  (01608) 330097

- Better Than Life
  11 Grosvenor Terrace
  Cheltenham
  Gloucestershire
  (01242) 239210

- Another World
  23 Silver Street
  Leicester, LE1 5EU
  (0116) 2515266

- The Model Shop
  209 Deargate
  Manchester
  M3 9NH
  (0161) 8343972

- Transylvania Traders
  1121 Aimson Place
  Metropolis
  Pabobo, NR Mont
  (003031) 1234567

- Travelling Man
  23 Headingley Lane
  Headingley
  Leeds LS6 1BL
  (0113) 2780417

- Trivial Book Shop (Inc. Mail Order)
  Manresa
  3
  2000 Hanover
  W Germany
  0511/228567

- Lindgard Games
  29 Sir Isaac Walk
  Colchester
  Essex CO1 1JU
  (01206) 574781

- The Gameskeeper
  (Inc. Mail Order)
  331 Howley Road
  Oxford OX4 1HJ
  (01865) 721346

- Thunderbook II
  116 Friargate
  Preston
  Lancs, PRI 2EE
  (01772) 204078

- Sheffield Space Centre
  33 The Wicker
  Sheffield S3 8HS
  (0114) 2758550

- The Little Shop
  12 Conway Street
  St. Helier
  CI
  (01484) 32187

- Mac's Models
  132-136 Carrington
  Royal Mile
  Edinburgh
  EH8 8BP
  (0131) 5575551

- Cubelite Games
  (Inc. Mail Order)
  4 Trinity Street
  Cork, Eire
  (01464) 734022

- Calver Books
  Portman Press
  818 Lennox Rd.
  Leigh-On-Sea
  Southend SS9 AHE
  (01702) 73988

- Game Inc.
  9 Frankfort Gate
  Plymouth PL1 1DA
  (01752) 672419

- Lancaster Roleplaying
  Game Centre
  33 North Road
  Lancaster LA1 1MS
  (01524) 382181

- Spirit Games
  88 Station Street
  Burton-On-Trent
  Staffs
  (01283) 512123

- Role & Play
  WLM Games
  (Inc. Mail Order)
  19 Broad Street
  Wolverhampton
  (01902) 319307

- Kacker Games Shop
  1-5 Fore Street Centre
  Exeter, Devon
  (01392) 825066

- Not Just Stamp
  17-19 Credon Street
  High Wycombe
  Bucks HP11 1DL
  (01494) 41717

- Dungeon & Starships
  448 Bradford Street
  Walsall
  WS1 2DA
  (01922) 464558

---

ALL GOOD GAMES SHOPS

---

TRADE ENQUIRIES ONLY

CHRIS HARVEY GAMES, PO Box 38, Bath Street, Walsall WS1 3BY

---
all of the dragon’s normal visual capabilities function normally through the shadow scry spell.

As long as the spell remains in effect, the dragon can switch shadows to inspect different areas, or view the effect, the dragon can switch shadows to gain a different vantage point. However, only one shadow can be contacted at a time. Switching from one shadow to another occurs instantaneously at the mental command of the casting dragon (switching shadows refers to the contacted shadow, not the shadow used as the shadow scry catalyst). While complete concentration is not required to maintain this spell, a small amount of attention is needed. If the dragon casts another spell, moves more than 10 yards away from the scry shadow, or no longer wishes to use the spell, the spell immediately ends.

Like normal scrying magic, shadow scry is revealed by a detect scrying spell. The contacted shadow radiates a faint dweomer, and, once detected, spells such as dispel magic or screen can be used against it (the former spell negates the shadow scry if cast successfully). Detection and location obscuring magic impedes the spell’s effectiveness just as it impedes all other Divination magic. Eliminating shadows with bright light or utter darkness prevents the spell from working in the illuminated or darkened area, but the dragon caster could still view these area from a shadow just outside such effects. The spell does not allow the dragon to cast other spells through the link between shadows; it allows vision only.

Shadow scry was created by a shadow dragon that wanted to search its lair for intruders without risking a physical search. Other dragons have come to enjoy this spell as well, for its uses in spying on parties of adventurers.

If a nondragon version of this spell exists, it has yet to surface, though such a spell would probably have slightly different characteristics (since many spell-using creatures don’t have lairs). However, shadow scry uses the same principles common to other types of scrying magic, and in theory it could be mastered by a nondragon caster.

**Shadow Dragon (Alteration)**

- **Level:** 5
- **Components:** V
- **Range:** 0
- **CT:** 1 round
- **Dur.:** 1 turn/lvl
- **Save:** None
- **Area of Effect:** Special

Used almost exclusively by shadow dragons, this spell allows a dragon to transform itself into pure “shadow matter.” While so transformed, the dragon retains all of its powers and abilities, including spell-use, breath weapon, and so forth. In dim, shadowy areas, a shadow dragon can hide in shadows with a 90% chance of success, and the dragon is totally invisible in utter darkness (either magical or natural).

Once in this form (and during the one full round it takes for the dragon to transform), the dragon is impervious to most attacks, though it is not entirely invulnerable. Attacks that can harm a shadow dragon include:

- Light-based spells inflict 1d6 hp damage per spell level for each round a shadow dragon remains in their area of effect. Thus, a light or a faerie fire spell inflicts 1d6 hp damage per round of exposure, a continual light inflicts 3d6, and the light of a prismatic sphere inflicts 9d6 hp damage each round a shadow dragon remains within its radiance. All other spells will not harm a shadow dragon unless specifically designed to effect shadows or creatures composed of shadow, or dragonkind in general. (While a fireball and other fire-based spells do shed some light as a byproduct of the heat they produce, they are not considered light-based for purposes of this spell.)
- Normal weapons do not harm a shadow dragon unless augmented with a light-based spell, in which case damage is inflicted as above, according to the spell used (the weapon itself inflicts no damage, nor do bonuses from magic or high Strength scores). An augmented weapon implies the use of a light, continual light, or similar spell that has been placed directly on the weapon.
- Magical weapons inflict damage equal to their magical bonus. If augmented with a light-based spell, the light damage and the magical damage are combined. Strength bonuses and normal weapon damage are still excluded. Magical weapons that normally shed light inflict damage as an augmented weapon, as described above.
- Full sunlight, either magical or natural, immediately negates the spell and forces the dragon back into its true form. The change occurs in a single round, during which time the dragon is helpless and can do nothing other than suffer through the forced transformation. Opponents gain a free round of attacks. While the transformation takes place, the light-based attacks noted above have no effect, but other attack forms may be used normally.

As mentioned earlier, this spell is used almost exclusively by shadow dragons, and if used in conjunction with the create shadows spell-like ability available to powerful shadow dragons, the combination can be quite effective, and no doubt, lethal when used against opponents.

Some sages believe that shadow dragons came into being due to the extended use of this spell by other dragon types. This theory is not widely accepted. However, some scholars speculate that if this spell is cast by a nondragon, the caster might very well be transformed into a variant type of shadow permanently.

**Sharptooth (Alteration)**

- **Level:** 1
- **Components:** V
- **Range:** 0
- **CT:** 1
- **Dur.:** 1 rnd/lvl
- **Save:** None
- **Area of Effect:** Special

This simple spell is a favorite among dragons who enjoy sinking their teeth into combat. The spell alters the dragon’s fangs, making them harder and sharper. In melee, this adds +1/age category to each damage roll on any successful bite attack, for as long as the spell lasts.

Dragons also employ sharptooth when gnawing apart a tasty but tough meal, such as orcs, armored dwarves, or knights in plate armor. Other spell-users have not sought to learn the spell simply because most spellcasters lack dragons’ teeth.

**Closing Words**

DMs interested in reading more about dragon magic should refer to FOR1 The Draconomicon and the DRAGON Magazine articles, “Dragon Magic” (issue #15), “Dragons and Their Deities” (issue #86), “The Cult of the Dragon” (issue #110), “Give Dragons a Fighting Chance” (issue #134), and “Serpents & Sorcery” (also in issue #134). Several general articles about magic could apply to dragon magic, but those listed here are the best examples (in this author’s opinion) regarding the subject. Perhaps these references will inspire creative DMs to devise a few of their own dragon dreamers.
MAGIC
The Gathering™

Available or Coming soon...
ICE AGE
WYVERN Chronicles
RAGE
Star Wars
Star Trek
SIM City

Call for availability and pricing
1/800/900-GAME 4 2 6 3
FREE SHIPPING!

P.O. Box 4351-779
Hollywood, CA 90028

□ Yes! Rush me your FREE catalog

Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip:
( )
Telephone:
Multiple Plotlines in Role-Playing Campaigns
by Thomas Kane

Artwork by Wayne Mondak
In a classical Chinese mystery story, at least two or three plots unfold at once. As the story goes on, the hero continues to investigate new crimes, and although occasionally two incidents prove to be the work of the same villain, others have no connection at all, forcing the detective to pursue first one case and then another. The authors of these mysteries reasoned that no real-life detective had the luxury of dealing with only one criminal at a time. This technique of telling several stories at once is a perfect model for a role-playing campaign.

Like a Chinese mystery, a fantasy world that develops more than one story at a time offers numerous advantages. First, multiple plotlines add to the scope and realism of the campaign world, helping PCs see their place in a complete world, a world that does not exist merely for them to adventure in it. Second, multiple plotlines add exciting variety to a game. Finally and most importantly, multiple plotlines expand the players’ chances to participate in the drama of the game.

But first, a definition. In a multi-plot game, the PCs may always choose between several challenges that potentially lead to adventures. Usually, this means that the party meets a number of villains and adventure patrons, each of them with their own plans and lives. The stories of these characters may collide, friendships and rivalries may develop between both PCs and NPCs, but no single theme dominates the whole campaign. As the PCs grow stronger, they may become as important to the story as the prominent NPCs. In time, the PCs may sponsor younger adventurers themselves.

When I mention NPCs, I mean any character able to affect the campaign’s plot. This includes kings, party henchmen, innkeepers and people the party meets during adventures. It also includes monsters, and, in some games, deities. It does not include cannon fodder, window-dressing NPCs, or the innocent bystanders who may be dragged into the PCs’ schemes, since these characters rarely, if ever, alter the course of the story.

Making Choices

Excluding Chinese detective stories, of course, most fiction follows a single plot. The characters face a central challenge, and—though it may take them an entire novel to reach a conclusion—most major plot elements lead to the final scene when the characters confront this problem. DMs and game designers often intend campaigns to work the same way. This is not a mistake. A game needs direction, and players need to know who their enemy is. However, the DM should not fall into the trap of planning a game’s plot in advance or thinking that one challenge will last for the entire campaign.

Players are simply not patient about waiting for a plot to unfold. A large part of gaming lies in planning ways to overcome obstacles. Therefore, when players find a challenge, they begin devising schemes to overcome it. If the opposition is clearly too strong for them, they quite sensibly attempt to retreat, avoiding the situation altogether. Nobody can deny that these are the most intelligent responses to a dangerous situation. However, when a DM has not planned for these responses, he may feel that the PCs are “short-circuiting” the adventure.

Some DMs respond by disrupting the PC’s plans, so that it takes the party adventure after adventure to overcome their opposition. This strategy works, but most players find it very frustrating, because it denies them the chance to make decisions and get results. Games are far more satisfying for everybody when the DM allows PCs to accomplish their goals relatively quickly and then proceed to new ones.

Plot Problems

Multi-plot scenarios have hazards. When the DM introduces too many plots too quickly, the party can become confused, and confusion kills the game. Players might always have a goal and know what it is. Without such a goal, players have nothing to plan, and therefore characters have nothing to do. (All gamers must remember adventures where the party was deep in a dungeon or enemy king’s castle when someone looked at the DM and asked, “What was our quest supposed to be anyway?”)

To keep multiple plots from being confusing, the DM should allow the party to concentrate on one story thread at a time. Whether the game is multi-plot or single-plot, adventures should begin with someone, be it a PC or NPC, choosing some project for the PCs to attempt. As long as the party wishes to continue this effort, the DM should introduce other plotlines only when they affect the main story. However, when PCs talk with their NPC acquaintances, they may hear news of things that may not seem important at the moment, but that could blossom into future adventures. Furthermore, PCs should always have the option to switch their focus from one plot to another.

In an ideal game, individual adventures follow a single-plot format, while the overall campaign follows many storylines. This way, players usually know what they are doing in a particular game session, but their characters are not trapped in a series of quests programmed by the DM. PCs always have the option of shifting their focus, changing the type of adventures they undertake and the type of problems they solve.

During a multi-plot campaign, PCs can always choose what adventures they will attempt. Naturally, not all their choices will be equally attractive. For example, if one of the DM’s plot lines involves an invasion of orcs about to overrun the PCs’ homeland, the party will almost certainly choose to address this threat. If they do not, they must face the consequences of that choice. However, the mark of a multi-plot game is that in such a situation, the players and their characters will have a range of possible decisions and options. Depending on their style, the PCs might:

- attempt to rally an army against the invaders.
- personally raid the orc camp.
- pack their belongings and flee the area.
- ally themselves with the orcs.

Again, some of these choices might produce better results than others, but in a multi-plot game, the DM should not punish any of them simply for being contrary to the adventure. The choices are all valid developments in the story.

Multiple plotlines keep the campaign lively by offering changes in mood and pace. They also give the PCs interesting choices about what sort of adventure to pursue. A party of thieves, for instance, may choose to pursue city intrigues where they feel most at home, while warriors preferring open battle might seek out bandits in the countryside. Sophisticated role-players, of course, may base these decisions on far more subtle reasons, relating to the campaign background, the characters’ personalities and the characters’ relationship to other people in the game. In all cases, multiple plots let players pick adventures that appeal to them and also let them develop character personalities by deciding what sort of activity their PCs would prefer.

Campaign Design

Designing a multi-plot campaign could require an enormous amount of work, if the DM took the time to prepare each and every storyline as if it were the whole campaign. However, a DM need not expend this much effort. Why prepare material unless the PCs will encounter it in play? Even in a multi-plot game, the PCs can still pursue just one adventure at a time.

Dungeon masters in a multi-plot game need two things. First, they require full details on the opposition that the PCs must tackle on any particular game night. He must prepare the game statistics of enemies, maps for important areas, role-playing notes for major NPCs, and the NPCs’ courses of action. Second, the DM must have a feeling for the setting. This includes knowing the game-world’s culture and environment, details of everyday life, and sensory details of what characters see and smell and think. It also includes sketching out the plots of the multi-plot game. When the PCs act, the DM must be ready to describe how NPCs respond, and when the PCs meet NPCs, the DM must know what stories the party has stumbled across.

In fact, a multi-plot game requires less preparation than a more linear campaign because it shifts many story decisions to the PCs. This lifts a great burden from the
DM's shoulders because the DM no longer needs to script the entire game. The players choose turning points in the storyline, and they often choose the adventure objectives as well. This is not to say that the DM must relinquish all control. NPCs can have just as much influence over the action as the PCs do, and outside events like wars and natural disasters may completely change the course of the campaign. However, the DM need not plan all these events in an artificial way. When he understands his NPCs and their motivations, he can choose their actions spontaneously, in the same way players role-play their characters. The DM still needs to plan. When PCs actually fight NPCs, the DM should write down the enemy's capabilities in advance. This increases the PCs' sense of accomplishment, and it can save the DM a lot of time and headaches during play—no more split-second decisions about how the genius-intelligence lich reacts when confronted by hostile PCs. As long as the DM has a general idea of what forces NPCs can muster, he need only plan out the PC's opposition for a particular evening. When the players decide to switch opponents, it will almost always take them at least one game session to extricate themselves from their previous operations and make plans for their new adventure goal. A smart DM will use the time between game sessions to prepare the details of the new adventure.

Steps To Establish Multiple Plots

The following system works well for designing a multi-plot game. First, generate the setting where the game will take place and the major events that will dominate the storyline. When using a published campaign world, choose a region of the map to play in; in a home-brewed campaign, develop an idea of the local climate and culture. Second, pick the NPCs likely to become major villains and adventure patrons. Decide what the NPC's goals are, what general resources they command, and what they want from the PCs.

Give all the NPCs backgrounds and motivations of their own; this is where the multiple plotlines appear. Each faction has its own ideas about how the adventurers fit into its plans—or how they must be eliminated for its plans to succeed. Some NPCs may be openly hostile. At least one NPC should have a reason to send the PCs on adventures so that an unmotivated party has something concrete to do while it forms its own plans. The other NPCs may begin as neutral figures with their own ambitions. If the party interferes with their plans, they become enemies, but if the adventurers assist them, the neutral groups may become allies or patrons. NPCs do not exist in a vacuum. All of them should have relationships with the others. The NPCs may be allies, rivals, friends, relatives, lovers, former lovers, bitter enemies, or wary neutrals. These relationships, of course, affect the party. If the party's patron has an enemy, the adventurers probably share that enemy as well, even if they have no other reason to quarrel with that foe. As the campaign develops, the party will become aware of these relationships and the reasons behind them. Eventually, the PCs must decide how they fit into the game's many stories. Adventurers may cling fast to their original loyalties, or they may break old connections, ally themselves with former enemies and try to re-shape their role in the world. This is where serious role-playing begins.

Finally, the DM must relinquish all control. NPCs can choose turning points in the storyline, and so the DM need not plan all these events in an artificial way. When he understands his NPCs and their motivations, he can choose their actions spontaneously, in the same way players role-play their characters. The DM still needs to plan. When PCs actually fight NPCs, the DM should write down the enemy's capabilities in advance. This increases the PCs' sense of accomplishment, and it can save the DM a lot of time and headaches during play—no more split-second decisions about how the genius-intelligence lich reacts when confronted by hostile PCs. As long as the DM has a general idea of what forces NPCs can muster, he need only plan out the PC's opposition for a particular evening. When the players decide to switch opponents, it will almost always take them at least one game session to extricate themselves from their previous operations and make plans for their new adventure goal. A smart DM will use the time between game sessions to prepare the details of the new adventure.

A Sample Campaign

As an example of how a multi-plot game develops, consider the following campaign. The DM wants to develop a campaign around Blackbriarton, a castle village set in a fertile river valley in his campaign world. He envisions the village as a town of relatively prosperous peasants and free farmers, used to living under the feudal rule of the House McAllister. Blackbriarton lies on the edge of the Trollfell Wastes, and raiders from those wild hills present a far more serious threat than the politics of the capital far away. However, in the rest of the kingdom, minor nobles such as the McAllisters are losing their influence to the High King and to the powerful merchant guilds.

Having developed this overall campaign concept, the DM considers the sort of adventure he wants the PCs to undertake. The Trollfell Wastes offer an obvious attraction to bold folk such as the PCs. Therefore, as a first challenge for the party, the DM develops a band of ogres who raid the farms on the outskirts of Blackbriarton. The DM designs an NPC to send the party against these ogres. He creates Lorna Gow, a stocky and outspoken peasant who has single-handedly organized the farmers of Blackbriarton to defend themselves against the attackers. To entice the adventurers further, the DM decides that Lorna has also collected reward money.

The DM puts most of his effort into designing the farms on the outskirts of Blackbriarton and the ogres who raid them. The ogre clan has a hill giant leader and a few bands of orich scouts, not to mention wolves, a shaman beast-tamer, and so on. The party finds the ogres tougher than expected and spends a number of game sessions fighting them. Along the way, the PCs take a liking to Lorna Gow, and, having taken substantial booty from the ogres, decide to refuse their reward money.

Meanwhile, the DM develops other elements of the campaign. The House McAllister falls from power. Angus McAllister, a sorcerer and patriarch of the family, dies after a long illness reportedly brought on by traffic with dark spirits. The PCs hear rumors that Angus rose from his deathbed in undead form and consumed the McAllister household, turning them into undead abominations like himself. Whatever the truth of these matters, the High King orders the McAllister's castle sealed, so that none may enter or leave. The merchants' guild appoints a governor to rule the town in the McAllisters' stead.

Once the players have heard some of the rumors, the DM introduces an important NPC into the game. Robert McAllister, the rightful heir to the barony, escaped the massacre in the castle with some of his personal guards. The horrors Robert saw in the castle shook his mind, but that isn't the worst of what he has suffered: His treatment after his escape drove him even further from the sheltered life he had led. The merchant-governor, an unscrupulous politician named Vincennes, saw the McAllisters as an obstacle to guild power and arranged for Robert to die in an accident. Robert fled to the woods, taking his loyal followers with him. He now lives as a bandit, seeking revenge on those who wronged him. Robert is not yet evil or insane, but he could easily lapse into madness.

At this point, the PCs must make a choice between the three options before them. The decision they make will affect the course of the adventure and their reward.

• The McAllister's castle lies empty of human inhabitants, with all the noble family's possessions still inside. The party contains several thieves who relish the chance to loot it. In this adventure, the PCs discover the nobles and their household are now ghouls and ghasts, with Angus himself as a spectre. If the players do not think of exploring the castle themselves, the DM may suggest the idea through an NPC.

• The PCs could work for Vincennes, since nobody knows of his assassination attempt against Robert. Although few people like the unctuous merchant lord, no one considers it dishonorable to work
AN AMAZING NEW ANTHOLOGY—FROM THE ORIGINAL SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE!

AMAZING STORIES

THE ANTHOLOGY

“R.A. Lafferty, Paul Di Filippo, and Thomas Disch are the high points of a very promising debut.”

—Science Fiction Chronicle

Now, from the oldest, most celebrated sf magazine in history—AMAZING STORIES: THE ANTHOLOGY collects new and classic stories by the great authors who have been part of the AMAZING® phenomenon, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Alan Dean Foster, Thomas M. Disch, Robert Bloch, Lawrence Watt-Evans, Kathe Koja, R.A. Lafferty, Paul Di Filippo, and Gregory Benford.

“An agreeable blend of the old and new: definitely worth a try for AMAZING® regulars and short-story fans.”

—Kirkus Reviews

AMAZING® STORIES: THE ANTHOLOGY
ed. by Kim Mohan
A Tor Trade Paperback
0-312-89048-6 • $13.95

AMAZING is a registered trademark of TSR, Inc. Copyright ©1994 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
bandits. He admires the PCs’ work against the ogres, and he offers them a substantial sum of money to work for him.

- Finally, the party may talk with Robert and learn his side of the story. In this case, they could become bandits themselves, harrasing the merchant-lord Robert and his forces. This could be a mistake, because the Merchants’ Guild can send powerful reinforcements to Blackbriarton. However, if the PCs are subtle enough to gain proof of Vincennes’ assassination attempt, they could charge him with the crime before the High King. The King might then sentence Vincennes to death and restore Robert to his place over the town.

At this point, the DM has not fully detailed all the forces of the spectre Angus, Vincennes, or Robert. He will wait until the party decides its next move.

The PCs make no attempt to contact Robert. The party, however, falls into a long argument about whether to investigate McAllister Keep or to accept Vincennes’ offer of a bounty. Everyone in the party dislikes Vincennes already. However, the mage in the party is convinced that Angus McAllister has become a lich, which makes the rest of the PCs understandably wary about entering the castle.

The party eventually decides to make an exploratory probe into McAllister Keep. Between game sessions, the DM prepares details on its interior and inhabitants. Among other things, he decides that Robert McAllister keeps a watch on his family fortress. In the next game session, the party goes in prepared for the worst imaginable danger and finds the going far easier than it expected. The PCs return bearing most of House McAllister’s heirlooms, including the family silverware, jewels, and signet ring.

At this point, the DM considers how the NPCs would respond. Robert McAllister does not know exactly what the PCs brought out of the castle, but his scouts have seen them enter and leave the fortress. Robert suspects they may have stolen property that rightfully belongs to him. However, he also wants to know exactly what the PCs met inside, and whether they destroyed the spectre Angus. Therefore, Robert sends a messenger to fire an arrow into the PCs’ camp, requesting a parley. Meanwhile, the DM puts together statistics for Robert’s band, in case the PCs end up fighting it.

The party agrees to meet Robert. During the conversation, Brian, one of the party’s thieves, steps forward and takes charge of the discussion. He does not deny that he went to the castle hoping for loot, but he smoothly assures Robert that the party failed to acquire anything of value. On the subject of Angus, he quite truthfully tells Robert that the adventurers failed to destroy the undead being. Robert, in turn, tells the party the full story of how Vincennes tried to kill him.

Robert asks Brian for help against the merchant-lord. The thief agrees to consider the matter and departs. As soon as the party reaches a safe place for discussion, another long debate begins. The more quixotic PCs now wish to attack Vincennes. Brian and the more roguish adventurers, however, feel no particular love for Robert or the McAllisters.

Here, the thief confesses with his friends in the party, and—to emphasize his point—he stands up and delivers a speech. Brian asserts that the only NPCs who have really earned his trust or respect are the peasants who followed Lorna Gow. Furthermore, the farmers are the true lifeblood of the land, and the people most suited to govern it. Brian proposes that the party fight against both Robert and Vincennes to establish a freehold for the local common folk. Brian adds that they can finance their revolution with funds from the McAllister castle.

The rest of the party agrees, and the campaign enters a new epoch, as the party carries on a guerilla war to seize control of Blackbriarton. First, the DM must decide how Lorna Gow, who never intended to be a rebel, responds. The DM must also decide what forces Vincennes has in the area, and what he and Robert will do when the party attacks. As time passes, outside forces may intervene, and the DM may introduce more conflicting interests (and adventure opportunities) from the larger world: the King’s men, rival guilds, a sorcerer seeking Angus’s secret spellbooks, and others. If the party establishes its freehold, it must then decide how to govern and administer it, while keeping all the outside forces encountered earlier at bay.

**Conclusion**

A campaign based on a single quest tells a simple tale of a challenge and how the party overcame it; a campaign based on multiple plots tells a tale as complex as the players care to make it. The storyline progresses in phases, each one dominated by a different story, a different peril, and often a different PC. The transitions between these phases often feature dramatic role-playing, in which the PCs discover a new fact about their world, and make the difficult decision to change their loyalties and their goals. The characters progress. Changing times bring out facets of a characters’ personality that even the player did not know existed, as the characters take on the roles forced on them by circumstances. The storyline becomes a complex, multi-layered saga, which each PC may remember a different way.

THE DESIGN REVOLUTION CONTINUES

Campaign Cartographer™, launched in October 1993, was the first PC compatible Computer Aided Design (CAD) software specially for RPG’s. Now that revolutionary game aid is complemented by Dungeon Designer™, another first from ProFantasy.

CAMPAIGN CARTOGRAPHER™
Derived from award winning professional CAD software and distinguished by a host of specialist tools, Campaign Cartographer™ is the smart, revolutionary way to create detailed and attractive maps and designs for RPG’s. Add any amount of detail, zooming from world view to an insect on a street in an instant. Hide or show features, secrets and text depending on who the map is for and then print at any scale.

- 100+ pre-defined terrain, flora and landmark symbols.
- Build your own symbol library.
- Straight-forward drawing and editing commands.
- Text linking for descriptions.
- Rapid placement for all terrain, structure and vegetation types.
- Show and hide related features to produce custom maps.
- Re-use sections of completed maps as the basis for new designs.
- Optional hex and square overlays.
- Create battle arenas, character records, etc in the separate General menu.
- Free Newsdisk for registered users.
- Numerous example maps including the Jaw Peninsular.
- Written in assembly language, making it the fastest PC CAD package in the world.

DUNGEON DESIGNER™
In giving role players the power to create any map on their PC ProFantasy started a revolution. Now advance even further with Dungeon Designer, the brand new add-on for Campaign Cartographer.
An extra menu, full of time saving features, gives you all the facilities to easily design the dungeons of your imagination. There are no limitations. Simply sketch the outline you want then let Dungeon Designer add the detail. Walls with any thickness, rooms with any shape, corridors at any angle and more than a hundred dungeon symbols. All with the authenticity that you have come to expect from Campaign Cartographer.

- 100+ pre-defined dungeon mapping symbols.
- Powerful new wall and door commands.
- Walls with true thickness.
- Text linking to show descriptions when room number is clicked on.
- Drawing linking to quickly load parent maps.
- Detailed building floor plans easily produced
- Optionally lock features to adjustable grid
- 1000 room example Hermaphroz dungeon.
- Concealed drawing layers for hidden features.
- More symbols, menus and fonts for Campaign Cartographer.

System requirements: PC, AT, PS/2 or compatible, MS-DOS 4.0 or higher. 1.4 Mb floppy drive, pointing device (e.g., Microsoft mouse). Recommended: a hard disk drive and printer. CC drives 99% of all printers and graphics cards to their full potential.

Campaign Cartographer is $69.95 in the US, £49.95 in the UK and rest of the world
Dungeon Designer is $24.95 in the US, £16.95 in the UK and rest of the world
Dungeon Designer requires Campaign Cartographer

Add on modules including new symbols, castles and towns coming soon

SEE FACING PAGE FOR ORDER DETAILS
Rifts® RPG Check List

- Rifts® Role-Playing Game (paperback): 256 pages, color, and all the basics. $24.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® RPG Hardbound Edition: Available in August. $32.95
- Rifts® Sourcebook One™: More on the Coalition States, Archie-3, bots and equipment. 112 pages, $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® Sourcebook Two: The Mechanoids. Mechanoid invaders, adventure and more on Archie-3. 112 pages, $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts Sourcebook Three: Mindworks™. Psynetic crazies, psi-bloodlines, and nearly a dozen new O.C.C.s and R.C.C.s, plus Mindworks. The Angel of Death, Gene-Splicers, monsters, magic, weapons, vehicles, bots, more about the Brokik and Gargoyles Empires, and adventure. 112 pages, $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book One: The Vampire Kingdoms™. Vampires like you've never seen them. Texas, Mexico and the Yucatan, plus travelling shows and other monsters. 176 pages, $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book Two: Atlantis™. The Splughorth & their minions, True Atlanteans, Suna assassins, tattoo magic, rune magic, stone magic, bio-wizardry (symbiotic organisms), new character classes and more! 160 pages, $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book Three: England™. 21 new O.C.C.s & R.C.C.s, including the Chiang-koo dragon, temporal wizard, nexus knights, druids, sekels, and more! Temporal magic, herb magic, New Camelot and adventure. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book Four: Africa™. A dozen new O.C.C.s & R.C.C.s, including the necromancer, priest, medicine man, pygmy warrior, tree people, and more! Plus the Four Horsemen, Egyptian gods, the Phoenix Empire, and world information. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book Five: Trias & The NGR™. 224 pages of bots, cybernetics, weapons and adventure in the New German Republic. By Siembieda and Long. $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book Six: South America™. 20 new O.C.C.s, including the anti-monster and biomancer, plus tons of new weapons and equipment, Cibolans, Feholoids, tanks, boats, weapons, power armors, adventure ideas and more. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® World Book Seven: Rifts Undersea™. The oceans of Rifts Earth are more alien and dangerous than the surface world! Scores of aliens, D-bees, monsters, and player characters, plus underwater biomes, bots, weapons, vehicles, magic and psionics. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

- Rifts® Dimension Book One: Wormwood™. An alien world locked in battle against supernatural forces. Strange new magic, symbiotes, slime, a living planet, and many new O.C.C.s & optional R.C.C.s. An original 20 page comic strip and artwork by Truman and Henry. Written by Siembieda. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® Dimension Book Two: Phase World™. If you're looking for epic space opera adventure, look no farther! 30 new O.C.C.s, cosmos-knights, phaser technology, magic, spaceships, weapons, equipment, the Splughorth and more! $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® Conversion Book One™: Conversion rules, playing tips, culture shock, 40 optional O.C.C.s/R.C.C.s, stats for over 100 specific creatures, the adult dragon, warlock magic, elements, and more. $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® Conversion Book Two: Pantheons of the Megaverse™. Mythological gods done Rifts style. Over 150 gods, demigods, and god pretenders, over a dozen optional O.C.C.s/R.C.C.s, including the godling. Tons of adventure ideas and insight into the Palladium Megaverse. 208 pages, $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.
- Mutants in Orbit™. Half of this book is for Rifts. The section on “Rifts Space” includes space stations in Earth’s orbit, moon and Mars colonies, A.R.C.H.I.E. 7, the Cyberworks Corporation, space glittry Boys, bots, power armor, killer satellites, mutants, and more! $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® Mercenaries™: 9 new O.C.C.s, including the bounty hunter, forger, spy, smuggler and safe-cracker. Rules for creating mercenary armies, organizations like Crow’s Commandos and Robot Control, Nanari Enterprises, more data about North America and tons of new weapons, power armor, and equipment! 160 pages, $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.
- Rifts® T-shirts: Four different shirts currently available.
- Aliens Unlimited™: A 196 page sourcebook with over 100 different aliens, plus weapons and vehicles. Written for Heroes Unlimited, but compatible with Rifts (includes conversion notes). $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.

Coming in 1995 for Rifts®

Rifts® South America 2: 160 pages, $15.95, coming this Summer.
Rifts® New West™: 160 pages, $15.95, coming this Summer or Fall.
Rifts® Lone Star™: 160+ pages, $15.95, coming this Fall.
Rifts® Game Master Companion™: Coming this Summer.
Rifts® Novels and other surprises.

Other Palladium® Products

Heroes Unlimited™ RPG
Villains Unlimited™ Sourcebook
Aliens Unlimited™ Sourcebook (new)
Scrapers™ (by Zeleznik & Siembieda; coming soon)
Mystic China™ The Compendium of Contemporary Weapons™
Beyond the Supernatural™
Scrapers™ (coming Soon)
Original RECON® (coming soon)
RECON® Modern Combat (coming later this year)
Robotech®
Robotech™ II: The Sentinels™
Nightspawn™ (coming this summer)
Macross II™
Macross II™ Deck Plan Series
Palladium (fantasy) RPG®

Palladium Books® Catalog

A mere 75 cents gets you our latest 32 page catalog filled with exciting products, like Robotech®, Heroes Unlimited™, Beyond the Supernatural™, Heroes Unlimited™, Ninjas & Superspies™, Macross II™, RECON®, Palladium RPG® (fantasy), miniatures and more!

Palladium Books® 12455 Universal Drive
Dept. D
Taylor, MI 48180

Palladium Books®, Megaverse®, RECON® and The Mechanoids® are registered trademarks owned & licensed by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Books®. Phase World™, New West™ and other titles are trademarks owned by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium Book®.
It’s been two months since the release of the BLOOD WARS™ card game, and the battles are growing fast and furious. But a new beachhead has opened up with the second Escalation Pack: the Blood War has invaded the City of Doors itself! Given the hidden plot of the card game, the Blood Wars have expanded well beyond the original five planes that contained it; sooner or later, we’d knew it would enter Sigil. The heart of the PLANESCAPE™ multiverse is poised on the point of a gelugon’s spear!

Escalation Pack II: Factols & Factions recruits the Factols, leaders of Sigil’s factions, into the BLOOD WARS card game as its newest Warlords. They work like standard Warlords, but they also can gather Legions of any alignments into their Battle Hands that belong to their factions. Included with the new Warlords are 40 Legion-Acolytes that are designated as faction members. These Acolytes can stack as normal Legions (by alignment), but they can also create a six-Legion Battle Hand when they are all of the same faction.

Other surprises within the Factols & Factions escalation pack include Portal cards (Fate-Spells) that lead from the wards of Sigil to random planes and realms, the Battlefields of Sigil (including all the headquarters of the factions), Fate-Acolyte cards that allow Legions from the initial set to join the factions of Sigil, and much, much more.

Portents of War
The future holds much turmoil for the BLOOD WARS card game; the gods arrive in August—Zeus, Lloth, Bast, Ilsensine, and over 40 other gods will join the ranks of the Warlords of the conflict infernal! Powerful Fates and mighty Legions also join the fray, bringing the proxies of the gods into game play. All this and more awaits in late summer, so watch for it!

Once again, though, I’m asking all BLOOD WARS fans and players to let us know what they think about the game. Tell us what you like and don’t like about the game. Clue us in about what you’d like to see in further Escalation Packs. What does the game need, in your esteemed opinion? Write to me care of TSR and let me know what’s on your mind. Even though I designed the game and its first three supplements, it’s just as much your game as it is mine, and I’d like to ensure that it’s fun for everyone.

Oh, one last thing, you didn’t think I’d set up this column without a deck suggestion and a card list, did you?

Assault on The Lady’s Ward!
This 50-card deck, compiled with cards taken from the Duel-Decks and the first two Escalation Packs, is a “theme” deck based on its composition and the information in the text boxes (and the PLANESCAPE RPG setting). In a nutshell, this deck suggests the following theme: The Xaositects and a number of tanar’ri battalions have joined forces to conquer The Lady’s Ward of Sigil and remove Sigil’s ruler from power!


Sigil enters the Blood War
by Steven E. Schend
Legions (25): Armanite* (x2), Dretch (x6), Foxwoman* (x3), Glabrezu (x2), Hezrou Desecrater* (x2), Hieracosphinx* (x3), Mane* (x5), Vrock (x2)

Fates (10): Chaosmen Mark* (x3), Diplomatic Treachery*, Lower Planar Conscription (x2), Monster Summons (x2), Powers of Evil Intervene, Spirited Troops.

Cards marked with an asterisk (*) are from Escalation Pack II. All others are from the original set of cards listed in DRAGON® Magazine #215.

BLOOD WARS™ Card Game Factions & Factols Card Distribution

The set contains a total of 134 cards; 15 cards per pack.

Frequency = Common (C); Uncommon (UC); Rare (R); Ultra-Rare (UR); Chase (Ch).

Card Artists = Jeff Butler (JB); Ned Dameron (ND); Tony DiTerlizzi (TD); Newton Ewell (NE); Paul Jaquays (PJ); Dana Knutson (DK); Rob Lazzeretti (RL); Robh Ruppel (RR); Peter Venters (PV)

Battlesfields

Abbreviations: P = plane; Rm = Realm, S = site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>TypeFreq.Artist</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>TypeFreq.Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armory of Sigil</td>
<td>S UC DK</td>
<td>Agathyn Anarchist</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogles' Glen</td>
<td>S Ch TD</td>
<td>Amazon Guardian</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City Barracks</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Apothean Archer</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City Courts</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>Aqualorrian Sensate</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Civic Festhall</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>Armanite</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk's Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC RL</td>
<td>The Aspirant</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dragon Bar</td>
<td>S R DK</td>
<td>Beholder</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gatehouse</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Bleak Battalion</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Foundry</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>The Cynical Wizard</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Gymnasium</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Dabus</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greengage</td>
<td>S R TD</td>
<td>The Defiant Ones</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildhall &amp; Market Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC RL</td>
<td>Doppelpanger</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hall of Records</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>Emerald Dragon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hall of Speakers</td>
<td>S UC NE</td>
<td>Hatching</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbinger House</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>The Entropy League</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hive</td>
<td>S UC DK</td>
<td>Foxwoman</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hive Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC TD</td>
<td>Gladiator of Sigil</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lady's Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC TD</td>
<td>The Glee-Bashers</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC RL</td>
<td>Godsman Warrior</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mortuary</td>
<td>S R ND</td>
<td>Guvner Baiff</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prison</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Halting Cleric</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Screaming Falls</td>
<td>S Ch TD</td>
<td>Hardhead Dwarves</td>
<td>Ac C PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shattered Temple</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Hezrou</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streets of Sigil</td>
<td>P R TD</td>
<td>Hieracosphinx</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple of the Abyss</td>
<td>S R DK</td>
<td>Hill Giant</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artus</td>
<td>R PJ</td>
<td>Lizard Man</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Ambar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Mane</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Darius</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Minor Magistrate</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Erin Darkflame</td>
<td>Fl R TD</td>
<td>Moon Dog</td>
<td>Ac C JB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Hashkar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Ogre Mage</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Karan</td>
<td>Fl UC PJ</td>
<td>Paladin</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Lhar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>The Perished</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Mallin</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Rogue Modron Merchant</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Pentar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Sigil's Sentries</td>
<td>Ac UC PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Rhys</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Tiefling Mage-Thief</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Rowan Darkwood</td>
<td>Fl R TD</td>
<td>Treant</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Sarin</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Valhalla's Finest</td>
<td>Ac R NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Skall</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Verkehan Guard</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Terrance</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Wemic Shamen</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamakar the Studious</td>
<td>R TD</td>
<td>Werekar Indep</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orryx</td>
<td>R TD</td>
<td>Werekarts of Sigil</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perigon</td>
<td>R TD</td>
<td>Weretiger</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The “Assault” deck is only one of the new types of decks you can construct with the new Escalation Pack for the BLOOD WARS card game. With future expansions planned for the gods and other powers among the planes, the fun—and the bloodshed—will never end!

BLOOD WARS™ Card Game Factions & Factols Card Distribution

The set contains a total of 134 cards; 15 cards per pack.

Frequency = Common (C); Uncommon (UC); Rare (R); Ultra-Rare (UR); Chase (Ch).

Card Artists = Jeff Butler (JB); Ned Dameron (ND); Tony DiTerlizzi (TD); Newton Ewell (NE); Paul Jaquays (PJ); Dana Knutson (DK); Rob Lazzeretti (RL); Robh Ruppel (RR); Peter Venters (PV)

Battlesfields

Abbreviations: P = plane; Rm = Realm, New abbreviation: Ac = Acolyte; all of these Acolytes are Faction cards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>TypeFreq.Artist</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>TypeFreq.Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armory of Sigil</td>
<td>S UC DK</td>
<td>Agathyn Anarchist</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogles' Glen</td>
<td>S Ch TD</td>
<td>Amazon Guardian</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City Barracks</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Apothean Archer</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The City Courts</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>Aqualorrian Sensate</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Civic Festhall</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>Armanite</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk's Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC RL</td>
<td>The Aspirant</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dragon Bar</td>
<td>S R DK</td>
<td>Beholder</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gatehouse</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Bleak Battalion</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Foundry</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>The Cynical Wizard</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Great Gymnasium</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Dabus</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Greengage</td>
<td>S R TD</td>
<td>The Defiant Ones</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildhall &amp; Market Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC RL</td>
<td>Doppelpanger</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hall of Records</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>Emerald Dragon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hall of Speakers</td>
<td>S UC NE</td>
<td>Hatching</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbinger House</td>
<td>S R NE</td>
<td>The Entropy League</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hive</td>
<td>S UC DK</td>
<td>Foxwoman</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hive Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC TD</td>
<td>Gladiator of Sigil</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Lady's Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC TD</td>
<td>The Glee-Bashers</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Ward</td>
<td>Rm UC RL</td>
<td>Godsman Warrior</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mortuary</td>
<td>S R ND</td>
<td>Guvner Baiff</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Prison</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Halting Cleric</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Screaming Falls</td>
<td>S Ch TD</td>
<td>Hardhead Dwarves</td>
<td>Ac C PI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Shattered Temple</td>
<td>S UC RL</td>
<td>Hezrou</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streets of Sigil</td>
<td>P R TD</td>
<td>Hieracosphinx</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple of the Abyss</td>
<td>S R DK</td>
<td>Hill Giant</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artus</td>
<td>R PJ</td>
<td>Lizard Man</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Ambar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Mane</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Darius</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Minor Magistrate</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Erin Darkflame</td>
<td>Fl R TD</td>
<td>Moon Dog</td>
<td>Ac C JB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Hashkar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Ogre Mage</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Karan</td>
<td>Fl UC PJ</td>
<td>Paladin</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Lhar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>The Perished</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Mallin</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Rogue Modron Merchant</td>
<td>Ac C PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Pentar</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Sigil's Sentries</td>
<td>Ac UC PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Rhys</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Tiefling Mage-Thief</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Rowan Darkwood</td>
<td>Fl R TD</td>
<td>Treant</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Sarin</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Valhalla's Finest</td>
<td>Ac R NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Skall</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Verkehan Guard</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factol Terrance</td>
<td>Fl UC TD</td>
<td>Wemic Shamen</td>
<td>Ac R PJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamakar the Studious</td>
<td>R TD</td>
<td>Werekar Indep</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orryx</td>
<td>R TD</td>
<td>Werekarts of Sigil</td>
<td>Ch TD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perigon</td>
<td>R TD</td>
<td>Weretiger</td>
<td>Ac C TD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOBBYGAMES LTD

EUROPE'S LEADING DISTRIBUTOR
Unit S4, Rudford Industrial Estate, Ford Airfield, Nr. Arundel,
West Sussex, BN18 OBD, UK.
Telephone: +44 0(1903) 730998    Fax: +44 0(1903) 731141

HOBBYGAMES DICE IN ANY LANGUAGE MEANS QUALITY

And more games from Hobbygames Ltd

Quality UK manufactured dice

Please contact us for wholesale/trade prices - dollars or sterling
IT'S GONNA ROCK YOUR WORLD!

Imagination

Tour Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MINI CON</td>
<td>February 10 - 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EUROPEAN GEN CON</td>
<td>February 17 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARCON</td>
<td>February 17 - 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAMES SPECTACULAR</td>
<td>February 17 - 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAMEX</td>
<td>February 23 - 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FURRY CON</td>
<td>March 3 - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAY CON</td>
<td>March 16 - 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHICAGO COMIC CON</td>
<td>March 17 - 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIGINS</td>
<td>March 22 - 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAGON CON</td>
<td>March 24 - 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEX CON</td>
<td>March 31 - April 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAN DIEGO COMIC CON</td>
<td>April 6 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAK CON</td>
<td>April 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TSR introduces the biggest gig since Woodstock, and the baddest assault since the F-22 fighter: The Imagination World Tour. We'll be roaring thru your city with a barrage of new products and demos. Also, the biggest stars in role-playing will be there to give out prizes and answer any questions you have on TSR products.

The tour will ignite at the GEN CON® Game Fair in August for a monster finale. see what the hype's all about when TSR roars into your town.

GEN CON® GAME FAIR 1995
Milwaukee, WI August 10 - 13
Convention Calendar Policies

This column is a service to our readers worldwide. Anyone may place a free listing for a game convention here, but the following guidelines must be observed.

In order to ensure that all convention listings contain accurate and timely information, all material should be either typed double-spaced or printed legibly on standard manuscript paper. The contents of each listing must be short and succinct.

The information given in the listing must include the following, in this order:
1. Convention title and dates held;
2. Site and location;
3. Guests of honor (if applicable);
4. Special events offered;
5. Registration fees or attendance requirements; and,
6. Address(es) where additional information and confirmation can be obtained.

Convention flyers, newsletters, and other mass-mailed announcements will not be considered for use in this column; we prefer to see a cover letter with the announcement as well. No call-in listings are accepted. Unless stated otherwise, all dollar values given for U.S. and Canadian conventions are in U.S. currency.

WARNING: We are not responsible for incorrect information sent to us by convention staff members. Please check your convention listing carefully! Our wide circulation ensures that over a quarter of a million readers worldwide see each issue. Accurate information is your responsibility.

Copy deadlines are the last Monday of each month, two months prior to the on-sale date of an issue. Thus, the copy deadline for the December issue is the last Monday of October. Announcements for North American and Pacific conventions must be mailed to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, P.O. Box 111, Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. Announcements for Europe must be posted an additional month before the deadline to: Convention Calendar, DRAGON® Magazine, TSR Limited, 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom.

If a convention listing must be changed because the convention has been cancelled, the dates have changed, or incorrect information has been printed, please contact us immediately. Most questions or changes should be directed to the magazine editors at TSR, Inc., (414) 248-3625 (U.S.A.). Questions or changes concerning European conventions should be directed to TSR Limited, (0223) 212517 (U.K.).

* indicates a European convention.
 delim indicates a Canadian convention.
> indicates an Australian convention.

---

MICHICON GAMEFEST '95, June 30-July 2
This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn North in Colorado Springs, Colo. Special guest is Connie Willis. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, an art show, and a charity raffle. Write to: MICHICON, P.O. Box 656, Wyandotte MI 48192.

VI-KHAN '95, July 7-9
This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn North in Colorado Springs, Colo. Special guests are Connie Willis. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, an art show, auction, banquet, a miniatures painting contest, and a charity raffle. Write to: VI-KHAN, 1025 Garner St. #108, Colorado Springs CO 80905.
DRAGON CON '95, July 13-16  GA  This convention will be held at the Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel, Atlanta Civic Center, Atlanta, Georgia. Over 200 special guests including Kevin Anderson, Ben Bova, Harlan Ellison, Margaret Weis, and Timothy Zahn. Events include role-playing, board, card, computer, and miniatures games. Other activities include workshops, tournaments, dealers, and a costume contest, live music and dancing. Registration: $55 before June 15. Write to: DRAGON CON '95, P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta GA 30362.

MAGNUM OPUS CON-10, July 13-16  GA  This convention will be held at the Callaway Gardens Resort in Pine Mountain, Georgia. Guests include: Roger Zelazny, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, and Bruce Boxleitner. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include a costume ball, tournaments, and a banquet. Registration: $40 before June 1, $25 for a day pass. Write to: MOC-10, P.O. Box 6585, Athens GA 30604.

WAR '95, July 13-16  GA  This convention is part of the MAGNUM OPUS CON-10. Events include a MAGIC: THE GATHERING card game tournament. Registration: $50 in addition to the registration fee for the host convention. Write to: National Association of Professional Gamers, P.O. Box 6585, Athens GA 30604.

ORIGINS '95, July 13-16  PA  This convention will be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, Penn. Guests include Margaret Weis, James Lowder, and Scott Douglas. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include RPGA® events and an auction. Registration: $34.95 preregistered. Write to: Andon Unlimited, P.O. Box 1740, Renton WA 98057; or e-mail: andon@aol.com.

GRAND GAME CON '95, July 15-16  MI  This convention will be held at the Godfrey Lee Middle School in Grand Rapids, Mich. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Registration: $8 for one day or $15 for both days. Write to: Leon Gibbons, 13910 Olin Lakes Road, Sparta MI 49345.

QUINCON X '95, July 21-23  IL  This convention will be held at the Signature Room in Franklin Square in Quincy, Ill. Special guest is Timothy Bradstreet. Events include role-playing, board, and card games. Other activities include an auction. Registration: $12/ weekend. Single day rates vary. Write to: Greg Stille, 1818 Hilltop Drive, Quincy IL 62201.

CON-DOME '95, July 28-30  CO  This convention will be held at Dtu-lyngby, Denmark. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers and workshops. Write to: Henning Jorgensen, Stenas 20, DK 2670 Greve, Denmark.

CONTINUUM IV, July 28-30  IL  This convention will be held at the Ramada Hotel in Mt. Vernon, Ill. Guests include John de Lancia, Troy Denning, Todd Hamilton, and Phil Farrand. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, an auction, art show, contests, and a dance. Registration: $35 until June 28, $40 thereafter. Gaming only registration available. Write to: CONTINUUM IV, 1617 Lyndhurst, Cape Girardeau MO 63701.

DRAGONFLIGHT '95, August 4-6  TX  This convention will be held at the Howard Johnson Shoreline in Corpus Christi, Tex. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, Japanimation, and an auction. Registration: $5 on site. Write to: GLCC, 5775 S. Staples #2802, Corpus Christi TX 78413.

DALLAS GAME EXPO, August 4-6  TX  This convention will be held at the Ramada Hotel Market Center, Dallas Tex. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include an auction and a dealers room. Registration: $10 preregistered; $7/day on site. Write to: Dallas Game Expo, P.O. Box 824662, Dallas TX 75382-4662.

TOLCON XIII, August 5-6  OH  This convention will be held at the Scott Park Campus at the University of Toledo, Ohio. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, movies, an auction, and a painting contest. Registration: $8 for the weekend, $5/day. Write to: TOLCON XIII, c/o Mind Games, 2115 N. Reynolds, Toledo OH 43615.

GAMEFEST XVI, August 9-13  CA  This convention will be held in the historic Old Towne in San Diego, Calif. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include trivia, and figure painting. Registration: $20 preregistered until July 31, $30 on site. Write to: GAMEFEST XVI, 3954 Hamey St., San Diego CA 92110.

BUBONICON 27, August 11-13  NM  This convention will be held at the Howard Johnson East in Albuquerque, New Mex. Guests include Harry Turtledove and Simon Hawke. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, an art show, an auction, a dance, a costume contest, and a genre cereal taste-off. Registration: $21 preregistered until July 21, $25 on site. Write to: BUBONICON 27, New Mexico SF Conference, P.O. Box 37257, Albuquerque NM 87176-7257.

MIGSCON XVI, August 18-20  This convention will be held at The Hamilton Ramada Hotel in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include a dealers room. Write to: MIGSCON XVI, P.O. Box 37013, Barton Postal Outlet, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, L8L 8E9.

RAILCON '95, August 25-27  CO  This convention will be held at the Sherton Hotel West in Lakewood, Col. Activities include a Puffing Billy tournament. Registration: $30. Write to: Train Gamers Association, P.O. Box 461072, Aurora CO 80046-1072.

DRAGONFLIGHT '95, August 25-27  WA  This convention will be held at the Bellarmine Hall on the Seattle University campus in Seattle, Wash. Events include computer, role-playing, board, card, and miniatures games. Other activities include seminars, an auction, and dealers. Registration prices vary. Write to: DRAGONFLIGHT '95, P.O. Box 417, Seattle WA 98111-0417.

CORPSE CON II, August 4-6  TX  This convention will be held at the Howard Johnson Shoreline in Corpus Christi, Tex. Events include role-playing, board, and miniatures games. Other activities include dealers, Japanimation, and an auction. Registration: $5 on site. Write to: GLCC, 5775 S. Staples #2802, Corpus Christi TX 78413.
1994 Calendar Year Releases

1. Best Historical Figure Series
   American Civil War 15mm .................. RFM
   Daimyo Samurai Figures .................. Reaper Miniatures
   Dark Ages 25mm ......................... Old Glory
   Wild West 25mm ......................... Stone Mountain
   Zulu Wars 25mm ......................... Connors
   Write-In ...................................

2. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Figure Series
   AD&D Personalities ...................... Rail Partha
   Legions of Steel .......................... Global Games
   Magic: The Gathering .................... Heartbreaker
   Star Wars Miniatures ..................... West End Games
   Technics Ltd. Edition Dragon .......... Rail Partha
   Write-In ...................................

3. Best Vehicle Series
   BattleTech: Vehciles & Mechs ............ Rail Partha
   Full Thrust Spaceships ................. Geo-Hex
   Firezone 1990 Vehicles .......... Geo-Hex
   Great War Micromats 1:2400 .......... GHO
   Star Wars Vehicles ...................... West End Games
   WWIl 20mm ............................... RFM
   Write-In ...................................

4. Best Miniatures Accessory Series
   Grenadet Resin Kits ..................... Heartbreaker
   Mountaineers ............................ Geo-Hex
   Rail Partha Paints ...................... Rail Partha
   Ultimate Carrying Cases ............... Glacial Games
   Warhammer Fantasy Banners ............ Games Workshop/Citadel
   Write-In ...................................

5. Best Miniatures Rules
   Blood Bowl ............................... Games Workshop
   Critter-Tek .............................. Crunchy Frog
   Full Thrust Spaceships Combat ........ Geo-Hex
   Napoleon's Battles Expansion Kit 2 .... Avalon Hill
   Star Wars Miniatures Companion ......... West End Games
   Toyway, by Joytoy ....................... Game Designers Workshop
   Write-In ...................................

6. Best Game Accessory
   Antiquities: Magic: The Gathering ...... Wizards of the Coast
   The Dark, Magic: The Gathering ......... Wizards of the Coast
   Legends, Magic: The Gathering ........ Wizards of the Coast
   Nuclear War Booster Packs .......... Flying Buffalo Inc.
   Principia Discordia .................... Steve Jackson Games
   Write-In ...................................

7. Best Role-Playing Rules
   Aria ..................................... Last Unicorn Games
   Castle Falkenstein ...................... R. Talsianer
   First Quest: Introduction to RPGs, AD&D .... TSR Inc.
   Immoral ................................. Precedence Publishing
   Kronoskone, Amazing Engine .......... TSR Inc.
   Nephilim ................................ Cheeseland
   The Whispering Vault ................. Parish Press
   Write-In ...................................

8. Best Role-Playing Adventure
   Cities of Bone, AD&D: Al-Qadim ....... TSR Inc.
   City by the Sea, AD&D: Dark Sun ...... TSR Inc.
   Council of Wyrms, AD&D ............... TSR Inc.
   Harlequin's Back, Shadowrun .......... FASA Corp.
   Sarnia, Talisanta ....................... Wizards of the Coast
   Write-In ...................................

9. Best Role-Playing Supplement
   Grimhod's Trap Bazaar ................. Flying Buffalo Inc.
   GURPS Lensman ......................... Steve Jackson Games
   Lion of the North, Ars Magica .... Wizards of the Coast
   Mage: The Bloodwall, Revelations .... TSR Inc.
   Planescape Campaign Setting, AD&D .... TSR Inc.
   Submen Rising, Talisanta .............. Wizards of the Coast
   Write-In ...................................

10. Best Pre-20th Century Boardgame
    Age of Exploration .................... Tim Jim Games
    Caesar ................................... GMT Games
    Colonial Diplomacy .................... Avalon Hill
    Kolonial ......................... Avalon Hill
    Maharaajah ....................... Avalon Hill
    No Better Place to Die .............. The Gamers
    Roads to Gutsburg ........................ Avalon Hill
    Write-In ...................................

11. Best Modern-Day Boardgame
    Advanced Tropics ...................... The Gamers
    Australian Rails ..................... Mayfair Games
    Enemy at the Gates ................... The Gamers
    Expert's Edition ...................... The Gamers
    The Rising Sun ....................... Avalon Hill
    Second Front ......................... Games Research/Design
    Write-In ...................................

12. Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Boardgame
    Battle Rider ............................ Game Designers Workshop
    Bloodbowl 3rd Edition ................ Games Workshop
    City of Thieves ........................ Games Workshop
    CityTech 2nd Edition ................... FASA Corp.
    Dragonlance, AD&D ..................... Wizards of the Coast
    Elven World ....................... Games Workshop
    Elven World 3rd Edition ............ Games Workshop
    What's My Line? ....................... Games Workshop
    Write-In ...................................

13. Best Card Game
    Dixie .................................... Columbia Games
    Illuminati: New World Order ........ Steve Jackson Games
    Jihadi .................................. AEG
    The Edge ............................... Atlas Games
    Spellsfire: The Magic .................... TSR Inc.
    Star Trek: The Next Generation .......... Decipher Games
    Write-In ...................................

14. Best New Play-By-Mail Game
    Labyrinths of the Mind ............... Flying Buffalo Inc.
    Forgotten Realms: Realms Simulations Inc.
    Mid-east: Third Age circa 2950 .......
    Game Systems Inc.
    STAR WARS Warlord ................... Task Force Games
    Traveler ............................... Edipio Entertainment Inc.
    What's the Message? ................. Games Workshop
    Write-In ...................................

15. Best Role-Playing Game
    Duelmasters ............................. Reality Simulations
    Illuminati: New World Order ........ Flying Buffalo Inc.
    Mid-east: Third Age circa 1650 .......
    Game Systems Inc.
    Cier Web ................................ Flying Buffalo Inc.
    State of War ......................... Game Systems Inc.
    Write-In ...................................

16. Best Fantasy or SF Computer Game
    Doom ..................................... 3D Realms
    Myst .................. BM/Brøderbund
    Time Fighter ................. Lucas Arts
    What's the Message? ............... Reality Simulations
    XCOM UFO ................. Microprose
    Write-In ...................................

17. Best Desktop Publishing
    Advanced Tropics ...................... The Gamers
    City of Thieves ....................... The Gamers
    Elven World ......................... Games Workshop
    Spellfire: The Magic .................... TSR Inc.
    Star Trek: The Next Generation .......... Decipher Games
    Write-In ...................................

18. Best Fantasy or SF Computer Game
    Critter-Tek ............................. Nightfire
    Myst .................................... BM/Brøderbund
    Time Fighter ......................... Lucas Arts
    What's the Message? ............... Reality Simulations
    XCOM UFO ...................... Microprose
    Write-In ...................................

    Ringmaster ............................... Avalon Hill
    Master of Magic ....................... Microprose
    Panzer General ....................... SSI
    Sid Meier's Civilization ............ Microprose
    SimCity 2000 .......................... Maxis
    Write-In ...................................

20. Best Game Related Fiction
    Arena, Magic: The Gathering ........... HarperPrism/Wizards of the Coast
    Bred for War, BattleTech .......... ROC/FASA Corporation
    Chihuhua's Heirs, ....................... Cheeseland
    Cast of Chihuhua Fiction Anthology .... Cheeseland
    Eliminator, The Making of a Mage, Forgotten Realms ........ TSR Inc.
    Siege of Darkness, Forgotten Realms .... TSR Inc.
    Whispersing Woods, Magic: The Gathering ...
    Write-In ...................................

21. Best Professional Gaming Magazine
    The Courier .............................. Courier Publications
    Dragon Magazine ........................... TSR Inc.
    The Duelist .............................. Wizards of the Coast
    Pyramid ................................ Steve Jackson Games
    Interstellar ........................... AEG
    The Unspeakable Oath ......... Pagan Publishing
    Write-Wolf Magazine .................... Write-Wolf
    Write-In ...................................

22. Best Amateur Adventure Gaming Magazine
    Alternars & Excursions ................ Lee Gold
    All of the Above ...................... Lee Graham
    Berg's Review of Games .............. Richard Berg
    KA/GE (Shadowrun) .......... Jim Long/AWOL Productions
    Mech (BattleTech) .......... Jim Long/AWOL Productions
    Zone of Control ................. John Kiner
    Write-In ...................................

Voter Name ...........................................
Address ...........................................
City __________________ State/Province ...........
Zip/Postal Code __________________ Country ...........
Phone Number ( ) ..................................
Signature ...........................................
Mail your Final Ballot to the following address postmarked by the deadline.
June 20, 1995.

Regardless of postmark, BALLOTS RECEIVED AFTER JUNE 25 CANNOT BE COUNTED

Faxed Ballots Cannot Accepted, unless you contact us to make special arrangements.

ORIGINS™ Awards
5575D Arapahoe Rd.
Boulder, CO 80303

For More Information Contact:
Phone 303-786-9727
Fax 303-786-9797
I just felt I had to respond to Larry Sonders' letter in issue #215; it struck a chord (I almost choked on my breakfast when I started laughing). As my girlfriend remarked when I read the first paragraph to her, "He's better off without that player." A person who quàts the campaign as a result of the DM’s ruling is unnecessary baggage. He sounds like an egotistical and self-centered player, more suited to solo games where he cannot impair the enjoyment of others.

I'm sure that the incident was simplified for the sake of the letter, but precisely how does any mage teleport above a ship and then levitate safely to the deck? By my interpretation, only one spell may be cast per round. Casting levitate immediately after arriving at the other end of a teleport spell looks pretty dodgy. This cocky mage would still have been casting his levitate when he made an abrupt and intimate acquaintance with the deck—you can fall a long way between spells! Furthermore, the mage would have had to teleport onto the vessel since the spell description states: "a wizard cannot teleport into an area of empty space—a substantial surface must be there." Whichever way you look at it, our mage shouldn't have been in this situation in the first place!

Just how many people in a serious fantasy would go around with "I am 11th level" tattooed on their forehead or "1st level arrow-fodder" emblazoned across their chest? From the pirate captain's point of view, anyone could land in the midst of his crew, courtesy of a magical item, claiming to be a Wizard of Might. How does he know how powerful the supposed mage was? It seems perfectly logical for him to call this arrogant fool's bluff, risking two dispensable crew members in doing so. Pirates aren't exactly known for being squeamish when it comes to risking the lives of their underlings. A seasoned scourge of the high seas is more than likely to test a visitor's mettle than to surrender his vessel without a fight.

We are not dealing with a superstitious tribe that have never seen anything more impressive than a shaman's trances or his limited repertoire of tricks. Pirates will have faced many dangers far more impressive than a blustering buffoon stupid enough to drop in on them without first displaying some proof of his prowess. Fighting boarding actions, facing the Imperial Navy's bolt-throwers, or riding out fierce storms at sea will have hardened a pirate crew to the point where a levitating mage is a laughable threat. Being struck dumb with awe might be applicable if the crew were simply unable to believe the nerve of the fellow!

Sheer weight of numbers would be on the pirates' side. When you have 40 companions and a tough captain, mob rule, peer pressure, and fear of your leader's retribution are powerful motivators. Some robed character who has dropped onto your deck and told you to "surrender or else" comes a poor second. Without any evidence of his ability to kill and maim in ghastly ways, what does a pirate do: obey orders or face keel-hauling? Perhaps when a dozen contaminants have beenuzzled or turned into parrots, the crew members will reconsider their position on the matter.

Finally, does the world in question have a background that emphasizes the power of mages? Are they rare and powerful enough to inspire awe? Do tales recount horrific fates that befell those who defied the wielders of magic? Or are mages two-a-penny—a threat which a pirate crew might expect to face from time-to-time? It is almost unfortunate that most fantasy campaigns fall into the latter category. As a result, players lose any sense of wonder when magic is used, taking it for granted, even becoming blasé in the face of enchantments. "Oh, it’s another cloud castle, let’s jump on our brooms of flying and sack the place!" It's as if the player belonged to the former category (magic is a rare thing to be feared) and suddenly found himself in a campaign world where casting spells is widely accepted.

To answer Mr. Sonders' last paragraph: no rule, written or otherwise, says that low-level PCs should always fear high-level ones, or that a high-level PC need not fear low-level characters. High-level groups have been overrun by large groups of kobolds, or experienced severe setbacks by disciplined hobgoblin crossbow troops. Even competent adventurers can lose confidence if their main fighting strength is lost to some unfortunate chain of events. Just takes a little luck (good or bad), an error of judgement, or a flash of brilliance can turn any encounter on its head. No PC or DM can go into a situation certain of its outcome.

On the other hand, a sufficiently notorious individual could instill just the reaction we be- desired. But in this example, did the pirates know about the mage beforehand? Had they heard tales of his daring exploits and terrible power? If they had, the player might be justified in expecting the pirates to surrender. This is true regardless of whether we are dealing with a powerful mage or a renowned warrior. If the coastal ports abound with rumors of a fearless adventurer, dressed just so, armed in a particular way, who has personally brought pirate crews to justice, then any crew might be nervous when someone answering his description turns up in their midst! On the other hand, a relatively low-level crew of 50 pirates might hope to make a name for itself which would, in turn, instill fear in its potential victims!

Larry ironically asks at the end of his letter whether incompetence, cowardice, and stupidity are the exclusive province of low-level folk. There should always be a fair share of fools to provide humor, but they don’t all have to be low-level—just look at the real world to see how many high-powered idiots there are! At the same time, high-level heroes and villains all have to start somewhere—the next pirate deck-hand you meet could be a Blackbeard waiting to happen!

Nigel Espley
West Midlands, UK

This letter is in response to Donald Haverson's remarks in issue #216 regarding the AD&D® magic system. I've been playing RPGs for 10 years now. In that time span I have played fantasy games that use spell-point or fatigue-based magic. I even created an alternative spellcasting system for the AD&D game, which I abandoned shortly thereafter. It is my firm belief that in their abundant wisdom, the designers of AD&D created the best system. Here's why:

First off, with the AD&D system you know what spells you have and how many times you can cast them. When they are gone, they are gone until your wizard gets the necessary sleep. Simple. With a
The gates of Arcadia, the original paradise, are closed to us.
Only the cities of humanity remain.
Without any awareness of our true nature, humankind crushes us beneath its banal heel.
Joy and laughter are gone; only the Dreaming remains.
The journey is now complete. We've entered the sensual world of Vampire: The Masquerade; crushed the corrupting minions of the wyrm in Werewolf: The Apocalypse; come to understand the paradoxical nature of reality in Mage; and experienced the dark heart of death in Wraith: The Oblivion.

Now join us in the final story, the final view of the World of Darkness.

CHANGELING
The Dreaming

Coming in June. Over 260 full-color pages. Also be on the lookout for Changeling Cantrip Cards. A card-based faerie magic system reflecting the chaotic and unpredictable nature of fae powers, available in July. Full cantrip card rules will be included in the main Changeling rulebook. Also be on the lookout for the full color Changeling promo in stores in May.


If you're reading this, GO TO BED.
fatigue-based system, wizards must keep track of time to regain lost Strength or fatigue points, which to me is monotonous, and must calculate out modifiers for reduced Strength or fatigue. A point or fatigue system is alluring to some gamers, because a wizard can cast many spells per day, as long as he doesn't become fatigued or drained. In the games I've played, this led to wizards with ridiculously high Strength or Constitution scores, who could dish out or take large amounts of damage while simultaneously blasting away with spells. As a player, that's fun for a minute. As a DM, it's no fun at all.

The AD&D system forces a wizard to choose spells for the day wisely, and to use them wisely. What fun is it to have your wizard knock open every locked door the party runs into, with minimal cost to fatigue? What about the thieves and fighters in the group—they like to open locked doors as well! A wizard able to cast any spell in his repertoire at will diminishes other PCs' interactions in trying situations. There is nothing more challenging to a serious role-player than a wizard with "useless" spells in a dire situation. In those situations, all the wizard's cunning and guile shine brightly, and the most memorable things occur.

Robert Melvin
PO Box 29
Represa, CA 95671

Kudos to "Paths of Power" by Wolfgang Baur and Steve Kurtz in issue #216! This is just the sort of thing to add mystery and variety to the wizard class in the AD&D game, because it means that not every PC and NPC mage will have the same magical powers available. More than ever before, research will be necessary to get a good handle on one's enemy. Speaking of research and information-gathering, it seems that users of path magic who concentrate on illusions (such as the Path of Deception and the Path of Shadows) have the most to lose if their precise powers are known. After all, if the enemy knows that a certain wizard can't really cast fireball or lightning bolt, or summon animals, monsters, elementals, undead, etc., then any such illusions that he casts will be automatic failures. The party would also be more cautious about picking its way through his stronghold, seeing illusion-concealed booby traps on every stretch of floor (of course, this could slow them down enough to give the wizard a chance to get away or rally his garriison). Leaking information to the adventuring public that he knows illusion magic at least could be to his advantage. And if he can cast lethal spells like fireball, and leaks information to the effect that he can't, then parties may stand in the open without taking cover from his magic, secure in the (mistaken) belief that "there's nothing there."

Gregory W. Detwiler
Williamsburg, PA

I am writing in response to Gary Wilson's letter in issue #216. I have also been playing AD&D games for about four years. Because the paladin is one of my favorite classes, I have faced the same questions during my years of playing and DMing.

I read your letter and I think I might be able to help. You said that the paladin is too generic, but it's not when you really think about it. They don't just represent a generic "good," but rather the specific ideals of Lawful Good. In fact, the paladin should be the epitome of Lawful Good.

If you look at it this way then it might help to explain your other questions. Although a paladin is usually allied with a government (whether it be a theocracy or not) and may worship a deity, the paladin is restricted by a higher meaning. The paladin should be considered a power of Lawful Good. He should not be forced to serve the vanities of one authority, even if that authority is divine in nature. Her beliefs in Lawful Goodness should transcend such ties. Instead, she should be a protector and enforcer of all the of the Lawful Good alignment. Therefore, a Paladin could never be chaotic good because chaotic actions and even chaotic thoughts go against the nature of a paladin.

I also think it's important to point out that paladins are alignment extremists. That's why it's important for a paladin never to do chaotic acts or stray even a little bit from the ideals of lawful good. That's why only the most dedicated can play paladins properly. If the paladin does stray from the ideals of lawful good, he immediately loses all paladin privileges and abilities until he atones for his misconduct.

You might argue that since the lawful good alignment has elite warriors, why shouldn't the other alignments have them. Well, you've come to the right place, because DRAGON Magazine printed an article on paladins ("A Plethora of Paladins" by Christopher Wood, issue #106). It featured a paladin class for each alignment. For example, the Lyan class was the paladin of lawful neutral alignment. It had completely different abilities, such as using a 1d12 for HD, casting magical or clerical spells, and bonuses when fighting chaotic creatures. Each different alignment had a paladin class with abilities and hindrances corresponding with the alignment. Although DRAGON Magazine recommended them for NPCs only, with some small precautions to maintain campaign balance, these paladins can easily be incorporated into almost any campaign.

Alex Plocki
New Kensington, PA
dream (5), mass suggestion (6)

The Performer’s Path: alter instrument (1, PHB8), ventriloquism (1), hypnotism (1), sound bubble (1, PHB8), magic mouth (2), rope trick (2), alter self (2), levitate (2), pyrotechnics (2), water breathing (3), minor creation (3), instant audience (3, PHB8), conjure cabinet (4, PHB8), advanced illusion (5), legend lore (6)

Note that bard paths tend to be spell heavy, containing several spells of each level. Bard colleges know that their students will not have the same access to spells afforded wizards (“What!” the master mage cried, “I don’t have time to waste on teaching you dabblers . . .”), and the colleges also want to prepare their students with enough magic to fork into other paths as often as they desire, as befits a true “jack of all trades”. Many colleges exist which provide paths which are suitable for the different bard kits.

Steve via e-mail

Some friends and I began playing the AD&D game way back in 1980, and have enjoyed countless hours of adventure, all set in my own game world. The AD&D game is a wonderful diversion and a most splendid way to pass the time. But as a veteran DM (and a lover of clerics), I feel compelled to respond to Melody Alder’s comments in issue #210.

I must agree with Adam Bickford’s astute evaluation of the cleric. Apart from the statistical standpoint, there are other important points to make about the hidden strengths of this superior class.

Regardless of alignment, the cleric is the most capable of dictating the goals and purposes of his faith, especially at higher level. He can foresee the future of his religion in whatever realm she chooses to adventure in. Indeed, I feel he also must do his best to influence the actions of other player characters and NPCs.

A well-played cleric can shape the events of his world to a degree that is almost beyond fantasy. For example, consider a lawful evil high priestess: the next time those soldier boys line up for their dose of healing, ask of them, “What have you done for me lately?” I’m not talking about merely relieving the warriors of excess cash, either. A sword-slinger on death’s door might well be forced to accept a quest in change for healing.

On the other hand, a lawful good high priestess may be able to stop a war and persuade the powers-that-be to support her temple in return. Even in battle, priests are formidable, especially with the nifty chant and prayer spells. I think even ungrateful PCs will sit up and take notice if they can more easily hit an opponent. During 15 years of gaming, our cleric has shone brilliantly as a mover and shaker. At high level, even one withheld cure spell can change the world forever! What’s the sense of risking your neck if unwise, short-sighted PCs don’t under-

I was talking with a couple of role-playing friends, and I would like to share one question with other players. Everyone knows about the 10% bonus experience for having a 16 or higher in his prime requisite. Is this a true character! Why? What is the point?

Why does a fighter with a 16 strength get 10% more experience than one with a 15? Don’t you think it is easier to kill an opponent with an attack bonus or a damage bonus? I think you should get bonuses for having a lower prime requisite, because it is harder to kill a monster, pick a pocket, learn spells, or get bonus spells. Many thanks if you can answer this.

CLSL Innis
Collinsville, IL

There’s been a lot of talk lately about “dark games” or “mature games,” in the gaming industry. It seems that people are comparing apples and oranges when they are throwing these two expressions around, as if they meant one and the same thing. I don’t think they do. Let me define both terms in the context of role-playing games.

To me, darkness in an RPG refers to the game’s setting. Consider some of the RPGs that have used the word “dark” in their titles or descriptions: the entire subgenre of “dark future” RPGs (the various cyberpunk games are still the best examples), Hero Games’ DARK CHAMPIONS* setting, and GDW’s DARK CONSPIRACY* game, among others. The newest of these, the DARK CHAMPIONS setting, was released in 1993. (As you can see, dark isn’t exactly a new concept.) All these games share a grim, often desperate situation, world, or campaign environment. However, the actions that the PCs take, the kind of missions they accept, and the variety of deeds they perform are all quite similar to the actions, missions, and deeds that PCs in other, “lighter” RPGs take. You can call the mission “a corporate extraction” in a dark future game, but how are the mission goals (and the actions the PCs take to achieve those goals) different from the goal of rescuing the princess in the evil wizard’s tower in a light RPG? All that’s different is the setting. Dark doesn’t have to do with what the PCs are doing, only where they’re doing it.

To further my definition, let’s look at the fantasy genre. Of the available campaign settings for the AD&D game, I consider both the DARK SUN® setting (there’s that word again) and the RAVENLOFT® campaigns dark. They are both bleak, somber settings. Neither would be on my list of top 10 vacation spots. But are they dark? A good synonym for darkness in fantasy is “low fantasy.” Low fantasy is grim, gritty, and action-oriented. Low fantasy fiction includes Fritz Leiber’s Fafhrd & The Gray Mouser stories, the Thieves’ World anthologies, and Robert E. Howard’s Conan tales. (Some people would consider some of the above examples sword & sorcery fiction, but that’s splitting hairs.)

Most horror RPGs are dark—it’s almost part of the definition. In fact, Chaosium’s CALL OF CTHULHU® game, can be considered one of the industry’s first dark role-playing games.

On the other hand, a mature game has adventures dealing with complex subjects such as crime and corruption, adult themes such as sex or violence, and even social issues such as abortion or conservation. In mature games, these themes permeate every aspect of the campaign’s stories, including the characters themselves, rather than being stuck in the background. Mature games are defined by plots. The actions PCs take are based on the decisions the players make for their characters. In a mature game, the decisions are much more complex than in other RPGs. The world is not black and white, but filled with an infinite number of shades of gray—just as in real life. Mature games carry stories that contain multiple choices, each with multiple outcomes. Each option carries with it consequences that the PCs must deal with—no wanton looting and pillaging allowed here. (What I’m not talking about when referring to mature subject matter is hack-’n’-slash gaming. Whether you’re playing a berserk human warrior, an undead being in a blood frenzy, or a psychotic killer hopped up on goofballs, don’t think that you’re playing a mature game just because there are graphic levels of violence or sex in your campaign. I’m talking about role-playing here, not indulging in a festival of lust and gore and calling that “mature.”) Simply put, mature games require complex decision-making by the game’s players.

Mature RPGs available now are the Storyteller series from White Wolf, and Chaosium’s CALL OF CTHULHU, the NEMATLIM* game, and Atlas Games’ OVER THE EDGE® RPG. Of these, the Storyteller games merit further discussion. Not only do they deal with mature themes, they also are written for an older audience. The language or artwork in Storyteller game products have occasionally ignited some controversy. While I’m not sure which angle belongs in any RPG product, it’s not my decision. I’m not trying to slam these games; I currently play in a VAMPIRE campaign, in fact. What
Ninjas and Superspies™

The most comprehensive role-playing game about Martial Arts ever published!

Ninjas & Superspies™ is the incredible world of espionage, spies, and combat!

Over 40 different types of martial arts enable players to create over 40 different types of Oriental martial arts masters! Mystic super abilities such as the arts of invisibility, body hardening, Zenjoriki, Dim Mak and more, make characters more than human!!

Secret agents, cyber-agents, gizmotouts, gimmick weapons and clothing, super vehicles, secret agencies, secret identities, espionage and intrigue are all part of the game!

- 17 Occupational Character Classes.
- Over 40 types of martial arts, including Ninjitsu, kick boxing, Aikido, several types of Kung-Fu and others.
- 48 mystic martial arts super powers.
- Bionic disguises and implants.
- Rules for creating secret spy agencies.
- Spies like the gizmoteer, cyber agent and commando.
- Secret identities.
- Super vehicles.
- A complete role-playing game directly compatible with Heroes Unlimited™, TMNT® and Beyond the Supernatural™. Adaptable to Rifts® and the entire Palladium Megaverse®.
- Written by Erick Wujcik.
- 176 pages — $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

Mystic China™

The dark, mysterious side of China with its magic and mysticism, Infernals, Immortals, dragons and other supernatural denizens. Player characters include monster hunters, masters of the martial arts, mystics, philosophers, antiquarians and adventurers. Plus new weapons, equipment, world information, villains and adventure ideas.

Highlights Include:

- 14 new Chinese martial arts.
- A dozen new O.C.C.s, R.C.C.s and P.C.C.s, including the Monster Hunter, Blind Mystic, Geomancer, Wu Mage, Fox Spirit, martial artists and even a Reformed Monster!
- Mudra — The power to deflect any attack.
- More Atemi, Chi, Katas, Zenjoriki, and other mystic abilities.
- Chi magic with 87 new spells, geomancy, celestial calligraphy and more.
- Immortals, demonic Infernals, fox spirits, phantom tigers and other supernatural beings of the Orient.
- Tons of adventure ideas.
- Written by Erick Wujcik.
- 200+ pages — $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.

China™ Sourcebook — Cancelled

We regret to report that the Mystic China™ Sourcebook has been cancelled due to the author’s inability to finish the book. Our deepest apology to our fans. We were looking forward to this book as much as you were. With a little luck, it may be rescheduled for late 1995 or a 1996 release.

Catalog of Palladium Books®

A mere 75 cents gets you our latest 32 page catalog filled with exciting products like Rifts®, Robotech®, Heroes Unlimited™, Beyond the Supernatural™, Macross II™, RECON®, Palladium RPG® (fantasy), T-shirts, miniatures and more!

Palladium Books® 12455 Universal Drive
Dept. D
Taylor, MI 48180

Available at stores everywhere!
I'm saying is that these games may not be for everybody.

On the other hand, mature themes can be dealt with in a more traditional manner. For example, the AL-QADIM®, PLANESCAPE, DARK SUN, and RAVENLOFT campaign settings all deal with mature issues (we just don't swear). Hey, you're thinking, didn't he say that the DARK SUN and RAVENLOFT campaigns (and the CALL OF CTHULHU game, for that matter) were dark settings? Yes, I did. Can a game be both dark and mature? Yes. In fact, RPGs that incorporate mature decision making in a dark setting can lead to the most intense role-playing possible, and these settings and RPGs are among the most successful in the industry. (What does that say about us?)

It is possible to play a mature game in an immature fashion (looting and pillaging, as mentioned above), just as it's possible to run a mature campaign using almost any rules system (with the possible exception of humorous RPGs). It's up to you and your group, really. I don't intend to preach about how you should play RPGs. Play the game that's fun for you; it is your campaign, after all.

Stephen Carter
Cleveland OH

I would like to tell all you AD&D game experts out there about something that is giving me trouble. You see, I am a player, and have been for about three years (I'm only a teen). I fell in love with the game and have been for about three years (I'm

Mike Clair
Woodchuck Hollow Lane
Wading River, NY

When starting a new campaign, players—especially new and inexperienced players—are often disoriented by their characters' hometown, a place they have supposedly lived in for 16 to 18 years! Even with a briefing and packets of information (as suggested by Eric Noah in his article "Right from the Start," issue #208) the players often aren't confident when moving around town.

To ease them into the process their hometown can be loosely modeled on the players' own world. If the players are over 18 (21 for American readers), they probably frequent a pub. This pub can easily be converted to a low-beamed tavern, with suitable changes such as the doorman becoming a retired fighter. The barmaid becomes a good-natured halfling and regulars become the usual assortment of humans and demi-humans, each with quirks that make them familiar yet sufficiently distinct. PCs would also have a better idea about who to approach for information since they already have an insight into each NPC's personality and fields of expertise, just as if the PCs had known them for years.

Other pubs can be involved, those with a reputation for richer clients may become the "regular" for the Mayor, merchants, and snobby fighters, such as the cavaliers or the royal bodyguard, who wouldn't want to be seen with the "great unwashed". On the other hand, pubs with a seeder reputation could become the local thieves' den, a place to find contacts with the criminal underworld or to hire thugs and assassins.

Local buildings could also feature. The townhall becomes the local seat of power for the mayor or, if the PCs live in a wealthy city, the court of a baron or even the king. Most towns also have a central church. This becomes the basis for a temple dedicated to the area's major deity. Other, less central, churches are transformed into the site of more specialized temples, for example, the temple may be deemed to be in the elf quarter and therefore it would be dedicated to a god suitable to the surrounding populace.

Lastly, unusual constructions can be incorporated. A nearby ruin can become part of the locale's history, as well as a possible site for ghosts that must be laid to rest by adventuring clerics. Clock towers are perfect for a wizard's residence (just replace the clock face with a large telescope that points to the heavens). Maybe a society has its own meeting hall; in Britain Masonic lodges are relatively common and are easily changed into the base of a secret society, either benevolent or malign, that needs to be investigated at the request of a mysterious stranger. The commonplace can be adapted to fit into a fantasy context, and with a little further thought your town can be changed to fit a science fiction setting. Even elements from the players' favorite films can be incorporated, Watt Dabney from Jabberwocky or Inigo Montoya from The Princess Bride have both appeared in recent adventures in my campaign, as have characters from Highlander.

All these things make a town seem familiar and help the players' integration to role-playing seem less of a shock. As a result, players can concentrate more on developing their inter-character relationships, and they can advance in the campaign with an idea of where to go for help.

Philip Crawley
Darlington, England

I play a FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign, and my problem is that my players are simply invincible. This is partially my fault, since I handed out a 1d100 hp damage sword and some 50% magic resistance armor to the party's fighter. This was not too much of a problem, as I simply invented very strong monsters and later simply took these amazing artifacts away. But the problem is that the players have found a way around almost every situation and I have no logical reason to disallow these things.

For example, the paladin has acquired a powerful mace, whom he has paid vast amounts of money to make potions
Telgrin gave the big knight a contemptuous glance. A dim light flickered momentarily from within the crystal sphere atop his staff, and he made a small gesture—really only a fluttering of two fingers.

Something happened then, but Alexander was not sure what it was. It appeared that the air itself rippled about Telgrin in some obscure and indefinable way, then gathered itself into a peaked tee of distortion, which flew across the room and struck Brian full in the chest. The knight gave a choked cry of alarm, as he was thrown high into the air and hard into the wall behind him. For an instant he appeared to be pinned there, several feet off the ground. Then the force that held him relented, and he fell heavily to the floor. He groaned, curled himself into a ball, and did not move again.

—Excerpted from King's Quest: The Floating Castle

On the clouds of a vicious storm, an ominous black castle appears in Daventry, ushering in a reign of terror over the once peaceful kingdom. The king's soul has been stolen and it is up to his son, Prince Alexander, to save his father's life and kingdom by penetrating the dark forces surrounding the castle... and facing the very heart of evil itself.

King's Quest®, the #1 bestselling computer game—now a thrilling new fantasy-adventure series

CRAIG MILLS

July/$5.99
raise all his ability scores to 18. The wizard is having a field day with his wish spell. When his Strength gets low he wishes to be as strong as a titan (Strength 25) and after aging he wishes to be younger. He has simply wished to ignore the negative effects of magical spells and items, so he can ignore the wishes spell’s downsides entirely. And death is hardly meaningful for a party with a cleric who is resurrecting people every day, with wishes on hand for those who fail survival checks.

I would like to know if other DMs have advice or suffer from this themselves. The MC monsters are simply too weak for PCs able to deal out 32d8 hp damage with a single Abi-Dalzim’s horrid wilting or to stand firm against monsters such as greater mummies casting out creeping dooms and death knights wielding swords of life-stealing.

I would also like to know if a DM is meant to design his own items and artifacts, as I cannot find anything in the rule books about this subject. After a few false starts (the infamous 1d100 sword), I have designed many spells, items, and monsters that have given us all a good session, and was wondering if this was, in fact, an intended practice!

Joe Walker
United Kingdom

Play With Me
Continued from page 8

I would also like to know if a DM is meant to design his own items and artifacts, as I cannot find anything in the rule books about this subject. After a few false starts (the infamous 1d100 sword), I have designed many spells, items, and monsters that have given us all a good session, and was wondering if this was, in fact, an intended practice!

Joe Walker
United Kingdom

worlds we played in by probing and asking.

None of us knew that September would be dead little more than a year later, the cancer that killed her already eating away at her, inside. Like all first loves, she’ll live forever, laughing, in memory.

I still try to DM the way she did, all these years later, though I’ve accepted the fact that I’ll never have September’s looks. I’ve tried to hold on to what we had, though: love, honor, and friendship.

Love is what the Realms has always been about; not just grand romantic passion, but simple, decent folk doing kind and noble things for others, up to and including laying down their lives for their friends.

As for honor, I still feel—project after project—that it’s an honor to share “my” world and dreams with gamers everywhere. I am, and will always be, grateful to TSR for doing so, from the pages of DRAGON® Magazine #30 onward.

And that leaves us with friendship. The most precious thing the Realms have given me are good and true friends, from Dave, Ken, and Tim to Victor, Andrew, John (the splendid roleplayer), Ian (the first Lore Lord of the Realms), Jim, Anita, and Cathy of my stalwart players; to creative folks who’ve shaped the Realms with me: Jeff Grubb, Steve Schend, Rob King, Karen Boomgraden, and Julia Martin (among many, many folks at TSR, and fellow scribes Bob Salvatore and Elaine Cunningham; to the gaming friends I’ve met and made all over the world, from “Uncle” Wes, Grant, Leslie, Craig, and Nicole in Australia (and hello to all at Mack Campbell’s Bookshop in Toowoomba), to Chris and Leo in Sweden, to Chris and Lisa in Dallas, to Steve and Jenny in Peterborough, to Mike and Roxy in Pennsylvania, to Erica in Colorado, to Terry, Steve, Helen, Lori and Doug in Houston, to Alex, Cheryl, and Merle in Toronto. The list can go on for pages. You have all made my life brighter, and you are why I keep on writing instead of being the (richer) doctor or lawyer my folks wanted me to be.

Besides, for me, it’s become a duty: someone has to be Elminster . . . . and I’ve mastered the bawdy banter.

And if I sometimes get tears in my eyes when I’m running yet another Realmsplay session, it’s because something has sent me back to that sun-dappled fern bower under the trees, and September’s clear voice calling, “Swords bright!” in farewell, as she started her walk back to the bus.

I’ll never see her again, but in the Realms, I can meet her every day. Farewell, September—and well met!

* indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc.
LEGENDS OF DARKNESS ARE NOT ALWAYS MYTHS.

VAMPIRE™
THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE

THE DECKMASTER TRADING CARD GAME OF GOTHIC INTRIGUE
FORMERLY JYHAD — SUGGESTED FOR MATURE PLAYERS

WIZARDS
OF THE COAST

Magic Resistance, Step by Step

by Skip Williams

If you’re having trouble deciding how magic resistance ought to work, don’t worry, you’re in good company. Magic resistance is widely misunderstood, and has been giving DMs fits since it was introduced back in the original D&D® game.

The first version of the game was a set of three slim booklets in a nondescript brown box. One of the monsters included in the set was the balrog, which had a 75% chance to resist spells cast at it. At the time, no other monster in the game had that ability and DMs didn’t quite know what to do with it. Most people treated the balrog’s magic resistance as a special saving throw, rolling 1d100 instead of 1d20 to see if a spell cast at a balrog worked or not. Of course, this meant that a balrog that successfully resisted a fireball still suffered half damage from the blast. Eventually, however, word got out that magic resistance was something that a creature enjoyed in addition to a saving throw, and that successful resistance made the creature immune to the spell.

These days, the sheer diversity of magic in the AD&D® game makes adjudicating magic resistance something of an art, but it’s an art anyone can master.

The Steps

No matter what the circumstances, you can decide how magic resistance works by following three basic steps:

Step One: Decide if the magical effect can be subject to magic resistance at all. Only spells and spell-like abilities from creatures and magical devices are subject to magic resistance. Breath weapons, gaze weapons, special attacks (such as disease, energy drain, or paralysis), magical combat bonuses, and psionics are not. A fear effect from rod of lordly might is subject to magic resistance because it is a spell-like effect. The rods combat bonuses (such as the +2 bonus from the rod’s mace form) are not.

Step Two: Decide if magic affects the resistant creature directly. Magic resistance has no effect unless the energy created or released by the magic actually goes to work on the resistant creature. If the magic acts on anything else (the air, the ground, the room’s light) and the creature is affected as a consequence, there is no magic resistance roll.

Creatures can be harmed by a spell without being directly affected. For example, a continual light spell, harms a drow elf because drow are sensitive to light and suffer considerable penalties when exposed to it. Continual light, however, usually is cast on the area containing the drow, making it bright, not on the drow itself. So, the effect is indirect.

Step Three: Decide what happens to the magic if a magic resistance roll is called for and it succeeds. The result of a successful roll depends on the type of magic involved. For purposes of magic resistance, we’ll split magic into just four types. (See Chapter 9 of the Players Handbook for details):

Individually targeted spells, which are completely negated if the resistance roll succeeds.

Area-effect spells, which have no effect on the resistant creature if the resistance roll succeeds, but are not negated. Other creatures and objects within the area of effect are still subject to the spell.

In-place spells, which collapse and cease to exist if the resistance roll succeeds.

Permanent spells, which have no effect on the resistant creature if the resistance roll succeeds, but are not negated. The permanent spell continues to function and other creatures within the area of effect remain subject to the spell.

There, now you know everything you need to know about magic resistance.

Troubleshooting

Having problems? Here are the difficulties most commonly encountered at each step:

Step One: The most frequent problem here is deciding what is a spell or spell-like effect and what isn’t. All spells are potentially subject to magic resistance. If the user memorizes it and casts it, it’s a spell. Beyond that, anything that works like a spell is also subject to magic resistance. Use your common sense. Does the effect in question seem spell-like? If so, it probably is. (Sometimes it pays to get literal. If a monster’s description contains a list of spell-like abilities, then everything in the list is spell-like.)

A creature can have some abilities that are subject to magic resistance and some that are not. For example, an androsphinx’s priest spells are subject to magic resistance, but its roar is not (it’s more like a breath weapon than a spell). An aboleth’s enslavement power is subject to magic resistance, but its mucous cloud is not (the cloud is produced in the aboleth’s body). A cleric’s spells are subject to magic resistance, but the character’s undead turning ability is not (unlike a spell, undead turning works only under certain specific conditions).

Step Two: The chief difficulty here usually is deciding whether the effect in question actually works directly on the target. Many effects are not subject to magic resistance because they are indirect. The easiest way to decide if an effect is direct or indirect is to consider the school of magic involved.

Evocations: These spells are almost always subject to magic resistance. If an evocation spell inflicts damage, it is either an individually targeted spell or an area effect like ice storm, depending on the spell.

Wall spells are in-place effects. They are subject to magic resistance if they inflict damage, entrap, or restrict movement.

Enchantments/Charms: These are almost always subject to magic resistance and are treated as individually targeted effects unless the spell enchants an object that is then employed against a creature—these are indirect spells. An enchanted weapon spell, for example, is never subject to magic resistance. Enchantment/charm that effect several creatures simultaneously are treated as individually targeted effects, but only the portion targeted at a resistant creature can be negated.

Conjurations/Summonings: These are almost never subject to magic resistance unless the spell conjures some form or energy, such as a power word, sten or a prisnic spray. The former is an individually targeted effect, the latter is an area effect. Spells that summon creatures are never subject to magic resistance. A few conjurations fall into a gray area. Evard’s black tentacles, for example, can be treated as a summoned creature (and therefore not subject to magic resistance) or an in-place effect. Pick one and then stick with your choice.

Abjurations: These are sometimes subject to magic resistance. The target crea-
ture must be harmed, changed, or restricted in some manner. Perception changes, such as non-detection, don’t count.

Illusions: These spells are almost never subject to magic resistance. Illusions that inflict a direct attack, such as phantasmsal killer or blindness, are exceptions.

Alterations: These usually are subject to magic resistance, especially if they transform the target creature. Alteration spells are not subject to magic resistance if they are targeted on a point in space instead of a creature. Transmute rock to mud and wizard eye change a creature’s surroundings, not the creature itself, and are never subject to magic resistance.

Divinations: These do not affect creatures directly and are not subject to magic resistance, even though what they reveal about a creature might be very damaging.

Necromancy: Most of these spells alter the target creature’s life force and are subject to magic resistance. Necromancy spells that summon creatures, such as summon shadow, or detect creatures, such as detect undead, are not subject to magic resistance.

**Step Three:** This step usually doesn’t give people much trouble, but beware of individually targeted effects masquerading as area effects. Spells such as magic missile, hold person, hold monster, and slow affect several creatures within a limited area. Nevertheless, they are individually targeted spells, though a successful resistance roll still applies only to the portion of the spell directed at the resistant creature.

Area effects are not negated by a successful resistance roll. A baatezu caught in a lightning bolt while crossing a bridge over a bottomless pit can avoid the spell’s effects, but the bridge can’t.

Wall spells are in-place effects (unless they are permanent); if a resistance roll succeeds against a nonpermanent wall, the whole wall collapses. This can be quite terrifying for a mage who thought he was safe and sound.

**Miscellaneous Notes**
A magic-resistant creature’s own abilities, spells, and magical items always work normally; magic resistance never interferes with magic that comes from the resistant creature. Also, magic resistance extends to a creature’s items. If its resistance succeeds, the creature’s items are protected, too. Magic resistance can be voluntarily lowered whenever the resistant creature wishes. Doing so takes some concentration, and cannot be done while the creature takes any action other than moving at half normal speed. Once resistance is lowered, every spell directed at the creature that round works normally.

Magic resistance works in addition to a saving throw, if the resistance roll fails, the creature is entitled to a saving throw (if one applies). A creature that has voluntarily lowered its resistance fails its resistance roll automatically, but it still gains any saving throw it normally would be entitled to.

A special note about wall spells: If (like me) you’re uncomfortable with the thought of magic resistant creatures running around collapsing wall spells, I suggest that you treat all wall spells as permanent effects. Magic resistant creatures can walk through them if their resistance rolls succeed, but the wall does not collapse. If the resistance roll fails, the creature cannot try to penetrate the wall again that day.
From the Best-selling Author of "Marooned"

MARTIN CAIDIN

BUCK ROGERS: A LIFE IN THE FUTURE

The Authorized Biography of Anthony "Buck" Rogers as told to Martin Caidin.

TSR #3590 • Suggest. Retail $19.95 • ISBN: 0-7869-0144-6

BUCK ROGERS and ROCKET RANGER are trademarks of The Dille Family Trust. ©1965 The Dille Family Trust. A trademark owned by TSR, Inc.
This month we’re going to look at a pair of Mac games—you know that other computer platform. Of course, as Crusty Old Ken Rolston (who looks at everything on a Mac) knows, the Mac is a perfectly fine platform that is vastly under-appreciated by the general masses of humanity. Of course, Ken would say this but he’s on vacation this month, so that just leaves Paul and Zeb to be crusty this time. (All right, this is a feeble attempt to prove that we really are broad-minded and liberal and not just oppressive PC snobs.)

However, the sad fact for those Mac fans in the world, is that there just aren’t as many games for their machines. Doing a little investigative reporting, I (Zeb) turned and asked Paul, and a bunch o’ other folks (who know more about Macs than human beings with real lives ever want to know) just why there are so few Mac games compared to PC games. Here’s what they said.

PCs are evil. There are lots more of them in the world and therefore lots of people available to sell games to.

PCs are evil. IBM chose to have an “open architecture” which allowed lots of people to monkey around with everything inside the box, and in the code, and create customized widgets to make their games just so, which is why it’s impossible to load the same game your friend has on your machine without a degree from PC University.

PCs are evil. PCs use DOS. DOS is clunky, dumb, and not real complicated. DOS is easier to learn and manipulate than System Whatever, which the Apple people don’t want you monkeying with anyway because it’s a “closed architecture.”

Enough of this. On with the reviews.

**Jump Raven**
A Review by Paul Murphy for Macintosh
A Paramount Interactive CD-ROM
Requirements: Color monitor, CD-ROM drive, 8 MB RAM (6 MB free)

**Apology**
Let me just say that I’m in a bad mood. It happens, even to the best of us. When you’re in a bad mood, you probably do stuff you regret later, like drive too fast on the highway, or say something you don’t mean to a co-worker. When I’m in a bad mood, I tear apart a game I’m reviewing.

So, I’d like to apologize, right now, to the creators of Jump Raven. I’m in a bad mood and I’m gonna savage your game. I’m sure I’ll feel bad about it tomorrow, if that’s any consolation.

**Overview**
*Jump Raven* is an SF game set in New York City, sometime in the next century. You are a mercenary. You ride around in a cool, high-tech hovercraft, armed with a variety of neat weaponry. You and your co-pilot wander the city, blowing the heck out of evil skinhead eco-terrorists, rescuing pods containing an arkload of genetic material. Sounds interesting, eh?

It should be. The premise has everything you might want in a fun, violent game: greasy punk villains, a politically-correct cause, a fast car (hover-car, that is), and loads and loads of firepower. When I opened this baby up, I was really looking forward to murdering hordes of mohawk-topped bad-guys. The opening sequence was up to specs, too.

**Opening Sequence**
Let’s get one thing straight, right up front: despite everything you might have heard, I am not automatically against five-minute-plus opening sequences to simple arcade games, complete with complex story-lines, loads of extraneous characters, and really, really expensive animation and special-
effects. If done right, they can add a lot to the game.

Jump Raven’s opening sequence was done right. We get to fly around a cool-looking Manhattan, see really crass advertisements—for Bazooka Hut and Mucus-Off, among others—and generally have a good time. The music is cool, the animation impressive, and the credits are no more than usually offensive.

My one objection to the opening sequence is that we’re not told right up front how to skip it. You can pound on the Escape, Delete or Enter keys all you like, click the mouse-button till you’re blue in the face, and nothing happens. Later on, you learn that you can hit Ctrl.- (control and period simultaneously) to get through any annoying sequences, but by then you’ve irrevocably lost five minutes of your life reading slow-rolling credits.

By the time the game started, I was in a bad mood already.

**Briefing**

Once you’ve survived the credits, you get to enjoy the briefing. A lovable old characer with some kind of pet rodent on his neck tells you what’s up, helps you pick a co-pilot, and introduces you to the Weapons Lady.

It’s not too bad, really. Once again, the animation’s pretty good (in the faces, only the eyes and mouth are animated while the rest of the head and torso are still, harking back to the old, innocent days of cheap TV animation). The writers had some fun with this stuff: the characters are fairly neat, and the conversations are fun as well. It all took just a little too long for me—but maybe that’s just ‘cuz I was already in a bad mood.

In any case, you’ll eventually get through the briefing, clamber aboard your machine, and head off into the Bronx (sorry!) on your first mission.

**How it Looks**

Jump Raven has a kinda neat-looking interface.

The center of the screen is the pseudo-three-dimensional display. Your hovercraft is in the foreground. It is surrounded by a futuristic Bronx (sorry!), complete with tall, good-looking buildings, roads laid out in a rigid grid pattern, and no garbage at all. Not as accurate as you might like, but still functional and attractive.

The top left corner of the screen contains a video monitor, where your co-pilot and some other characters tell you stuff. Below that is a panel with three buttons: Navigation, Hover, and Weapons. Here you assign your co-pilot control over one or more systems.

The bottom edge of the screen is the weapons display, showing your various weapon-systems: laser, rocket, missile, bombs, etc. You click on a picture to activate that system.

The right side of the screen displays a bunch of other info: an ammo status board and a directional display for finding enemies, pods, repair docks, fuel trucks, and so forth.

As I said above, this display is basically pretty and functional. Kudos to the screen-design guys.

**How it Works**

Okay, you’re sitting there in the Bronx, right? Now what? First, you assign your co-pilot a job or two: weapons (firing the guns), navigation (steering the vehicle), and/or hover (hovering).

So naturally, right at the start, you’re teed-off: the game hasn’t even started yet and you’ve got to give up control of an important system to an NPC. Why? Poor game design is why. The designers couldn’t be bothered to design a vehicle simple enough for you to control in its entirety: to fly the damn Raven, you require the assistance of somebody else. How irritating.

Anyway, you look over the choices to see what you’re gonna give to the co-pilot. You naturally decide to hold onto weapons because blowing up stuff is what you’re here for; similarly, you want to hold on to navigation, because driving is fun. So the co-pilot gets hover.

Now you’re ready for combat. You click on the lasers icon, because it’s all the way to the right and you have no idea what any of the weapons do anyway, and it’s a fine place to start. Eventually, little red blobs appear on your directional finder, announcing the impending arrival of bad guys. You zoom toward them, using your keyboard to turn left and right and go forward. Soon little sprites appear in front of you. You put your cursor on ‘em and when you click the mouse-button, green laser-rays shoot out from your craft.

**Blowing Up Stuff**

Imagine this: You put the cursor on a stationary sprite ahead of your craft and press the button. And you miss. Hmmm, you think. Wonder why I missed? So you press the button two or three dozen more times, keeping the cursor firmly on-target. And you still miss. This is unfortunate. You say a couple of bad words.

Eventually, through trial and error, you discover that, in order to hit something, you must place your cursor above the target! Always—even if you’re not moving and your target’s not moving. It’s just like Robocop after he’s shot up by the entire Detroit police force: your targeting system is always off!

Naturally, you respond by hurling the CD across the room, through a waiting open window. Then, remembering that you’re on deadline with this stupid review, you go outside, brush off the CD, and restart.

Meanwhile, all sorts of baddies are ambling around the screen, moving toward you, shooting you, moving away in a sort of Brownian motion. You get bored with the laser, and switch to other weapon systems. They all seem to do something, you’re not sure exactly what. The rockets make a nice “Spang” noise when they hit; the missiles seem to blow up stuff real good, but have virtually zero accuracy—that is, I haven’t yet figured out where to put the cursor to make them hit.

Then there are these jeep-like things, see? They stay on the ground, and shoot at you with machine-guns or something. You shoot back at them with your laser, and find to your chagrin that you can’t hit them at all, no matter where you aim. So you switch to rockets, missiles, etc. . . . nothing works.

Finally, you remember that the weapons-system all the way to the right, the bombs, is specifically designed for ground targets! Phew! So you switch to the bombs to take out the pesky jeeps. And you can’t hit ‘em for beans. Ever. You blow up dozens of bombs, and the jeeps stay there, grinning evilly at you. Frustrated some more, you leave the area and go blow up more flying guys.

Eventually, you zoom around the city, rescuing some pods and blowing up some flying things, both of which give you a nice cash bonus. But, at the same time, you’re taking damage. Weapons systems go out, you run out of fuel and ammo, and so on. A variety of repair-replenishment vehicles show up, you dock with ‘em, and get fixed and stuff—if you can afford it.

Sooner or later, though, you’ll run out of money before clearing the Bronx of villains and rescuing all the pods. Then the game is over. If you’re on deadline, you restart and try again. If you’re a consumer, you take it back to your software store and demand a refund.

**Other Stuff**

*Reward Screens:* How the heck should I know? I played this game for two bloody days and was never able to clear the Bronx! Maybe the reward screens are really cool; you’ll have to ask someone else. (Incidentally, this is another graphic game-design failure: you should always give the customer an easy early victory. This sucks him into the game, and tricks him into putting up with future bad design decisions . . .)

*Music:* Very well done indeed. You’re given four different rock styles to choose from (excellent decision); each is good. Well done.

*Installation and Stuff* (Remembering that I’m working from the Mac here): Not bad. You’re given three versions of the operating system, each of which requires a different amount of RAM. Thus, you can load the version that’ll work best on your machine. Cool.

*Help:* This robot guy gives you assistance when you click on the help button. He’s cool, and he fully explains all of the buttons and screen areas and stuff. He doesn’t
City of Broken Dreams

IN THE CAGE: A GUIDE TO SIGIL
PLANESCAPE

The good, the bad, and the outright bizarre seems everybody and every thing wants into Sigil, the City of Doors. That's not to say that the Lady of Pain's hometown is a safe or happy place. What a body doesn't know can get him dead fast. Anybody would be crazy to go to Sigil without a guide to the Cage's ins and outs!

FANTASY... TAKEN TO THE EDGE.
provide strategic or tactical assistance, though, so don’t ask him.

Conclusion

Jump Raven just ticks me off, see? As a grizzled veteran crusty old game-designer, I’m fully aware of how much time, trouble, blood, sweat, toil and tears went into this game. Dozens of highly-skilled folks—programmers, animators, artists, designers, musicians, etc.—busted their butts for months and months to make it. Yet it’s a failure. Once again, a computer CD-ROM game fails, because the producers forgot that the most important part of a game is game-play.

I don’t care how good a game looks or sounds, how cool the animation and special-effects are, how easy it is to load or save: if it isn’t any fun to play, it’s a failure. So there.

Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’m going to go take a couple of aspirin and lie down with an icepack on my head until the next review. See you.

Cosmology of Kyoto

Reviewed by David “Zeb” Cook
Supervised by Dr. Kazuhiko Komatsu, associate professor of anthropology, Osaka University for Macintosh
Requirements: System 6.07 or later, Quicktime 1.5 or later, 4 MB RAM, 13” color monitor, CD-ROM, KanjiTalk (optional)

In the ancient days of Japan, the world was more than just the world of night and day or work and rest. It wasn’t enough for a peasant to rise with the sun and work all day or work and rest. It wasn’t enough for a man to be born, die and then not be reappear in one of the Hells or—my favorite—be reborn as a dog. (The screen goes to black and white and about the only thing you hear is yourself whimpering.)

The encounters you have are equally fascinating. There’s not much of a story to follow, so you don’t spend a lot of time running from place to place collecting this cookie to give to that monster. However, you meet a lot of people and see a lot of strange things and they’re all true! Well, sort of. All the encounters are taken from the history, folklore, and legend of Kyoto in 1,000 AD. At the time, Kyoto was the capital city of Japan, home of the emperor and his court. Life in Kyoto ranged from the pinnacle of refined culture to the meanest beggars in the streets. Still, as the slim booklet makes abundantly clear, a major concern of life in Kyoto was dealing not just with your next-door neighbor, but also with the immense collection of spirits, ghosts, goblins, and demons that wanted to inflict harm on the city, its people, or the emperor. Many of the encounters retell familiar tales from Japanese folklore, and it’s fascinating to match your own knowledge against the discoveries you make. Many of the encounters are completely cryptic: What can you make of the tea-kettle spirit that suddenly runs into the center of the road and buries itself before your eyes? Or the swast of demon footprints that just as suddenly appear out of nowhere? Or—and this is truly choice—the beautiful woman who lures you into the woods only to change into a fox and spray you with its . . . well, the screen goes yellow at that point.

Fortunately, you’re not left adrift. The other part of Cosmology is the Encyclopedia. Every encounter, every building you can enter, every street you can walk down has place in the Encyclopedia. For each entry, a snippet of the history, story, or culture relates to the game, and pro-

Cosmology of Kyoto (Yanoelectric)
He is Immortal, born in the Highlands of Scotland 400 years ago. He is not alone. There are others like him... some good, some evil. For centuries he has battled the forces of darkness, with Holy Ground his only refuge. He can not die unless you take his head, and with it his power.

This June...
There Can Be Only One.
vides a picture and links to other topics. Wondering about the story behind those footprints that just appeared? Look it up if you’re curious. If you are sent to the Hell of Hungry Ghosts, you can switch to the Encyclopedia and find out just what tortures await you (which you’ll get to see on-screen later) and what kinds of sinners made their way there. From there you could learn about the other hells or the concept of reincarnation. Or you could go back to the game. In fact, the Encyclopedia can be used entirely by itself, without ever opening the game. The CD-ROM can even be used for aspiring speakers of Japanese, since all the encounters have digitized speech, all in Japanese. For the rest of us, Cosmology shows English translations of everything that is said.

Cosmology of Kyoto is frustrating, flawed, and fascinating. The play is slow and deliberate, sometimes outright plodding. Through large parts of the game, players may feel lost and aimless. Interaction is often limited to watching little stories unfold. Accessing screens isn’t always logical or easy. Throughout it all, though, the wonder of the setting and its approach outweighs these irritations. There are too many fascinating things to discover, from haunted houses to backgammon-playing demons.

Ultimately, Cosmology of Kyoto is best viewed as less a game and more a software toy, one of those things you plug in and fiddle with. Once you forget about winning and indulge your curiosity, the CD-ROM’s strength truly shines. There are too many little discoveries to make. You could even use it as a resource for your own role-playing game, borrowing encounters and background. Indeed, the ultimate would be to set a campaign in Kyoto using the CD-ROM as your game world. Almost all the material is there—the box even includes a street map of ancient Kyoto.

So look, forget about winning and explore. What’s the worst that could happen to your character? You die? Reincarnation does give you a certain freedom after all.

Quick Notes

Marathon: First there was DOOM* and it was good. And it was for the PC only. And there was much sadness. Then there was MARATHON* and it was for the Mac. And there was much joy. MARATHON is DOOM for the Mac. Pretty much. Oh, it’s got goofy-looking aliens, and hostages to rescue, and takes place on something that looks like a space station, but the same idea is there. Played solo, it just ain’t DOOM, but MARATHON can network up to eight players. And we all know how easy it is to link Macs together, right?

What’s your opinion?

What is the future direction of role-playing games? What problems do you have with your role-playing campaign? Turn to this issue’s “Forum” and see what others think—then tell us what you think!
RPG International

Order Monday Through Friday, 9am to 5pm using VISA, MC or Discover. Most orders ship UPS Ground within two days of order. Please allow 7 to 10 days for delivery. Shipping 83c/1 item, $5/multiple items.

Buy everything you need to start playing ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventures in one convenient package!

RPG! Revised Starter Kit!
TSR has revised the world's most popular role-playing system -- creating new versions of the PLAYER'S HANDBOOK and the DUNGEON MASTER GUIDE. These expanded and reorganized manuals are a must for every AD&D® player!

Both books have been systematically adapted to make them easier to use, and to provide clarifications and expansions.

Combined with the best-selling MONSTROUS MANUAL®, a set of polyhedral dice, character record sheets, pencils and pencil sharpeners, the Starter Kit provides everything you need to start, or update your AD&D® Game -- TODAY!

RPG International Kits - More Value, More Product!

CD-AUDIO GAMES
MYSSTAR
KARAMEIKOS

FORGOTTEN REALMS
Ruins of the Realms
$24 Ruins of Undermountain 1 & 11
$12 plus Ruins of Myth Drannor
$11
Night of the Vampire
$15
Ravenloft
Reference Kit
$24
Red Steel
$24
Isle of Terror
$24
Lectures of Dr. Van Richten

AD&D® KITS
Basic PC Class Kit
$16
Fighter, Priest, Wizard, Thief
Speciality PC Class Kit
Bard, Ranger, Paladin

Planescape
Module Kit 1
$16
The Eternal Boundary, The Abyss, The Deva Spark

PLAYER'S OPTION® Rolebook
$16
Combat & Tactics

THE FACTOR'S MANIFESTO
$9

CHILLING TALES
$10

CASTLE SITES
$19
SPELLBOUND: THAY, RASHAHEM & AGLAROND

BEYOND THE PRISM
$6

© Designates registered trademarks of TSR, Inc. TM Designates trademarks of TSR, Inc.
Morgan and his band of adventurers strode into the throne room and knelt before the wizened king.

"We have come in answer to your call, milord," Morgan said. "What is this blight your messenger spoke of, and who is behind it?"

The king raised his head and looked Morgan in the eye.

"An evil wizard has thrown a curse upon the land..." he intoned.

"Oh, great, another one," Morgan groaned, rolling his eyes. "What a surprise. Oh, well, what's this one's name?"

One of the biggest keys to great adventure is a really nasty villain, one that players will go out of their way to confront and, with any luck, defeat. In too many games and adventures, however, the villain is nothing but a grocery list of powers and minions, a cardboard cut-out that the players fight because there is nothing better to do with their time.

To fire the players' interest and imagination, a good villain is in order. This villain must be vile enough that the players will want to throw a wrench in his plans even if their characters are not getting paid to do so. But how does one go about making an archvillain that the gaming group will love to hate?

The two key tools for making a genuinely despicable antagonist are fear and hate. As a species, we hate what we fear, and we fear what we hate. If you can create a character the group is afraid of, but despises so much they will still go after him, then you have succeeded in making an outstanding villain.

### Fear

Fear is a good thing. Fear keeps the players on their toes, makes them wring their hands and worry. Real fear helps players suspend their disbelief and identify with their characters. Fear makes for good roleplay.

But fear is elusive in role-playing games. It is very hard to instill fear in players sitting around a table with their friends in a well-lit room. Getting players to scream and jump is nice, but that is just a part of fear's potential. Fear is getting players to worry about what will happen to the characters they value so much, to wonder how they will ever beat their adversary, or to fret when they cannot seem to get out of a sticky situation.

Here are some things villains can do to make your players afraid:

- **Invulnerability.** A good GM makes opponents challenging, but not so tough that the players cannot defeat them. Indestructible villains lead to bored and frustrated players. Every once in a while, though, the group should meet an adversary who is very tough to beat, or who may be stopped only in a certain way. The characters may run like rabbits at first, but just watch them sit down and fiendishly plot their opponent’s demise as soon as they catch their breath.

  For instance, I ran a CHAMPIONS® campaign with a group of malicious heroes known as the Wrecking Crew. They had some tough fights, but they always stomped the bad guys in the end. It became a pattern, and anything predictable is in danger of going stale.

  One day the heroes ran into a group of villains called Anselum Defilus. Anselum Defilus had fewer members than the Wrecking Crew, and the villains were only marginally more powerful. However, through complementary powers and teamwork, Anselum Defilus smoked the heroes like a cheap cigar. Twice. My players hated these villains more than anyone else, mostly because they were afraid of being beaten again. The Wrecking Crew eventually managed to beat Anselum Defilus by tracking down the individual members and pounding them when their friends weren’t around to help.

  Even in the case of nearly invulnerable opponents, the villain must have some flaw or secret vulnerability that allows the heroes to beat the villain; if the villain is truly indestructible, there is no point to playing. Even Smaug, the great dragon in The Hobbit, had a chink in his armor.

- **High Intelligence and Cleverness.** How many times have you seen a monster or master villain described as a “genius,” even though all he does is sit in a tower or dungeon, waiting for the PCs to come and smash the place up?
I've seen this happen much too often, and it is entirely preventable. How is the average GM supposed to run a character who is more intelligent than he is? Simple. Assume that a genius can figure out almost exactly what his opponents (the PCs) are doing at any given time.

What made Grand Admiral Thrawn of Timothy Zahn's Star Wars trilogy such a deadly opponent? An uncanny ability to predict and act on the plans of others through infallible logic and study of the art of his opponents' culture. Zahn wrote Thrawn as a genius so he didn't have to resort to goofy plots and overly-complicated plans.

High intelligence can make a party jumpy and jittery, always wondering if the master vampire has yet again been able to guess their plans and lay a trap. Just like invulnerability, though, a genius villain can become frustrating if taken too far. When the players are just about to give up, let the villain make a mistake. Even geniuses slip up. If the PCs are quick to exploit the mistake, their final plan may succeed.

**Phobias.** If the players are afraid of something in real life, use that fear to your advantage. By this I don't mean locking people in dark rooms or dumping live spiders on the gaming table. However, villains who embody or play on your players' personal fears will strike a chord.

Maybe one of your players has a fear of snakes (“Snakes. Why did it have to be snakes?”). Send the party up against the snake cult from *Conan the Barbarian*, or the Children of Yig in *Call of Cthulhu*. If the PCs are captured, drop them all into a pit full of venomous snakes, then describe the experience in excruciating detail. I guarantee your herpophobic player won't hate any villain more than rotten snake worshippers.

Another way to play on phobias is to introduce a villain with the ability to read minds and generate illusions. Several examples exist in super hero and fantasy games, but the fear these villains engender is often expressed as "temporary damage due to system shock" or some other rules-heavy cop-out. One would imagine that an opponent with this power would be feared, but most players laugh at them because they are not played correctly. These villains can customize the fear for every member of the party and spread the hate around evenly. By really getting into the role and exploiting the players' real-life insecurities and phobias, you achieve maximum gaming impact. Play it to the hilt.

Remember to keep it tasteful, though. Some people have such strong phobias that even role-playing against the objects of their fear is too much. If you know or find out one of your players has such a strong phobia, be mature and leave it alone.

**Insanity.** Many people are afraid of insanity, and for good reason. The insane are not predictable and don’t always mesh with our expectations. They live in a world of their own and play by that world’s rules. In fact, it has become a cliche for villains to be described as insane.

Almost all of Batman’s enemies are insane; that’s why they go to Arkham Asylum instead of jail. They are dark and frightening because their thoughts and actions are unpredictable. Why are the Malkavian Kindred of White Wolf’s VAMPIRE* game and the Black Spiral Dancers of the same company’s WERE-WOLF* game so shunned and feared? Because they are one and all off their rocker.

Homicidal and sadistic impulses are evidence of insanity, not the disease itself. Take your players’ crazy opponents to the outer extremes of the wild, the bizarre, the nonsensical, and the frightening. Remember, the insane follow logic just like anybody else, but it is a twisted, private logic. If the PCs can figure out what the pattern of their madness is, insanity can be a useful tool to defeating the villain.

**Friends and Power.** George Orwell’s novels *Animal Farm* and *1984* are two of the most frightening books I have ever read. Political power can, in many ways,
be more deadly than magical or physical power.

Let's say the PCs are part of the special law-and-order task force of a fantasy city. They find out Abdeluh the wizard has committed murder and plotted against the king of the city-state. The PCs get their gear together, wander out to the wizard's secret tower where she lives by herself in the middle of nowhere, and fix Abdeluh's wagon. A nice, clean-cut, black and white scenario. Whether they win or lose, the powers of goodness are on their side.

Now, let's just say that instead of Abdeluh living alone in the middle of the desert with only her familiar to keep her company, she lives right in the middle of the city that the players are trying to protect. In fact, Abdeluh is the court wizard, and has done many things to make her popular with the royalty and city as a whole. Besides that, she wields huge political power.

Without casting any spells, Abdeluh can defeat the PCs. She can get them fired, destroy their reputation, send the king's own guards or assassins to arrest or poison them, confiscate their possessions, imprison their loved ones, and generally make them miserable.

Why is this frightening? Because as a GM, you have made it absolutely clear what will happen to the PCs if Abdeluh finds out they know her plans, much less are plotting to act against her. The party will have to skulk in shadows and walk on eggs the whole time they are rushing to save king and country. One wrong move and the jig is up.

Perhaps the party is fighting against the new, totalitarian regime. Or they must stop a very popular political or religious figure, a la George Stillwell of Stephen King's *Dead Zone.*

With politically powerful opponents, the stakes are always high. If the party does not succeed against conventional villains, they can always track the bad guys down again later for a rematch. With popular, high-ranked villains, the PCs get one shot. If they miss, the villain can crush them by picking up the phone. Now that is fear.

**Paranoia.** When the PCs have no one to trust and nowhere to hide, they have much to fear. They will be afraid when the enemy has them surrounded and controls the situation. The party will fear their character's well-being when they doubt the most trustworthy of NPCs.

Why would the PCs fear everybody they meet? Plenty of reasons. The villain may have mind control powers. There may be a fat reward for the party, and everyone wants to cash in. They may be wrongly accused of a heinous crime, as in *The Fugitive.* The town, country, or world has been invaded by aliens like those in *Invasion of the Body Snatchers,* or by the RAVENLOFT® realm's doppleganger plants.

The villains may be numerous and able to shape-change: for instance, the PCs may face a plague of vampires or werewolves. Whip Up fear through the players' paranoia. Burn them again and again and again. Hound them and surround them. Have the party's best-laid plans turn into deadly traps as their closest friends (or the people they thought were their friends) turn them in. Let the master villain repeat verbatim, things the PCs said in private. Rattle the cage, and keep rattling.

The Technocracy of White Wolf's MAGE: THE ASCENSION® game is a powerful and terrible foe because they can replace anyone with a genetically or cybernetically constructed spy. The PCs, literally, have no one they can trust except each other, and even then maybe not.

While they are fighting, the party should hate and fear everyone around them. When the party finally beats the villains, the players should feel the weight of paranoia lift from their chests. Horror Show. Most people know fear from the usual horror books and movies: dark nights, strange noises, supernatural creatures, and so on. In certain sessions when everyone is in the right mood, those tired standbys can actually work, and boy, is it a lot of fun. Just like phobias, use whatever frightens the players the most. If your players are big fans of Clive Barker, throw in bizarre,
Heinous Crimes. Villains, as a group, are people who are expected to do very nasty, despicable things. Things no one would even think of doing. Things that make villains less than human, that make them a blight on society.

A few times I have played in games where the villains did nothing terribly wrong. Every time I run across an adventure where the main bad guy is a bandit chief or something. Now, what player is going to get angry about a guy who steals from merchants?

Make your villains memorable as the meanest of mean, the lowest of low. The bad guys should torture peasants, burn crops, spread lies, ruin reputations, release plagues, and steal candy from babies. Because role-playing is a game, it takes more to upset the players than it would take in real life. A villain must do something very, very bad for the players to care whether he gets his just desserts or not.

Bring it Home. Try naming a player who truly, honestly gets upset when an evil wizard curses the land, or steals a king’s powerful magical item. Go ahead, try.

Now, name a player who gets upset when the wizard casts a curse on their characters, or steals their most powerful magical items. A PC who would not blink an eye to watch an entire city burn down might gnash his teeth at the sight of his own house on fire.

Unless your players are all excellent role-players and the whole group is an order of paladins, no one cares when the villain does mean stuff to other people. It just gives the PCs an excuse to beat him up. When the villain’s guns turn to the gaming group, however, watch the temperatures rise. If the villain does something vile to the PCs and they still don’t care, let him keep stealing, bullying, and harassing them until they do. Be malicious until the group is riled up, then keep going.

When the party treks off into the wilderness or flies off into space after the bad guy, they will have a personal reason for seeing the villain brought to justice.

Personal Hatreds. Always keep in mind what upsets the players in real life, and carve your villains to fit that hated image. If your players are concerned about the environment and ecological destruction, dust off the Giant Evil Corporation from any of the cyberpunk games or Pentex from WERE-WOLF: THE APOCALYPSE.

Give your villains the exact qualities that you know your players hate in other people. Arrogance, racism, sexism, closed-mindedness, lying, bullying, selfishness, greed, immaturity, or stupidity can all make the PCs really want to get their hands on that bad guy. Perhaps while their characters are beating up the villain, the players are imagining someone from real life getting their due. If so, you are doing your job as a fiendish GM. That is what escapist entertainment is all about.

Again, be tasteful and mature about playing on your players’ emotions. If a player is upset, hold back on the villain a bit. There’s no point in losing friends by driving players away.

Betrayal. There is one, sure-fire, big gun way to get your gaming group to hate somebody—pull out all stops and betray them in the most heinous manner possible.

If the party rescues the damsel in distress, watch their reaction when she implicates them in crimes, blames them for deaths or failure, or accuses them of being part of a larger plot all along. If the heroes save a reporter from certain death, let the weaselly reporter promptly turn around and expose their secret identities for an easy Pulitzer. Make them find out that their mentor is evil and manipulative, and has been playing them for fools since the beginning of the campaign.

There is nothing, nothing, nothing at all that makes players’ blood boil than a nicely-crafted betrayal. They will stop at nothing to give what they got, to even the score, to serve up a plate of revenge. Hate and fear are best used in conjunction. A single trait to make the players hate or fear the story’s villain will work nicely. Blend two or three together with a strong character and you will have a memorably desplicable villain. Let’s look at some examples.

Why are Nazis such great villains? Because they controlled a totalitarian state with a nearly unbeatable military force and committed unspeakable atrocities in the name of a racist and insane leader. As you can see, the traits mix well.

Try mixing and matching fear and hate ideas. Greed, arrogance, and insanity? Sounds like Batman’s arch-enemy the Joker.

Bram Stoker’s Dracula is another stand-out villain. Dracula was not just a Wallachian knight, he was a cruel and despotic ruler who put both his worst enemies and most loyal followers to the stake by the thousands and dined to the sounds of their tortured screams. Four hundred years later, he traveled to London to kill and possess the women closest to Harker and company. When they struck back, Dracula dodged and tricked them every step of the way, all the while arrogantly flaunting his incredible undead power. As icing on the cake, the whole story drips with the best horror show conventions. Wow, what a villain!

Bring out the best in your bad guys by giving them a style and character all their own. Make each adversary distinctive, sinister and easily recognizable, so the PCs react strongly whenever the villain or his minions show up. A word, a phrase, an image, a modus operandi — these will bring flesh and blood to that cardboard cutout, and make your next NPC a full-bodied, three-dimensional, monstrously evil villain your players will love to hate.
Shadowmasters Prevail

The gods go to war. The Time of Troubles wracks Faerun. The powers of Elminster and Mystra are soon shadowed in darkness. Others must become beacons in the face of the coming doom. It appears that the evil Shadowmasters prevail.

Ed Greenwood
Best-selling author of Elminster: The Making of a Mage

Available at Waldenbooks, B. Dalton Bookseller, and other fine bookstores nationwide.

ISBN 0-7869-0301-8 • Suggested Retail $4.95; CAN $5.95; £4.99 U.K. • TSR #8559 • ™ and ® designate trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. ©1995 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Hear Us Roar!

The July issue of DRAGON® Magazine will contain a special 60-minute audio CD filled with sound effects and music to enhance game play. Included are sample tracks from four new TSR releases: Mark of Amber, Savage Baroines, A Player’s Primer to the Outlands, and A Light in the Belfry. This special edition goes on sale in late June; the CD will also be sent to all subscribers.

A conspiracy is afoot to make the game, supposedly backed by the big-secret lab. No word on a release date; it’s been a long delayed game of intergalactic expansion and conquest, tentatively titled Super Nova*. It will be released this summer.

In more card news, Heartbreaker is also working with Target Games Inc., in conjunction with Target Games in Sweden will be developing a new collectible card game based on last year’s hit film The Crow. They’re also working on a game based on the new James Bond film Goldeneye, due to be released simultaneously with the film’s premiere this fall. It’s probably just a matter of time until we see the Barney card game, folks.

Heartbreaker is also working with Buccaneer Games on a new collectible card game of intergalactic expansion and conquest, tentatively titled Super Nova*. It will be released this summer.

You can send us news, press releases, and announcements using the Internet at TSR.mags@genie.geis.com. We welcome your comments at Rumbles, DRAGON® Magazine, 201 Sheridan Springs Rd., Lake Geneva WI, 53147, U.S.A.

Heartbreaker Hobbies and Games Inc., in conjunction with Target Games in Sweden will be developing a new collectible card game based on last year’s hit film The Crow. They’re also working on a game based on the new James Bond film Goldeneye, due to be released simultaneously with the film’s premiere this fall. It’s probably just a matter of time until we see the Barney card game, folks.

Heartbreaker is also working with Buccaneer Games on a new collectible card game of intergalactic expansion and conquest, tentatively titled Super Nova*. It will be released this summer.

In more card news, Mag Force 7 will release a collectible card game based on the best-selling CD-ROM computer game Wing Commander III, Heart of the Tiger* (which featured Mark Hamill, among others). Designed by Don Perrin, the man behind the Star of the Guardians* card game, and former TSR designer Jeff Grubb, the game cards feature photo-realistic paintings of the computer game’s Hollywood stars. The game will be sold in a single-deck format and will be available this summer. Rumor has it that Mark Hamill will be Mag Force’s guest at this year’s GENCON Game Fair.

Acclaim Comics will publish two new comic books this summer. The first is a MtG* comic called Fallen Empires*. The comic, written by Jeff Gomez and Kevin Maples, incorporates the MtG* game system into the storyline and focuses on the foreshadowing of events found in the Fallen Empires* expansion set.

Jeff Gomez is also writing The City Knights*, a comic series set in the heart of New York City’s 1970’s punk scene. The City Knights is penciled by Val Mayerik and will feature covers by game industry veteran Timothy Bradstreet.

Andrew Greenberg, developer and creative engine guiding White Wolves VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE* RPG, announced he is leaving White Wolf to join HDI, an Atlanta computer game company. HDI is best known for the games Hammer of the Gods* and Merchant Prince*.

White Wolf will release the fifth and final volume of the Storyteller series early, unlike previous Storyteller games, all of which premiered at the GEN CON® Game Fair. The Changeling: The Dreaming* RPG is due out in June, with gamebooks and a novel to follow later in the year. The game uses Cantrip Cards as a supplemental magic system and feature artwork from Brian LeBlanc and Tony DiTerlizzi.

Board Enterprises will finally release The Book Of Wishes, a long delayed supplement for the Legend Quest* game system. This is one of the largest spell books ever released for a role-playing game; it adds four new spell classes to the game and contains information on the nature of magic and how it works. The book will be available in July.

Spectrum Holobyte announced that their Star Trek: The Next Generation “A Final Unity” computer game for PC CD-ROM will be available sometime this summer. The game incorporates full 3-D simulation, five major worlds with eight stars, and approximately 15,000 lines of dialogue spoken by actors, including eight principals from the TV series.

Gold Rush Games has hired Chris Avellone, sometime DRAGON Magazine author, as an assistant editor. Chris will be working on The Gamer’s Connection*, a quarterly gaming magazine, and will also be involved with game design and book editing. Good luck, Chris!

In more magazine news, Steve Jackson Games has named Scott Haring as managing editor. Scott will continue to edit Pyramid* magazine and supervise the editorial and production staff at the company. Scott announced that beginning with the May/June issue, Pyramid will expand to 96 pages and add more color. The new issue will also feature two preview cards from WotC’s newest MtG* supplement, Ice Age*. Games Magazine is entering the world of fantasy game conventions in a big way at ORIGINS ’95 convention in Philadelphia on July 13-16. Games will be joining forces with the Live/Wire Conductor Corps, the group that puts on the Safe House and Star Trek interactive game events at the GEN CON Game Fair, to debut The Maze of Games. This event will turn the entire ORIGINS convention hall into a giant maze of complex puzzles and fantasy characters. Players will search through a multi-level maze to find an evil wizard’s treasure.

Wizards of the Coast’s Alter Ego Design Group hopes to redefine roleplaying with a new game system called EVERYWAY*. The game promises to introduce some new concepts to gaming, including the use of images to guide game play. EVERYWAY is set in the mythical worlds of legend and fairy tales. Players use “Rimage” cards to create characters while gamemasters use them as springboards from which to launch adventures. In addition to the Rimage cards, the game also uses a Fortune Deck, rather than dice, to determine the fate of the characters. The game is due out this summer.

*indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc.
In 1993, Wizards of the Coast revolutionized card games with Everway. This summer, WotC’s Alter Ego Design Group will redefine roleplaying with Everway™.

Set in the limitless worlds of fantastic imagination, Everway™ relies on imagery and symbols to create dramatic stories of fate and fortune.

The worlds of Everway™ move under the guidance of primal, metaphysical forces. Humans understand these forces through the Fortune Deck, a set of thirty-six unique, symbolic cards. These cards guide the life of your character and the play of the game.

Everway and Alter Ego are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Wizards of the Coast is a registered trademark. All rights reserved. Artwork courtesy of Jeff Matsuda and Todd Kozlowski © 1993.
Ah, but it was warm, and Mufti eagerly looked forward to reaching the oasis. It was there that he would replenish his waterskins, refresh himself, and water Mandrake. The sturdy war camel had been pushed hard during this chase. Given the freshness of the trail, it seemed likely that it would end soon with finding the woman and child in the oasis. And it was there that Mufti would have to defeat the genie who had stolen the two females; it seemed unlikely in this heat that they would travel during the day.

As Mandrake kept up his steady pace, Mufti pondered the character of his foe. Some genies were known to be cruel and uncaring, but one who stole a noble merchant’s wife and child through enchantment was certainly to be despised. And the fact that this magical opponent could not be seen meant that it would have to be dealt with carefully. But the most grating aspect was the genie’s blatant pride. To leave a note to the husband bragging of the theft had to be the height of vanity. Did not the Loregiver teach that the intolerant who mock those beneath them shall choke on their own self-righteousness? Did not the Loregiver teach that the intolerant who mock those beneath them shall choke on their own self-righteousness? This genie apparently felt no guilt about violating Her teachings, and that, above all else, was a threat not only to the family in this matter, but to all inhabitants of the land. Yes, Mufti concluded, this genie would have to be destroyed.

Which was why the merchant Suleman had sent for a faris, one who would not only undertake the mission without fear, but one who would destroy the magical thief and return Afta and her daughter without any thought of despoilment. Mufti had volunteered readily along with several others of his class, but Suleman had chosen him—due, no doubt, to Mufti’s greater accomplishments and his carefully cultivated reputation for purity of heart.

Just on the horizon the warrior spotted the dim outline of the oasis. He stopped, mopped the sweat from his brow with the sleeve of his aba, and concentrated. Yes, it was the oasis, not a mirage. While surprise would have been an advantage, in the end either Mufti’s skills at fighting blindly would prevail or they would not. Fate would decree the result.

Yet one should not tempt Fate sorely, the warrior reflected, and he commanded Mandrake to kneel. After dismounting, he kept his eyes shifting about for any telltale signs of an approaching unseen enemy. He drained what was left in one of his last waterskins and kept looking. But there was nothing that gave any indication of an invisible enemy anywhere. No sudden sitting of the sands, no break in the heat waves, no sound, nothing. Well, oh magical one, you want me fully clad, eh? So be it. My thirst for water is now quenched. Now my hunger for justice must be satisfied. Mufti reached among the bundles secreted on Mandrake and unlivered a carefully wrapped heavy package. Untying the knots, he took out a shirt of fine steel chain mail and, after a few quick glances all around, he put it on, suspecting that now would be a prime time for the genie to strike. But nothing happened, a little to his disappointment. Had the genie suddenly rushed in, it would have discovered that Mufti had grasped a sharp dagger concealed within the armor and had kept it in his hand the entire time, ready for instant use. The warrior sighed. Ah well, the genie apparently wanted him to come to the oasis. He pondered the matter some more. Since the wife and child probably would not remember the details of the fight once the enchantment was lifted, there was no sense in taking a chance. He reached into one of Mandrake’s bags and pulled out a finely crafted bandolier that he slid over his chest and tightened. In it were three finely honed daggers, each one having a sunburst nicely etched into its blade, and they were joined by the fourth that had been hidden in the chain shirt.

All along Mufti had worried about being ambushed by his invisible opponent, but the genie now giving him the opportunity to get fully protected and armed was unsettling. All during this chase, it had not made the slightest appearance—no observations, no tracks, nothing. To be sure, everyone Mufti had questioned had seen the woman and child, and their tracks were quite visible once he had picked them up. But no one had seen anyone (or thing) with them. Perhaps the genie could fly and be invisible, an uncomfortable thought that caused him to scan the sky as well as the ground.

There—up above was a bird of some sort lazily circling. Peering intensely, Mufti finally recognized it, a desert owl up looking for a desert rat or snake for a mid-afternoon feast. Hmm . . . could it be the genie in disguise? Mufti rebuckled his weapons belt nonchalantly, keeping his head turned just enough to keep the owl in sight, but it made no move toward him. Perhaps it lived in the oasis and felt disturbed by the genie’s presence?

Certainly the owl would not have been uncomfortable with Suleman’s wife, Afta. From everything he had heard from the farmers in the river valley, she was a
kindly lady, a kahina who had stopped along the way to cure a diseased oxen, share her water with an overheat farmer, and set the broken leg of a boy who had fallen from an apple tree. She had even spent an entire day with a village, instructing them how to better irrigate their fields. So strange that the genie would have allowed her to do so, or perhaps it was that magical being’s way of sneering at any pursuit by allowing such a clear trail. The latter was the more probable reason—otherwise it could have just taken the wife and daughter in its arms and spirited them all away, Mufti mused.

But Suleman’s words of warning still remained with the faris. Atta was powerful in her own right and the magical garment the genie had placed on her, a veil of some sort, could make her a dangerous opponent as well. The upset husband had been most insistent; above all Mufti must remove the veil and bring it back along with wife and daughter. He had given the warrior a potion, one that he said would put the kahina and her daughter in a deep stupor. It was necessary, he said, because there was no telling what would happen or what the desert priestess would say once the veil was removed. Better to drug them. Mufti had suggested to Suleman that he simply destroy the veil on the premise the genie had placed on her, a veil of some sort, could make her a dangerous opponent as well. The upset husband had been most insistent; above all Mufti must remove the veil and bring it back along with wife and daughter. He had given the warrior a potion, one that he said would put the kahina and her daughter in a deep stupor. It was necessary, he said, because there was no telling what would happen or what the desert priestess would say once the veil was removed. Better to drug them. Mufti had suggested to Suleman that he simply destroy the veil on the premise that destruction of the enchanting item would negate the charm, but the fat merchant had replied quickly, “No, just bring it back. I would give it to the College of Wizardry for their research and use.”

Mufti unpacked his steel helmet from another bag and strapped it in place, then untied the shield carefully secured to Mandrake’s saddle. His final steps were to pull out the carefully slung lance, then remount his camel. A few nudges in the side got the beast up and trotting toward the oasis. Time to get this done and over with. At least the sun was to his back. Still there was no sign of the genie; even the owl had flown away. Mufti entered the oasis unopposed.

It was a fine place with a clear pool of sparkling water surrounded by numerous date and palm trees, and most of the ground was covered by a nice mat of green grass. There were several piles of rocks and boulders here and there. Mufti had been to this haven three times before in his travels, and it looked as normal and as peaceful as before.

Except for the girl who sat by the pool. She was dressed in a fine abaya and sat cooling her feet in the water, her sandals beside her. Laying a few feet away was a spear, another abaya, a wooden case with a handle, and another, slightly larger pair of sandals. The girl looked at Mufti as he trotted up, and he was taken aback—the dark eyes behind the veil showed no surprise, relief, or fear—only a penetrating curiosity. It must be the daughter, Fatira, he decided—her body was far too unshaped and young (about ten years old) to be that of the mother. But where was the mother? And, above all, where was the genie? Mufti kept one suspicious eye on the pool. The girl just stared at him.

“Little one, where is your mother?” he finally asked.

“Off,” was her only reply.

“Off? Off where? And where is your abductor?”

The girl cocked her head, her eyes looking confused, then asked in return, “Our ab-du—our what?”

“The one who took you and your mother away. Come, you can trust me, I am here to take you back to your father,” the warrior replied, looking all around for any sign of danger. But all he saw was the owl again, fifty paces away sitting upon a boulder, busily tearing something apart and eating its fill.

The girl got to her feet, put her hands on her hips, and gave him a piercing look—“You mean to take me and Mother back? To my wonderful, loving father, who only talks about how he can’t wait for a few more years until he sells me? If I were you, I would leave before Mother comes back, mercenary! She promised me we would never return! Now you just better go away before she gets back!” With that, she picked up the spear and pointed it threateningly.

The large war camel snorted and grumbled—it was not smart to make such a display to his master—but Mufti kept a mercenary! She promised me we would never return! Now you just better go away before she gets back!” With that, she picked up the spear and pointed it threateningly.

The large war camel snorted and grumbled—it was not smart to make such a display to his master—but Mufti kept a mercenary! She promised me we would never return! Now you just better go away before she gets back!” With that, she picked up the spear and pointed it threateningly.

The large war camel snorted and grumbled—it was not smart to make such a display to his master—but Mufti kept a mercenary! She promised me we would never return! Now you just better go away before she gets back!” With that, she picked up the spear and pointed it threateningly.
to life like writhing snakes, and his arm was knocked aside. Then the warrior found himself wrapped tightly by a thick trunk, which wound around his body and over his face. What in the name of Kor— but he thought no more as the breath was squeezed out of him and he blacked out. The last thing he heard was the hyenas shrieking in panic. They were laughing no longer.

“Are you all right?”

Mufti shook his head slowly, groaned, and opened his eyes.

Kneeling over him was a woman in a plain tan aba, her nose and mouth covered with the strangest veil he had ever seen. It seemed to be made of light brown feathers tightly woven together. Her eyes were dark and curious just like the girl’s had been, and Mufti suspected that if the veil were removed, the face would be beautiful. Her hands, elegant but strong looking, tightly woven together. Her eyes were dark and curious just like the girl’s had been, and Mufti suspected that if the veil were removed, the face would be beautiful. Her hands, elegant but strong looking, offered a cup. He grunted his assent and sat up to drink—only to be reminded of his ankle by a blinding flash of pain. Despite his training he gasped and nearly fainted.

“Here, drink this, it will help the pain,” she said. “It is all I can do until I regain my spells.”

Breathing shallowly (his chest hurt too!), Mufti sipped, then gulped from the cup. A sweet taste, far better than he expected. “My thanks,” he croaked, “but why waste the poison, lady? Certainly the genie will kill me for slaying his beast?”

She looked at him curiously, and started to answer, but then saw there was no need. The potion had done its work as the warrior slumped to the ground unconscious.

Suleman al Fataq stretched, yawned, and belched loudly. One of the harem girls woke up, wrinkled her nose, and closed her eyes again, pretending to be asleep. Then lumbered off to the eating room. Maybe, thinking, he plopped a few into his mouth. Chewing blissfully, he said, “You destroy the genie? Where did you find it? Why did you not be broken from my oath.”

Suleman and stated dryly, “I don’t know where the story so I shall finish it. I did not believe you insisted on hearing the story so that’s quite all right, Suleman,” Mufti said, holding up his hand, signaling refusal. “In a way, I am already on my next mission.”

“Watch,” asked the merchant stupidly. “After she saved me, Afta told me the most incredible story. She indicated that she was a slave to her husband who had power over her by keeping her veil, the one I have just given back to you. She also said that as long as the veil was parted from her, the holder became her master. And she said that her current master, you, Suleman, inflicted atrocities upon her and her daughter too unmentionable to name.”

“That is none of your business, faris!” roared Suleman, waddling from the couch, and shaking his finger. “You agreed to this mission and swore your word to accomplish it! Nothing can change that! Now, get out!”

That is exactly what I told her, Suleman,” replied Mufti soothingly, holding his hands open while remaining seated. “Even though she had saved my life, even though she endured the mountain mount back to health, and regardless of the fact that her husband might be cruel and inhumane, I advised her that I could not be broken from my oath.”

Suleman relaxed a little, and nodded. “Good. Then we are agreed that what happens in a man’s house is his own business. Well, you may be on your way.”

“Well, if you please, remain,” the warrior stated flatly. “You insisted on hearing the story so I shall finish it. I did not believe her until I put the pieces together. There was no genie, there never was. The note
COMING SUMMER ‘95!

Ancient Greeks named the creatures that brought art across dimensional boundaries. Collectively, they were known as muses, and in myth, each held dominion over a specific talent. In reality each muse was an entrance to a parallel universe, and mortals with courage and vision found their way in. If they survived, the art and knowledge they brought back enriched and advanced mankind.

Two well known explorers of these alternative realities are BORIS VALLEJO and JULIE BELL. Their art speaks volumes about the mystical characters, nightmare creatures and heroic warriors they encountered on inter-dimensional journeys.

The HYBORIAN GATES card game brings this fantastic collection of art to life.

Players collect and create special decks which pit magic against technology, or vehicles against monsters, or any combination of powers unique to the six races included in the starter sets. Controlling powerful vortex gates, players project heroes, monsters and troopers to battle for control of parallel universes.

Infinitely expandable, HYBORIAN GATES is the new generation in collectible card games.
was a hoax, similar to the tricks you perform on your competitors, and I remember you had me dine with you when we first talked. It is apparent to me now that you probably put something into my drink or my food to get me to believe such an incredible tale. Once I had agreed to the mission and given my word to complete it, you knew that something like this could happen. Thus, you gave me a potion to keep her and her daughter drugged."

"Yes," grinned Suleiman, "but she is my wife, and an oath is an oath, whether by contract or by marriage. We have no further need for your services, faris, so if you please?" and he pointed toward the back door that led to the alley.

"Of course," Mufti stated, and he got up to leave, but then added, "but I did make an oath to her as well that you need to know about. I promised her that upon completion of my contract to you that I would ask that you release her from the vows of the marriage you have forced upon her by possession of this veil, and I do so now. You know that she is not only a creature of the wild, but a caring person who mistresses the land and its people. Her knowledge is great, and her ability to render assistance is considerable. Why keep her in this gilded cage when her knowledge and learning could be shared with the people? Please, Suleiman, go to the qadi with her and declare that this marriage should be dissolved. She will agree readily and it will be done. You will have done a great service to her, yourself, and the Land. She will want none of your property. What say you?"

Suleiman laughed heartily and long. He fell back on his pillow and coughed, and it creaked dangerously. Tears came to his eyes and he slapped his fat knees. Then he sat up and cried, "You self-righteous donkey! She is mine, I captured her fairly, I know she would. Ah, what a wonderfully independent creature!"

"Independence!" snorted the grandfather. "If Kor could reveal total knowledge to me, I suspect the Old One would tell me that my grandson’s lust for independence, especially being freed from keeping the garb of a faris, was the real motivation behind this incident!"

Mufti smiled. "Oh exalted one, I believe Kor speaks through your lips as he has for many years. Yes, being a faris was getting tiresome. Please tell me that I do not have to continue."

"Ha! You made your own wish come true, did you not? The city is still in an uproar over the killing of the fat toad and his six guards by a faris! How could you pose as one now? Mufti al Kaban will be searched for by mercenaries and bounty hunters all the way to the Isle of the Elephant."

"Ah, you are wise, grandfather," cooed Mufti.

"And you are impudent! But," he added with softness in his voice, "you are one of our best, and it is indeed time for a change. I think you should learn to cut hair and trim beards. There are certain people in Huzuz we want to keep track of, those who seem to be, well, unfriendly to the scholars of Kor’s mosque for reasons yet to be divulged. Are you interested?"

"Exalted one, I am yours to command," replied Mufti, bowing.

"Very well, go out and talk to Latifa. She will teach you the ways of the barber and brief you on your new background and mission. May the knowledge of the Old One protect you on this, your new life."

"Yes, grandfather," replied Mufti, bowing again, and he left the tent.

The old man laid back on the pillows in his tent and looked at the deed again. Justice had been done and there would probably be a day when the bird maiden could be called upon to return a favor. And what a wonderful home Mufti had procured. Posing as a faris for five long years, he had brought in much useful information. It would be interesting to see how well he would do in the Grand Bazaar of Huzuz posing as a enterprising barber. As a faris, Mufti had to rely on his brawn and fighting skills. This new role would require a lot more wits. If he did well, it would probably be time to consider even greater things for him among the Wrath of the Old. Yes, with followers such as Mufti, the future of the Order always would be bright with the blood of those who opposed it.

The Grandfather of Assassins smiled happily, looked at the deed again, and reached for a pear.

Notes
1. The bird maiden is a creature unique to Zakhar, the Land of Fate. It is always female, just like the swanmaying living in the northern lands of Toril, and in some respects quite similar to that creature. Like a swanmaying, a bird maiden may shapechange, into a variety of bird forms, depending upon her level.

   There are other differences between swanmays and bird maidens. A swanmaying is a ranger while in human form, while a bird maiden is a kahina, with all of the powers of that class (See Arabian Adventures). Another important difference is that swanmays are always good-aligned, while a bird maiden may be of any alignment. Most bird maidens (80%) are of neutral alignment, while 10% are good and 10% are evil. Whatever the alignment, it always has a neutral tendency (i.e., neutral good, true neutral, or neutral evil). It is rumored that evil bird maidens are able to shapechange into ravens, blood hawks, and giant vultures.

2. Good and neutral bird maidens see themselves as protectors of living things, in line with the tolerance to help and teach those who respect the land. Their protection applies to sentient beings as well, in line with the tolerance extended to all by the teachings of the Loregiver. Hence, a bird maiden would teach irrigation to farmers to help their crops grow, but she would ensure that the system would not harm the lake or river life being used as a water source.

3. The power of a bird maiden resides in a shawl, veil, or other significant object of clothing that is made of feathers. This
For three million years, the human race has been
at the top of the evolutionary ladder.

SPECIES
Nothing lasts forever

A MasterBook Game

Available now from West End Games

© 1995 United Artists Pictures Inc. All Rights Reserved. Licensed by MGM/UA Licensing and Marketing.

MasterBook is a trademark of West End Games Ltd.
Deal me in: A look at collectible card games

If you haven’t noticed the rise of collectible card games... well, how are things on Mars, anyway? In the wake of the MAGIC: THE GATHERING* game, card games have been multiplying like promises in a Presidential campaign. A few anxious readers have wondered if the popularity of card games foretells the death of role-playing, since, after all, gamers have only so much money to spend, and they seem to be squandering it all on booster packs. And they wonder if maybe they should be investing a few more dollars themselves, considering the skyrocketing prices of hard-to-get-cards.

Well, relax. Role-playing is here to stay. If you need convincing, try counting heads at the next GEN CON® game fair. Card games pose no more threat to RPGs than video games or computer games or dart boards. It’s a big hobby, and there’s room for everyone. And if you plan to get rich from the rare MAGIC cards you’ve stashed away in a shoe box, you’d probably be better off with mutual funds. Collectibles whose scarcity is determined by the manufacturers rather than the passage of time have a way of losing their value pretty fast. Just ask collectors of 1980s comic books.

As to the play value of card games, there are a few gems and a lot of junk—in other words, they’re no different from RPGs. If I were reviewing MAGIC (as Allen Varney did in DRAGON® issue #201), I’d give it maybe five pips, good but not spectacular. Though the trading card concept qualifies as a stroke of genius, the rules themselves are serviceable but hardly revolutionary, indebted not only to games like DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®, but also to the COSMIC ENCOUNTER® and RUNEQUEST® games. Then again, it’s easy to pick on pioneers. Someday, I bet the current version of MAGIC will look as crude as the D&D did in its first incarnation. (Anyone remember those cheesy little pamphlets?)

If you’re ODed on MAGIC, consider the alternatives discussed below. All are as engaging as MAGIC and just as easy to learn. Best of all, they won’t bankrupt you. A couple of starter decks and a few booster packs—an investment of $20 or so—will give you all the cards you need to get your feet wet.

Two caveats:

First, while reading the reviews, keep in mind that your mix of cards might not be the same as mine. Just because I grumble about the lack of Enterprise crewmen in my STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION® game deck doesn’t mean you’ll have the same experience. You might find Captain Picard in your first booster. (Don’t count on it.)

Second, though I appreciate a good-looking deck, I have next to no interest in cards as collector’s items. I’m aware, of course, that some players invest vast sums of money for so-called “killer decks” to enhance their chances of victory. I like to win as much as the next guy, but the day I shell out a hundred bucks for a Black...
Lotus card for my MAGIC set will coincide with the day I sprout wings and fly to the moon. Besides, I've got better things to spend my money on—like role-playing supplements.

**STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION**

**game**

* Starter deck: 60 cards, rules booklet
* Booster pack: 15 cards
* Decipher, Inc. $9.50 (starter), $3 (booster)
* Design: Tom Braunlich and Rollie Tesh
* Graphic design: Don Burns
* Product management: Ross Campbell and Warren Holland

I am not now, nor have I ever been a fan of the *Star Trek: the Next Generation* TV show. Though I liked the Shatner/Nimoy original, the sequel struck me as a dreary rehash, burdened by recycled plots and dust-dry characters (you know you’re in trouble when the android has more personality than the humans). My enthusiasm for the game, then, has nothing to do with a series that means about as much to me as *I Dream of Jeannie*.

My wife, on the other hand, is a die-hard *Trek*-ster, who inexplicably prefers Picard’s shiny dome to her own husband’s luxurious locks. She spent the better part of an afternoon ogling the 300-plus cards acquired for this review, ooh-ing and ahh-ing over the scenes from her favorite episodes. Not me—I barely know Mr. Riker from Mr. Rogers.

But I know a good-looking deck when I see it, and this one’s terrific. In addition to a crisp image, each card features a paragraph of description, a summary of the pertinent rules, a set of statistical icons, and an eye-pleasing color field to indicate the affiliation (blue for the Federation, green for the Romulans, and red for the Klingons). A typical starter deck provides a good mix of all categories—including Personnel, Outpost, Mission, Ship, and Equipment—though in four starters I found only a single familiar face from the Enterprise (Deanna Troi). That’s not a big deal in the context of the game, but if you’re a die-hard like Mrs. Swan, you may be disappointed.

Each player begins by selecting six Mission cards from a deck of 60 cards. Some Missions involve problems on planets (a medical emergency on Beta Lankal, a scoutrship rescue on Galordon Core), others describe assignments in deep space (an investigation of a plasma streamer, a study of a time distortion in the Typhone Expanse). After the players arrange the Mission cards side by side to create a 12-card Spaceline, they conceal Dilemma cards (a ship-munching Microbiotic Colony, a radioactive relic from the Methar-Promillian war) under the Missions they think their opponents are most likely to investigate.

By deploying cards from his hand, a player assembles crews, chooses weapons, and launches starships. He then moves a Ship card along the Spaceline until it arrives at a Mission he wishes to undertake. He flips over the first Dilemma, dispensing with it if he has right mix of Personnel and Equipment. If he fails, he can try again later with a different Ship or a new group of Personnel. When he resolves all the Dilemmas associated with a particular Mission, he earns a fixed number of points. Players continue launching Ships and attempting Missions until one accumulates 100 points and wins the game.

What distinguishes *STAR TREK* isn’t just its streamlined game system, but its remarkable simulation of the elements of a good SF adventure. Say, for instance, the Federation player hears rumors of an ancient civilization site on Barradas III (represented by the Plunder Site Mission card). He deploys the U.S.S. Excelsior and a crew of five officers (by playing the corresponding cards from his hand). Once the ship is orbiting the planet, he beams down an away team of three officers, keeping two officers on board in case of a Romulan attack (a Romulan ship lurks on a Mission card two spaces away). Alas, the officers are attacked by a Minotan Bowman (the first Dilemma card). Fortunately, the away team includes the medical and security officers needed to deal with the Bowman (and dispatch the Dilemma). Then, representatives of a matriarchal society appear (Dilemma #2) and refuse to cooperate with the male officers; the Federation team must return to their outpost to pick up more females (new Personnel cards). En route, however, they’re attacked by the Romulans . . . Interrupt and Event cards, functioning as subplots, add further complications. Events are played as part of a normal turn. Interrupts may be played at any time, even in the middle of an enemy action. Both types of cards translate incidents from the TV series into rule modifications. In the series, for instance, sometime a character attempted to transform the U.S.S. Enterprise into an ancient temple and grounds by rearranging its matter.” In the game, the Masaka Transformations card requires the opponent to discard his entire hand and draw a new one. If a Klingon dies in an away team battle, the Klingon Right of Vengeance card doubles the strength of the survivors. Events and Interrupts move the game along at a breathtaking pace: A male officer is suddenly whisked away for a rendezvous with his girlfriend, the end of a Mission leads to an enemy confrontation, an unexpected encounter sends a ship careening to the other end of the galaxy.

Though the rules contain no serious flaws, Mr. Spock might raise an eyebrow at the lapses in logic. Some of the Missions must be undertaken by specific affiliations—why can’t the Federation assist with the fever outbreak on Nahmi IV and why can’t the Romulans hunt for artifacts on Barradas III? The basic rules allow opposing sides to use the same Personnel cards, meaning that Lt. Worf might have to battle himself. Combat involves little more than a comparison of weapon and shield ratings: straightforward but not particularly dramatic. And the starships seem to be made of Kleenex; if a ship loses two battles in the same turn, it’s gone.

But these shortcomings are easy to overlook, considering the loving attention given to virtually every aspect of the *Trek* universe. Romulan and Klingon ships may use cloaking devices to move unseen. TriColor cards boost the science aptitude of Engineers. Archvillan Q might pop up to erect a force field grid. And chicken-hearted captains may substitute holographic characters for flesh-and-blood crew members, handy in an environment with belligerent natives.

**Evaluation:** Ingenious, gorgeous, and addictive, *STAR TREK* has screwed up my family. Attracted by the nifty graphics, my three-year-old daughter confiscated the Static Warp Bubble card and refuses to give it back. At the local game shop, I caught my wife—a college instructor, a pillar of the community—elbowing aside 12-year-olds to get her hands on the latest shipment of boosters. As for me, I’m staying up late to catch reruns of the series—how can I sleep when I don’t know what that Masaka thing’s all about? (Ugh, anyone have a Picard they wanna trade?) (Information: Decipher Inc., PO Box 56, Norfolk, VA 23501).

**STAR OF THE GUARDIANS**

**game**

* Starter deck: 60 cards, rules folder
* Booster pack: 15 cards
* Mag Force 7, Inc. $9 (starter), $3 (booster)
* Concept: Margaret Weis
* Design: Don Perrin
* Art direction: Margaret Weis

Long-time role-players will remember Margaret Weis as the co-author (with Tracy Hickman) of the first six *DRAGONLANCE* novels and one of the chief architects of Krynn. She’s also produced a shelf-full of books, including the *Star of the Guardians* series, from which this game derives. Unlike the novels, which feature a host of imaginative characters and doodads, the game concentrates almost exclusively on combat. That may be a letdown for fans of the novels, but war garners—especially those dissatisfied with the simplistic space battles of *STAR TREK*—should be delighted.

Though few of the cards are suitable for framing, they’re attractive and user-friendly. Each consists of a colorful illustration, a block of text, and a some simple icons (stars stand for Bombing Factors, humanoid silhouettes for Personality Points). The color field indicates the category (gray for Fate, light blue for Crew). Each starter deck features a good mix of cards, including about 20 Ships, a half-dozen Weapons, and an adequate assortment of everything else. Booster packs add
weird, optional stuff like the Space Rotation Bomb (an Artifact card that forces an opponent to lose half his ships) and the Dark Matter Creatures (a Fate card that absorbs damage from the Space Rotation Bomb). No one can accuse Weis of lacking a sense of humor; one of the Personality cards bears a striking resemblance to a former editor of this magazine.

Nor can she be accused of verbosity. Most cards contain only a line or two of rules, some have no text at all. Where STAR TREK informs us that the Zibalian Class Transport is a merchant vessel used by traders like Kivas Fajo, STAR OF THE GUARDIANS tells us that the Destroyer Escort belongs to the Frey Class, and that’s it (total words: four). The System cards, representing various planets and outposts, aren’t identified at all (total words per card: one—and that word is “system.”). But the generic approach detracts less than one might think. The absence of descriptive text serves—inadvertently perhaps—to focus attention on tactics. In a sense, STAR OF THE GUARDIANS is the card game equivalent of chess, substituting gatling lasers and destroyer escorts for pawns and bishops.

Taking the roles of rival warlords, players compete for galactic dominance by crushing enemy armadas. Each side starts with 25 Power Points, spending points to power up ships. Beginning with six cards drawn from their decks, players deploy System cards (to gain Power Points), then place as many Ship cards as they like in any of five columns (called lanes). Crew, Weapon, Fate, and Damage cards boost the combat effectiveness of Ships. When maneuvered into the proper positions in the various lanes, Ships may attack squadrons, fleets, and Systems, with successful attacks reducing the enemy’s Power Points. When a player reduces his rival’s Power Points to zero, he wins.

Despite a couple of fuzzy mechanics (it took me two game sessions to figure out how to launch squadrons from planetary bases) and an occasional fudging of physical law (with only three ships per lane, this is an awfully small cosmos), the simple rules make for an intense contest. Resource management is a constant challenge; a player can never hold more than six cards, and most actions require spending points from a chronically short supply. Nervy players may try special tactics, such as Running the Flask (which gives a combat bonus to a ship in an outer lane) and Weapon Conduit (allowing all friendly ships to combine attack strengths). With careful planning, a player might be able to pull off a Mind Link, allowing friendly characters to communicate telepathically. Though a typical game eats up the better part of an hour, the outcome usually remains uncertain until the last few minutes—presuming, of course, you’re not playing with a wise guy who’s loaded his deck with killer Artifacts.

**Evaluation:** The high rating reflects my bias for fast, kill-free combat games. Don’t expect a rich universe, a lot of whistles and bells, or personalities you can get to know (most of the characters don’t even have names). But if your idea of a good time is wiping out war machines, welcome to paradise. These starships wither like toy soldiers in a microwave oven, making STAR OF THE GUARDIANS king of the stellar shoot-em-ups. (Information: Mag Force 7, Inc., PO Box 1106, Williams Bay, WI 53191.)

**GALACTIC EMPIRES** game

**Layout**

**Starter deck:** 55 cards, rules booklet

**Booster pack:** 15 cards

**Companion Games** $9 (starter), $2.45 (booster)

**Concept, layout, and design:** C. Henry Schulte

**Writing:** John M. Hammer and C. Henry Schulte

**Art direction:** Richard J. Rausch and Edward P. Beard Jr.

It’s the gas men vs. the crab people for control of the universe!

**Star Wars** meets **Alice in Wonderland** in this science-fiction extravaganza featuring some of the wildest aliens this side of a drive-in movie. The premise: two factions representing a United Nations’ worth of races fight to annihilate each other with starships, monsters, and natural catastrophes. Though the permutations are endless—and I’ve got the boosters to prove it—you can play a credible game with a single deck. GALACTIC EMPIRES ain’t just loopy—it’s cheap, too!

The stylish cards—a bit better-looking than STAR OF THE GUARDIANS, a bit worse than STAR TREK—are less notable for their graphics than for their staggering variety. Along with the expected Ship, Crew, and Equipment cards, we also get Ability, Hazard, Occurrence, Luck, Reaction, Monster, Base, and Terrain cards. The Empire cards alone represent more than a half-dozen races, including the Mechad (electromagnetic technologists), Vektreans (space pirates), Argonians (the gas men), Krebiz (the crab people), and Dragons (big lizards with sharp teeth). My starter deck also included a Warp Funnel, Meteor Shower, and Phaser Eel. Thanks to the judicious use of color, the cards are easy to identify. A field of mottled blue, for instance, designates Argonian vessels, while Krebiz fleets are a dusty beige. The rulebook explains the mechanics in detail, and a lengthy Q&A section addresses most of the ambiguities. Still, the editor could’ve benefited from a few more journalism classes, if only to spare us from sentences like: “Any additional rules, or rules which change when playing a Standard Game or one of the other playing structures defined later are noted within the specific rules for that playing structure.”

**EMPIRES** involves both the prudent deployment of assets and the management of a rather complicated hierarchy of points. Beginning with nine cards, drawn at random, players lay down as much Terrain as they can, which generates the Economy, Supply, Energy, Ammunition, Research, and Repair points needed to power other units and trigger various actions. Ships, for example, require Supply points to operate. Heavy weapons need Ammunition points, Repair points negate Ship damage, Research points destroy monsters. With the right cards (and the right points), players may arm weapons and launch combat fleets. Reaction cards, similar to STAR TREK’s Interrupt cards, may be played at any time to transport a crew from a wrecked Ship or prevent an enemy doctor from curing wounded allies. If a player maneuvers past his opponent’s defenses, he may assault the enemy Sector Headquarters; whoever has the last intact Headquarters wins.

One you get a handle on which points affect which cards—I had a hard time remembering that Research points get rid of monsters—play flows smoothly. The barrage of decisions (do I spend my Economy points to activate the Clipper Frigate, or use them to patch the hole in the Scout Capsule?) keeps both sides focused. The relationship between power and terrain is reminiscent of the best features of MAGIC: THE GATHERING. Special rules, such as the Victory Celebration earned when a player blows up the opposing Headquarters, add an appealing irreverence.

But EMPIRES has a drawback, and it’s a big one. Bookkeeping is a royal pain, not so much because of the amount (though it’s excessive) but because of the method. Nearly every variable must be tracked with dice. You don’t roll the dice; you use them as markers. If a Fleet Freighter suffers two points of damage, a die with its four-pip face showing is placed on the card. If the Freighter’s shield suffers damage (instead of the vessel itself), the result must be noted with a different die. Dice also are used to keep track of Research points, the strength of Mechad electromagnetic fields, and permanent damage (as opposed to temporary damage). We’re talking a lot of dice here, and none come with the game.

**Evaluation:** This one’s a tough call. It’s recommended only if (1) you’re willing to put up with chunks of clunky writing, (2) you don’t mind keeping track of all the points, and (3) you’ve got one or two bags of dice handy. With the freewheeling mythology and dizzying variety of options, you can easily lose yourself in GALACTIC EMPIRES’ goofy pleasures—it’s like diving into a swimming pool of jelly beans. There seem to be no serious problems with the mechanics, nor any clear paths to victory. After a week’s worth of games, I still have no idea which empire has the edge. But I’ve got my money on the crab people.

(Information: Companion Games, PO Box 392, Stamford, NY 12167)
New for Rifts®

Rifts® Undersea

*Rifts® Undersea* creates a fabulous and exciting world as unique and expansive as any *Rifts® Dimension Book™*. Fans may be surprised at the scope of characters, abilities and adventure available to them, both undersea and on dry land.

**Highlights Include:**
- Over a dozen new racial and occupational character classes.
- Ocean magic and the power of Whale Singers™.
- The New Navy — the last survivors of American Empire!
- Underwater bionics, weapons, power armor, bots, subs, and ships, including Triax™ creations!
- D-bee invaders like the Naut’yl, Gene-Splicers, mutants, and the Lord of the Deep.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda and C.J. Carella.
- Art by Kevin Long, Vince Martin, Randy Post and others.
- 160 pages, $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

Rifts® Japan

*Rifts® World Book Eight: Japan* explore the people, magic and power of the Japanese islands (and under the sea below them).

**Highlights Include:**
- Over a dozen new racial and occupational character classes including the Samurai, Ninja, Tech-Ninja, Tanker, Glitter Boy Marine, Tengu Birdmen and others.
- Page after page of new bionics, armor, weapons and equipment.
- Tanks, aircraft, ships, and robots galore!
- The Japanese Republic is a technological power house, while the New Empire has forsaken the “danger” of modern technology; practice the ancient ways and follow the gods. All kinds of world information and adventure.
- Written by Patrick Nowak and Kevin Siembieda.
- Art by Long, Martin, Johnson, Rosema and Zelzenik.
- 200+ pages, $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.

Rifts® T-Shirts

Two new limited edition *Rifts®* T-shirts are available. One features the Dog Pack and the other the *Rifts®* logo. Both are printed white on black, are available in sizes Large, X-Large and XX-Large while supplies last.

Rifts® South America Two

*Rifts World Book Nine: South America Two* explores the wonders and terrors of Peru, the mysteries of the Nazca Lines, an alien defense system, the return of ancient gods, an alien menace and more. Tons of great new characters classes, magic, weapons, armor and equipment.

**Highlights Include:**
- Nearly 20 new O.C.C.s and R.C.C.s.
- The Nazca line maker — an ancient magic rediscovered.
- The return of the Inka Empire. A growing human power led and inspired by the return of the Inca gods.
- The Silver River Republic is a collection of human and D-bee alliances constantly involved in conspiracies, alliances and war.
- War machines that rival Triax! Mutants, demons and gods.
- Written by C.J. Carella.
- Art by Kevin Long, Vince Martin, Scott Rosema and others.
- 160 pages, $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

Rifts® Hardbound Edition

Because the fans demanded it, Palladium Books® has produced a hardcover edition of the *Rifts® RPG*. This deluxe hardbound edition will be available in stores everywhere, the first week of August, and commemorates the fifth year anniversary of *Rifts®* and over 100,000 copies sold of the basic game alone. One of the most popular and epic role-playing games ever published!

- Silver foil stamped cover featuring the *Rifts®* logo on a black, leatherette covers, giving it the appearance of being bound in leather covers.
- High quality production with sewn pages that won’t fall out.
- $32.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.
- Please note that the paperback edition ($24.95) will also remain in print.

Also Coming in 1995

- *Rifts® GM Campaign Manager* is a package of print and computer material to assist Game Masters and players in creating characters quickly and game play even simpler. The package will include a Game Master Screen, a comprehensive index for nearly a dozen *Rifts®* books, a book of new adventures and computer generation.

  The comprehensive computer segment (a Windows driven program for I.B.M. systems) will provide quick character generation (and personal modifications), random character generation, character sheets, references, campaign tracker, the index and tons of other cool stuff. Estimated price: $29.95

- *Rifts® Juicer Uprisings* by Kevin Long and Kevin Siembieda. The mysteries of the Great Lakes, more data and weapons about Northern Gun and the Coalition States, plus Juicers, the Super Juicer, rebellion, and adventure.

- *Rifts® New West and Rifts Lone Star* by Kevin Siembieda. New West will explore the wilds of the North American West and South West. Ancient native American gods, demons, spirits and surprises await. As for the infamous CS Lone Star Complex, it is far more than anybody suspects — including the Coalition States, who think they control its incredible resources. They are wrong.

Available at stores everywhere!
NEW WORLD ORDER* game

Starter deck: 55 cards, rules booklet
Booster pack: 15 cards
Steve Jackson Games $10 (starter), $2.25 (booster)

Design: Steve Jackson
Graphic design: Derek Pearcy, Jeff Koke, and Monica Stephens

The game that won’t go away, ILLUMINATI arrived in 1982 as a deck of low-budget cards, then spawned a couple of expansion sets, mutated into an on-line supplement (an award-winner, no less). Now it returns as a collectible card game. Somebody’s determined to keep it alive—the Sons of Cthulhu, maybe?

The Sons, along with the Discordian Society and the Gnomes of Zurich, are among the secret conspiracies who, according to ILLUMINATI, run the world. Everyone from Hillary Clinton to Dan Quayle to you and me are pocket change for these power-mad big shots, not an unreasonable premise if you’ve ever been jerked around by a personnel office or the IRS.

The cards, twice the size of their 1982 counterparts and infinitely more attractive, come in three basic flavors. Group cards, colored red, represent prey: personalities (Nancy Reagan; Elvis), places (Vatican City, Silicon Valley), and entities (Big Media, International Community Conspiracy.) Groups are also assigned alignments, such as Liberal, Conservative, Violent, and Weird, to indicate their friends and foes. Liberal Hillary, for instance, is the natural enemy of Conservative Nancy. Resource cards, colored violet, include weapons (Hammer of Thor, Orbital Mind Lasers) and allies (Mercenaries, Loch Ness Monster). Blue Plot cards represent disasters (Car Bomb, Rain of Frogs) and events (Martial Law, Liberal Agenda). Plots and Resources modify actions of the Groups; the Hammer of Thor boosts the power of any Violent Group, the Liberal Agenda increases Hillary’s chance of clobbering Nancy. Witty writing makes the cards fun to read, and a dose of cynicism makes ‘em bite; anyone who kills Bjorne, the purple Viking dinosaur, earns an extra Plot card “as the thanks of a grateful world.”

A player starts by choosing a conspiracy (like the Sons or the Gnomes) and placing the corresponding card on the table. He draws nine cards from his deck to form his hand, then begins building his Power Structure, a web of Groups and Resources controlled by his primary conspiracy. As the Power Structure grows, so does its strength; the stronger the Structure, the more formidable its attacks. A player wins by eliminating all enemy Illuminati, controlling a specified number of Groups, or meeting the objectives of a special Goal card.

Groups generate action tokens (represented by buttons, coins, or glass stones, not included with the game) that allow the controlling player to attack, use special abilities, or draw additional Plot cards. An attack may be attempted to either control or destroy a Group. To destroy a group, the initiator announces the target, the name of the attacking agent, and whichever of the attacking agent’s associates are eligible to lend a hand. The initiator rolls two six-sided dice (not included); if the result is equal to or less than the difference between the Power rating of the attackers and the Power of the defender, the attempt succeeds and the target heads for the cemetery. An attack to control follows a similar procedure, except the roll must be equal to or less than the difference between the attacker’s Power and the defender’s Resistance. If the attack to control succeeds, the Group becomes part of the winner’s Power Structure.

Incoming and outgoing arrows printed on the Group card show their allegiance within the power structure. When a player takes control of a new Group, he lines up one of its incoming arrows with an outgoing arrow of its new master. Bizarre organizational chains are not only possible but likely. Prince Charles and Saddam Hussein might become lackeys of the phone company. The Moral Minority may recruit Hillary.

Modifiers, alignments, and Plots make the outcomes of attacks uncertain at best. If one of your cards duplicates a Group controlled by an opposing player, the duplicate acts as a “hidden agent,” granting a +10 attack bonus. Linked Groups with identical alignments improve their attack strengths by 4. If Bjorne stays healthy, he generates an extra action token for every Media Group under his command.

Ever-shifting alliances present endless opportunities for treachery. An Assassination card enables the owner to incinerate any personality on the table. Groups requiring too much effort to maintain can be bumped off by their own allies. California giving you trouble? Try a Terrorist NuKe or a Meteor Strike. Better yet, send in Bigfoot.

Evaluation: With its pointed satire and subtle tactics, INWO aims squarely at sophisticated; those who find STAR TREK too demanding need not apply. And owing to the unconventional mechanics, even experienced gamers may have trouble at first. (More examples of play, or a Q & A section like the one from GALACTIC EMPIRES, would’ve helped.) But resolute players who scrutinize the rules and grind their way through a few practice rounds will discover why ILLUMINATI has been so durable. Not only is it an inspired concept, it’s an enlightening treatise on the fine art of backstabbing. What more could you ask from a deck of cards?

Short and sweet
Limited Edition Prints (500 signed & numbered)
CLP0001 - 'Assault on a Clydon Bridge' (this illustration 20x24, 100# Paper)
$39.95
Illustration © 1995
Douglas Chaffee.

Galactic Empires !!!

Galactic Empires is a science fiction trading card game. While in command of Sector Headquarters you conquer terrain, deploy bases, ships, crew and special equipment; and cautiously avoid space monsters, hazards and other occurrences. The objective: Eliminate your opponent's Sector HQs, conquering the sector and eventually the galaxy.

Players choose which empire they will represent: Krebiz, Argonian, Corporation, Mechad, Betaan, Vakrean, Indirian, Dragon, Scorpessa, Clydon, Tufor, and P.O.T. empires. More empires will be added to the game on a regular basis through additional expansion sets.

Game Mechanics: Each player uses his own deck of cards. Basic Game allows two players to use one deck. There can be as many or as few cards in the deck as you wish. Each turn consists of moving the output from your terrain to your bases & ships, playing cards from your hand, firing weapons and playing more cards.

The Cards Themselves: Each card is in dazzling full color from an assortment of different artists and illustrators. Each card has the rules needed to operate that ship, system, crew person, etc.

This card game is deceptively simple to learn. Even non-gamers pick it up quickly. But, more importantly, the game has all the rich flavor and history of the Fat Side of the galaxy, the strategy of spaceship combat and a fantastic science fiction flavor.

This game will be the easiest, most fun way of introducing new players to your unique hobby than anything you've ever tried before. And best of all, you will be able to start play within minutes. Don't be surprised if you find yourself playing Galactic Empires more than anything else!

Call Companion Games for Details: 1-800-49-GAMES or 607-652-9038
Magica, compiled and developed by Slade (R/T), Henson. TSR, Inc., $25 per volume.

These reference books share a diligence on the part of the researchers that borders on the superhuman. The *Encyclopedia Cthuliana*, the more scholarly of the two, contains an alphabetized listing of nearly every entity, cult, and scrap of arcane lore pertaining to H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu Mythos published in the past century. Source material includes the fiction of Ramsey Campbell, Robert Bloch, and Stephen King, as well as scenarios from the CALL OF CTHULHU® game. Inclusion of the latter may offend purists, but as compiler Daniel Harms notes, “nothing in the game is antithetical to the spirit of Lovecraft’s work.” The entries cover everything from the origin of the Shining Trapezohedron to the lineage of Hululquiomzzhah, capped by a year-by-year chronology of the history of the Necronomicon.

The *Encyclopedia Magica*, no less ambitious, lists all of the AD&D magical items from two decades of TSR products—every boxed set, accessory, and magazine article. The entries span three volumes, available individually. I’m looking at volume two, *Decoy Dust* to *Phylactery of Righteousness* (misspelled on the title page), marveling at the diversity. Pick your favorite: hat of stupidity, gloves of the octopus, fountain of dexterity (yikes!). A must for Dungeon Masters who want to spruce up their campaigns, and for every TSR contributor who longs to see his masterpiece immortalized in an upscale format.

*Fianna Tribebook*, by Harry Heckel with Fallon Doherty and John Bridges. White Wolf Game Studio, $10.

Of all the tribes in the WEREWOLF: THE APOLCALYPSE® game, the Fianna are among the most intriguing. Lycanthropic bards, they communicate with songs and have even been known to crack jokes. This player’s reference, number four in the Tribebook series, presents a thorough history of the Fianna and a nice selection of new gifts (like *warp spasm*) but downplays the culture. Where’s the music? Where’s the details about their oral traditions and compositional styles? (Any Fianna symphonies?) And the first-person approach makes for some awkward passages (“... we’re a moody lot. Our passions burn hotter than those of other tribes. Be careful of them, or else they’ll govern you and strip you of your senses.”). Still, designer Harry Heckel keeps the energy level of the text so intense (“There is no greater glory than covering your claws with their accursed blood”), I half-expected the book to jump out of my lap and chase the cat around the room.


Nothing aggravates me more than an RPG adventure with a flabby climax; after slogging through a books worth of fight scenes and dungeon crawls, I want to be dazzled. So Bravo to *The Deva Spark*, a 32-page scenario for the PLANESCAPE™ setting. The final chapter is a knock-out, a sensational blend of surreal characters and obstacles, building to a climax of surprising impact. The rest of the trip’s nothing to sneeze at either, though if I see one more AD&D adventure that starts in a tavern...


This solid collection of creeps for the WHISPERING VAULT® game would be right at home in CALL OF CTHULHU or the drearier realms of the PLANESCAPE multiverse. So vivid is the writing, the pages practically ooze slime: “Upon enter- ing the Flesh, the [Mitel et Abrean]’s fluid form acquires a muddy viscosity, turning it into a thick puddle that moves with terri- ble deliberation.” Also looking for trouble are the corpse-like Locust, whose presence causes meat to rot, and the U’Glaann, a three-armed werewolf with an appetite for entrails. The book also provides complete statistics and a chapter of helpful referee tips (“A bloody death is nasty, but a slow lingering wasting is nastier”). What’s WHISPERING VAULT, you ask? Only one of the smartest, spookiest horror RPGs that ever clawed its way from a crypt. (Information: Pariah Press Inc., 5744 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, IL 60634.)

*Through the Cracks*, by Greg Farshtey, Matt Forbeck, Shane Lacy Hensley, Ron Selend, Ed Stark, and John Terra. West End Games, $15.

I’m not the world’s biggest fan of the SHATTERZONE® game, but I know a good SF adventure when it totters by. Shane Lacy Hensley’s slam-bang “Kipling’s Drift” sends the PCs to a remote asteroid for a rendezvous with virus-infected scavvies. John Terra’s “Corona Incident” involves the investigation of a derelict ship, replete with twitching corpses and disgusting aliens. Though the remaining scenarios in this anthology aren’t as memorable, they’re well-written and easy to run.

*The Gamer’s Connection*, edited by Mark Arsenaualt. Gold Rush Games, $8 for a four-issue subscription, $2 for a sample copy. Published quarterly.

Too many small press publications serve as repositories for whiny editorials and amateur hour fiction that wouldn’t pass muster in an eighth grade English class, which is why *The Gamer’s Connection* comes as a pleasant surprise. The 16-page tabloid is packed with news, features, and reviews, intelligently written and edited. The latest issue, number 22, contains an update on the Small Press Association, an essay titled “Marriage and Gaming,” a generic time travel scenario, and a meticulously thorough convention list (nearly 80 entries). If you miss the glory days of *Space Gamer* magazine, or if *DRAGON* Magazine doesn’t come out often enough to suit your tastes, consider a subscription. At two bucks an issue, it’s a steal. (Information: Gold Rush Games, PO Box 2531, Elk Grove, CA 95759.)

**TERROR** T.R.A.X.™ game: *Track of the Werewolf* and *Track of the Vampire*, by Flint Dille and Buzz Dixon. TSR, Inc., $15 each.

The audio equivalent of choose-your-own-adventure paperbacks, these CDs cast the listener as a hard-boiled private eye on the trail of supernatural bad guys. A Dirty Harry clone handles the narrative, sound effects and mood music set up the encounters, and a sweet-voiced computer sidekick lays out your options. For in- stance, after stumbling into a den of lycan- thropes in *Pack of the Werewolf*, the sidekick says that you may “flee the shack (go to track 5)” or “fight the werewolves (track 8).” Half the fun comes from the over-the-top performances; at one point, we hear a victim on the phone screeching, “You’ve got to help me! I’m changing! I’m going to rip hearts and lungs open!” Because both discs feature the same produc- tion team, and more or less the same type of adventure, you can satisfy your curiosi- ty by buying either. I lean towards *Werewolf*, the one with the lung-ripper. But that might be because of my performance in *Vampire*, which the sidekick matter-of- factly evaluated as “pathetic.”

A former newspaper publisher, rock musician, and medical student, Rick Swan has designed and edited nearly 50 role-playing products. You can write to him at 2620 30th Street, Des Moines, IA 50310. Enclose a self-addressed envelope if you’d like a reply. *indicates a product produced by a company other than TSR, Inc.*

---

**Voice your opinion and make it count!**

What issues are most important to the role-playing hobby? What solutions have you found for problems in your favorite game? Turn to this issue’s “For- rum” and see what others think—then tell us what you think!
STAR
OF THE
GUARDIANS™
COLLECTIBLE TRADING CARD GAME

Limited Edition available now!
Blue Border, 20,000 displays of boosters and decks printed.
275 unique cards plus 10 player’s aid cards in the collection.

Unlimited Edition due in October ‘95.
Black Border, same mix as the Limited Edition.

First Expansion due in October ‘95.
Blue Border, small run followed by a black bordered unlimited run.
100 unique cards with a rules expansion.

MAG FORCE 7 Inc
PO Box 1106, Williams Bay, WI 53191 U.S.A. email: Guardian@Mag7.Com
stood quietly in the doorway, awaiting my time. My master sat on the cold balcony in the chill wind and looked across the way, staring with unfocused eyes at the canyon walls. “Davrin?” I finally said.

He turned slowly, pulling his blanket higher over his shoulder, his fast-graying beard and the few wisps of thin hair at the sides of his head blowing faintly in sharp currents of the winter air. His eyes latched onto mine like iron talons, and the corners of his lips twitched slightly upward.

“What is it, Garrett?”

“You have a visitor,” I replied.

He turned back. The canyon’s walls were blood red this time of day, stained so by the last dying rays of the sun as it set behind the castle. For a moment I thought he was going to ignore my comment. But finally, he spoke. “How long have you been apprenticed to me?”

I answered, knowing he was fully aware of the span. “Fifteen years.”

“You are no longer a boy.”

I cleared my throat. “I am twenty-two, no longer young.”

“And your magic is now stronger than mine.”

“Yes, Davrin. What is your point?”

“Why have you not left to search out your own fortune like the rest of my apprentices?”

I looked at him and considered my answer. The contour of his face stood out above the depth of the canyon. The lines chiseled in his cheeks were suddenly deep, like the shadowed crevasses that ran down the cliffs. How do I tell him that I am afraid, that I cannot rely on magic alone? How do I tell him that his strongest student cannot trust himself, that my nerves run unchecked when I think of leaving this castle? “There is more I can learn from you.”

“What further lessons do you think I have to give?”

Bitter wind whistled over the exposed balcony, filling the momentary silence. “I will know when my time of leaving comes.”

“My sons are already raised, Garrett. I cannot be your father.”

“I do not expect that.”

He nodded slowly but said nothing. “Your visitor waits.”

“I’m tired. You handle it.” Using only his middle finger and forefinger, he waved me away.

“I think it would be best if you were to look after this caller yourself.”

He breathed the mountain air deeply and released the breath through his thin nostrils. “Then, by all means, let us go.” Davrin rose from his chair, leaning upon a gnarled staff that stood half a head’s height above his bony pate.

I took his arm and guided him as we walked through the tower room and down the stairs.

I was never apprenticed in the formal manner. That is to say, my parents did not sell me or send me away to learn at the feet of a master of this particular trade. No. In fact, I would not know my parents if they were to announce themselves to my face. They left me to die in the

The Time of Leaving

By Ron Collins

Illustrations by Dave Kooharian
street's well before I was old enough to earn my keep, while I was still merely a mouth to feed rather than an item with value for barter. Davrin took me in. He spared my life when I was tired and starving, when I weighed less than a well-fed dog and wore dirt and lice as my primary coverings. He was my savior.

He brought me home to his family, and they accepted me as one of them. Averett and Kile became my brothers. And Lorien, Davrin's wife, became my mother. Due to them, I never again knew the bitter ache of a stomach dried up in hunger. Thanks to them, I never spent another night huddled in an alleyway, shivering in the rain. But life changes. Averett and Kile grew up and moved onward. And Lorien, too, moved onward, leaving the face of this earth to take residence in holier castles. After Lorien's passing, Davrin took to spending much of his time on the balcony, silently staring into the vastness of the open canyon, and withering slowly away. I felt his sorrow and I felt the emptiness to his life that she left behind. Perhaps I remained with him for this reason. Perhaps I owed him something that I could not repay. But I knew better than to think this highly of myself. I remained because I was not ready. It was that simple, and that complex. I would have considered my intentions further, but the visitor who awaited downstairs concerned me.

He was a slight man, this visitor. His hands were thin, his fingers sticking out of the overlarge sleeves of his tightly woven riding cloak at awkward angles, like cattails jutting out of a stagnant pond. I dare say that even a small while I was still merely a mouth to feed rather than an item with value for barter, Davrin took me in. He spared my life when I was tired and starving, when I weighed less than a well-fed dog and wore dirt and lice as my primary coverings. He was my savior.

He brought me home to his family, and they accepted me as one of them. Averett and Kile became my brothers. And Lorien, Davrin's wife, became my mother. Due to them, I never again knew the bitter ache of a stomach dried up in hunger. Thanks to them, I never spent another night huddled in an alleyway, shivering in the rain. But life changes. Averett and Kile grew up and moved onward. And Lorien, too, moved onward, leaving the face of this earth to take residence in holier castles. After Lorien's passing, Davrin took to spending much of his time on the balcony, silently staring into the vastness of the open canyon, and withering slowly away. I felt his sorrow and I felt the emptiness to his life that she left behind.

Perhaps I remained with him for this reason. Perhaps I owed him something that I could not repay. But I knew better than to think this highly of myself. I remained because I was not ready. It was that simple, and that complex.

I would have considered my intentions further, but the visitor who awaited downstairs concerned me.

He was a slight man, this visitor. His hands were thin, his fingers sticking out of the overlarge sleeves of his tightly woven riding cloak at awkward angles, like cattails jutting out of a stagnant pond. I dare say that even a small man, such as I, could manage him well in a bare-handed fight. Yet, despite his frame, he carried himself in the way of a man familiar with power—upright and sure. His movements were bold and efficient, his language direct. And, most unsettling of all, there was something cold about the way his black eyes lit upon me as he spoke that drew my breath away, something that brought a tingle to my spine and bade me call my master to handle this case.

I wanted to tell Davrin about him. I wanted to warn him, to make sure he didn't underestimate this man who awaited our arrival. But Davrin preferred to draw his own conclusions. I would not give him these concerns until he asked for them—and his lips remained closed throughout our walk.

The visitor rose from the wicker chair as we entered the receiving room. It was a small chamber, dimly lit by globes of mage-light at each corner. Three chairs and a waist-high table filled the floor space. Shelves lined two walls, one set holding rows of leather-bound books, the other containing multicolored powders, rodent parts, and other spell catalysts.

“Good evening,” Davrin said. His voice was stronger than it seemed a few minutes before. “I am sorry to have kept you waiting for so long. I am an old man, and my body does not move as fast as it once did.”

“The wait was not overly long for someone who has already traveled two days.”

“Any wait is too long for a visitor of mine. I did not catch your name. What may I call you?”

“Kenderick. Just call me Kenderick,” our visitor replied.

Davrin's lips closed into a thin line as he moved to stand in front of Kenderick. He analyzed our visitor as he walked; I noted the subtle changes in Davrin's expression as he scanned Kenderick's clothing, deciphered his body language, and listened to his tone of voice. Kenderick wore a brown riding cloak and highly polished leather boots. His hands were clean and unmarked, and the hint of a golden belt buckle shone from where his cloak was unbuttoned. I could tell Davrin came to the same conclusion that I had. This man was of noble birth. And if his further study revealed the same answer as mine, Davrin would understand why I called for him.

“What do you want of me?” Davrin said.

“I have recently had a death in the family.” Kenderick's voice was sharp, a razor's edge that made my nerves twinge as he spoke the word “death.”

“That is always terrible to hear. You have my condolences,” Davrin replied.

Kenderick nodded his head in return. “As a result, I have inherited an item that I'm told has some mystic power. But I can find no records that discuss what this power might be.”

“Ah.”

When Davrin went no further, Kenderick continued. “I want you to determine this item's magic and inform me of how to use it.”

“Let me see the item.”

Kenderick reached into a pocket and withdrew a small velvet pouch cinched by a leather drawstring. He untied the pouch and let a small stone tumble out onto his hand. The stone was dull in the mage-light, an opaque blue several shades darker than a robin's egg. I couldn't tell from my angle, but I thought one side of the stone had been carved.

Davrin looked at it in silence for several seconds and grunted. Then he shook his head. “No,” he said. And he turned to walk toward the door.

“Pardon me?” Kenderick said.

“I won't reveal the magic on your stone. I'm old, Kenderick, and tired, too. I don't have the strength to spare for the magic you request . . . .”

I was shocked at this. Davrin had never turned a customer away. And this reason was ludicrous. Searching an object for the presence of magic was a simple spell that required little effort.

“. . . but my apprentice is my equal in talent. Perhaps you can convince him to help you.”

The room was quiet for a moment. I looked at Kenderick and he at me. His eyebrows knit together and he raised his chin slightly, peering down his nose at me.

“Are you as good as your master says you are?”

I gave a sidelong glance at Davrin. What was he up to, I wondered? Why was he putting me in this position? It was a challenge, obviously. But what was this test's passing mark? “I can manage.”

“Then will you take the task?”

“It is difficult magic,” I said, using Davrin's charade to buy time.

“I have gold enough to make it worth your while.”

I walked around the small table, putting it between Kenderick and myself, and turned to face him. There it
was, the uneasy hood to his eyes that made me summon Davrin to this case in the first place, the sharp stare that burned my cheeks and made me want to turn away. Whatever this man’s story, one thing was sure: If Kendrick had inherited the stone, his relative’s death was not accidental. I glanced at Davrin and saw that his eyes had narrowed and the lines in his face had deepened.

“Bring me the stone,” I said. “I will perform your spell.”

Kenderick walked to the table, never removing his gaze from mine. The stone clicked against the polished wood as he laid it down. There, I could see its carving—a frontal view of an eyeball thinly etched in the surface.

I picked the stone up and rolled it between my fingertips. It was smooth, even in the area of the etching.

I placed it back on the table and went to the shelves, searching for three items. I pulled a small jar of powdered owl beak from the top shelf, and another of dried bat eyes. I dropped a pinch of the powder and two of the bat eyes into the third item, a shallow clay bowl painted in quadrants depicting each elemental power.

Returning to the table, I fished a woven mat out of the drawer and rolled it out. It made a good setting for the bowl, large enough to catch spillage, but small and plain enough to ensure the bowl a prominent status. Using both hands, I smoothed wrinkles from the cloth.

I could hear Kenderick breathing as I picked up the stone and held it over the bowl. He bent closer as I dropped the stone into the mix. He smelled of his travels, and his closeness was bothersome, making me edgy and reluctant to continue.

Davrin, too, seemed to loom closer. He stood at the perimeter of my sight, watching like a mother bird perched on a nearby tree limb.

I splayed my fingers over the edge of the bowl and focused my thoughts. The bowl’s coarseness seemed to grow into me, making my fingers take on a ceramic brittleness. Then my fingers became the powder, slipping into the wrinkles of the pair of hollowed bat eyes before finding their way to the stone. It was smooth and cold, perfectly formed.

I spoke a word of magic.

Heat rose through my arm. Green light flared through my fingers, casting sudden shadows across the room, passing through the flesh of my hand to reveal an eerie view of bones and ligaments, cartilage and tendons. I drew a slow breath to calm my nerves. This was the light of power, the light of magic. But it was a light that only sorcerers such as Davrin and I could see. I struggled to avoid an outward reaction, and returned my efforts to the magic at hand. As heat traveled up my arm and crossed my chest, the full power of the stone was unveiled to me. It was intense, almost more than I could bear.

Raising my gaze, I stared at Kenderick and saw the black, malignant root of darkness that he held inside him. It festered there, twisting and churning, glistening like a mass of maggots scavenging a corpse. Kenderick’s soul opened to me, and I knew his most profound desires. His dreams raged through my mind. Kendrick was a baron, soon to rule a fiefdom. I saw his anger. I saw his distaste for the truth, his preference for quick resolution over inconvenient justice. I saw the way common people would follow him, and the bloody results if they didn’t.

These visions were the stone’s doing. And I was afraid. Now that I had seen the man, could I bring myself to give Kendrick the stone’s power over others? Could I allow him to see into other’s lives, to steal their dreams and turn those dreams to his favor? Could I live with myself if I did? I knew the answers to these questions as I asked them, but these answers only brought a sharper edge to my anxiety. This was the fear that had brought me to call Davrin here in the first place, I realized. He should be making this decision, not me. He would know how to comport himself; I did not. He would handle this tension; I could not.

I fought the power of these thoughts, and the grotesque form that Kendrick held within. I fought for my self-control, to avoid giving Kendrick a clue to my findings. As I withdrew from the stone, the images trickled away, and I concentrated on regular breathing. I moved through the powder and the bowl, quieting my heartbeat and struggling to overcome the nervous energy that came with knowing I would soon have to confront my fears.

Finally, I returned to my normal self, and the spell’s energy faded. I looked at Kenderick. Even without the stone’s magic, I could see the writhing darkness in his pupils.

“Well?” he said.

I swallowed and shook my head, wondering if my voice would waver. “There is no magic on this stone.”

Kenderick paused for a moment. “None?”

“None,” I lied again.

A sigh of resignation escaped Kenderick’s lips. I glanced at my master and saw a thin smile on his face and a glimmer in his eye.

I stood quietly in the doorway, awaiting my time.

Davrin sat on the cold balcony in the chill wind and looked across the way, staring with unfocused eyes at the canyon walls. Those walls were dull brown this time of the morning, waiting for the sun to rise over the highest crests.

I didn’t know how to proceed. I was here to tell Davrin that I was prepared to leave, that his work was complete. But despite his earlier prodding and my eagerness to make my leaving, I suddenly found the words difficult.

“Davrin?” I finally said.

“We lived here because Lorien loved these cliffs,” he said before I could say more.

“They are beautiful,” I replied. “Almost as breathtaking as she was.”

He turned and looked at me. His frail body and his shrunken face seemed almost hollow, lifeless. But his eyes flared with a passion sparked by the mention of Lorien’s beauty.

“She was my life,” he said.

He turned back to the canyon walls. For a moment I thought he had forgotten about me.

Thoughts tumbled through my mind, colliding with each other and mixing themselves up. My heart pounded against my breast. My throat choked. I wanted to talk to him. I wanted to tell him what his guidance had meant to
me, to thank him for giving me a life. There was so much I wanted to say.

But as these words stuck in my throat, a memory wedged its way in. I remembered my youthful anticipation as I would wait in the castle for his return from distant lands, the warm look on his face as he burst through the doorway, and the smell of the woods on his hands and clothes when he greeted me with hugs of the same fervor as those he had for Averett and Kile.

What would my life have been without Davrin? Where would I have been without Lorien?

I gazed at him. His head shook with more than the cold. His lips were dry and creased, showing no signs of having been treated with the oils that Lorien would have made him apply. His hair blew about his uncovered head.

A new thought managed to struggle through my own selfish concerns. One so disturbing that it caught my breath and drew me harshly back into reality.

Davrin had never been alone before.

“When are you leaving?” he asked.

I swallowed and cleared my throat. There was only one answer to this question. My time of leaving would come when Davrin’s came, and this was not it. “I am not ready yet.”

He grimaced. “I have nothing more for you, Garrett. You should go and live your life. Leave an old man in peace.”

“No, I disagree. There is much more I can learn from you.”

Davrin pursed his lips.

I walked to his chair and knelt beside him, warming his cold hand in mine. “I’ll make our breakfast in a moment. But first, tell me about when you first met Lorien.”

He sat in silence for a moment, staring at the cliffs. Then he began to speak. As he described their first meeting, the sun crested the far ridge of the canyon. I raised my free hand and shielded my eyes, squinting into the light of a new day.

Bird Maiden

Continued from page 80

Object is given to her at the end of her initial training. If she ever loses it, she loses all her powers as kahina and shapechanger until she recovers it. Unscrupulous men have been known to come into the possession of a bird maiden’s feathered garment, and with the creature helpless, have forced her into marriage.

4. Destruction of the feathered token of the bird maiden always results in the creature’s death with no hope whatsoever of resurrection.

5. When shapechanged, only a bird maiden’s feathered garment and her body transform. All other worldly goods must be taken off and guarded by someone else.

6. Just as mystics dance, bird maiden kahinas sing, and the verbal components of their spells are always sung in a sweet, warbling voice. They have major access to the spheres of All, Animal, Divination, Elemental, Healing, Plant, and Weather. They have minor access to the spheres of Creation, Protection, and Sun.

7. While bird maidens always have the nonweapon proficiency options allowed to kahinas, one proficiency they always possess is herbalism due to its connection with the land they are sworn to protect.

8. The place of training for bird maidens is said to be a place called the Crown of All Feathers. It is supposedly a great wooden fortress concealed among the clouds in high hills or mountains. There aarakocra teach the rituals, duties, and abilities of the bird maidens. It is rumored that a very special genie of enormous power guards this place and uses powerful illusions to keep it safe from the curious and unsavory. All bird maidens know where this place is, but no sort of magical compulsion or physical abuse can pry the location from them.
HOBBYGAMES LTD
EUROPE'S LEADING DISTRIBUTOR
Unit S4, Rudford Industrial Estate, Ford Airfield, Nr. Arundel,
West Sussex, BN18 0BD, U.K.
Telephone: +44 0(1903) 730998
Fax: +44 0(1903) 731141

GAMES GAMES GAMES GAMES GAMES

AND MORE GAMES FROM HOBBYGAMES LTD
PLEASE CONTACT US FOR WHOLESALE / TRADE PRICES - DOLLARS OR STERLING
VAMPIRE
THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE

In the macabre drama that is Vampire: The Eternal Struggle, the stage is set as you take on the role of an ancient vampire, known as a Methuselah, and thrust your vampire pawns into the unrelenting hands of Machiavellian politics and gruesome acts of conspiracy. But you must choose your vampires carefully. While some may be at your beck and call, others will only come to your side after a great measure of influence is forced upon them. Only through daring strategy and cunning use of your limited resources will you defeat your fellow Methuselaths and attain the crown of victory. Vampire consists of over 400 beautifully painted images set inside a variety of new sensual textures.
If you have any questions on the games produced by TSR, Inc., “Sage Advice” will answer them. In the United States and Canada, write to: Sage Advice, DRAGON® Magazine, 201 Sheridan Springs Rd., Lake Geneva WI 53147, U.S.A. In Europe, write to: Sage Advice, DRAGON Magazine, TSR Ltd., 120 Church End, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 3LB, United Kingdom. We are no longer able to make personal replies: please send no SASEs with your questions (SASEs are being returned with writer’s guidelines for the magazine).

This month, “Sage Advice” looks at optional expansions to the AD&D® game and considers a few other questions from the mailbag.

Wizards using the ghul lord kit from the Complete Sha’ir’s Handbook have an ability called manipulation, which inflicts temporary damage on the user. What is temporary damage? Also, there is a reference to a process called “leaching” that allows the character to use magical items to avoid the hit point loss, but leaching is never explained.

The damage a ghul lord suffers from a manipulation comes from the negative energy the character uses to power the manipulation. It is temporary only insofar as it can be healed by rest or spells—the character does not lose hit points permanently.

Leaching is a complete mystery to me, but here’s a suggestion: Defensive items, such as rings of protection, cloaks or protection, and bracers of defense, can block the damage. Each of an item’s plus stops one point of damage; bracers of defense have one effective plus for each point of armor class improvement they bestow beyond armor class 10; so, for example, bracers of defense AC 4 count as +6 items. A ghul lord carrying several defensive items can choose which one to leach during any particular manipulation. If the manipulation is particularly powerful, the ghul lord can leach multiple items to block all the damage. A leached magical item becomes nonmagical for 1d4 melee rounds no matter how much damage it blocked. Each time an item is leached, it must save vs. magical fire or be destroyed in a wave of negative energy.

Are the weavings used by mageweavers, also from the CSH, like scrolls or like spellbooks? That is, are they consumed when used or are they just another sort of spellbook?

A mageweaver’s spell weavings are like scrolls in that they can be used only once. Unlike scrolls, a spell weaving can be used only by the mageweaver who originally wove it. If the mageweaver loses a spell weaving, he loses the spell it represents. A mageweaver’s spellbook is a huge tapestry (or set of tapestries) that contains all the spell patterns that the character knows.

Exactly how does a wizard using the Mystic of Nog kit (from the CSH) sacrifice spell levels when maintaining the hands of stone power? I understand that the character must devote one spell level to the power each time he advances a level, but the kit description says that spells have to be expended in whole spell units, you can’t spend part of a 3rd-level spell to get a power that costs only one or two spell levels. So, only a 1st level spell slot can be used to maintain hands of stone. What happens to a Mystic of Nog when he gains a level and does not also gain a 1st-level spell slot? Also, the kit description mentions that an ability score can be raised higher than 18 temporarily. How long does the temporary increase last and how does the character pay for it?

If a Mystic of Nog character doesn’t have a 1st-level spell slot available to spend on maintaining the hands of stone power, he can’t maintain the power and suffers the consequences (1d6 points of damage to the character every time he uses hands of stone). Players who choose this power for their characters should plan ahead and make sure that sufficient 1st level spell slots are available. If the DM is feeling kind, the PC may use the power at a lower level if the maintenance cost can’t be paid. For example, an 8th-level Mystic of Nog inflicts 1d4 +4 hp damage with hands of stone (1d4 + half the character’s level, rounded up). If the character advances to 9th level, he could inflict 1d4 + 5 hp damage. If the character cannot maintain the power, the DM might allow him to inflict 1d4 + 4 hp damage with no damage to himself. If the DM was feeling really kind, he might allow the character to delay the maintenance cost for several levels and make up the deficit with a higher level spell slot. For instance, the character from the previous example might not pay any maintenance for his hands of stone power until he reaches, say, 11th level. Under the suggested rule, his hands of stone power still would inflict 1d4 +4 hp damage, but if he sacrificed a 3rd-level spell slot upon reaching 11th level the ability would be properly maintained and would inflict 1d4 + 6 hp damage.

I recommend that temporarily increasing an ability score above 18 cost five spell levels per point of increase. The spell levels should be taken from the slots the character normally has available for casting spells and are not lost permanently. The increase lasts one day or until the character rests and studies spells again.

The movement rates for a clockwork mage’s mechanical devices (from the CSH) seem to be a little short. Why would anyone bother with a device that only moves a couple of inches each round?

In this case, the term “inches” is an erroneous reference to the original AD&D game, which used scale inches to measure ranges and movement rates. Just substitute “points of movement” for “inches” and everything will be fine. For example, for a cost of 50 gp, a mechanical can be given the ability to walk at a rate of 2. If the clockwork mage wants a mechanical that walks at a rate of 12, the cost is 300 gp.

Are the two language proficiencies (languages, modern and languages, ancient) affected by the character’s Intelligence score? How do you use the Number of Languages column from Table 4 in the PHB, and how does that affect the language proficiencies?

Most proficiencies require a check against a relevant ability score if the DM decides there is a chance of failure. Speaking a language can require a check against the PC’s unmodified Intelligence score (see PHB, Table 37). Deciding whether a proficiency requires a success roll always is a judgment call on the DM’s part. In the case of a language, no check is required when native speakers are conversing. If the circumstances are difficult, such as when a non-native speaker first hears an unfa
miliar dialect or a character has to do some fast talking in a non-native language, the DM might call for a success roll to determine whether the speaker stumbles over a phrase or otherwise mispronounces a word. A success roll might also be required when a non-native speaker tries to get vital information out of a native speaker who is excited or distracted (did he say run to the back or the runt is back?). The Number of Languages column from Table 4 indicates how many different languages a character can learn. For example, a character with a 12 Intelligence cannot learn more than three different languages.

According to The Book of Artifacts (page 124), a wizard needs a permanency spell and an enchant an item spell to create a permanent magical item. Because the permanency spell is 8th level, a wizard with an Intelligence score of 15 or less cannot learn it (see PHB, Table 4) and cannot make permanent magical items. Is that right? Also, if the wizard were a half-elf, the character would have to have a 19 Intelligence or he could not reach 16th level, which is the first level in which a wizard can learn an 8th level spell. Right? Finally, if the wizard is an abjurer, invoker, or necromancer, the character cannot make permanent magical items because one of the two required spells falls in the character's opposition schools. (Abjurers cannot learn permanency, an alteration; and invoking and necromancers cannot learn enchant an item, an enchantment/charm.) You are almost right on all three counts. Yes, a wizard needs both an enchant an item and a permanency spell to create a permanent magical item.

Yes, a wizard must be at least 16th level to learn and cast permanency, which is an 8th-level spell available only to wizards with Intelligence scores of 16 or higher and access to the alteration school. (Enchant an item is a 6th-level enchantment/charm spell, which requires a 12th-level caster with an Intelligence score of 12 or more.) Yes, a half-elf wizard needs an Intelligence score of 19 or more to reach 16th level (if the campaign is using the Exceeding Level Limits optional rule).

But no rule says a character who is creating a magical item has to cast all the required spells himself. The character can get another character to cast the spells for him, read the spells from scrolls, or use a wish to duplicate a spell's effects. Remember that any wizard can read wizard spells from scrolls, even spells from a specialist's opposition schools. (This a special property of magical scrolls and an important exception to the general rule that prevents specialists from employing magical items that produce effects from their opposition schools.) Also, "Sage Advice" suggested last month that it's okay to add enchant an item to the evocation/invocation school. You can use the same logic to put permanency into the evocation/invocation school, too, but that's beginning to stretch things a bit.

One of my players has recently discovered the svirfneblin from the Complete Book of Gnomes and Halflings. The svirfneblin can be accurately described as having incredible powers and virtually no limitations. Is it reasonable to impose the same sort of light penalties on svirfneblin as drow get? Sure it is. You might want to give svirfneblin some form of agoraphobia (fear of open spaces) instead. If they don't have a substantial roof over their heads, they suffer a -2 penalty to Dexterity scores and attack rolls, and opponents get a +2 bonus to saving throws when resisting spells cast by the afflicted drow). The PLAYER'S OPTION™: Skills & Powers book offers a more limited selection of powers for svirfneblin player characters (who have let their wanderlust and thirst for adventure interfere with their racial abilities).

Where can I find basic game statistics for the various weapons and armor described in Encyclopedia Magica? Check out the Arms and Equipment Guide (TSR Product #2123) or the PLAYER'S OPTION: Combat & Tactics book (TSR Product #2149).

In a campaign where individual experience point awards are used, can a character get an award for using an spell-like racial ability, such as the drow's dancing lights effect? What about psionic wild talents? Can a character get an individual award for using those? If you're talking about experience granted from DMG Table 33: Common Individual Awards, the answer is yes. If the player is clever, it makes no difference exactly what the character did, the character gets the award. For example, if a player with a drow character uses the drow's dancing lights ability to convince a group of monsters that reinforcements are coming, thus making the monsters flee from a situation where the party was in dire peril, then the player is entitled to a reward in the form of a few extra experience points for his character.

If you're talking about experience granted from DMG Table 34: Individual Class Awards, the answer is no. The character must use a class-specific ability to get the extra experience, not a magical item, proficiency, or racial ability.

Does the 6th-level wizard spell invulnerability to magical weapons (from the Complete Wizard's Hand-
book) also grant immunity to nonmagical weapons (like the 5th-level *invulnerability* to normal weapons spell in the same book?)

No, but a wizard can have both spells running at the same time.

Why have the names of some of the planes of existence changed?

They haven’t. What has happened is that the PLANESCAPE™ setting has revealed what beings who actually live on each plane call their planes. The AD&D game has adopted these “true” names in most cases. For example, the plane that people who live on the Prime Material Plane call the Plane of Concordant Opposition is actually called The Outlands by the people who live there. The plane always has been called The Outlands, but until recently very few people on the Prime Material knew that.

What’s the chant, berk? I have compiled a list of about three dozen creatures that are listed on page 128 of the PLANESCAPE™ MC Appendix but that I can’t find anywhere.

Okay, here’s your list with the TSR product numbers in which they appear:

- Abyss Ant (2145)
- Abyss Bat (2603)
- Achaierai (2607)
- Adamantite Dragon (2118)
- Astral Dragon (2105)
- Astral Dreadnought (2613)
- Azer (2145)
- Chronolith (9294)
- Diakki (2016)
- Fetch (2105)
- Fire Minion (1050)
- Fire Shadow (2105)
- Fire Tail (2125)
- Flame Spirit (2116)
- Gingwatzim (9292)
- Gl’lok-lok (9294)
- Hollyphant (2613)
- Khargha (2132)
- Kodragon (2105)
- Mortai (2118)
- Noctral (2118)
- Phantom Stalker (2132)
- Retriever (2132)
- Shocker (2132)
- Sympathetic (2125)
- Terithran (2132)
- Tshala (2125)
- Vaporighu (2118)
- Windwalker (2145)
- Xag-Ya (2016)
- Xeg-Yi (2016)
- Zoveri (2607)

Here are the titles that go with the numbers: 1050 Time of the Dragon, 2016 Monster Manual II, 2105 DRAGONLANCE® MC Appendix, 2116 Kara-Tur MC Appendix, 2118 Outer Planes MC Appendix, 2125 FORGOTTEN REALMS® MC Appendix, 2132 FIEND FOLIO® MC Appendix, 2145 MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM® Annual

**TSR2149 PLAYER’S OPTION™: Combat & Tactics ....$20.00**

All the optional combat rules any AD&D® gamer could want in one volume! Includes an advanced tactical combat system, critical hit tables, and weaponry information.

**TSR1121 Spellbound: Thay, Rashemen, & Algardon ...$25.00**

The secrets of two magical cultures—and of Simbul, one of the famed Seven Stizers—revealed for the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting.

**TSR2611 Factol’s Manifesto ....$20.00**

A must-have guide to all 15 factions player characters can join in the PLANESCAPE™ setting.

**TSR2613 Mark of Amber Audio CD $18.00**

The Ambervale family of eccentric wizards and their amber castle await in this adventure for Mystara.

**TSR9495 Chilling Tales .................$9.95**

A series of quick-play adventures for RAVENLOFT®, featuring noted personality Dr. Ralph von Richter.

**TSR9478 Thief’s Challenge II.............$6.95**

Your character wakes up in the middle of the night on a ship full of dead men and has no idea how s/he got there! An ONE-ON-ONE® AD&D® adventure.

**NOVELS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TSRR55 Cloak of Shadows</td>
<td>$4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRR59 Death of a Darklord</td>
<td>$4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRR29 F.R.E. Lancers</td>
<td>$4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSRR94 The IRAA</td>
<td>$4.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TSR9479 Castle Sites...$12.95**

96 pages of creative castles plans for innovative AD&D® Dungeon Masters.

**TSR2441 Beyond the Prism Pentad......$6.95**

Incorporate the changes wrought by the Prism Pentad novel into your *DARK SUN®* campaign with this 32-page adventure book.

**DRAGON 99**
How many hit dice does a lich have?
I find the hit dice listings for the various types of liches in the RAVENLOFT™ setting very confusing.

If the lich was a spellcaster in life, it has 11 hit dice, plus one point for each character level it has beyond 11th. For example, an 18th level lich has 11 + 7 hit dice. If the lich was a psionicist, it has 9 hit dice, plus one point for each level beyond 9.

The item description for a vorpal blade says the sword can sever the head of a larger-than-man-sized opponent on a modified roll of 21-23. Now, in the MONSTROUS MANUAL™ tome there is a size category for creatures called “larger than man-sized,” covering creatures 7'-12' tall. The players in my game were very annoyed when I ruled that their vorpal blade could not sever the heads of huge or gargantuan opponents such as dragons. My players argue that the sword can sever any creature’s head, and that the number to sever the head of any creature larger than a man is 21-23. I contend that the sword can’t sever the heads of creatures more than 12’ tall. I don’t think that a 3’ sword ought to be able to slice the head off a creature with a neck 10’ thick.

Technically, your players are right. The phrase “larger than man-sized” in the item description refers to any creature bigger than a normal human, not just size Large creatures. This kind of usage is common throughout the game. For example, most weapons have two damage ratings, one for small or man-sized opponents and one for larger opponents. In this case, “small or man-sized” refers to size Tiny, Small, and Man-sized creatures; “larger” refers to size Large, Huge, and Gargantuan creatures.

Nevertheless, you are free to employ whatever house rules you think are reasonable. For example, if one reads the rules literally, a character armed with a vorpal blade and standing in a pit could behead a storm giant standing on the floor outside the pit—even if all the character could reach was the giant’s big toe. Does that seem silly or illogical? I think so. On the other hand, magic does not have to be reasonable or logical.

Magic is fantastic and can bring about all kinds of effects without any logical physical causes—a spell that can turn a griffon into a goldfish isn’t at all logical. It may be that when a vorpal blade severs a neck there is a brilliant magical flash and a cloud of smoke. When the smoke clears, there’s the opponent’s head lying on the ground; the sword might not even be bloodstained. And there’s nothing wrong with that if that is the kind of game you want to run.

I suggest, however, that you allow vorpal blades to sever any opponent’s neck only when there is a reasonable chance that a blow from the sword could touch the opponent’s neck at some time during the melee round. For example, if a character hacks at the tip of a sleeping dragon’s tail, the creature’s head is many feet away, and there is no chance to sever its neck. On the other hand, if the dragon is trying to bite the character wielding the vorpal blade its neck is within reach at least some of the time. Remember that combat in the AD&D game is abstract; a vorpal blade doesn’t necessarily cleave off a creature’s head in a single blow. The character might strike the target’s neck several times during the course of the round. Or perhaps the sword does strike off a head with a single swipe—there’s nothing that says that a vorpal blade can’t temporarily grow to an enormous length to get the job done or that it can’t emit a plane of magical force that does the really heavy duty cutting.
Robotech® mania is back with the release of the toy line by Playmates®, the mass market distribution of videogames and laser discs of the animated series, TV syndication, new novels, and talk about computer games and more! Enjoy the action and adventure of Robotech® right now, with Palladium’s Robotech® RPG series!

The Robotech® RPG has sold over 120,000 copies and remains one of the most popular role-playing game lines ever published!

Robotech® is an epic saga of war, survival, heroes and heroines that pits courageous mecha pilots against deadly aliens and overwhelming odds. Play the pilot of the fabulous, transformable Veritech Fighters, Veritech Hover Tank, Cyclone motorcycle, or one of the incredible Destroids (50 feet of mega-damage steel with the fire power of a tank division)! Or any number of other human and alien characters.

The mega-damage™ system, science fiction setting, and high technology makes Robotech® suitable for use with Rifts®, The Mechanoids® and any of Palladium’s mega-damage settings.

Robotech® RPG Check List!

ROBOTech® RPG: Book One: Macross. A complete role-playing game that recounts the Robotech Defense Force’s valiant efforts to protect the Earth from the alien invaders known as the Zentraedi. Includes: Five different transformable Veritech Fighters, the famous RDF Destroids, Zentraedi Mecha, Lancer Space Cannon and Fighter, A.R.M.D. space platform, Macross characters, O.C.C.C., and the RDF-1, 112 pages, written by Kevin Siembieda and illustrated by Kevin Long. Over 120,000 copies sold! $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

ROBOTech®: Book Two: The RDF™ Manual. A 48 page source book with more data on the RDF and the world. Includes the floor plans of the Dae-dalus and Prometheus, plus additional aircraft, tanks, character sheets, a time-line, random encounters and optional hit location tables. 48 pages, written by Kevin Siemieda, with art by Kevin Long and Peter Simon. $7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.

ROBOTech®: Book Three: Zentraedi™. Complete deck plans for the five giant Zentraedi space ships, more Zentraedi mecha and weapons, quick roll Zentraedi characters, character sheets and space combat rules, 48 pages, written by Kevin Siemieda. $7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.


ROBOTech®: Book Five: The Invid Invasion™. A 112 page source book with the famous and fabulous mecha of Robotech New Generation! Includes the transformable Veritech motorcycles known as the Cyclones, plus Alpha and Beta fighters, the Shadow Fighter, a variety of weapons, the insidious Invid and their mecha, Invid rifles, Lancer, Root and all the other characters. Written by Kevin Siemieda and illustrated by Siemieda and Long. $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

ROBOTech II: The Sentinels™. A complete RPG in itself, that presents the mecha, vehicles, aliens, and characters of the novel completed, second Robotech animated series! 5 alien player characters, 8 REF O.C.C.C.s, new Destroids, Veritechs and war machines, plus the invid orionics! 160 pages, written by Kevin Siemieda and illustrated by Kevin Long. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

ROBOTech II: The REF™ Field Guide. A sourcebook that publishes a great variety of artwork directly from the animation model sheets created for the New Generation and Sentinels television series. It pays close attention to details regarding the operation of REF mecha and transformation sequences, as well as stats on REF characters, floor plans for typical REF bases and the Robotech Factory, adventures and more. Written by Siemieda, with art by Kevin Long. $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

RDF Accelerated Training Program™: A 56 page adventure sourcebook for new recruits into the Robotech Defense Force. 20 adventures in all! $7.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.

The Newest Robotech® Releases

Zentraedi™ Breakout (New!). A 64 page adventure sourcebook detailing the RDF bases, allies, governments and rebels around the infamous Zentraedi Control Zone in the South America Sector. Both RDF and Southern Cross mecha and characters can be played. $9.95 plus $1.00 for postage and handling.

Robotech® New World Order (New!). A unique 112 page adventure sourcebook that not only details the Zentraedi warlords of the Congo, but also details the RDF and Veritech against each other! $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

Robotech® Strike Force (New!). 112 pages of adventures: new RDF mecha, weapons, equipment, characters and adventure ideas. Written by Wayne Breax and Kevin Siemieda. Tentatively $11.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling, may be expanded to 160 pages and $15.95.

Send 75 cents for Palladium’s complete catalog of other exciting role-playing games, miniatures and T-shirts.
Looking for a game world that has everything?

Middle-earth

HAS IT ALL!

Miniatures!
PRINCE AUGUST, U.S.A.
MITHRIL MINIATURES
BYE-E ME BLK, SUITE 285
LINCOLN - MORGAN ST.
PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460
(610) 935-7622

Play-by-mail!
GAME SYSTEMS INC.
MIDDLE-EARTH PBM
PO BOX 160129
MIAMI FL 33106-1229
(305) 274-5599

Role Playing!
IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES, INC.
MIDDLE-EARTH ROLE PLAYING
PO BOX 1605
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA
22902

(800) 323-0479

Copyright©1993 by Tolkien Enterprises. MIDDLE-EARTH is a registered trademark of Tolkien Enterprises, a division of the Saul Zaentz Company, Berkeley, CA, USA. All characters and places derived from the works of J.R.R. Tolkien are trademarks owned under license from George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Copyright ©1993.
CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ACE IN THE HOLE?

SO YOU'RE THE ONE WHO KILLED CHARLIE!

OH... YEAH, I MEAN YEAH, I'M THE ONE! WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT?

HOW'S THAT?

PERFECT, BEAKER. JUST PERFECT.

HEH, WHEW! WHEN YOU FIRST CAME THROUGH THAT DOOR, I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA...

EEP!

SORRY, BEAKER

URP!

KRAK!

KRAK... KRAK...
ARE YOU TWO ALL RIGHT?

THIS BUNCH WAS NO MATCH FOR US.

YEAH, WE REALLY TOOK 'EM BY SURPRISE.

OUR INFORMATION WAS RIGHT. THE ONE WHO KILLED CHARLIE WAS INSIDE THE HIDEOUT.

SO NOW YOU TWO CAN GET BACK TO SEARCHING FOR THE LIBRARIAN WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT THIS BRUTE SQUAD.

ACTUALLY, I WAS THINKING ABOUT SPENDING MORE TIME WITH JENN, SHOWING HER MORE OF THE MAZEWORKS.

BUT WHAT ABOUT...

ANOTHER DAY, WE DESERVE A VACATION FROM ALL THIS WAR.
MEANWHILE, DEEP WITHIN THE MAZEWORKS.

Hey, I'm sick in here! Somebody come in and help!

No way! He's not sick and who cares if he was?

Oh, heh heh.

Wonder what's keeping Beaker.

Yeah, he loves this game.

Help! Help! Fire! Fire!

Fire! Fire! We better let him out!

There's no fire. Stupid! He's tricking you.

Heh, I knew that.

He's just like the boss. Tricky. That's why we're here to stand watch.

Heh. Right.

Damn.
**SWORDPLAY**

By Matthew Guss

- Okay guys, I've marked out our assault on the dungeon. But you're the blue circle marked off to the right.
- You stay by the stairs and cast spells to keep the trolls off balance. I'll mark the black circle marked shadow and I'll chew along the walls and steal the treasure while the trolls are otherwise occupied.

**FLINT AND STEEL**

By Mark McCabe

- “Him? . . . General Mage.”

**FLINT AND STEEL**

By Bill Hrenchuk

- “She’s so beautiful! Just like a goddess! It’s hard to believe she’s got 4 stomachs . . .”

**I LOVE YOU... YOU LOVE ME... WE WERE BEST FRIENDS LIKE FRIENDS SHOULD BE...**

By Joe Pillsbury

- “Jump? Hitchhike? Ahh . . . Sky? What are you trying to tell me?”

By David Hanson

- [Scene with characters in a dungeon, text not transcribed]
CONGRATULATIONS, ELRIC!
YOU'VE SLAIN THE WORLD'S ONLY STAMP-COLLECTING DRAGON...

By Barry Munden

FORGIVE ME, PERSEPHONE.
GLATHIELD HAS MY
THREAD-POWERS IN
THRAUL MUST
OBEY...

-DESTROY YOU.

THAT'S OKAY, RALPH.
HERE, DOESN'T THAT
FEEL BETTER?

BUNT!

You've stepped on the wrong toes, Glathield.
Perth himself has become enraged at your claims of ownership of skulls everywhere.
And, he has entrusted to me the STAFF OF PUBLIC DOMAIN
to end your petty tyranny!

I'M RUINED! MY WEALTH
IS NOW WORTH NOTHING!

I CAN'T BE THAT BAD, SIR. WHY, I'
NOW THERE LIES A GREY SORCERER
YOU COULD MASTERCIZE...

NO! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? THE
SKULLS WERE EVERYTHING AND NOW
I'M LOST! COMPLETELY LOST!

BUT... YOU STILL OWE ME YOUR
OWN SKULL! THAT ONE WAS
ALWAYS YOUR FAVORITE!

IT'S UNLAWFUL TO ME PETTY
WAYWARD.

CONVENIENTLY RUINED OUT OF
PLACE.

KIDS, ADJUST DONT TRY THIS AT HOME.

By Barbara Manui & Chris Adams
THE JOURNAL OF THE PBM GAMER
Information on play-by-mail games and companies, which includes descriptions, prices, etc. about various PBM games on the market today.
Send $4.00* for 8th edition to:
PAPER MAYHEM
Dept. DM
1518 Adams St.
Ottawa, IL 61350
*Overseas orders send $6 in US funds

FIREBREATHER
HEROIC FANTASY ROLE PLAY
$5.00 FOR RULES & TWO FREE
TURNS IN EITHER GAME
HORIZON GAMES
PO BOX 581434
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55458-1434

PAPER MAYHEM
"The Informative PBM Magazine"n
Do you know what PBM (Play-By-Mail) gaming is? If you don't, we can help you explore the world of PBM gaming. Paper Mayhem has been leading the way for over 10 years by informing people about PBM gaming. Articles, reviews, biographies, PBM game & company ratings and more fill each issue. Paper Mayhem has been improving with the ever expanding hobby of PBM gaming since 1983. Each bimonthly issue brings you the latest on PBM news.
So why delay and miss out on all the fun? Read Paper Mayhem and take advantage of PBM gaming.
Send subscriptions to: PAPER MAYHEM
Dept DM, 1518 Adams St.
Ottawa, IL 61350-4770
US Subscriptions: Single issue $5.00
1 year $24.00 - 2 year $42.00
FOREIGN SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1 year Canada $71.00, 1 year to Europe $91.00, 1 year to Australia $53.00. All Subscriptions to PAPER MAYHEM are to be paid in US funds and drawn from US banks. Foreign subscriptions are asked to use International Money Orders in US funds.

GALACTIC PRISONERS
2440 AD - When expanding into space, humans encountered a vastly superior race, the Nibor. Because of the highly aggressive nature of humans, peace with the Nibor was not possible. The Nibor were forced to destroy all humans except for a very few.
Because of your character's unique personality, intelligence and leadership, the Nibor have selected him as the captain of an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV). He has been given a crew of 100 humans who were his fellow prisoners.
Galactic Prisoners is a unique, realistic, exciting, computer-modulated, futuristic, play-by-mail game. There are numerous avenues of play. Some characters will build walled forts or a vast labyrinth of tunnels. Some will establish colonies to increase production and income or will become warriors and take what they want from others by force. There will be much to explore and discover. Many different aliens will share this prison with humans. You are permitted to move as fast as once a week or as slowly as you like.
Send your check for $18.00 to receive the rulebook, setup and 4 turns. Subsequent turns will be $3.00 each. Any player who recruits a new player will be given two free turns. We offer discounts which would lower your price to as low as $2.64 per turn.
Grandel, Inc.
P.O. Box 4388
Wilmington, DE 19807-0386

MAGIC
The Gathering
We have all the singles. All the time!
WE HAVE EVERYTHING!!
We have Italian, French and German Magic cards!
WE SHIP WORLDWIDE!!!
A FULL SERVICE GAME SHOP!
TSR, GW, CITADEL, FASA, ICE, WHITE WOLF, and MANY others at
20% OFF RETAIL!
THE OUTER REALMS
115 N. Wood Ave. Linden, NJ 07036
(908) 486-1777
FAX (908) 486-1651
Nightspawn™ RPG

The Nightlords™ plan to quietly seize control of the world! They have already secretly infiltrated the highest levels of world government and business, and have begun to manipulate and enslave humankind.

Their only opposition: humans who have uncovered the truth, vampires (rivals for world domination), and the Nightspawn who have elected to fight their own kind to save the human race.

The Nightspawn™ RPG presents a world of darkness where the forces of good and evil clash in a desperate war among unsuspecting humans.

It is a world where one’s allegiance to good or evil cannot be determined by appearance alone. Where monsters fight on the side of angels and evil comes in all guises, whether they be human, vampire, doppleganger, or the Nightspawn.

A complete role-playing game! Compatible with Beyond the Supernatural™, Heroes Unlimited™, Ninjas & Superspies™, Mystic China™, and adaptable to Rift®.

- The Nightspawn™ R.C.C. enables gamers to play supernatural shape-changers. Beings who can appear completely human, but are really superhuman creatures from the twilight dimension known as Nightlands™.
- Nightspawn “talents” are supernatural and magic abilities of incredible power and range. The only catch, they must shed their human disguise and become a monster to use them.
- Nearly a dozen other O.C.C.s and R.C.C.s including the Sorcerer, Vampire, and Nightspawn Mystic.
- New magic, psionic abilities and supernatural powers.
- Nightlords and their minions like the Hunters and Hounds.
- The Nightlands™, secret organizations, and tons of campaign and adventure ideas.
- Written by C.J. Carella. Cover by Brom.
- 200+ pages; $19.95 plus $2.00 for postage and handling.

Scrapyers™

Imagine an alien world filled with superhumans and cities that tower a mile into the sky and cover the continent.

Imagine that world invaded by murderous aliens and the incredible battle that would follow.

This is the world of John Zeleznik’s Scrapyers™! An adventure sourcebook for Heroes Unlimited™ and Aliens Unlimited™ that will bring to life an alien world and people caught in an epic battle of survival, sacrifice and heroics.

This is the first time ever that John Zeleznik has created an entire world, producing not only the cover but most of the interior art, character designs and even some writing. A genuine treat for Zeleznik fans and the addition of a dynamic and different world to explore in the Palladium Megaverse®.

Highlights Include:
- New super powers.
- Psychotic and brutal alien invaders.
- Dozens of heroes, villains, aliens and danger.
- Character creation rules, suggestions and tables.
- High tech wonders, super-cities, robots, and weapons.
- A bold new world of adventure, superhumans, and danger.
- Cover, interior art and concepts by John Zeleznik.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda and John Zeleznik.
- For use with Heroes Unlimited™ and adaptable to Rifts®
- 160 pages — $15.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.

Available at stores everywhere!

Catalog of Palladium Books®

A mere 75 cents gets you our latest 32 page catalog full of exciting products like Scrapyers, Nightspawn, Rifts®, Robotech®, Heroes Unlimited™, Beyond the Supernatural™, Macross II™, RECON®, Palladium RPG® (fantasy), T-shirts, miniatures and more!
**FREE!**
For a limited time only
- 50 (yes FIFTY) free 25mm miniatures*
- 25% discount on all gaming products
- free catalog*

Available only from:
**EMPERORS CHOICE**
144 Roycroft Blvd., Snyder, NY 14226
(716)839-4469

*call for details
*with $100 purchase; actual amounts vary with package option; choose from Sci Fi or Fantasy

---

**Gamer's Union**
104 S. Main St.
Rice Lake, WI 54868
(715) 234-6505

Specializing in RPG, Strategy, &
Family Games
Discounts Begin at 20%

Quantity Discounts Available
Write or Call For a FREE Price List.

---

**GamaAholic's**

Join our National Club!
- All Games at least 10% off
- No Shipping & Handling Fee
- No Sales Tax or added charges
- 20% off on Advance, Software,
& Out-of-Stock orders
- Every RPG, Hobby, Strategy,
Simulation, Miniatures, Board,
Card, Video & Computer Game
- Timely New Product Info.
- Opponent Info. Service
- Visa, Mastercard, C.O.D.

(800) GAME - CLUB

---

**LUDICROUS GAMES**
(212)eskimo.com

**EVERYTHING**
**20% OFF RETAIL**

**DISCOUNT MAIL ORDER**
**NO MINIMUM**

**ICE AGE**
**ROOSTER BOX**
 DESCRIPTION BOX

$70.56

add $5 for S&H
PER BOX

Display Box

Send Check or money order to:
LUDICROUS GAMES
P.O. BOX 9999 DEPT DRI
Bellevue, WA 98006
We residents add 7.4% sales tax

Realizing Games
Strategies/Win Games
Board Games
Miniatures
Accessories
and MORE

---

**EILEEN'S HOBBIES**
25 Waterview Rd.
Dowington, PA 19335
610-458-0801

Games, Miniatures and
Accessories by Mail.
WITH UP TO 30% DISCOUNT

Send a SASE for details, or
$3.00 for a Chessex catalog.

---

**RAFM COMPANY, INC.**

Rafm Co. is looking for freelance sculptors and model makers to produce new product.

If you are interested please contact
Jack VanSchaik
C/O RAFM Company, Inc.
20 Parkhill Road East
Cambridge, Ontario, N1R 1P2

---

**CAST YOUR OWN FANTASY FIGURES**

NOTICE
Six new molds are here and the figures are great. Call or write for illustrations!

Write for our catalog
with over 200 molds!
$1.00
(409) 364-2020

THE DUNKEN CO.
P.O. Box 95 D
Calvert, TX 77837

---

**DIAMOND DICE, Inc.**
324 S. Fairview, Park Ridge, IL 60068
(708) 992-7165 — DEALERS INVITED—
All orders add $1.00 for postage / Send $1.00 for catalog

**DICE SALE 4-8**
10-12-20

**BONUS—6 FREE dice with each set**

All sets contain six different dice. (4-6-8-10-12-20)

Sets of six dice — White, Red, Dark Red, Tan, Green, Blue
Dark Blue, Brown, Baby Blue, Violet, and Black

- Sets of six dice — White, Red, Tan, Green, Blue and Purple

- Sets of six dice — Black, Dark Red, Dark Blue and Brown

- Sets of six dice — Green, Yellow, Light Green and Red

- Sets of six dice — Blue, Purple, Red and Green

- Bag of 100 assorted dice one — (10) $2.00

- Bag of 100 assorted dice two — (10) $3.00

- Bag of 100 assorted dice three — (10) Assorted $4.00

- Bag of 20 assorted 6-sided die — $2.00

- Bag of 8 assorted Transparent Jumbo dice — $4.00

Set of "Ravens" ideal dice (each die is made in six different colors — Blue, Red, Green, Black Silver and Purple)

---

110 JUNE 1995
Visit these fine Wargames West-sponsored stores to reserve your Ice Age™ today!

Hobbycraft, Inc. Anchorage AK
Comic Shop Fairbanks AK
Lost Realms Denver CO
K & S Sportscards Decatur IL
Hastings Books Cape Coral FL
Gallery of Champions Fayetteville AR
University Comics Rogers AR
Hastings Books Flagstaff AZ
Little Shop of Magic Glendale AZ
Roaming Panther II Mesa AZ
Alloy Comics Mesa AZ
Roaming Panther II Mesa AZ
All Sports Cards & Comics Phoenix AZ
Books & More Phoenix AZ
Pretty Party Place Phoenix AZ
Fan Quest Tucson AZ
Biff's House of Games Amherst CA
The Gathering Auburn CA
Millenium Shop Salinas CA
Harko's Buena Park CA
Last Grenadier Burbank CA
D & D, J's Hobo Castle Valley CA
Crush Comics & Cards Carlsbad CA
Flying Colors Concar CA
Kelley's Comics Costa Mesa CA
Frozen Fevemacher Games Davis CA
Comic Ink Dublin CA
Triple Play El Cajon CA
J N J Comics Fairfield CA
Bruce's Book-O-Rama Fife CA
Sparky's Comics Hayward CA
Toy town Books Lompoc CA
Comic Experience Lomita CA
Printed Matter Manteca CA
Action Comics Mountain View CA
The Other Side Menlo Park CA
Home Field Advantage Millbrae CA
Dragons Keep Morgan Hill CA
Gears For Less Morpark CA
Dragon's Wagon Newark CA
Fourth W Coal Novato CA
Collector's Corner Newark CA
Gamestop South Palo Alto CA
Barry's Gathering Pleasant Hill CA
BBE Video Ridgecrest CA
Clerk's Sacramento CA
Even Better Games Sacramento CA
Key Comics & Cards Sacramento CA
Toby's Baseball Cards Sacramento CA
Tony's Comics and Games San Anselmo CA
Dreams & Imagining San Bernadino CA
Kris Comic Connection San Francisco CA
Cards & Comics Centre San Jose CA
Novastar Games San Jose CA
 realizes San Rafael CA
Game Guppies Santa Clara CA
Gamescape North Santa Clara CA
Gamelactica Santa Cruz CA
Arc 'C Santa Rosa CA
Comicon Odyssey 2 Simi Valley CA
Triple C Scotts Valley CA
All American Sportscards Ukiah CA
Castle Siege Games Valencia CA
Sport Memories Valletta CA
Neverland Verona CA
Comicon etc. Woodland CA
Harley Quinn Hodges Yuba City CA
D & D Sports Cards Yuma CA
O.C. Sportscards Yuma CA
Attacks Zephyrhills FL
Dragonlair Games Boulder CO
J & B. R. Comics Broomfield CO
Marshall's House of Fantasy Casper CO
Village Villiot Fort Collins CO
Don's Hobbies Golden CO
Hobby Hut Grand Junction CO
see our other ad in this magazine for more stores!

Retailers: Wargames West should be your store's distributor! We offer America's fastest shipping, up-to-the-minute computerized inventory, and free advertising in top magazines! Call us!

Magic: The Gathering and Ice Age are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
Beasts of the Imagination

©1995 by Ken Carpenter

Photography by Don Witmer
Painting by Ken Carpenter, Alexander Bond, and Mickey Leach

Thunderbolt Mountain Miniatures
656 E. McMillan
Cincinnati, OH 45206-1991
Voice: (800) 235-3908 Fax: (800) 235-3908
Mail Order: Yes Catalog: S.A.S.E. (2 stamps)

#1039 Empty Nest
Vignette series
Sculptor: Tom Meier
Scale: 25mm Cost: $11.95
Technical: 9 Artistic: 10 Value: 9

Possibly the cutest figure of all time, this piece was among the fastest moving figures premiered at last year’s GEN CON Game Fair! (Though my wife was twisting my arm behind my back as I wrote the opening sentence, that doesn’t make it any less true.)

Although there’s a minute parting line along the colt’s right side and a little flash between the mother’s rear legs, but if you can find another technical flaw, you’ve got a better microscope than mine. The pieces fit very well; the only problem is where to position the pair. The photo on the back of the blister shows you where Thunderbolt put them, but you can place them nearly anywhere around the nest, with a little work.

As you can see, this vignette depicts a mother Pegasus pushing her young colt out of the nest for its first flight. Being no fool, the colt is resisting. Think of the vertigo you’d get from the view from a pegasii’s nest! Detail is incredible, from nest to wings. The proportions of the pegasi are near perfect, with slim limbs and the head of an Arabian horse.

Again, “cute” is the key word here. Have a wife or girlfriend? Even many of us gamers have mothers! Any of them would treasure this piece, as will most collectors and painters. If you haven’t picked this one up, you may be jeopardizing your relationship with the women in your life! (Ouch! Yes dear, you can have it when I’m finished painting!).

Grenadier Models, Inc.
P.O. Box 305
Springfield, PA 19064
Voice: (800) 643-2015 Fax: (610) 623-5780
Mail Order: Yes Catalog: $3.00

#3146 Pegacorn
FANTASY LEGENDS line
Sculptor: Sandra L. Garrity
Scale: 25mm Cost: $4.00
Technical: 8 Artistic: 8 Value: 9

A wonderful combination of two mythological creatures, the pegacorn (unisus?) displays a lot of life and action, making it fairly leap off the stand.

Cast in three pieces, slight traces of the old lines remain along the legs. Assembly is quick and easy, though a small amount of putty is recommended. You might also want to adjust the positioning of the wings, to emphasize the figure’s motion. The greatest detail is in the wings, which have incredibly well-rendered feathers. The mane and tail of the legendary mount are also full and flowing. Proportions are very good, and the figure’s muscle definition gives great painting results. The base is blank, allowing you to add your own embellishments or remove the animal from the base for addition to a diorama.

Explanation of Ratings

1 Slag, a good doorstep
2 Poor, for die-hards only
3 Well below average, needs work
4 Below average, but salvageable
5 Standard, average quality
6 Good, definitely worth your perusal
7 Great, have you seen this yet?
8 Excellent, you have to see this!
9 Incredible, where can I get one?
10 No mortal hands produced this!
Part of L&L’s licensed PENDRAGON® line, the griffin is a masterpiece. Though simpler, the gnashings from the FIFTH CYCLE® role-playing game are also wonderfully done.

With hardly a parting line to note, both blisters are very well cast. Bare traces can be found on the gnashings and even less on the griffin. Attaching the wings to the griffin requires putty, and you might want to play with the position of the wings a bit, but the fit is pretty good.

Crisp detail and excellent proportions are the griffin’s eye catchers. Though there isn’t much life to the pose, the sculpting is impeccable. Its wings are unbelievable, from shoulder to wing tip.

The gnashings, in three poses, have a lot of action in their stances. The detail is simpler than the griffin, but is well done and will contribute to a great paint job. Accents, such as belts, pouches, headbands, and additional weapons are present in profusion.

Grendel Productions Ltd.
80 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HG
Distributed in the U.S. by
Heartbreaker Hobbies & Games
1260 E. Woodland Ave.
Springfield, PA 19064
Voice: (610) 544-9052 Fax: (610) 544-9052
Mail Order: Yes Catalog: Free

As a showpiece, the centerpiece in a diorama or on the table top, the black orc warbeasts will impress and entertain. Though the warbeast lacks rules for fantasy miniatures games, creating stats and rules for such a creature can be quite entertaining in itself.

Each box contains two of these critters (one shown). Cast in resin, each warbeast comes in three pieces. A bit of excess material will need to be trimmed away from the rider. Other preparation work includes sanding and washing in warm, soapy water, but the fit is very good. Little epoxy is required, but you may want to pin the pieces for added strength.

Despite their obviously ominous mien, the best word to describe these brutes is “cute.” There, I said it. The beasts look like escapees from the gone-but-not-forgotten TV show Dinosaurs (“I’m the baby, gotta love me!”). Does that disqualify it for table-top use? No way! Most miniatures players enjoy, or even require, that their armies include pieces built for entertainment and visual impact over optical nastiness. Certainly role-players don’t mind the personality built into a figure like this.

The detail is crisp and omnipresent, from the rough, craggy hide to the snarling black orc rider to the skull dangling howdah. The price is pretty reasonable for such huge, finely crafted pieces. They are even a better deal in Europe, where there aren’t as many middlemen.
When you think you've seen just about every possible variation of a dragon, you need to take a look at this RAFM boxed set, From the deepest fathoms of Bob Murch’s imagination come elemental dragons.

The dragons, both technically superior, have negligible parting lines. Unfortunately, both of the humanoids in the set, the air dragon rider and the earth dragon summoner, have noticeable mold shifts. Both can be corrected, however, with time and patience (files wouldn’t hurt, either). Assembly is required, as are pins and epoxy.

The earth dragon is a wonder of rough, rocky, spined skin. This chunky, flightless creation has long forelegs and short hind legs, making for what would be an interesting gait. The relatively smooth belly armor, while cracked and lined, is in stark contrast to the heavy, earthen hide of the beast. The dragon’s summoner is a worker of natural magic, wearing only a loin cloth, cloak, and hat. He wields a wand to supplement his magical arts.

Smooth, flowing grace is the main characteristic of the air dragon. An apparition of wind and mist, this dragon curls up from its base element and stands poised for attack. The detail is very good, and the sharply sectioned wings add something to the foreign appeal of the figure. The air dragon’s rider is a thin-limbed creature with batlike ears and a polearm, and mounting him will require some work.

This fine set provides another view of one of man’s favorite magical creatures. The listed price is for no-lead alloy.

#3609 Armored Cyclops
Sculptor: Stephen Koo
Scale: 25mm Cost: $6.50
Technical: 6  Artistic: 8  Value: 6

Standing twice as tall as a typical humanoid figure, this fantastic brute is bound to draw more than a casual glance from your friends and players.

The cyclops has slight mold lines that will clean away with some careful file work.

Strange as mythology made the cyclops, this guy is stranger still. With rugged, angular features, thick musculature, and heavy, spiked armor, Mr. Monovision isn’t the fur-clad, club-wielding barbarian that we’ve come to expect. That’s right, this guy carries a sword. Detail is very good, and he should paint up well. Price is for no-lead alloy.
Back to the Past...At Last!
Travel with Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective, to the better end of town for
West End Adventures

This long-awaited addition to the diceless Victorian problem-solving game is here at last! Join the Baker Street Irregulars in solving mystery cases as you match wits with Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective. The six cases of West End Adventures (SLP 1050) join the other delightful crimes of Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective (SLP 1005), Mansion Murders (SLP 1020), The Queens' Park Affair (SLP 1030), and Adventures by Gaslight (SLP 1040) as favorites for families and adults alike to solve and enjoy. Packed with period maps, newspapers and other entertaining and challenging clues, these games are suitable for solo or group play. Produced by Sleuth Publications, Inc. and published by Chessex Publishing.

SLP 1050 WEST END ADVENTURES $25.00
Grim Reaper Casting
Clifton Industrial Center
Mill Rd. & N. Sycamore Ave.
Clifton Heights, PA 19018
Voice: (610) 544-9052 Fax: (610) 544-9052
Mail Order: Yes Catalog: Free

#1070 Wyvern
Nasteez* line
Sculptor: Cliff Linton
Scale: 25mm Cost: $5.25
Technical: 8 Artistic: 7 Value: 6
Nearly flawless casting, Grim Reaper’s specialty, has produced a figure that requires few strokes of the file. Coming in three pieces, the wyvern requires glue and epoxy for assembly.

The wyvern has one foot perched on a rock and has spread its wings, as if issuing a challenge. With one push of its mighty leg, it could leap to the air and take wing. Head and facial detail are very good, as is the back. The inside of the wings and the belly of the beast are simple but will paint up well with some shading.

The detail of the figure is good, and it will make a great gaming or collecting piece. Price is for lead alloy, pewter will be slightly higher.

Alternative Armies
Unit 6, Parkway Court
Glaisdale Parkway
Nottingham, England NG8 4GN
Voice: (0602) 287809 Fax: (0602) 287480
Distributed in the U.S. by The Armory
1101 Greenwood Road
Baltimore, MD 21208
Voice: (410) 602-8000 Fax: (410) 602-8140
Mail Order: Yes Catalog: $5.00

#DW3 Spined Wyvern
Sculptor: Staff
Scale: 25mm Cost: $13.99
Technical: 5 Artistic: 8 Value: 5
Alternative Armies’ version of the mythical wyvern, the sinister cousin to the dragon, will rattle the nerves of a character or two. This nasty comes in five pieces.

The parting lines along the front and back of the piece are noticeable, though not major. However, the lines do go through detail on the belly and legs. Also, some flash mars the webbed spines of his back. Be careful not to mistake the webbed spine itself for flash or you’ll take a great look off the figure. None of these problems will be difficult to correct, though it will require an investment of time. Assembly will require putty to fill in a couple of small gaps.

The wings and head of this wyvern are what really caught my eye. The wings are uncharacteristically detailed and the head is so evil and insidious, it’s frightening (I think I had her for 10th-grade English). The only minus on the artistic end was the ungainly stance; the rest was suitably impressive.
NEW REALMS OF ADVENTURE!

Talisman – Dragon’s Tower contains a unique three-dimensional board that represents the Dragon’s Tower together with a superb model of the Dragon King himself. This new section is placed at the center of the Talisman board and players must now battle their way through the tower in order to defeat the evil Dragon King. Included in the supplement are a new set of adventure cards that detail the events, enemies and followers that can be encountered in the Tower and the treasures that can be found there!

Talisman – Dragon’s Tower also contains four new characters: an Alchemist, Chaos Sorcerer, Astronomer and Sorceress, each represented by a superbly detailed plastic Citadel Miniature.

THE DRAGON’S TOWER BOX CONTAINS

1 Dragon King • 1 Tower board • 3D model • 4 Characters playing pieces
4 Character cards • 1 Rule sheet • 28 Tower cards • 1 Construction sheet • 1 Realm Dice

Talisman – Dragons Tower is not a complete game.
You will need a copy of Talisman to use the contents of this book.

Games Workshop, the Games Workshop logo, and Talisman are registered trademarks of Games Workshop Ltd. Citadel and the Citadel logo are trademarks of Games Workshop Ltd. © Games Workshop Ltd. 1995. All rights reserved.
You've used these creatures from TSR's compendiums before, now you can finally put them on the table in metal. An incredible line to date, these figures certainly continue that tradition.

The kirin is near perfect, with only a trace of parting line between the legs. The wemic had more noticeable parting lines, and even then only between the legs and along the arms.

The wemic, a race that's been around since Monster Manual II, are a tribal race of lion centaur nomads. These figures do an excellent job of capturing the race: its cat-like grace, the feline proportions in the lower body, and a humanoid torso with faces mixing human and lion features.

Detail is very good, and there is a lot of life in their pose.

Kirin, goody-goods that they are, are a happy and powerful lot. This figure is as capricious as they come. Romping happily, the Kirin bears a huge grin. Detail is phenomenal, including its scaled sides, furred head, and flowing mane and tail. The detail makes this a painter's trial by fire, so get out your golds, whites, and grays, and let's see what you can do.

As always, you can write with your comments and suggestions to: From the Forge, P.O. Box 9, Murrieta, CA 92562.
**NEW PRODUCTS FOR JUNE**

**Encyclopedia Magica™ Volume III**  
An AD&D® game accessory  
by Dale "slade" Henson  
The third volume in the series that details every magical item ever created for the AD&D® game. This 416-page volume is a must-buy for all magic aficionados!  
**$25.00 U.S./$32.00 CAN./£15.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 2157**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01357**

**A Light in the Belfry**  
A RAVENLOFT® audio CD adventure  
by William W. Connors & Dori Hein  
Welcome to Tegeron House, the home of the wicked lord Morgoroth, where only the heroes can shatter the house’s curse. The first interactive audio CD adventure for the RAVENLOFT® setting combines a chilling plot with shrieks, screams, and sounds to curdle your blood.  
**$15.00 U.S./$22.00 CAN./£11.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 9494**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01430**

**NEW PRODUCTS FOR JULY**

**Player’s Option™ Rulebook:**  
Combat & Tactics  
An AD&D® game fundamental reference  
by L. Richard Baker III & Skip Williams  
All the optional combat rules any gamer could want are collected in this hardwood 192-page book. Inside you’ll find supplemental rules, an improved tactical combat system, extensive information on armor and weapons, and alternate rules for unarmed martial arts, monster tactics, terrain effects, fighting vehicles, and combat-style options.  
**$20.00 U.S./$26.00 CAN./£11.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 2149**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-00962**

**Thief’s Challenge II**  
An AD&D® game adventure  
by Terry Amthor  
Just two people can play this adventure specifically designed for one thief player and the DM. With minor adjustments, it can also be used for groups of 2-3 players. In this adventure, your thief wakes up on a ship full of dead men, and has no idea how he got there. Things can only get worse when the ship hits the rocks!  
**$6.95 U.S./$8.95 CAN./£4.50 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 9478**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-02892**

**Castle Sites**  
An AD&D® game accessory  
by Sam Witt & Kevin Melka  
This 96-page accessory offers detailed castle floorplans, showing their exteriors, purposes, and inhabitants. Several adventure hooks are included for each castle.  
**$12.95 U.S./$16.95 CAN./£7.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 9479**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01454**

**BIRTHRIGHT™ Boxed Set**  
An AD&D® game campaign setting  
by Baker & McComb  
Experience the thrill of playing rulers of legend, commanding mighty armies, and wielding the power of entire kingdoms! TSR’s newest campaign world lets you play warriors, priests, and rogues descended from royal bloodlines. But be prepared to battle enemies who are just as powerful, and millennia-old Abominations that will stop at nothing to steal your kingly power. Contains three books, two poster-sized maps, and much more!  
**$30.00 U.S./$42.00 CAN./£21.50 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 3100**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01438**

**Blood Enemies: Abominations of Cerilia**  
A BIRTHRIGHT™ accessory  
by slade with Steven Schend  
A guide to the most dangerous creatures on the face of Cerilia: the avnishghelians! With 128 pages of monstrous dictators and wandering nightmares, this appendix should strike fear into the hearts of all blooded rulers from the Sea of Storms to the Isle of the Serpent!  
**$18.00 U.S./$23.00 CAN./£10.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 9494**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01330**

**A FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign**  
Thay and Rashemen, and touches on the Simbul’s nation of Aglarond. Within are detailed maps and three booklets of never-before-released information on the Red Wizards and other rulers.  
**$25.00 U.S./$32.00 CAN./£15.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 1121**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-0139X**

**The Factol’s Manifesto**  
A PLANESCAPE™ accessory  
by Beach, Hein, Salisbury, and others  
A must-have guide to all 13 factions characters can join, presented firsthand by the faction leaders themselves! Includes guidelines on faction interaction, proficiencies, magic, equipment, and more.  
**$20.00 U.S./$26.00 CAN./£11.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 2611**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01411**

**Mark of Amber**  
A MYSTARA™ audio CD adventure  
by Jeff Grubb & Aaron Allston  
The Amberville family of eccentric wizards and their sinister castle await you, in the first interactive audio CD adventure set in Glantri. The digitally recorded audio CD comes with a 64-page booklet, playing aid, and poster-size map.  
**$18.00 U.S./$26.00 CAN./£12.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 2513**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01403**

**Beyond the Prism Pentad**  
A DARK SUN® accessory and adventure  
by Bill Slavicsek  
Gathered here are extensive details on all the events and characters revealed in the Prism Pentad novels that altered Athasian history. This 32-page accessory helps players and DMS incorporate the changes into their campaign.  
**$6.95 U.S./$8.95 CAN./£4.50 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 2441**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-03082**

**The Irdi**  
A DRAGONLANCE® novel  
by Linda P. Baker  
Volume Two in the Lost Histories Series is the story of the high ogres, forerunners of the high ogre race. For the first time we learn how a legendary race fell from the grace of their gods.  
**$4.95 U.S./$5.95 CAN./£4.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 8364**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-01381**

**Cloak of Shadows**  
by Ed Greenwood  
The Time of Troubles continues and Elminster’s role in the Avatar crisis is further revealed. As the Shadowmasters slaughter and manipulate their way to prominence in Faerun, it’s up to the heroes to stop them.  
**$4.95 U.S./$5.95 CAN./£4.99 U.K.**  
**TSR Product No.: 8559**  
**ISBN: 0-7869-03015**

Unless otherwise noted:  
© designates registered trademarks owned by TSR, Inc.  
™ designates trademarks owned by TSR, Inc. ©1995 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
A Light in the Belfry

From the shattered edges of dark terror comes, A Light in the Belfry. The first interactive audio CD adventure for the RAVENLOFT® classic horror world.

Experience the Terror.
COMING THIS SUMMER...

WIDE OPEN GAMING

PLAYER'S OPTION™ Rulebooks

Combat & Tactics
Unveiling in July

Skills & Powers
Unveiling in August