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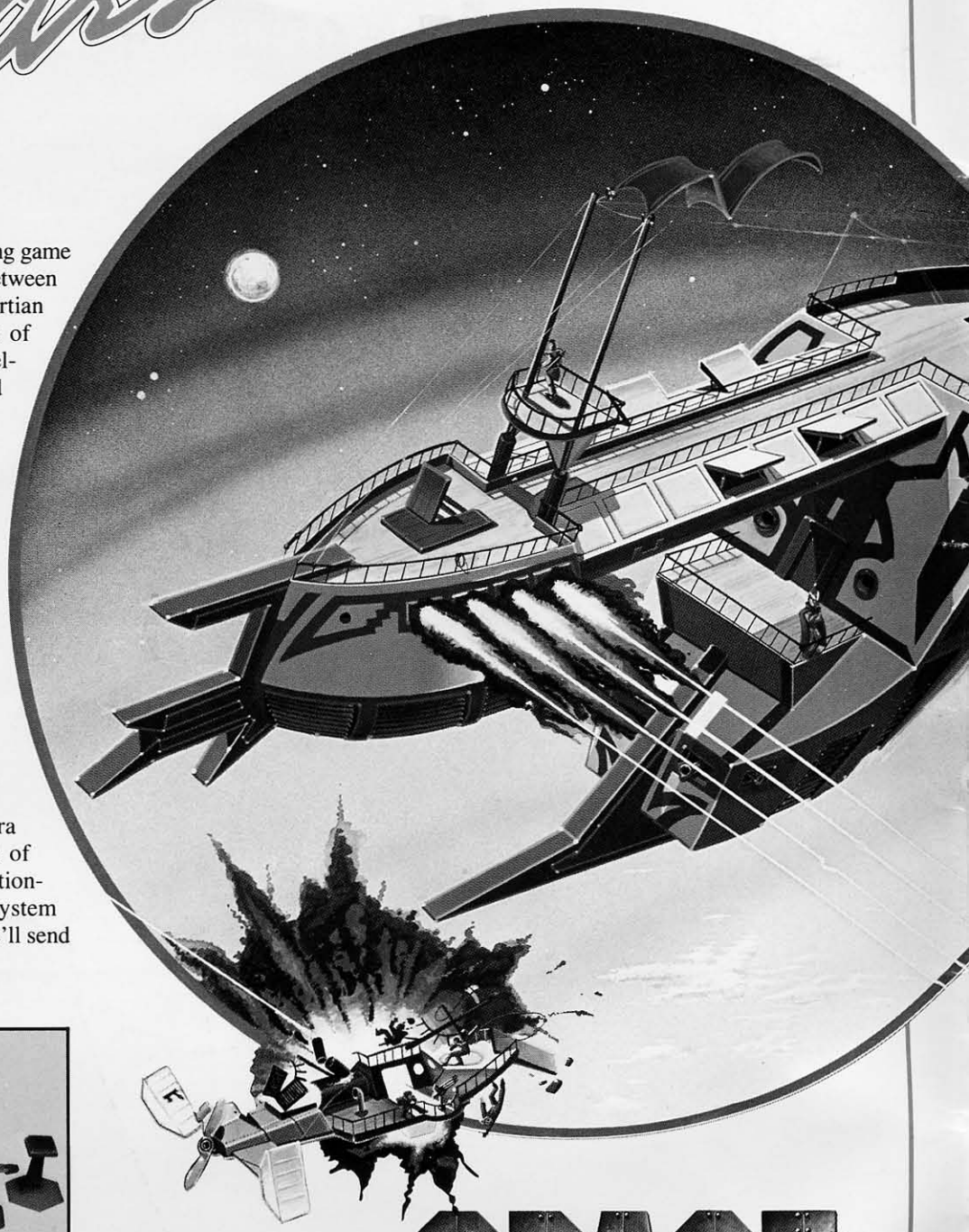
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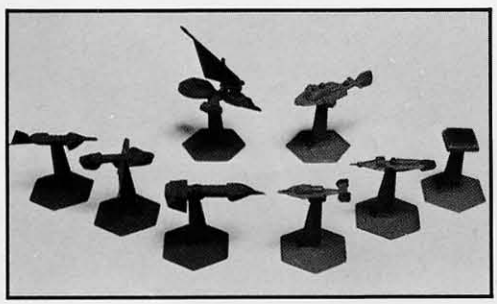
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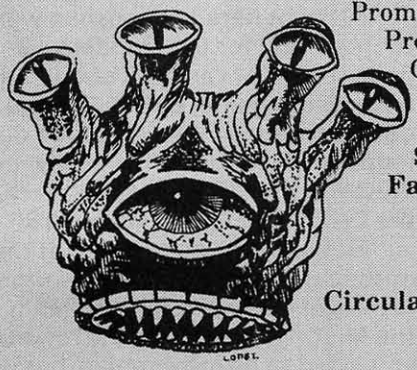
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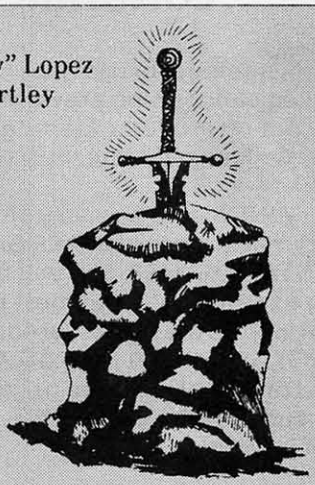
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SpaceGamer FantasyGamer

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Editor in Chief	Jeff Albanese
Space Gamer Editor	Perrin D. Tong
Fantasy Gamer Editor	Jeff Albanese
Art Director	Perrin D. Tong
Publisher	3W, Inc.
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Butter Finger
Claustraphobic

I track mind
Goldberg
Squeamish



Editorial

Remember in last issue how I talked about doing previews of upcoming products, starting with **Sky Galleons of Mars** from ***GDW.***

Well, lo and behold, coming up in our next issue of **SPACE GAMER/ FANTASY GAMER,** you will be seeing a preview of what most people feel will be the hottest product of 1989: **Space 1889** from ***GDW!*** This is a trend that we hope to continue throughout the up-coming year and beyond.

Hot News! **Finieous Fingers** will be returning to the pages of this fine magazine, beginning with issue #85. And speaking of cartoons, **Gator-Aide** gets its start this issue.

In this issue, we get a preview of ***Hero Games'*** **To Serve and Protect,** which is the article for a new column in the magazine, the **Hero HOTline.** The feature of this issue, is a tournament-level **AD&D** module, The Halls Of Fortune. which I think you'll enjoy over the up-coming holidays.

Also, don't be afraid about writing for **SG/FG**. If you have a variant or scenario for a game, send it in - who knows, maybe you'll see your name in print! We're looking for more articles on **GURPS, BATTLETECH**, and **Twilight 2000**.

SG/FG #83 FEEDBACK

First of all, the amount of feedback, both good and bad, was a noticeable improvement over previous issues. Most of the feedback was on the good side, with the poor printing job getting most of the negative feedback. One of our distributors liked the issue so much that they increased their order with us. Also, 65% of the feedback cards thought this issue was better than the last one - *thanks.*

OOPS!

We forgot to give credit to the artist of the Call Of Cthulhu article in issue #83 - Tim Calendar, our Murphy's Rules artist. Thanks, Tim!

Rating by Article/Feature

1. **Star Wars**
2. Murphy's Rules
3. Scanner
4. SG Reviews
5. Cover Art
6. **Sky Galleons Of Mars**
   Issue Overall
8. Editorial
9. FG Variants
10. Robocops
11. FG Reviews
    Issue Graphics
13. Plague In Westbrook
14. Gamer Guide
    Classified
15. Letters
16. Convention Calendar
17. The Ruler (Comics)
18. Book Reports
    A Question Of
    Leverage

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Letters

Dear Space Gamer:

All of us here at ***Chaosium*** want to thank you for the wonderful 2-page spread of cartoons about our best-selling game, **Call of Cthulhu**. Cartoons rarely make me laugh out loud, but these did. They really illustrate the differences between the **Call of Cthulhu** game and FRP's.

However, I was appalled at the misunderstanding displayed in the review of Gene Wolfe's **Soldier in the Mist.** Undoubtedly the reviewer wished to be informative, but is obviously unfamiliar with ancient history. For instance, the story is not set in Mycenean times, but several centuries later during the Classical period of Greece during the Persian Wars. The amnesiac soldier is not Greek. By looking at the clues given we can discovered he is, in fact, Roman; his unit is called a maniple (a sub-unit of the Roman Legion), they use throwing spears (Romans used a Pilum), he remembers his youth at the City of Seven Hills (an old name for Rome), and at the end his rediscovered companion calls him by a Roman name.

Since a great part of my enjoyment of the book came from trying to figure out where the main character is from, this oversight seems quite significant to me.

Sincerely,

Greg Stafford
President,
Chaosium, Inc.

Thanks for the comments, Greg. I'm glad to see that you liked the magazine. As to the book review, having never read the book, I have to go by what the reviewer writes.

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The following products have been, or are scheduled to be released soon:

Game Designer's Workshop(GDW)

Referee's Companion for Megatraveller
Howling Wilderness sourcebook for Twight 2000
Mediterranean Cruise module for Twlight 2000
Challenge Magazine #34 - Space 1889 preview
Ironclads and Ether Flyers board-game for Space 1889
Also, Challenge plans to go bi-monthly starting in 1989.

Iron Crown Enterprises(ICE)

Far Harad, The Scorched Land for MERP (Supplement)
Shadow In The South for MERP (Supplement)
League Of Merchants for Space Master (Supplement)
War On A Distant Moon for Space Master (Module)
Empire Of The Witch-King for MERP (Supplement)
Space Master: Star Strike science ficttion boardgame for Space Master
Rolemaster Companion III for Rolemaster
Lords Of Middle-Earth, Volume III for MERP (Supplement)
Scourge From The Deep for Champions (Sourcebook)
Stirke Force for Champions (Sourcebook)
Enemies: VIllainy Unbound for Champions (Supplement)
The Spell Book for Fantasy Hero (Supplement)
To Serve And Protect for Champions (Supplement)
Voyage of the Titania module for Space Master

TSR, Inc.

High Stakes Gamble/Overlords of the Underworld - a Double Agent Book
Foul Play at Fool's Summit - a Top Secret/S.I. Solo Casebook
Buck Rogers: Crusader - a Buck Rogers Adventure Book
Buck Rogers: Martian Wars - Graphic Novel #2
The Midnight Avenger - a Agent 13 graphic novel
St. John the Pursuer: Vampire in Moscow (Novel)
Hellflower (Novel)

Mayfair Games

Strangers in Paradise - a Wonder Woman sourcebook for D.C. Heros
Betrayal at Bogwater module for the City State of the Invincible Overlord
City of Fear module for DC Heros
Revenge of the Manhunters module for DC Heros
Belle Reve Sourcebook for DC Heros, featuring Task Force X

Gamescience

Has acquired the rights to 18 ***Judges' Guild*** modules. Existing copies will be sold first, then re-printed. Some will be modifed/improved/combined.

Steve Jackson Games(SJG)

Has acquired licenses for both the **RIVERWORLD** and **UPLIFT** science fiction series. Both will become worldbooks for **GURPS**, and are scheduled for release in 1989.
Guilty Party: Murder on the Casting Couch - a murder mystery game
I Never - a pocket box party game
Uncle Al's Grab Bag - a bag full of Car Wars stuff
GURPS Blank Character Sheets
GURPS Space GM Sheets
Car Wars City Blocks I
Car Wars City Blocks 2
Up Harburk! - a solo adventure for Horseclans
GURPS Space Altas 2
GURPS Magic - more spells
Autoduel Quarterly Vol. 6, #4
Roleplayer #12 & #13

21st Century Games

The End of a Legend for the ENFORCERS Super-Hero RPG

Flying Buffalo, Inc.

Tunnels & Trolls is now in Japanese

Blackburg Tactical Research Center

Timelords Adventure Pack #1 for Timelords
Space Time Role-Playing Game

Bantam Books

Darksword Adventures paperback RPG

Strategic Simulations, Inc.(SSI)

Pool of Radiance Cluebook for the AD&D computer adventure $12.95
Demon's Winter - a fantasy "role-playing" computer game for the Apple II and C64/128 computers $29.95
Also, ***SSI*** products will be distributed by ***Electronic Arts(EA)***, thereby increasing the number of retail outlets carrying their products.

Ral Partha

Forgotten Realms Heros - miniatures for AD&D

IntellicreationsIDatasoft

Firexone - future history computer game for the C64/128($24.95), and for the ST/Amiga/IBM ($34.95)
Sorcerer Lord - fantasy computer game for the C64/128($24.95) , and for the ST/Amiga/IBM($34.95)
The Android Decision - play against your own hostile computer for the C64/128 ($24.95), and the ST/Amiga/IBM($34.95)
Lancelot - Knights of the Round Table computer game for the C64/128, Apple II, Atari 8-Bit($29.95), and the ST/Amiga/IBM/Macintosh ($39.95)
Time and Magik -time travel computer game for the C64/128, Apple II, Atari 8-Bit($29.95), and the ST/Amiga/IBM/Macintosh($39.95)

FASA Corp.

House Davion for Battletech
Battletech Map Set II for Battletech
Renegade Legion Tanks for Regegade Legion
Harbingers of Death - scenarios for Centurion(Regegade Legion)
The Star League for Battletech/ Mechwarrior (Sourcebook)
Leviathan boardgame for

Renegade Legion
Star Trek Ground Forces Manual for Star Trek
The Fourth Succession War, Volume One for Battletech
Wolves on the Border novel for Battletech
Also, be on the lookout for more The Next Generation products.

Chaosium
Prine Valiant: The Story-Telling Game
Field Guide To Dreamland Monsters

Palladium Books
Transdimensional Turtles for TMNT

Masterplay Publishing Corporation
Star Saga: One Beyond the Boundary - a science fiction role-playing computer game by the creator of **Wizardy.** The game is available for the IBM and Apple IIGS

Tor Books
The Willow Sourcebook - Designed for use with most fantasy RPG's

R. Talsorian Games
Mekton Empire for Mekton
Also, the agreement with ***TOR BOOKS***, as mentioned in **SG/FG #83**, will not be taking place.

West End Games
Battle for the Golden Sun module for Star Wars
A New Hope Miniatures Set for Star Wars
Light Saber Dueling Pack for Star Wars
Assault on Hoth boardgame for Star Wars
Don't Take Your Laser to Town module for Paranoia

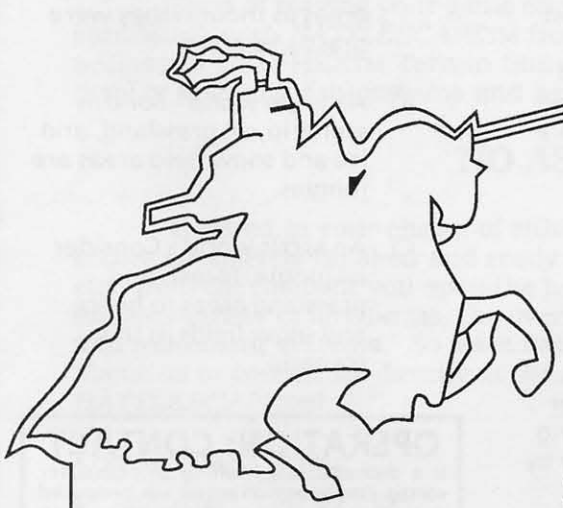
Games Workshop
Warhammer Armies - hardbound rules for WH RPG
Dark Future - vehicle boardgame in the Blood Bowl universe
Realms of Chaos Vol 1: Slaves of Darkness - supplement for WH and WH40K, with a warning: "FOR MATURE PLAYERS" on the box. This supplement will instruct players in the ways of "daemons" - *Something that we don't need in this hobby, considering all of the anti-roleplaying nuts out there.*
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Task Force Games
Central Casting - general RPG supplement to add history to your game
Captain's Log #7 for SFB (Jan'89)
Update 2 - new ships and scenarios for Starfleet Battles

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Landing Party

By James E. Meldrum

Other missions, besides search missions, can be simulated using ***FASA's Search For Spock*** *game. One such mission is a landing party scenario where a Federation landing party from a starship beams down either to capture or destroy a robot outpost established on the Genesis planet by the Klingons. When the landing party arrives, it discovers that a Klingon landing party from yet another Klingon vessel has been sent to prevent the Federation landing party from accomplishing their mission.*

Scenario Set Up:

This may be either a solitaire or two-player scenario which uses existing game equipment and mechanics. Where there is any conflict between this variant material and the original game rules, the game rules take priority in resolving the conflict.

In this variant, the Genesis planet is constructed in the normal manner. The Spock marker is concealed as per the game rules, but in this scenario the marker represents an automated research station which is armed and has facilities and shelter for four personnel. All personnel in each landing party carry phasers and tri-corders. Any Klingon "pet" markers are considered to be decoys for game purposes and are removed from play when revealed.

The landing parties for both sides always consists of four personnel. Kirk and Kruge always command the Federation and Klingon landing parties respectively. Since these landing parties actually consist of "marines", all characters from both sides have a skill rating of 7. If the special skills rules are being used, all personnel are considered marksmen in addition to any other skills. Each of the landing parties is controlled by only one player each, and all personnel conduct specific activities in each phase at the same time. In other words, all Federation personnel will move at the same time, all will conduct combat at the same time, etc. No weapons malfunctions occur in this scenario, and all weapons malfunction cards are ignored.

When players beam their forces down at the start of a scenario, all personnel must appear at a single beam-down point for each side.

As mentioned earlier, the robot outpost is represented by the Spock marker. The outpost also has an automated defense system that conducts one round of combat against all opposing personnel units in adjacent areas subject to the rules governing combat with weapons, with a skill level of five. The outpost does not "run away" after combat since it is a stationary object. Personnel attacking the outpost "run away" after combat in the normal manner.

The outpost is considered to have an endurance factor of four for combat purposes. The outpost may be destroyed by phaser fire. When four phaser hits are scored against the outpost, it is converted to a rubble hex by placing a rubble marker in the space formerly occupied by the outpost/Spock marker.

Victory Conditions:

The Federation player wins by eliminating the Klingon outpost. The Klingon player wins be either preventing the Federation landing party from achieving its goals, or by killing all Federation personnel units.

Extra Variants:

1) Role Reversal - Allow the Federation player to use the outpost.

2) Point Defense - Have the Klingon player begin the game with four personnel units and the outpost on the planetary surface. All Klingon personnel have skill rating of seven for this scenario. The Federation player landing party consists of six personnel. This variant also may be played by reversing sides.

3) Non-Genesis Planet - Assume that instead of happening on the Genesis world, the scenarios take place on a normal planet. Ignore the planet spinning and shifting rules and event cards. All planet tiles are "frozen" and may not move. This applies to **Search For Spock** as well as the landing party variants.

4) Different Worlds: The Genesis world is an almost perverse combination of nearly all possible environments contained within a single planet. Suppose, however, that either the **Search For Spock** or the landing party scenarios take place on a world with a more uniform environment.

   A) An arid world - Treat all ice and snow fields, and jungle areas as though they were grassland areas.

   B) A jungle world - For this scenario, all grassland, and ice and snow field areas are jungles.

   C) An arctic world - Consider all jungle, forest, and grassland areas to be ice and snow fields in this scenario.

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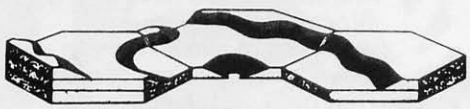
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Solitaire Starship Combat



By James E. Meldrum

Wargaming, it must be admitted, is a rather esoteric hobby. Sometimes opponents can be very difficult to find. For those who have difficulty finding an opponent or who wish to play without one, this scenario is presented for ***West End***'s **Star Trek III** game.

This scenario is based on the assumption that the major "powers" (Federation, Klingon, Romulan) have vast areas of space to patrol/control with a limited number of vessels and manpower. Consequently each side has developed robot ships which would operate without a crew and attack any unknown vessel entering a given area of space. This article presents rules for using robot vessels in the **Star Trek III** game. PLAYERS MUST FOLLOW THESE RULES EXACTLY TO ENSURE THAT THE ROBOT SHIPS ARE USED PROPERLY.

Set Up:

The following types of ships may be used as "robot" ships by the Federation, Klingons, and Romulans including: All types of destroyers, frigates, escorts, and scouts. The Romulans may also use Bird of Prey light cruisers in the robot mode.

Players should understand that in addition to moving his own ship and firing its weapons, the solitaire player must plot for, move, and fire the robot ship's weapons.

Usually only one robot ship may be used in each scenario and should be matched against a similar ship type to ensure some sort of game balance. However, more than one robot ship may be used against a more powerful opposing vessel.

Initially, the solitaire player will place his ship in the center of the map. The robot ship will enter the map from any hex on the map edge in the solitaire player's ship aft arc. If multiple robot ships are used, one ship is placed in a hex on each map edge; no more than four robot ships may be used in a single scenario. Play continues until all robot ships have been destroyed, or the solitaire player's ship has been destroyed. The three impluse game MUST be used.

Plotting and Energy Allocation:

In addition to plotting for his vessel, moving it, and firing its weapons, the solitaire player must also do the same for the robot ship. Energy points produced by the robot vessel's engine(s) is allocated between various ships's systems according to the following priorities, without exception:

1) Movement
2) Shields: The shield facing the opposing vessel is always powered up to maximum strength. Remaining shield points are distributed between remaining shields.
3) Weapons:
   a) Photon/plasma torpedoes,
   b) Long-Range phasers or disruptors (if two kinds are carried),
   c) Short-Range phasers or disruptors.
4) Remaining Energy Points: Remaining energy points are distributed among remaining shields, preferably to those that are or could be facing the opposing vessel.

Movement:

1) All robot vessels have energy allocated to movement sufficient to allow them to move four hexes per game turn.
2) The robot vessel must either move toward or follow the solitaire player's ship in each game turn.
3) At the end of each movement impluse the robot ship must turn in the hex it ends its movement in to allow any unfired weapons to bear on the opposing vessel. If all weapons have already been fired these turns are not made; instead the robot ship will move toward the opposing vessel.
4) The robot ship may not move off the map since the map represents the patrol area that the robot ship has been assigned to patrol. The robot ship will always select a course that will keep it on the map.

Shields:

1) The robot ship will always have the three shields facing the opposing vessel powered up to full strength. If there is the possibility that the opposing ship may shoot at and hit the robot ship on a hex side between two shields, then both shields are powered up to full strength.
2) No more than three shields may be powered up at one time.

Weapons:

1) The robot ship will always follow/move toward the opposing ship until it is in sufficient range to allow hits to be made on a die roll of 1-4 or better. Combat may take place at closer ranges. As soon as a robot ship is in range it will fire all weapons that can bear against the opposing vessel.
2) After the first time the robot ship fires its weapons in a game turn, it turns so that any unfired weapons may be fired in the next impulse.
3) The robot ship will always turn to present the firing arc with the most unfired weapons toward the opposing ship.
4) In each impulse the robot ship will continue to turn and fire its weapons until no unfired weapons remain.
5) Photon or Plasma torpedoes are always energized and fired before phasers or disruptors are fired or as soon as they are in range. If more than one of these weapons is available, only one is fired in any single impulse.
6) Cloaking devices may not be use during the game by either side.

Unless otherwise noted, all regular game rules are in force at all times. In any situation where the variant material presented in this article conflicts with the regular game rules, the regular rules will take priority in resolving the conflict.

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Supercloth

By Anthony DiGiacomo

Captain Wonder flew through the atmosphere at a hundred miles an hour. He landed on the street and smiled to greet his adoring fans. They greeted him with shrieks and blushing faces. He didn't understand why they did this until he looked into a nearby store's plate glass front window. He saw himself, NUDE. It seems the tremendous heat of re-entry had burned away his guady, well known costume. With his hands covering his private parts, he took off into the air in frantic search of somewhere to hide....

What a way to begin a superhero roleplaying article, huh? How many comic book characters do we read about who have that very real problem: Super body - cloth costume? Many of course. But now there is hope for the superhero. Read this article with your favorite superhero P.C., and find out how he or she can get a SUPERCLOTH costume.

It is a small store, in the Pelham Bay section of the Bronx. It has a small sign on a shingle over the door that reads: CLOTHES UNIQUE. You enter it and are greeted by a gorgeous man or woman - depending on your sex. This person directs you to a tastefully covered couch and asks if you wish a beverage. While you sit, a telepathic/biological scanner audits you, determining if you are a super powered being or a non-super normal. You are a super powered being, so the receptionist directs you to a sliding partition. You walk through it and see a small room occupied by a stool, a drafting table, and a two foot high riser with tape marks for various positions, on its "floor." A Voice belonging to a five foot three, two hundred pound man wearing a perfectly tailored blazer, shirt, slacks, and maroon vest, greets you. You have just met the Tailor. The Tailor begins to interview you, and you tell him what kind of costume you want designed. Afterward he asks you to strip nude and take your place up on the riser. He asks that you assume various action poses, and as you do so, he measures the muscular movements and physical changes each position would demand from the clothes covering those muscles. You dress once more and he tells you his rates and his terms. He also tells you what he will or won't be able to do in terms of costume extras and effects.

The Tailor's rates:

1) Basic skintight bodysuit: 25 hero points(**Superworld /Champions**) or 1 super power (**V&V**).
2) Skintight costume with disguise capability (become normal clothes - one shirt/blouse and pants/slacks): 50 hero points/2 super powers.
3) Extras: 10 pts/gloves, 20/boots, 30/cape, or all inventing points in **V&V**.

What, you may ask, is SUPERCLOTH? Supercloth, like the Tailor, is a wonderous thing. In 1941 a ten year old Italian tailor's son discovered he was being followed by a metal craft unlike any plane he'd ever seen. The occupants took him inside and when he emerged, he was four years older and many miles away - in America; New York City. Also when he emerged, Antonio Calluccio posessed the secret of manufacturing and turning into clothing, what the aliens (actually denizens of a parallel earth) called SUPERCLOTH. He built his telepathic/bio scanners, his variable form androids, and opened his clothing shop. Clothes Unique services all economic classes equally, but is just another custom clothes tailoring shop to those who do not read Super Being to the Tailor's devices.

Supercloth Itself:

In **Champions**, SUPERCLOTH has an innate armor rating of 3pd 3ed Armor. This only protects the cloth itself, it confers no protection to the wearer. In **Superworld**, it posesses 3 point armor, again only to protect itself. In **Villains and Vigilantes** it has an adr rating of 10, again only to protect itself.

Any upgrading or uprating of the 'CLOTH to a stronger composition, costs: 10 points/plus 3 factors of armor, or ten inventing points.

The Tailor can make a costume to exact fit and exact specifications for any superbeing - male, female, or alien/mutant. Including any physical peculiarities (tails, horns, multiple limbs).

Of course, the store is defensible from vandalism or burgling. In fact, it contains devices that, because they are tied into the telepathic/bio scanners, can neutralize ANY super power/skill/ability/device borne effect.

Referees, this article was written with you in mind, not to make your job (bookkeeping) more difficult, but to take away the burden of trying to keep some semblance of comic book "realism", in your games. If characters know that their costumes can be torn away/ burned away/etc., leaving them nude, they may just refrain from grandstanding or throwing your rules of physics out of the window. Think about the shy girl/guy, who is insecure about their body outside of super identity's costume - would they wish to be trapped in a barely covering mess of rags? Or what of those characters that couldn't afford the cost, of having their real faces seen?

Remember to tell them: "Just because you are invulnerable, doesn't mean that the costume you sewed together in your room, is!"

I hope this works for you (if anything else, it will keep character power levels low by syphoning points/powers away).

Distinctive Minds

At last, a company that offers games, books, and even videos for the discriminating buyer. We emphasize customer satisfaction and quick service.

GAMES

MEGATRAVELLER
This is the updated version of the classic science fiction role playing gameTraveller from Game Designers' Workshop. This boxed version contains three rules book: The Player's Manual, the Referee's Manual and the Imperial Encyclodepia plus a map of the Spinward Marches. This game is compatible, but an improvement upon, the basic Traveller rules.
Retail price: $30.00; Your price: **$27.00**; Stock **# GDW 210**

BULLWINKLE AND ROCKY
And now for something completely different....three different games in one package from TSR. The Narration Game, which uses cue cards and retell stories; the Everybody Can Do Something Game, a roleplaying game with spinners for outcomes; and the Mr Know It All Graduate Game, allows you to design your own characters and develop your own story lines. All use the characters from the Rocky & Bullwinkle show, including Boris and Natasha, Mr Peabody and Sherman, Dudley Do Right and Snidley Whiplash plus many others.
Retail price: $15.00; Your price: **$13.50**; Stock **# TS 1035**

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING
Based on the works of J.R.R. Tolkien this is a two player boardgame that recreates the Fellowship and their allies attempt to move the One Ring from the Shire to Mordor. Illustrated playing cards are part of the game as each player uses the characters of the Lord of the Rings to their best advantage.
Retail price: $35.00; Your price: **$31.50**; Stock **# ICE 7100.**

D & D Set 5: Immortal Rules
This is an expansion set of fantasy role playing rules for the D&D Basic, Expert, Companion and Master sets. This TSR set of rules includes a Player's Guide to Immortals, which includes rules for creating new characters and their form, abilities, powers and home plane; and a Dungeon Master's Guide to Immortals, which includes rules for their use, creatures and a reference screen.
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THE WILLOW GAME
A fantasy boardgame based on the movie story Willow . A game for 2-6 players and played in only two hours. One side must find the baby and bring her to Nockmaar Castle while the other must protect the baby and deliver her to safety. The game includes encounter, treasure and full color transformation cards, a map board of the land of Willow, various plastic game aids and rules booklet.
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SKYREALMS OF JORUNE
3500 years from now Man's rule is ancient history. This is the role playing world of Jorune. The world has unusual creatures, races, customs and even energy which will be totally alien to players but will be learned as you explore and game in Jorune. The game includes the Tauther Guide, which explains the world; the Player Manual, which holds the rules to character generation, skills, combat and more; and the Sholari Guide, which is a gamemaster aid.
Retail price: $25.00 ; Your price: **$22.50**; Stock **# SR 101.**

DRAGONSTAR RISING
A futuristic boardgame of man-to-man power armor combat by Leading Edge games. This game is for 2 or more players and basicly introduces players to the combat system of Living Steel role-playing game. The game comes with a background and scenario book, the combat rules, 2 game maps, and die cut counters representing the various combatants.
Retail price: $25.00; Your price: **$22.50**; Stock **# LE 10400.**

AD&D DUNGEONEER'S SURVIVAL GUIDE
This hardbound AD&D sourcebook provides the player and DM alike with innovative rules and settings for underground adventures. This book contains information on combat, mining, underground civilizations, and more.
Retail price: $15.00; Your price: **$13.50**; Stock **# TS 2019.**

HIDDEN KINGDOM
A fantasy role playing adventure game based on the legends of King Arthur and his knights. The game comes in a three ringed binder and slip cover, and includes the following: complete rules and referee guide; character information for over 300 characters; two large color maps of Britain and Ireland; various charts; and dice.
Retail price: $32.95; Your price: **$29.00**; **Stock # NR HK101.**

VIDEOS

EXCALIBUR
John Boorman wrote and directed this interpretation of this classic story. This time each generation is depicted in more detail, first Uther Pendragon, then Arthur and finally Mordred. Nicol Williamson comes of the best as Merlin. Available in VHS.
Your price: **$19.98**; Stock **# V22018.**

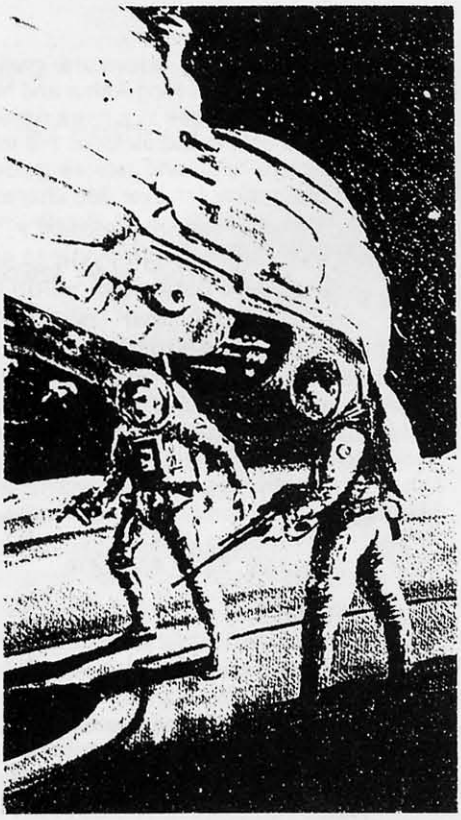
BLADE RUNNER
A science fiction detective story with Harrison Ford as the special enforcer brought in to track down replicants (androids). Rutger Hauer plays the leader of the killing machines that have returned to the futuristic Los Angeles. Ridley Scott directs and brings out the slimy rain, neon lights and over crowdedness of the next century.
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RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK
Based on the cliff-hanger serials of the 30's and 40's, this Steven Spielberg directed action movie became one of the top movie makers in movie history. Dr. Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford), an archaeologist and adventurer, must thwart the Nazis from finding and seizing the Ark of the Covenant for their own evil purposes. VHS only.
Your price: **$19.95**; Stock **# 1376.**

ALIENS
Ridley Scott returns to direct the sequel to Alien. Sigourney Weaver, as Ripley, accompanies the colonial marines as they return to the scene of the crime. Lots of action in the fast paced movie. Michael Biehn plays a solid supporting role. VHS only.
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BREAKOUT!



A BOARDING PARTY VARIANT

By: Perrin D. Tong

The Marine could barely keep his eyes open as he concentrated on keeping his teeth from chattering and his stomach from growling for the umteenth time as a robot patrolled the reactor room (on routine rounds or in search of him, he didn't know... and this made him more tense as time passed).

Private First Class Faber, William J. was inducted into the Marine Corps five years ago, late summer, after finishing high school. He was planning to go to college to become an architect when "**THEY**" made themselves known and the Ulysses was prepared to be launched. The crew billets needed to be filled, thus, the would-be architect became a Marine.

Background

Initially, the DESTRUCTOR Cruiser and the Colony ship ULYSSES were disabled during a brief skirmish. Captain Morrow took the initiative at that time to send a boarding party to the DESTRUCTOR Cruiser in hopes of destroying the robots and the onboard computer.

Success came with only a few minor injuries. But not too easily. The battle seemed to rage on endlessly until finally the DESTRUCTOR was seized and all the robots were disabled or destroyed.

Without their knowledge, the boarding party was attacked by yet another DESTRUCTOR Cruiser. This time, however, it was the robots who were sending over a boarding party!

As the second DESTRUCTOR Cruiser came into the scene the ULYSSES had managed to finish repairs on its weapons, but did not fire immediately. As soon as the Weapons Chief realized the intentions of the second cruiser he opened fire. After a brief exchange both ships were disabled. The ULYSSES took some heavy damage to its cargo holds, losing many supplies and equipment, and the third deck quarters and recreation area, which was sealed off, doubling the casualties. Life support was at a minimum, but sufficient for the time being. Sickbay, all the while, was being kept busy with an abun-dance of casualties.

Back on the first Cruiser the boarding party had their hands full. Once again the battles raged on. But this time the robots had the element of surprize!

As the battle continued the boarding party got seperated. Nearly half the party was killed while the rest were carried off by the Slaver Robots. Luckily, one Marine escaped the misfortune.

Other than the hasty repairs being made to the ship's Command Computer the robots were back to their routine duties. It was now time for the Marine to make his move.

The first two battles were over. But the end of the war was far from sight!

The Situation

Private Faber is in the Emergency Power Generator Equipment Compartment on the second level. His radio was busted during the previous battle but he still had his blaster and plenty of power cartridges. He had been in, and ran around in, the corridors of this ship long enough to know it like the back of his hand. But now, fatigued, cold and hungry, he could vaguely remember were he was. But he knew that he was the only chance the rest of them had..., and it was now or never!

Initial Set-up

HUMANS:

1. Take one Marine counter and place it in the Emergency Power Generator Equipment Compartment on the second level.
2. Shuffle the remaining human counters, upside down. Remove six counters and place three in each of the Slave Quarters on the second level.
3. Human weapons of the captured party are stowed in the Weapons Computer Compartment on the third level.
4. Roll (as usual) for the number of Blast Packs available. Place them in the Explosives Compartment on the second level.

ROBOTS:

1. Remove two Repair Robots and place them aside.
2. Take two more Repair Robots and place one in the Command Computer on the third level and one in the Primary Weapons Power Compartment on the fourth level.
3. Invert all remaining robot and dummy counters and shuffle them. Remove 8 counters for play.
4. Place the 8 counters as follows: 1C, 2A, 2C, 3A, 3C, 3F, 4A, and the Command Computer.

PreGame Preparations and Notes

1. The Command Computer has not been totally repaired yet. To reflect this, roll three 6-sided dice and record the total as the present damage.
2. The Repair Robot in the Command Computer will repair one point of damage per turn.
3. Computer locked doors are inoperative. Use the YES/NO markers as usual for Shock Guarded Doors.
4. Perform three (3) turns of Robot Movement for all inverted robot (and dummy) counters. Yes, this means that the Repair Robot in the Command Computer will repair 3 points of damage!
5. Any robot(s) that happens to move into the same compartment as the Marine will stop. This will be the Marine's first encounter during the first turn.

Special Rules

1. The Marine has only 2 movement points per turn, due to fatigue.
2. He may attempt to *SNEAK* past any robot(s) in a compartment. A die roll will determine his success or failure and is modified by the number of robots present in a given compartment. Roll a 6-sided die and use the following chart:

Number of Robots	Success	Failure
1	1-5	6
2	1-3	4-6
3	1-2	3-6
4 or more	1	2-6

If the die roll fails the robot(s) will follow the Marine during the following Robot Movement Phase. Robot counters remain inverted as the Marine attempts to sneak past them.

3. If the Marine is noticed the counters are revealed as the move to follow the Marine.
4. Once the Marine enters the Slaver Quarters random movement will begin to cease (except for Repair Robots) as follows:

   On the turn that the Marine enters the Slaver Quarters the Command Computer will take control of the closest inverted counter to the humans and move towards them along the shortest possible route.

   On the next turn the Command Computer will control two inverted counters in the same manner.

   On the turn after that the Command Computer controls three counters, and so on and so on!
5. The doors to the Slaver Quarters are locked. They may be destroyed by 3 points of damage, or more, from a blaster, disruptor or blast pack.
6. If there is an Explosives Expert amongst the survivors he may attempt to blow a hole in the floor, ceiling or wall in the same manner as blasting a door. However, they require 5 points of damage.
7. All other rules of Boarding Party apply.

Victory Conditions

There is no time limit for this scenario. The Human player must simply destroy the Command Computer and all the Repair Robots or they lose the scenario!

Postlude

During the next twenty minutes the men managed to retrieve all the dead bodies and placed them all in the Command Computer, stripped them of their dog tags and any personal effects they happened to have on them and gave them a short and sweet burial ceremony. Then they headed for the fourth deck airlock.

The rescue boat was just arriving. Faber reached into his pocket and pulled out the remote control box that electronics tech fashioned out of the spare parts in the workshop.

"Five minutes 'til the Grand Finale folks," he announced.

Three quarters of the way back to the **ULYSSES** and the cruiser exploded with several small explosions breaching the hull, then one final blinding blast. The men opened their eyes again as debris twinkled in all directions and faded, some pieces bouncing off the rescue boat. The men silently looked at one another vic-toriously. Yet, they all knew that another cruiser was close by... and still a threat!



TRIAL BY STRENGTH
A GEV SCENARIO

Fiction and Variant
By Tim Robinson

I am an experimental unit of the Combine Army, a new OGRE using the Mark V chassis. I am the first variation of the Mark V "Fortress" unit, the Mark V-B, codename "Calliope." While I have been tested on the simulation range and in the field exercises, this is my first engagement in actual combat. This combat will probably decide whether my series will be produced or if there will be further research and development.

I can now detect the Paneuropean units I am to engage. They are 15.62 kilometers away. They have a good defensive position and seem prepared for an attack. Although surprise has not been achieved, my orders are clear: "engage and destroy the enemy and disrupt his formation as much as possible." This I must do.

Two-hundred fifty-two point five seconds after my initial contact I can now recognize individual units on my scanners and I am approaching them at top speed. There are 30 Mobile Infantry Squads, 8 Missile Tanks, 5 GEV's, 10 Light Tanks, 10 Heavy Tanks, 1 Mobile Howitzer, and a Command Post, a formidable array of defensive firepower. This should be an excellent test of my abilities.

The battle is now engaged. I move in at top speed and destroy 6 Squads of MI. My escort GEV's are making a diversionary attack along the lake area. As the Paneuropean commander moves up his units I attempt to destroy the nearest and most powerful units with my secondary batteries and eliminate the faster GEV's and Heavy Tanks with my missiles.

After 151.36 seconds of direct slugfest with the enemy, I move to engage his west flank forces and I crush two more Heavy Tanks. Hopefully, this move will force the enemy to concentrate his forces so they will make better targets.

Sixty-four point two seconds later, my tactics have worked! I am now disengaging from the slower Mobile Infantry and Missile Tanks, and head for the Command Post Since the enemy no longer has his fast units they will not be able to catch me until his Command Post is destroyed. However, the damage I have sustained is serious. Three missile racks, 3 secondary batteries, and 4 anti-personnel weapons are no longer functional. While the enemy has concentrated on my weapons and my missiles have been used, only 8.33% of my tread has been destroyed. But I still should be able to overrun their Command Post.

One-hundred seventy-two point thirty five seconds later, I have destroyed their Command Post and I am turning east, towards the lake. I am trying to get away from the remaining units. All friendly GEV's have been destroyed. All I can do is run for the safety of the water and submerge myself to avoid destruction.

Three-hundred ninety-eight point six five seconds later, I am safely submerged. I will escape and fight another day.

Variant rules and set-up

Paneuropean Defender:
30 Armor Units
30 Mobile Units
to be placed anywhere within 6 hexes of the south edge of the mapsheet.
1 20-point building as the Command Post at G-0805

Combine Attacker
1 Mark V-B: "Calliope"

4 Missile Racks (D4) 0 0 0 0
20 Missiles (6/5) 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

1 Main Battery (4/3;D4) 0
3 Secondary Batteries (3/2;D3) 0 0 0
6 Anti-personnel (1/1 vs. INF or CP;D1) 0 0 0 0 0 0

60 Treads -- M4
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 (Movement drops to 3)
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 (Movement drops to 2)
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 (Movement drops to 1)
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 (Movement drops to 0)

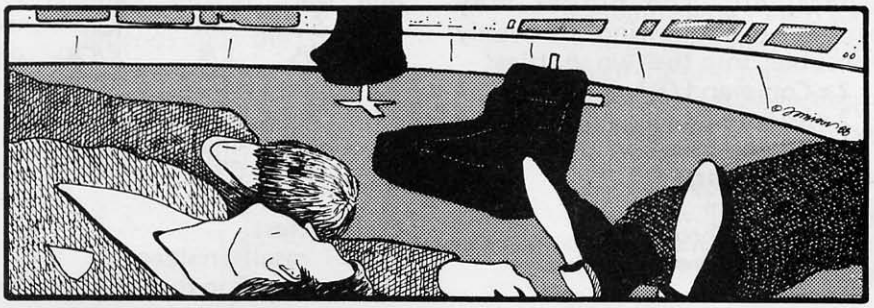
Plus: 8 GEV's

Victory Conditions:
The Combine Player must destroy the Command Post and escape with the Calliope. Any other result is a Paneuropean victory.

THE PROMETHEUS STRAIN

An Intruder Scenario

By Perrin D. Tong



Aboard the PROMETHEUS, the three surviving crew members sank down to the floor of the Command Module, gasping and sweating from the ordeal that began about two hours ago.

"*Are you sure we killed the last on Scotty?*" asked Lt. Commander Mike Rasloan, the commanding officer now in charge of the station due to the death of the station commander not too long ago.

"*According to all the lab charts and data we have* (gasp!) *that should have been* (gasp!) *the last one, Sir,*" answered the rather young lab technician on his first tour of deep space duty. He was more frightened than anything else due to being lost from the rest of the crew during the later half of the ordeal.

"*What do we do now, Mike?*" asked Captain John Stokely, the chief engineer. Stokely is a career man in the Space Fleet. He is always concerned with, and aware of, the present situation and surroundings in a calm and an extremely well disciplined manner.

"*Shall we contact Explorer Team P-1,*" he suggested.

"*We can't,*" *explained the Lt. Commander,* "The Intruder smashed the radio console when he broke out of the freezer. That took out all the circuit breaker junctions for the light in corridor C and access shaft #3, also."

"*What about the emer-gency radio in the supply room,*" offered Scotty.

"*Nope,*" boasted John, "*I used it to fend off one of the Intruders and the blasted beast stomped on it!*"

"*Well...,*" began Mike, pausing to get everyone's attention, "*P-1 should be returning at 1600 hours. I suggest that... th-that we get the... oooh!*"

The Lt. Commander suddenly grabbed at his head in pain.

Scotty got up to rush over towards him but got no further than a couple of steps before he collapsed in the same pain.

John was already unconscious and in a matter of a few moments they were all sprawled out across the floor of the Command Module, motionless!

The Situation:

The three crewman had contracted a strain that was turning them into "Human Intruders" rather quickly!

The crew of Explorer P-1 will soon arrive at the station only to find the station torn upside down within a complete bloody mess. They will discover a few dead lab animals and Intruders but only seven dead crewmen. Looking on the bright side they'd think that three survived. However, three of them are now lurking amongst the debris in the corridors and compartments of the PROMETHEUS, awaiting their victims!

Objective:

The P-1 crewmen must find at least one of the three "Intruder" crewmen, find and antidote to the strain and administer it to the "Intruder" crewmen, as well as themselves.

Initial Set-up:

1. Take all the dummy counters, any three lab animal counters, and one Command, Science and Engineer counter and shuffle them upside down.
2. Distribute them as per (10.0) PANIC.
3. Place the life stage marker on the Intruder Life Stage number 1.
4. Place a lab cage in each: corridor C-1, lab, mess, and main airlock.
5. Place all gas canisters in the armory.
6. Place a blaster in the Command Module and the Maintenance Room.
7. Perform three turns of hidden counter movement.

The Explorer P-1 Crew

The crew arrives in shuttles #1 and #2 at shuttle docks 1 and 2 respectively. The player may distribute the following, as evenly as possible, into the two shuttles:

2 x Command Officers
2 x Science Officers
2 x Engineers
3 x Sleep Darts
1 x Blaster
1 x Flame Thrower
1 x Electric Prod

Special Rules:

1. The "Intruder" crewmen will be treated as Intruders in regards to the Life Stage and Intruder Powers.
2. Of these die rolls there will NOT be any cloning capability. Ignore the die roll.
3. When the Life Stage marker reaches "6" the "Intruder" crewmen will die.
4. The "Intruder" crewmen will not have the same probability of kill that the Intruder chart indicates. Instead, each "Intruder" crewmen has a weapon as follows:

a. Cmd. Officer - Blaster
b. Sci. Officer - Sleep Dart
c. Engineer - Gas Canister

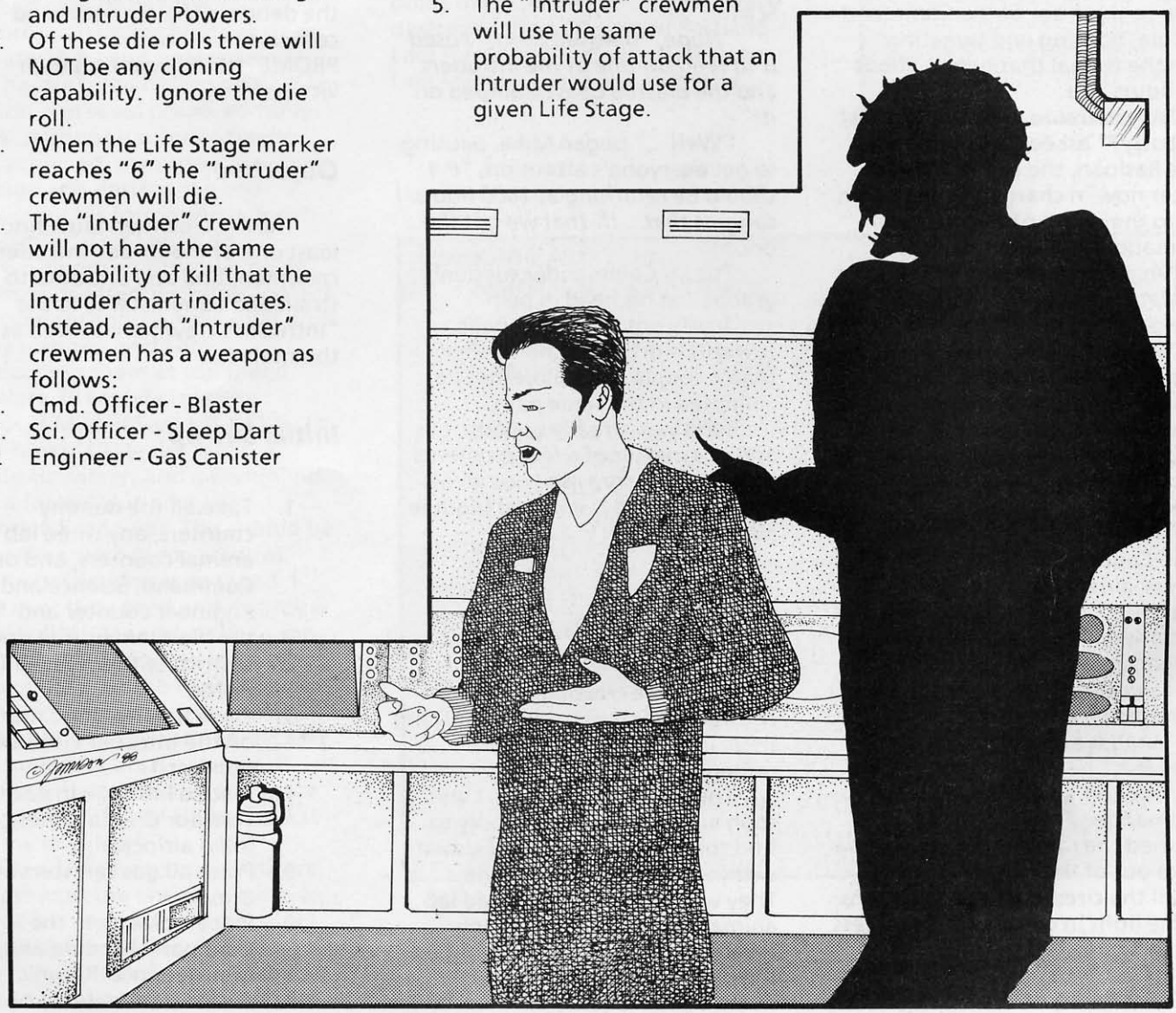
5. The kill probability is as follows:

Die Roll	Sleep Dart	Blaster	Gas Canister
1	S/S	K/K	K/K
2	S/S	K/K	K/CR
3	S/--	K/CR	K/CR
4	S/--	K/CR	CR/--
5	--/--	CR/--	CR/--
6	--/--	CR/--	--/--

Code Letter:

S results in sleep
K results in the crewman being killed
CR results in the crewman retreating, no attack
-- results in no effect

5. The "Intruder" crewmen will use the same probability of attack that an Intruder would use for a given Life Stage.
6. The "Intruder" crewmen can make a defense action before an attack is made against it in the same manner as a crewman.
7. The Self Destruct Device is inoperative.
8. The Panic Segment is ignored.
9. The Lost Crewman optional rule may not be used.
10. The crewmen may not kill an "Intruder" crewman unless it has killed.
11. Ignore the *Can Crewmen Kill* column on the Intruder chart.

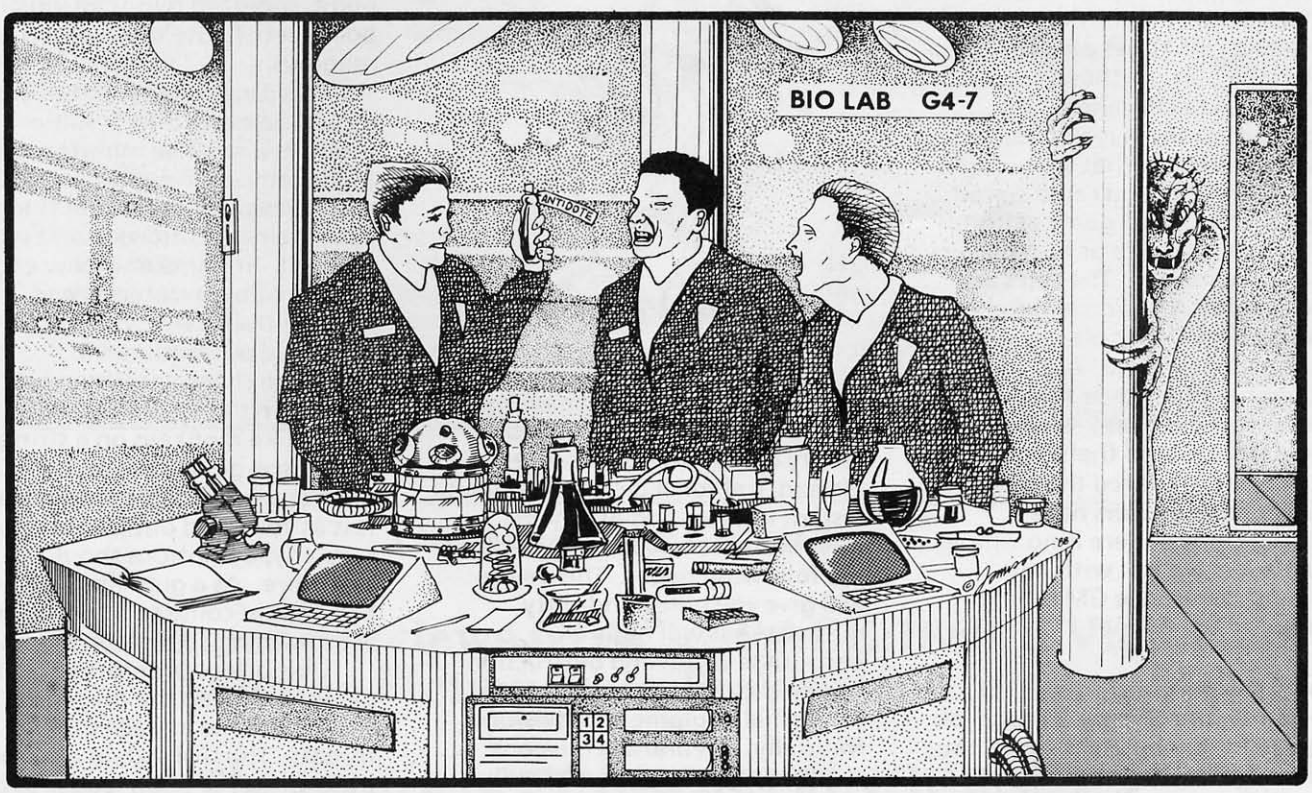


Finding a Cure:

1. To find a cure the crewmen must first *capture* an "Intruder" crewman in the same manner as capturing an Intruder and bring him to the Lab.
2. A Science Officer must perform the necessary research in order to find a cure.
3. Three turns are required to find a cure. Players may use the chart for constructing a flame thrower to keep track of the research.
4. If the "Intruder" crewman goes through metamorphosis while research is in progress the Science Officer must start all over, and the "Intruder" crewman must be still present.
5. Once an antidote is found the Science Officer may then administer it to the "Intruder" crewman. The probability of success depends upon the Life Stage as follows:

Life Stage	Probability of Success
1	1-5
2	1-4
3	1-3
4	1-2
5	1
6	--

6. An "Intruder" crewman must be captured or rendered unconscious in order to administer the antidote.
7. The antidote will work successfully on all crewmen if the Life Stage of the "Intruder" crewman is five or less.
8. Even after the "Intruder" crewman has been given the antidote the Life Stage must be checked for metamorphosis each turn until all crewmen have been given the antidote.
9. If the Life Stage reaches "6" all "Intruder" crewmen will die and all crewmen that have not been given the antidote will develope the strain and will become an "Intruder" crewman at Life Stage one!
10. The sequence of play has not been altered for this scenario.



Speed Paranoia
or How to Raise All Hell in One Hour or less

By J. M. Caparula

Introduction

The computer has become tired of lazy, overly-cautious Troubleshooters to entrust its highly dangerous missions to. Therefore, The Computer, in cooperation with CPU Individual Ego-Boosting and Attitude Adjustment Division, has created a series of contests for enterprising Troubleshooters to weed out the weaklings and produce a new, vastly-improved Troubleshooter even more prefect than the kind that exists now.

The Game

If you're the kind of **Paranoia** player that groans at the sight of any ad-venture with pages numbering more than one; a player who pre-fers action over deliberation; a GM who couldn't care less about the mission at hand and would rather get on with it and just kill the players, then you're ready for **Speed Paranoia**.

Speed Paranoia is a variant of standard **Paranoia** that encourages competitive play and rapid-paced, highly unstructured game action. It is intended for three or four players plus a gamemaster. The rules are quite simple: A basic, randomly-generated mission is played out for one hour of real time. At the end of that hour, if one player remains with surviving clones (i.e. all other players have lost all their clones), that player is declared the winner. If two or more players have surviving clones, there is no winner. If no players are left with any surviving clones, the GM is considered the winner.

How To Do It

Clearly, the GM has a tough job in **Speed Paranoia**. He has one hour to kill off 18 to 24 clones. Fortunately, there are very specific ways to do this when playing this variant.

Pre-generated characters: The GM should create the characters for the players, rolling dice for attributes, but choosing mutant powers, service groups and secret societies himself. The players may then allocate their own skill points as they see fit.

When choosing service groups, always have at least one Internal Security agent in the group. An interesting variation on this is to have all players be Internal Security agents. Secret societies should consist almost entirely of mutual enemies (Communists and Free Enterprisers, PURGErs and RCCCPers, etc.). Mutant powers should be some of the nastier ones, like Mental Blast, Pyrokinesis, etc. Combine all of these elements creatively to produce explosive combinations, like have all the characters be Anti-Mutants with the Mental Blast power.



Pre-generated missions: Don't use the lengthy literary masterpieces that make up ***West End's*** library of **Paranoia** adventures. Instead, roll some dice on the handy Instant Mission-and-Mayhem Adventure Generator provided on the following pages. This device will give you quick-and-dirty missions that will naturally encourage death and destruction on a mass scale.

Lethal equipment provisions: Naturally, all **Paranoia** missions require large amounts of deadly weapons, but in **Speed Paranoia** this should be played to the hilt. Tacnukes and plasma generators should be the norm. Anything less lethal than napalm rounds don't belong in **Speed Paranoia**.

The only exception to this is the "king of The Hill" approach. Give one player a plasma generator, and the rest brass knuckles or some equally useless armament (like an umbrella or a cake stand). You'll have dead clones on your hand before the mission even starts.

Encourage mutant power usage: Tell the players you're only playing for an hour, so they'll have nothing to lose by utilizing their mutations to dramatically insure victory. It is recommended that new clones be given different mutant powers, although it is not imperative.

Judicious dispensation of treason points: Each clone should start out with as many treason points as its clone number (e.g. Wee-R-DED's third clone will automatically begin with treason points). Every minor infrigement on The Computer's trust should earn further treason points (be hard-core; pausing 1 second to answer a question might be worth a point, sneezing might be worth 2 points, etc.). Use the Treason Chart religiously.

This does not mean that you should be executing Troubleshooters every five minutes. Since this is competitive play, you should play somewhat fairly. Let them earn their executions (Don't worry, they will. It's amazing how eager some Troubleshooters are to become traitors!).

Rapid promotion and demotion: The characters should slide up and down the security clearance ladder like monkeys on a string. Forget the guidelines on page 76, promote the Troubleshooters as fast as you hand out treason points. Similarly, demotions should be rapid-fire. As a guideline, demotion should come to a character after earning 10 treason points.

Ubiquitous promotions and demotions keep the players on theirs toes and at each other's throats. The GM should also rotate the position of team leader as often as it seems necessary, even to the point where no one is sure who the team leader really is.

Pacing: Most importantly, **Speed Paranoia**, as the name implies, should move very fast, so fast as to keep everyone's heads in a constant state of rotation. Think of it as a role-playing counterpart to a video arcade game; this is a test of reflexes and quick wits, not scientific analytical abilities. If things slow down even for a second, have some Commie mutant terrorist with a flamethrower come out of nowhere to liven things up. Yell at people, jump up and down, scare the neighbors...the more loud and obnoxious everyone is, the better!

The Instant Mission -and-Mayhem Adventure Generator

To use this wonderful device, roll a D20 three times and consult the tables under Section 1, Mission Parameters. Then proceed to Section 2, Complications, and roll a D20. Finally, roll under Section 3, R&D Equipment & Effects. You now have a complete mission for use with Speed Paranoia.

These tables should be used as guidelines, and the GM has every right to fudge die rolls and do whatever else is necessary to insure a fun evening for all.



Instant Mission-and-Mayhem Adventure Generator

Section 1: Mission Parameters (roll 3 times)

	Do What?	Where?	Why?
1	locate	outside	Commies
2	secure	FAR sector	mutants
3	terrorize	warehouse	traitors
4	transport	armory	spies
5	guard	nuke reactor	terrorists
6	raid	IntSec area	sabotage
7	capture	bureaucratic office	primitives
8	destroy	R&D lab	bureaucreatic bungling
9	steal	INFRAVRED quarters	computer error
10	map out	ULTRAVIOLET quarters	Death Leopards
11	reconnoiter	computer error	Frankenst. Dest.
12	ambush	Vulture training ground	PURGErs
13	field test	Troubleshooter firing range	Romantics
14	defend	food vats	Illuminati plot
15	infiltrate	PLC equipment area	technical problems
16	terminate	vidscreen studio	major accident
17	transcribe	concourse/corridor	citizens' unrest
18	crowd control	bot repair area	bot "gone franksn."
19	pacify	transit tube station	high radiation
20	cover up	GM choice	GM choice

Coming Next Issue...

Space Gamer previews GDW's SPACE:1889, a Victorian Science Fiction Role-Playing System...

The return of FINIEOUS FINGERS...

Preview of Gloranthan Metals for Runequest, and more!

Section 2: Complications (roll as many times as you want)

1	heavily-armed follow-up team	11	sent to wrong area
2	heavily-armed team already sent	12	given wrong mission
3	PC's are heavily drugged	13	target is another TS team
4	malfunctioning docbot provided	14	Vulture squadron at site
5	malfunctioning combot provided	15	IntSec team at site
6	massive form-filling required	16	target site destroyed
7	malfunctioning weapons provided	17	denial of mission knowledge
8	a malfunctioning autocar provided	18	IntSec arrests everyone
9	a malfunctioning flybot provided	19	Armed forces "mop up"
10	mission already taken care of	20	GM choice

Explanation of Complications:

1. Another team of Troubleshooters will follow the PC's after they arrive. The second team will better armed.
2. Same as 1, expect that the other Troubleshooter team has already been sent.
3. The PC's will be pumped up with Asperquaint, Telescopalmine, or some other chemical supplement before undertaking the mission (see **Acute Paranoia**).

4, 5, 7, 8, 9. The PC's will be provided with some piece of highly unpredicatable equipment.

6. The PC's will have to claw their way through a jungle of paperwork before departing. Since this a one hour session, attempt to create frustration that reaches a lethal level.
10. The mission was executed and completed last week-cycle by another team of Troubleshooters.
11. The team will be sent to the wrong area (and will, of course, be held responsible for "their" mistake).
12. Through a bureaucratic mix-up, the team will be given the wrong mission. Roll again under Section 1 to find out what the real mission is (which can be given to a group scrubots or something). Once again, the PC's will be accused of bungling the mission once it's completed.
13. The "target" of the mission (i.e. the objective under "Why?") is actually another Troubleshooter team sent to investigate the PC team.

14, 15. A team of Vultures or an Internal Security squad has been dispatched to take care of the same problem. They should be under orders that conflict with the goals of the PC's.

16. The PC's find the mission site destroyed in some kind of disaster (reactor meltdown, large-scale firefight, etc.). Need I say that the PC's will be held responsible?
17. The mission is so top secret that everyone at the mission site denies that the mission exists.
18. Towards the end of the mission, Internal Security arrives and arrests all the PC's on some ludicrous charge.
19. A battalion of Armed Services' brightest and best arrive at the end of the mission and lay waste to the area.

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Section 3: R&D Equipment and Effects (roll 3 times)

	What it is	What it's supposed to do	What it really does
1	laser	Damage #10	nothing at all
2	grenade	Damage #15	Damage #20
3	flamethrower	Damage #20	mindwipe
4	slug/cone round	detect mutants	explodes
5	melee weapon	detect Commies	combusts
6	body suit	detect traitors	falls apart
7	com unit	detect outsiders	stuns within 5 m.
8	bot	read minds	drill through walls
9	helmet	fly	fly
10	vehicle	drill through walls	read minds
11	land mines	emit x-rays	provides a mutant power
12	drug	emit IR rays	incr. 1 skill to 20
13	sense enhancer	emit UV rays	takes away mutant power
14	mutant detector	emit sound waves	decr. 1 skill to 1
15	multicorder program	emit gas	causes malfunctions
16	mini-computer	electrocute	electrocute
17	port-a-pack	protect against damage	floods area
18	mind control device	protect against Commies	shorts out bots
19	vending machine	protect against mutant powers	kills ULTRAVIOLETS
20	GM choice	all the above!	what it's supposed to do!

Creating Instant NPC's

This shouldn't be a problem. For "cannon fodder" like traitors, IntSec's and other generic typers, just determine their weapon skill by rolling a die (decide what their weapon is yourself). There is a 25% chance that they are wearing armor (a roll of 1-5).

For more detailed NPC's your best bet is to steal them from already existing adventures. Just change their names and security clearances to make them seem different.

Interpreting The Results (An Example)

A group of gamers decides to take a break from their regular "Creatures & Catacombs" campaign to play a couple of rounds of **Speed Paranoia**. The GM whips outs some pre-generated characters (be prepared) and proceeds to roll up an adventure on the IM&MAG. Rolling under Section 1, he gets a 15, an 8 and a 16, giving him "infiltrate", "R&D lab", and "major accident". Rolling under Section 2 produces a 2, "heavily-armed team already sent". Under Section 3, the GM rolls a 5, a 12, and a 14, producing "melee weapon","emit IR rays", and "decrease 1 skill to 1".

The GM decides that an R&D lab was mostly destroyed after an experimental device was accidently detonated. The team is to infiltrate the lab and retrieve the device. The complication is that another team has already been sent, and will be there when the team arrives. This second team will no doubt mistake the PC's for Commie traitors attempting to steal the device.

Before departing, the team will be outfitted with experimental melee weapons, perhaps neurowhips or truncheons, that emit high levels of thermal radiation when brought into contact with a foe. Of course, when actually used, the weapons will merely reduce the PC's melee skills to 1 (perhaps because they backfire and produce heat in the wielder's hands).

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Tarragon's Heir
a Traveller Adventure

by Michael O'Brien

Between jobs on Mmorden, the group is approached by Haaje Tarragon, a retired Merchant Captain, now the owner of a Type R Subsidized Merchant "fat trader." With this vessel he trades between Mmorden and a neighboring system some three light-years away.

He will buy the group's next round of drinks and explain his problem. Mmorden (B-9736CA-6) is governed by an extremely conservative Charismatic Oligarchy which en-forces a highly restrictive legal code. Tarragon's problem relates to the antiquated laws of succession. Under Mmordani law property and chattels, including starships, cannot legally be left to a benefactor after one's death by means of a Will. In other words, Wills are not recognized by Mmordani Law. Rather, possessions have to be passed to an heir during the life-time of the benefactor. Any interstate goods are forfeited to the State.

The merchant Tarragon fears this will happen to his starship, the "Rourke's Drift." He wishes to give this vessel to a recently departed friend's niece, he himself being a bachelor with no children. The young woman, Tarragon explains, is currently off-world serving her final term in the Merchant Navy. This tour will be finished in three years.

Tarragon says he is suffering from a terminal disease and doubts if he will survive until the girl returns. Wanting to ensure she will get the "fat trader" rather than the State, he needs a group to take part in a "feoffment," a legal contract the crafty Mnordani lawyers created long ago to get around the restrictive succession laws. Upon signing this feoffment the group will own the "Rourke's Drift" in title only: Tarragon will still enjoy the use and profit of it until he dies. According to the contract, upon's Tarragon's death the group will be custodians of the vessel until the heir returns to claim it.

In return for this service, Tarragon will employ the party as crew on board the "Rourke's Drift." If he should die, he instructs the group to look after the Subsidized Merchant until the young women's return. They may continue to engage in trade if they wish.

Referee's Notes:

If the players agree to Tarragon's proposal he will transport them by taxi to a plush lawyer's office downtown to sign the feoffment contract. The document is in typically unintelligible legalese, but characters with Legal-2 or Admin-3 may note some particularly nasty "fine print", if they care to examine it in any detail. Both the lawyer and Tarragon will strive to ensure the players do not get more than a cursory glance at the contract.

Upon signing the feoffment Tarragon will then transport the group to the starport to acquaint them with the "Rourke's Drift", a standard Type R Subsidized Merchant ship armed with a single pulse laser.

Now the ship's crew, Tarragon wants to jump to Pavlov's Dog (B-4566B-4) (or any suitable planet in your campaign), which is a vassal world of Mmorden's one jump away. On board, stowed in the cargo bay is 30 tons of farm machines which he wants delivered to a local dealer on that world. This delivery should get the group about 120,000 Cr., which should be used to secure cargoes to bring back to Mmorden.

In addition to normal salaries Tarragon offers the group a 33% share of any profits made on the trip. He wants the group to leave immediately, explaining that the consignment of farm machinery is already over a week late. The "Rourke's Drift" is fueled and ready to go, and life support has been paid for the first jump.

Subsequent events on the trade mission are left up to the referee. The trip will take about a month.

Upon returning to Mmorden (indeed as soon as the ship docks), the group will be approached by a delegation of government officials, tradesmen and others, led by the lawyer who officiated at the signing of the feoffment. In the month that the group has been away, Tarragon has died, making the players the legal owners of the "Rourke's Drift" until the heir's return.

Unfortunately, according to the contract, this also makes them legally liable for any debts that Tarragon left unsettled. These, it is announced by the lawyer, amount to some 1,240,800 Cr. Tarragon's creditors include several merchant firms, a starship overhaul company, the Mmordani Taxation Department, the lawyer himself, at least one criminal organization, and others. Naturally, all want their money... FAST! How the players can possibly recoup this money is left to the referee, but the obvious solution is trading with the "Rourke's Drift". Skipping with the ship will incur pursuit by Mmordani agents, and perhaps crack assassins hired by the criminal organization.

Once the money has been repayed, and before the players can leave the planet in the ship, a young woman will appear wearing a Merchant Navy uniform. Accompanied by the lawyer, she will produce documents indentifying herself as Tarragon's heir, and will demand her rightful property. She will also inform the players that they are no longer required as crew for the "Rourke's Drift." Also with the woman and the lawyer will be a squad of starport police, each armed with Auto Rifles and wearing ablat armour. The woman is carrying a laser carbine.

If the players return to the ship at a later date, either to try to get their old jobs back, or perhaps to exact revenge, they will see a familiar face: Tarragon! He and the young woman (actually his daughter) often use the feoffment contract to trick hapless off-worlders into paying off their debts. The lawyer is in on the deal too.

Subsequent events are left up to the referee. A possible scenario is having the players try to prove in court that they have been swindled. Another is for them to take the ship by force and run. Either way could possibly see them eventually gain possession of the "Rourke's Drift", a considerable prize for their efforts.

Author's note: Feoffments were a legal practice in England during the Middle ages, when wills were not recognized by the law.

No Man's World

By James E. Meldrum

Anyone taking the time to speculate about the kind of lunar war simulated in ***Yaquinto's* Marine 2002** game will soon realize that the logistics required to transport a hundred or more men to the moon within a relatively short period of time would be staggering. For this reason, if any conflict on the moon actually occurred, the "armies" would not be counted in terms of hundreds of men, but rather in tens of men. I would like to present a slightly more realistic version of a lunar war based on the conflict presented in the novel **No Man's World** by Martin Caidin.

In the book, Russia wins the race to the moon by a mixture of guile and sabotage. Several years later, the U.S. finally lands on the moon, after the Russians have constructed a permanent base and declared the moon to be a Soviet colony. The Russians meet the Americans as they land, and force them to leave at gunpoint.

After several years of intense space activity, the U.S. returns to the moon with the intention of staying. The scenario presented in this article is intended to simulate the battle fought when the Soviets send a force to eject the Americans from their base.

Scenario Ten:

1) Mapboard configuration: Same as scenario 8.
2) Terrain Lay-out: All terrain counters, one building counter.
3) Order of battle: U.S. - All first platoon units, two mortars, two assault platoons. USSR - All first and second platoon units, company commander, two bus units.
4) Entry/Set-up: U.S. - In or within six hexes of the largest crater counter. USSR - Anywhere along a single map edge, USSR player's choice.
5) Special rules;
   a) Russian player always moves first.
   b) The largest crater terrain counter is set up in the center of map B. The building counter represents the U.S. base, and is set up in the center of the crater.
   c) All USSR units enter play on the on first game turn carried in bus units.
   d) Neither side may use CPG units.
6) Victory conditions: The Russians win by eliminating the U.S. base/ building counter. The U.S. wins by preventing the Russians from achieving their victory conditions.
7) Game length: 7 turns.

STARSHIPS

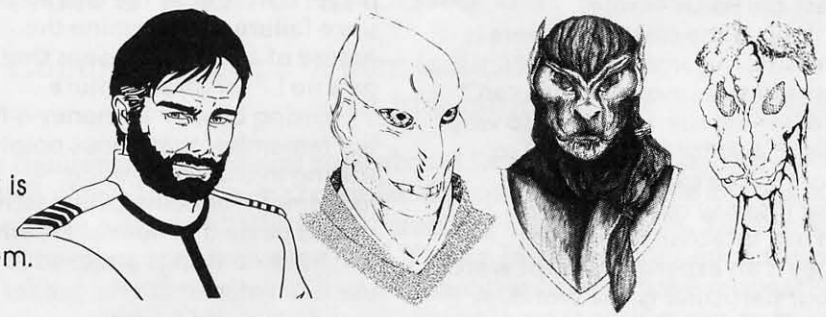
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Unofficially Yours... Champions

By Steve Fulleman

"Thank you, Captain Technology." said the Mayor. *"You saved the city from that evil villain, Meglo-Maniac. I don't know how we can ever repay you."*

Don't worry about that, Mr. Mayor. You'll get my bill in the morning. Itemized, as usual." And with those few words, Captain Technology activated his Jet Earrings (Pat. Pending), and flew off into the sunset.

What, you may ask yourselves, is going on? In **Champions**, money has no real meaning to the characters. For a few power points you can give your character thousands, or even millions of dollars: Millions which do your character not the slightest bit of good, since nothing that can be bought with those dollars can be used by your character. A common folding knife that costs only a few in the real world, costs 7 power points if it is to be used by the character. It is a 1D6 hand-to-hand killing attack (15 points), Obvious Accessible Focus - Knife.

If this is the case, then there is no reason, in game terms, for villains to steal money. They can't buy anything useful with it, so why bother? Just for fun, let's try to restore to the game world that minor insanity called money.

First, establish how much money is an Experience Point worth in your particular game world. A thousand dollars? Ten thousand? Pick a number that you are comfortable with. Now, use that conversion to scale the size of a villian's crime, and the reward given to the heroes. Points gotten in the form of money are like any other experience points, except that they can only be spent on things that are commercially available. This means breakable foci, skill training, hero bases, etc. In this way, the GM can enforce a subtle limit and direction on character growth, making it easier to keep characters within the power limits of the game world. The money itself represents not only the cash it would take to purchase the training or gadgetry, but also covers the cost of maintaining and/or replacing them.

With the restoration of money as a functional motivation for characters, we also open the way for a different type of character: The Mercenary. Mercenaries are in business primarily for the money, and the EP that is means. They can be played as either heroes, villians, occasionally allies, or incidental natural disasters. You may encounter one acting as the bodyguard for a major villain, offering you employment, or you may end up competing against one in an adventure: If the mercenary completes the mission first, he gets the reward, not the player characters. Player character mercenaries are also possible, and can add an interesting flavor to a game. Captain Technology, as mentioned above, has a 40 point disadvantage on his character: He collects experience points only for work done under contract. In his case, contracts include posted rewards, and insurance settlements for stolen goods recovered, as well as formal contracts. It forces the player to role-play the character, since failure to determine the nature of a contract means that he gets no EP for an adventure.

Giving base EP as money is fine, but remember that bonus points for staying in character, using judgement, or being overmatched should be paid in normal EP, which will have no strings attached to its use.

NEW POWERS/ADVANTAGES

Enhanced Senses - Night Vision:

By amplifying the available light, this visual enhancement lets your character see normally in all but total darkness. It will be stopped by the darkness power, and gives no advantages towards seeing invisible creatures or power effects.

Point Cost: 5

Encumber:

An encumber is similar to an entangle, except that it does not necessarily hold the victim in one location, and does not pin arms or legs. Its main function is to slow down an opponent's movement rate, and interfere with dodging and acrobatics. To encumber someone, roll the number of dice of encumber that you hit the opponent with, and count the BODY points. For each BODY that the encumber has, victims lose 1 inch of movement, and suffer a 1 point penalty to dodge, martial dodge, martial throw, and acrobatics maneuvers. Encumber does not restrict teleport in any way. The defense of the encumber is the same as the number of dice used. Note that, as the BODY of an encounter is reduced, so is it's effect on the victim. Breaking out of an encumber is done in the same way that an entangle is broken: Do damage to the encumbering materials/energies. Example: Spectre encumbers his opponents by forming massive chains on them, dragging them down with sheer weight. G-Force encumbers her opponents by reducing their weight so they bounce around like weather balloons. Petro coats his opponents in a slippery oil, which fouls their footing and keeps them off balance.

Power Cost: 8 Points per Die, minimum cost : 16.

Advantage - Inobvious Special Effect:

The original **Champions** rules state that any power which affects another character will be visible and obvious. An inobvious special effect is one which is visible, but is not easily noticed or traced to its source. To notice an inobvious special effect, or locate its source, observers must make a normal perception roll. Examples of an inobvious special effect might include an energy blast that makes a flash of light around the target, but not the source. An attack that only gives off a high pitched whine

would qualify, since such noises are overlooked easily, as well as being hard to trace. Having an attack that calls lightning from the skies would also fit, since it can be difficult to tell just where the attacker is.
Power Advantage: 1/4

Disadvantage-Power runs on Stun:

Powers that normally cost END to use can be converted to use STUN points instead. Such powers may not have their STUN/END cost reduced to less than 2 STUN, or 1/4 normal, whichever is greater. Similarly, such powers may not run on END/STUN batteries, or on charges.
Disadvantage Total: -1/4

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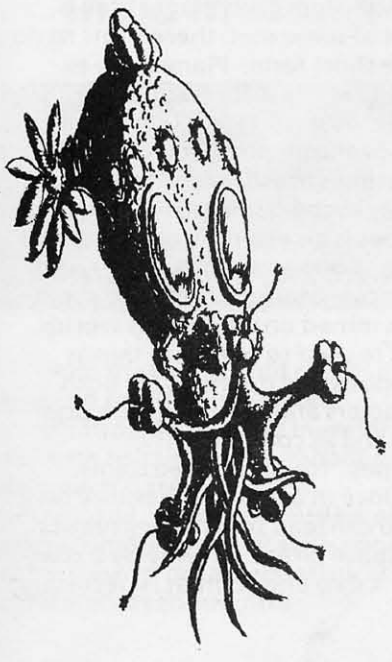
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Space Combat was designed to be easy to learn, but difficult to master. Every game starts with ten players, and as each is eliminated, the chances of the game ending will increase. Turnsheets are custom made on a laser printer to aid you in filling out your next turn. The games run about 12-16 turns. Cost is $3.00 per turn. A rulebook (required before you can join) is only $1.00.

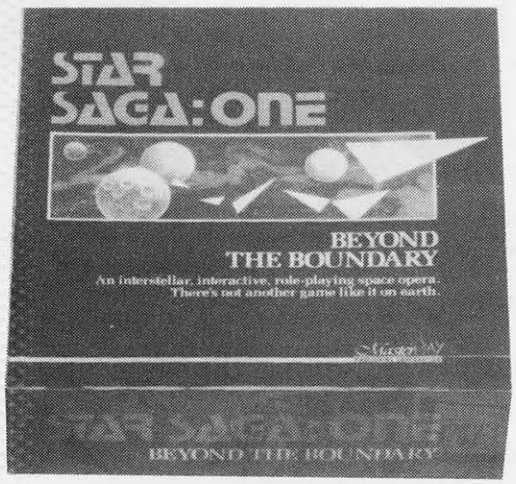
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Star Saga:One Beyond The Boundary

Published By: *Masterplay*
Designed and Developed By: Rick Dutton, Walt Freitag, Andy Greenberg, Mike Massilla
Price: $75.00
Complexity Level: Low
Rules Clarity: Good
IBM Computer Version

Reviewed By: Tony Watson



STAR SAGA:ONE is a departure from the large majority of computer-moderated SF RPG. It is innovative - but not in the sense that is introduces new procedures or fancy graphics. Indeed, the game is almost retrograde in its approaches, borrowing from one of the oldest and simplest forms of role-playing, and using the computer in the most mundane of capacities, as a bookkeeper and secretary. Given that computer games are becoming increasingly more sophisticated and capable, what can one say about such a game? Probably only that it is one of the best and most interesting computer RPG's around.

STAR SAGA:ONE is a very literate game. Upon opening the very substantial box, one is stuck by the vast amount of printed material (a rules manual, a fold out map, six character booklets, and a dozen paragraph booklets), along with a single diskette that make up the game. In **STAR SAGA:ONE**, the computer does the record keeping, while the printed word and your imagination do the story telling.

The game uses a variation of the old numbered paragraph method used in solitaire RPG products as well as the numerous "choose your own adventure" style books. The course of the game's action is directed through a decision tree; the players type their moves into the computer, which in turn refers them to one of the 888 paragraphs for a written description of the situation and the resolution of action. Paragraphs may introduce a new set of action possibilities for the players to chose from. While the paragraph books make the story come alive, the computer does the record keeping, tracking play-er's location, goods and items own-ed, as well as resolving combat and other interactive situations.

STAR SAGA:ONE is set in the 29th century, in the aftermath of Mankind's "Great Expansion" and subsequent contact with the devastating Space Plague. To protect themselves, Earth and eight of her colonized worlds have cordoned themselves off from the rest of the galaxy by the means of a "Boundary." Passage is one; travellers who go beyond the boundary may not return.

There are those who, for various reasons, feel the need to leave the enclave. Six such intrepid explorers are offered for the players to role-play, each with their own history and motivation. Laran Darkwatch, for example, a Disciple of the Final Church of Man, seeks the holy relic that will reveal the Final Truth, while the callow Corin Stoneseeker continues a family quest for the famed lost Core Stone. Each of the character booklets gives a brief biography of the character and some background on his/her goals.

Thus, from one to six may play, each engaging in their own adventure. There is a minimum of player interaction, just the occasional exchange of information or goods, and the competitive aspect of the game is very small, so solitaire play is easy. As the designers estimate playing time to be sixty hours, many session will be required However, if one of your playing group can't make it to a game session, it's still possible to play; the program is set up so that characters can be temporarily "disabled" and those present can continue on, with the absent player catching up later.

Each turn represents a week of time, with action being plotted for seven phases per turn. Phases are spent moving between worlds on the strategic map (a jigsaw pattern of brightly colored triangles) and undertaking activities on planetary surfaces. Upon landing on a planet and some initial exploration, a player is usually presented with a menu of actions that are possible on that planet. Players can go on adventures, or gain information and important objects through these actions. Most of the time in playing the game is not spent at the computer, but off somewhere with the paragraph books and a notepad, savoring the adventure and deciding on the next course of action.

Although each player is on a quest of some sort, there's lots to do in the short term. Planets are explored for the information and clues they might yield (and some of the adventure prospects offered are sometimes irresistible). There is no money in the game, so trading of cargoes is an essential aspect of the game. Commodities can be traded for at planetary markets and sometimes mined on wilderness worlds. They're used to purchase things (weapons and defenses for both characters and their ships are popular) and as components in "recipes" for specialized items.

Once in a while, adventure on a world can lead to a sticky situation, or a space pirate can waylay a character's ship and combat is necessary.

The game's combat system is rather perfunctory and may disappoint some players - there's not much in the way of player input. The computer selects the most appropriate weapons and defense in three different classes, compares them against the opposition and then refers the player to a paragraph that describes the outcome. It's a weak link in the game system, to be sure, but combat isn't all that common in the game.

What **STAR SAGA:ONE** is good at, is telling a story, or more accurately, a set of stories. Sure, it's space opera, but it's not space opera at all. Ra-ther. there are strange worlds to discover, stranger aliens to meet, technological marvels to construct and the mysteries of the galaxy to uncover. As I've played, I've found the unfolding of my character's epic and his growing knowledge of the universe around him to be a facinating trip. Through imaginative writing, an appreciation of SF, and an appropriate sense of humor (and Will McLean's illustrations help too), the designers have made the paragraph system work. **STAR SAGA:ONE** is simply a lot of fun. It's indicated in the rules that this is the first in a trilogy of games. I will be waiting for the second installment.

Invid Invasion

Published By: *Palladium Books*
Designed By: Kevin Siembieda

Reviewed By; Rick Swan

And those nasty old robots just keep on coming, their latest incarnation being **Invid Invasion**, the fifth installment in ***Palladium's*** **Robotech** system. For the uninitiated, **Robotech** borders on the incomprehensible, with page after page of detailed statistical information about ultra-complicated mechanical monsters right out of a military engineer's worst nightmare. Of, say, the top dozen or so most popular RPG's, I found **Robotech** the toughest to get into - **GURPS**, as another fairly complicated system, is a day at the beach compared to this. That, of course, may just be evidence of my creeping senility, as **GenCon** seemed loaded to the rafters with **Robotech** obsessives half my age or less that could recite the most obscure rule mechanics at the drop of a Destroid.

Be that as it may, **Robotech** is not for the uncommitted, so causal RPGer's may wish to approach it with caution. Ditto for **Invid Invasion**. It's a guaranteed Pavlovian salivator for hardcore (are there any other kind?). **Robotechies**, but for the aftermentioned unimitiated, it might as well be written in Sanscrit. (Which is a correctable flaw, and one for which I believe that ***Palladium*** is missing the boat - more about that directly)

Invid Invasion is somewhat of a departure for **Robotech** products, as it is adapted directly from the television series. Players are invited to recreate the original series beginning with the Invid Invasion of around the year 2035, and ending with the Reflex Point battle three years later, or establishing a campaign anywhere before the Reflex Point encounter. Likewise, ambitious players could improvise their own time line based on the presented material, but the depth of detail probably makes that option more trouble than it's worth.

The invid setting is also a departure form pervious Robotech campaigns, most notably in that civilization has been essentially wiped out. There are no major cities to speak of, no industry, and not much in the way of social or governmental structure. This after-the-holocaust type setting where criminals run wild, where gangs often rule the wilderness, and rotten invid invaders are crawling around virtually everywhere is an ideal setting for the combat-heavy **Robotech** system, a certain delight for players who believe that a game-minute without something blowing up is a game-minute wasted.

The bulk of the book is given to detailed explanations of new and expanded equipment and warriors (such as the Cyclone Rider and the Bio-Maintenance Engineer), combat systems (ranging from hand -to-hand combat to a handy missile chart that looks like it accounts for every conceivable type of missile), and of course, our friends the invid. Invid info includes stats for Enforcers and Royal Command Battloids, sensors and equipment, and a nicely worked-out history of the invasion and what Earth is like under their evil domination.

The material is well-organized, well-written, and mind-bogglingly complete - except for one minor point: What are we supposed to do with this stuff? There are maybe two pages total of adventure/ scenario ideas, and that's being generous. As a person who's had a hand or two in designing roleplaying material, I can tell you that the hardest part of the process is coming up with thoughtful, engaging adventure ideas that use the source book material to its best advantage. Writing game mechanics and equipment statistics is glorified number-crunching, it's not easy to so well, but for every first -class scenario designer, I bet there're a dozen first-class number-crunchers.

The **Invid Invasion** owner is largely left to his or her own devices to decide how to use all this material. Since the **Robotechies** I know mostly like to choose up sides and see how fast they can blast each other to pieces, this book provides plenty of springboards to create new and interesting combat situations - for them it's a terrific product. But as far as actual roleplaying advice, **Invid Invasion** provides about as many ideas as the Sahara does icicles. Couldn't the designers have found a chapter or two just for scenario outlines? And wouldn't that have broadened the book's appeal beyond the hardcore? Maybe next time.

*The **Hero HOTline** is a new column for the **Space Gamer.** Every issue the Hero HOTline will preview at least one upcoming product from **Hero Games,** the **Champions, Danger International,** and Fantasy Hero people. The Reviewer for this issue is David Rogers, contributing editor to **The Adventures' Club** magazine and author of the new **Champions** supplement **RED DOOM.***

To Serve and Protect

Published By: *Hero Games*
Designed By; Scott Heine
Art By: Scott Heine & Tom Lyle
Price: $5.95
Graphics Quality: Good
Reviewed By: David Rogers

To Serve and Protect is a mini-series adventure for **Champions** that asks the question, "what happens when superheros go out of control?" As always, the players supply the answer. The supplement comes complete with a large superhero team, a super-agency and a superhero headquarters. The adventure is a 32-page book that contains maps for a museum, a "skycruiser," and an underground cavern as well as the hero base. The interior art is quite good (and matches the descriptions perfectly, since the artist is the writer). Unfortunately, the cover art and other graphics were not yet available at preview time.

The physical organization of the supplement is quite good - it makes the adventure easy to follow. The text flows well, without any unnecessary interruptions for maps, characters sheets, and explanations thereof. The typesize, though changes 2/3 of the way through the adventure, which is an annoying but hardly devastating flaw.

The adventure is well written. Text is clear, level of detail is adequate without being intrusive, and characters are generally well developed and well presented. The three page introduction and summary for the GM is a helpful innovation that ***Hero*** should continue to use.



Lest you think that this review is bunnies and roses, I must say that I have some problems with this game. Several of the heroes seem, well, unheroic. In their origins and outlooks several of them are only barely, if at all, removed from villainy. The team's mystic in particular has this problem - he began his career by fixing the California state lottery, and his battle tactics are described as treacherous. Moreover, few of these heros have any reason to be in a team - for the most part they seem like loners.

That's not all - I have problems with the plot as well. The mechanics of the plot work fine, but the larger structure is missing something. It's as if the writer knew what he wanted to happen but didn't know why it should happen. Also, there are important motivation questions about the master villain that are alluded to but never explained in the text. If the villain is crazy, the players will want to know why. If the GM knows the root of insanity, that knowledge makes the players' inevitable search for a cure that much easier to play.

Lastly, the end of the story seems tired. Can't we just once have a master villain who doesn't want to blow up the world?

I recommend this book, with reservations. The heros and villains are interesting and useful outside the context of this adventure, though you may want to use some of the heros as bad guys, since it seems to make more sense in some cases. The hero base and skycruiser, the museum and agency are also useful in other contexts, and the main evil-doer is interesting enough to return for further villainy.

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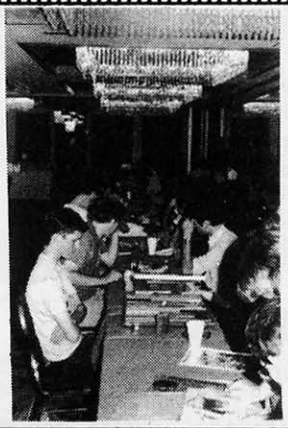
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The Halls of Fortune

An AD&D Tournament Module

By Jim Kirtley

Editor's Note: We ran this dungeon at our GAMEX 1985 convention. Jim has written several modules for us, and all of them have a strange sense of humor which has left many a player laughing while their character died. So have fun and enjoy The Halls Of Fortune!

TOURNAMENT NOTES FOR THE DM

This scenario is designed to be played with a four hour time limit. The characters provided must be used for fairness and continuity in play. Every doorway has a magic mouth placed in it that will activate when touched or passed. Please be sure not to forget to read the magic mouth messages to the party. They contain vital clues to the proper actions to be taken inside the hall. Also above each doorway is a sign bearing the name of the hall on the other side. These are written in common. They are written above the descriptions so do not forget to tell them to the party. Some of the penalties imposed on the party will include a delay of REAL TIME (i.e., a 10 minute coffee break). Please do not deviate from the text provided and do not give the party any breaks not written into the scenario. Be tough, but fair.

INTRODUCTION

The flames crackled and popped as the large campfire came to life. Thoughts of fear and anticipation fill your mind as you stare at the other seven strangers who share the fire. You have arrived within minutes of each other. Some have been traveling for days, others for months. All of you have one thing in common, the glass signet ring like the one on your hand, and a compulsion to come to this small clearing. Suddenly, a man appears from out of the forest. Though you hardly believe it, there is no doubt to the identity of the newest arrival. The long flowing white hair; the red robe with the letter K on it; and the famed black staff. It could only be Korbin, magician and advisor to King Rogan of the legendary city of Kath, which had disappeared entirely some 40 year ago.

With a wave of the black staff, the rings start glowing. The fire fades in importance, and you find that you cannot move. The only thing you can see or hear is Korbin's voice.

"Hear this, chosen defenders of the realm of Kath! The rings that you wear were made by myself some 50 years ago and given to families loyal to Kath, but living outside of the realm. You, the grandsons and granddaughters of these chosen have been summoned to help Kath and prove your families's loyalties. The powerful and evil sorceress Novala has captured King Rogan in a magical prison of glass. She also managed to secure 4 of the 8 great elemental gems required to keep Kath between the planes. With 4 gems missing, the city will appear in about a day were it once stood 2 scores ago. Being exposed with a small army and no king to lead them, the city is in great peril of being invaded or destroyed by some of the surrounding evil kingdoms. Your quest is to enter the sorceresses' lair known as The Halls Of Fortune. Lost ages ago, these magical halls were renowned for their deadly tests of peoples worth. Recover the gems and free the King."

"You must locate the cell number of the King to free him. With his location, and the four gems, you may call forth from the prison. But beware! Call forth the wrong cell, and may call forth from your doom, for Novala is cunning and has imprisoned many creatures that would be dangerous to any who would free them. There are clues to the proper methods for dealing with the halls. Each hall has a spoken message by Novala herself presented at the entrance."

With another wave of the staff, a dark cave-mouth appears in the air by Korbin, and you are compelled to walk into the unknown. . . .

1. ENTRANCE HALL



MONSTER:

Spectator (MM2, p.112)
HD: 4 + 4 #atk: 1 + special MR: 5%
AC: 4/7 Hp: 30 Mv: 10"
Special- Eye Gaze Attacks:
1) Cause Serious Wounds (2D8 + 3), Save = 1/2
2) Paralyzation (5-20 rounds)
3) Telepathic Suggestion (save or leave)

Initiative on D8 vs. party's D6
Defense: On any ranged spell, if spectator makes save, spell will be reflected back to caster (once per round.)

MAGIC MOUTH:

It Watches and Waits,
For the one who Gates,
To see the Treasure's right,
To pass is as simple as Day and Night.

As you enter the dark cave month, a door appears in front of you. *(When party opens the door, don't forget to read the magic mouth.)*

Behind the door is a darkened hallway with hovering shadows at the far end.

The shadows are caused by a spectator levitating in front of a door at the end of the hallway. It will converse freely with the party. It does not know anything about the halls. It will not let the party pass into the Pool Hall.

2. POOL HALL

MONSTERS:

2 *Crysmals* (MM2, p. 26)
HD: 6 + 6 #atk: 1 Dam: 2D8
AC: -4/0 Hp: 40 ea. Mv: 6"
Special: Can shoot top appendage 2" for D8 + 8 for damage(last defense)
Immune to fire and cold attacks
1/4 damage from electrical attacks (save for none)
Immune to poison and gas

1 *Crystal Ooze* (MM2, p. 27)
HD: 4 #atk: 1 Dam: 4D4
AC: 8 Hp: 30 Mv: 3
Special: 75% invisible in the water
Save vs. poison or be paralyzed.
Immune to acid, heat, cold, and fire
Blows from weapons do 1 pt damage per hit
Wooden weapons must save vs. acid, or break

SPECIAL: Pool

MAGIC MOUTH:
Friends can take what they want,
But to give away freely is the key.

This hall is dominated by a large sunken pool of clear water. Surrounding the pool is a 10' border of black tile. Centered on the back wall is a spectacular 20' x 30' solid adamantite door. Flanking each side of the door is a large mound of crystals. Ten feet above each mound of crystal is a large triangular hole.

Close inspection of the tiles and the pool will reveal thinly scribed runes (they are magical) on the tiles and four large red gems in the pool. If the players cast a read magic spell they will be able to read the runes. The runes say to "cast a friend spell on the pool, remove 2 gems and feed them to the crysmals". If the party fails to cast a friends spell and reaches into the pool, or removes more than 2 of the gems, the crystal ooze will attack. When anyone comes within 10' of the door, the piles of crystal animate into crysmals. They will only attack to defend themselves. If a crysmal is killed, another will magically appear and take its place. This will be repeated for as long as the players kill the crysmals (That is, until the entire party is killed if the players are that dumb!). If offered the gems, the crysmals will eat them, then turn and place their trunks in the holes wiggling them in some unknown fashion. This will open the door. ***ONLY A CRYSMAL CAN OPEN THE DOOR!! THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO OPEN THE DOOR!!***

3. HALL OF JUSTICE



MONSTER:

4 *Tentamorts* (FF, p. 86)
HD: 8 #atk: 2 Dam: D6
AC; 3/1 Hp: 32 ea.(8 per tentacle, 16 body) Mv: 1"
Special: Two tentacles special attack: 1 constricts on 2 over to hit (D6 per round), 1 poisons on 2 over to hit, save vs. instant paralyzation, plus death in 4 rounds (Heal spell required within 1 hr.)

SPECIAL: Sword in Rock

MAGIC MOUTH:
Use a Soft Touch
To Gain the Edge,
But don't be Greedy.

This large columned hall contains 4 glass display cases on raised platforms. Directly in front of each platform is a column larger than the rest. Each of the four large columns have intricately carved vines wrapping around them forming a pinwheel design. A rod, staff, ring, and wand are contained in the display cases. A large rock, embedded in the floor, occupies the center of the hall. A glowing two-handed sword is buried in the rock to about 6 inches below the hilt.

Each stone pinwheel design will animate into a tentamort if the display case in front of it is lifted. The tentamort will attack the person who lifted the case until it is killed. The glass display cases cannot be broken. All items in the cases will radiate magic if detection is cast, but in reality they are worthless. The cases will also detect as magical. To remove the sword from the rock, the party must use a rock to mud or a disintegrate spell. The sword is a *+3 Two-Handed Sword.*

4. HALL CLOSET

MONSTER:

4 *Cloakers* (MM2, p. 25)
HD: 6 #atk: 2 Dam: D6
AC: 3/1 Hp: 40 ea. Mv: 1"
Special: Successful hit envelops victim, attacks against cloak w/player pass on 1/2 damage
Cloaker emits humming sounds, w/increasing effect each round:

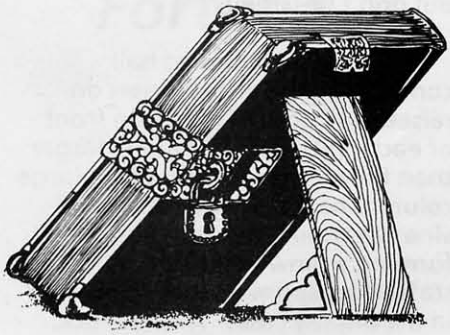
1. Players attack at -2 to hit and to damage
2. Save vs. spells or fear
3. Save vs. poison or nausea (stinking cloud)
4. Save vs. spell or hold person

Can use shadows for mirror image

MAGIC MOUTH:
Isn't it obvious!

Four racks of various types of clothing occupy this walk-in closet. Each rack contains a cloaker that will attack when it's rack is searched. There is nothing of value in this room.

5. HALL OF RECORDS



TRAP: Spell Book
MAGIC MOUTH:
Don't judge a book by it's cover.

This study is filled with numerous shelves overflowing with books, scrolls, and various maps. Table, chairs, and couches surround a gigantic 8' tall book standing semi-upright on a stand. the book is clasped and padlocked.

The padlock is trapped with a poison needle. The clasp, when opened, will cause the cover to fly open (it has hidden springs). Anybody standing close to the sides of the book will receive 3D10 points of damage. The first page is blank. the rest of the pages each have a fire trap that will go off for D4 + 20 points of damage when turned. The book has a total of 100 pages. If the players look closely they will discover a dogeared page. Turning directly to this page will not set off the traps. On this page is the following message, written in common:

Countless are the nights
Behind glass walls
Listening to the Wail
Of evils I can call

I wait for my beloved
A choice for him to make
To stay by me within these halls
Or war on Kath will break

In his heart I know he will
Chose me for his queen
Drawn from the seventh image
Kath can fade back
Into dream

6. DINNING HALL

MONSTER:
Purple Worm (MM1, p. 80)
HD: 15 #atk: 2 Dam: 2D12, 2D4
AC: 6 Hp: 100
Special: If to hit roll is 4 or more above the number needed to hit, character is swallowed whole. Must be saved in 6 rounds, or dies.
Save vs. poison if hit by tail
SPECIAL: Purple worm is polymorphed into the table
MAGIC MOUTH:
Special of the day: Dessert.

This is a lavishly furnished dining hall. A large 50' table occupies the back alcove. The table is very ornately carved, from a wood with a deep purplish hue. There are place setting for each of you.

After all who wish to are seated, a place card engraved with their name in gold will appear on the gold-rimmed plate. They will be served a full seven course meal which will appear magically. The food will be delicious. When dessert is served, the table will polymorph back into a purple worm. Characters sitting at the ends of the table are automatically surprised. All other players will be surprised on a roll of 1-4 on a D6. Characters must roll their dex in order to get out of the room or take D8 + 6 damage from the trashing purple worm each round (in addition to the worm's normal attacks). Characters sitting along the back wall must make two (2) dex rolls (one to climb, one to get out).

7. HALL OF CONJURING



MONSTER:
Magnesium Spirit (FF, p. 62)
HD: 6 + 1 #atk: 1 Dam: 3D4
AC: 0 Hp: 40 Mv: 36"
Special: Bright light, save vs. petrification or blindness for 12 turns
Energy drain - 1 level per hit
Strength drain - 2 pts. per hit (heal one per hour), automatic after successful hit
MAGIC MOUTH:
DO NOT ENTER!
The mind you save may be your own.

As you enter the hall, to the left you see a couch and 2 chairs around a small table, to the right is a large canopied bed. In the center of the hall and off to the sides are rows of bookcases. In the back of hall from behind the center bookcase, 4 columns rise to the ceiling. A very white brilliant light emanates from somewhere between the columns.

If the players look behind the bookcase:

You see 4 large pillars extending from the floor to the ceiling. In the center of the pillars on the floor a circle of strange runes surround a pentagram. In the center of the pentagram is a cylinder of white flames 5' tall and 3' in diameter with a wispy, 5' long tail. In front of the pillars is another circle of runes surrounding a small pentagram. In the center of this pentagram, behind a podium, is a robed female figure lying on the ground apparently dead.

There is nothing useful in this room. If any person or object breaks either circle, it will release the magnesium spirit. Should the spirit be released, it will attack the characters randomly. The spirit will pursue the party unless it successfully attacks a character of 9th level or above. The body is that of Novala. Sometimes the strain is just too great.

8. HALL OF COPPER

MONSTER:
Quasi-Elemental of Lightning (MM2, p. 103)

HD: 6 #atk: 1 Dam: D6 + 6
AC: 2 Hp: 40 Mv; 18"
Special: Can avoid attack on round it gains initiative
Need + 1 or better weapon to hit
Attackers suffers D4 on hit if using metal weapon
Immune to electrical damage
Acid and fire cause only half damage
MAGIC MOUTH:
You'll get a charge out of this.

This hall seems to be made entirely of copper. A rectangular border of runes surround two 20' high copper poles placed about 50' apart. Atop the poles are large, round copper balls. Between the poles is a large copper chest.

The runes are magical. A read magic spell will tell the party "if the runes are crossed, an elemental of some sort will be summoned." Whenever the quasi gains initiative, it will attack and then arc away nullifying the player's chance to attack. Protection from lightning will make the recipient immune to all the quasi's attacks. Inside the chest is one of the elemental gems.

9. THE HALL OF THE CLENCHED FIST

SPECIAL: Stone Hand
MAGIC MOUTH:
Grasp the situation with both Hands.
The result should be shocking.

In the middle of this hall are 4 large pillars that extend from floor to ceiling. On a raised platform in the center of the pillars sets a gigantic hand clenched in a fist. The hand is extremely lifelike in detail. It is 10' long and rests palm up. Sticking out of the wrist like a broken bone is a bronze life-sized hand, open.

To open the fist, 21 points of shocking grasp damage must be cast on the smaller bronze hand. The spells can be cast simultaneously or within 3 rounds of each other. If the party does not do 21 points of damage within 3 rounds or damages the hand by any other means, all 5 "Bigby" spells go off at once, one spell per player at random. In the event of fewer than 5 players, the spells will double up at random. They will follow the party throughout the halls until they are dispelled.

1. Bigby's Interposing Hand: This hand is human sized and slows character to 1/2 movement.

2. Bigby's Forceful Hand: Causes movement to slow to 10' per round. Ogre sized.

3. Bigby's Grasping Hand: Giant sized hand holds character motionless, no attack possible.

4. Bigby's Clenched Fist: Human sized, always hits (roll a D20);
   - 1-12, glancing blow, D6 damage
   - 13-16, solid punch, 2D6 damage
   - 17-19, hard punch, 3D6 damage, stunned next round, add 4 next roll
   - 20, Crushing blow, 4D6 damage stunned next 3 rounds

All the various Bigby's hands require 45 pts. of damage to be dispelled. If the party attempts to run, the "Hands" will follow. If the party successfully opens the hand, they will find a glowing glass mace.

10. JUVENILE HALL

SPECIAL: Fountain
MAGIC MOUTH:
Heal all wounds!
Be young again!

This hall sports a very large fountain in the center. The running water in the fountain is clear and clean. The floor, walls, and ceiling are done in large mosaic tiles depicting children playing.

This is a fountain of youth. Any character drinking from the fountain must make a save vs. magic. If the character saves, he receives the effects of a heal spell. Failure indicates that the character's body has turned into that of a 12 year old. All abilities are lost. This spell lasts one hour of real time.

11. HALL OF PILFERING

SPECIAL: Magic Square (dig spell)
MAGIC MOUTH:
A Test for Thieves
If you are brave:
Be Nimble, be Quick,
Or dig your grave.

This unusual hall has a 20 ft. square mound of dirt in the center. Surrounding the dirt is a 10' wide band of tiles with runes. On the middle of the dirt pile is a large gold chest with diamond studs.

The runes (if a read magic is cast) say "no chests beyond this point." Which means the chest cannot be removed from the square by any means. When someone gets within 1' of the chest, a dig spell will go off each round, directly under the chest. The area affected is 5'x5'x5'. If the hole is more than 10' deep, there is a 10% cumulative chance for the walls to collapse each round. Inside the chest is a glowing glass hammer. A knock spell ***WILL NOT*** open the chest. Thieves will be able to climb at 12' per round, twice that rate if they have a rope tied around themselves which the characters can pull on. If a party member is trapped lower than 10' below the ground when the walls collapse, the character cannot be rescued by the party.

12. NEWTON'S HALL

SPECIAL: Reverse Gravity Spheres
MAGIC MOUTH:
What Goes UP, must come DOWN.
etc.

This hall has a 15' ceiling. 4 glowing globes about 1' in diameter lie about 10' from each corner. The 30x30 area formed by the globes has a fine dust in it that swirls from floor to ceiling. Directly in front of the door on the opposite wall is a marble pedestal with a slightly larger glowing globe on it. On the side of the pedestal is a gold chain with a large piece of black cloth attached to it.

The area inside the globe operates in reverse gravity. Anyone stepping into the area will be subject to the spell. A character will

fall to the ceiling, for 2-9 points of damage, and back to the ground for 2-9 points more. This happens twice a round. A character cannot exit the area on his own. The party must extract him or deactivate the spell. The spell can be deactivated by placing the globe on the pedestal in darkness. (This is what the black cloth is for, the chain is just long enough to allow it to cover the glowing globe.) None of the globes can be broken.

13. HALL OF DELIVERANCE

MONSTER:
Stone Golem
HD: (13) #atk: 1 Dam: 3D8
AC: 5 Hp: 60 Mv: 6"
Specials: Slow spell (10' r.) every other round
+ 2 or better weapon to hit
TRAP: Corridor of Rods
MAGIC MOUTH:
It's not the Kill,
It's the Thrill of the Chase.

This darkened hallway is only 5' wide. At the end of the hallway is a brightly lit chamber, in which the legs of a statue can be seen.

If players examine the 5' corridor closely, they will find hundreds of small (1") diameter holes in the walls, floor, and ceiling. When two characters enter the chamber, a wall of force will form across the ends of the 5' wide hall, trapping anyone in the corridor. The next round, the statue will animate into the stone golem and attack. At the same time rods will start rapidly extending through the holes in the corridor. Every other round characters must roll their dex or lower on a D20, or be hit by a rod. The dwarf, gnome, and all characters that are 12 year olds from the Juvenile Hall are -2 on their dice for this roll. Characters failing to make their dex or lower receive 3-30 pts. damage. The monster will die before allowing anyone to use the door behind it. It cannot be distracted. When the stone golem is defeated, the rods will retract and the walls of force will come down.

14. THE HALL OF BRIDGES

MONSTERS:
1. *Xaren*
HD: 5 + 5, #atk: 4 Dam; 3x 1-3, 4D4
AC: 1 Hp: 45
Special: Surprise on 1-5 (D6)
Immune to fire and cold
Sharp weapons do half damage
40% to bite magic weapon
(Save vs. Crushing Blow)
2. 2 *Vortexes*
HD: 2 + 2, #atk: 1 Dam: special
AC: 0 Hp: 18 ea.
Special: Hit makes character spin in vortex(1-3), 5% cumulative chance per round of being killed by violent air current
3. *Xeg-yi*
HD: 7, #atk: 1 Dam: D6 + 6
AC: 0 Hp: 50
Special: Metal items save vs. lightning or be destroyed
If slain, will release energy in "retributive strike'" doing double damage to all in 10' r.
+ 1 or better weapon to hit
Only affected by shield, disintegrate, magic missiles
MAGIC MOUTH (14a.) :
Give the Edge to gain the Bridge.

A dark pit lies before you. Three short steps lead up to a bridge with an earthen top spanning the 50' chasm. A stone archway with a darkened opening awaits on the opposite side. The chasm appears to be bottomless.

When the players step onto the bridge, the Xaren will appear in the middle of the bridge, with its arms extended towards the party (at least 2 out of 3). If the party gives the Xaren the sword from the HALL OF JUSTICE, the Xaren (with sword) will vanish. The Xaren will also accept any combination of magical weapons whose bonus totals + 3. If the Xaren does not get its bribe, it will fight until it is dead or has destroyed + 3 worth of weapons (i.e., a + 1 mace and a + 2 sword + 3).

MAGIC MOUTH (14b.) :
Breeze thru this hall,
To avoid the Twist of fate.

Again, the solid stone of the mountain is interrupted by a chasm. Mists swirl and billow in restless air currents. There are three steps leading to a bridge which looks as if it were made from a cloud, mists only slightly more substantial than those of the foggy vapors in the canyon.

When characters step onto the bridge, two vortexes form in the middle, out of the mist. A control winds spell will slow the vortexes so that the players can walk by. No other method will prevent melee.

MAGIC MOUTH (14c.) :
Shield yourself from life's Dark Side.

A jet-black stone bridge at the top of three steps spans a dark void. In the light from the party a doorway is vaguely visible.

As the party steps onto the bridge, a Xeg-yi materializes halfway across the bridge. A shield spell will enable the party to cross unopposed. The magic user can only place the spell on a successful touch. Other than this, there is no way to cross without fighting, and defeating, the monster.

15. SAMPSON'S HALL

MONSTERS:
Spirit Troll (FF, p. 91)
HD: 5 + 5 #atk: 3 Dam: D3/D3/D6
AC: 2 Hp: 40 MR: 30%
Special: Strength point drain
Regenerates 3pts per round
Immune to cold-based spells
Magic weapons to hit
Invisible
Xill (FF, p. 96)
HD: 5 #atk: 4 Dam: D4(x4)
AC: 0 Hp: 30 MR: 70%
Special: + 3 to hit (str.)
Surprise 90%
Paralyzation
(SEE FIEND FOLIO FOR MORE INFO)
SPECIAL: Xill summoned if magic circle broken
MAGIC MOUTH:
Only the strong survive, or
The way to a man's heart is. . . .

This hall contains a circle, inscribed with runes, surrounding a chest. The wooden chest is inlaid with gold and bound with iron. Other than this, the hall is empty.

Characters with infravision will be able to see the spirit troll if the players state their intention and there is no torches in use at the time. The spirit troll will attack immediately when the party enters the room. There is no morale check for the troll, he will fight to the death. It may be burned, but check locations to be sure that the chest n the circle is not also set aflame. (Save vs. normal at -2.)

The runes are magical. If a read magic is cast on the runes, it will tell the party: "Break the circle, summon a xill". Protection from evil will ward off a xill. The xill will not leave the confines of the circle, unless it has grappled successfully with a party member (dragging the rope out of the circle won't save him). The chest contains an elemental gem and can't be taken out of the circle without breaking the runes.

16. THE HALL OF MISTS

SPECIAL: Sphere of Annihilation and Talisman of Control
MAGIC MOUTH:
If you're having Trouble, Don't be annoyed;
A Choice I give you, Control or Blackest Void.

This hall is entirely colored white. Midway down the hall are 2 pedestals extending 4 feet from the floor into a cloud of mist about 3 feet in diameter. Between the pedestals is a circle of runes. Lying against the back wall is a white marble chest with veins of gold running through it.

A read magic will translate the runes: "For complete control, stand here." A wall of force will also appear between the circle and the chest when a character enters the room (closing off the back half on the room). The wall of force cannot be dispelled by normal means.

If a destroy water spell is cast on the mists, they will disappear, revealing a Sphere of Annihilation and a Talisman of the Sphere. A character standing in the circle, wearing the talisman, will have 100% control of the movement of the sphere, within the confines of the room. The sphere can be used to destroy the wall of force (which will consume the sphere in the process).

The chest is not trapped. Inside the chest is an elemental gem.

17. HALL OF SPHERES

MONSTER:
Homonculous (MM1, p. 53)
HD: 2 #atk: 1 Dam: 1-3
AC: 6 Hp: 12
Special: Bite causes sleep (save vs. spell)
Saves as 20th level MU
SPECIAL: Time stop
MAGIC MOUTH:
Now you see it,
Now you Don't?

In the middle of this plain hall rests an opaque hemisphere of shimmering, multicolored spheres of light. These scintillating spheres flash the seven colors of the visible spectrum.

The hemisphere is the top half of a Prismatic Sphere. In the middle of the sphere is a chest (locked) guarded by a homonculous. The players cannot see this as they enter the room. If they are dispelling the layers of the primsmatic sphere, they will be able to see that there is something inside after three layers are removed, and will see exactly what after 5 layers are gone. Every other round, a time-stop spell will go off. The homonculos will leave the sphere and take a random magic item from the party and place it in the chest. (He has the key.) If confronted, he will give the key to the party and say: "What's the matter? Can't ya take a joke?" He won't fight unless attacked.

Note that the players could just walk through the sphere, but in doing so they will take the appropriate damage from each level of the sphere. If they have used the wrong spells earlier in the adventure, this may be their only course of action. You may need to have the party read the description of the spell. (If you really have a dense bunch of players, have the magic user make an intelligence roll, since the player's character would almost certainly recognize the spell for what it is.)

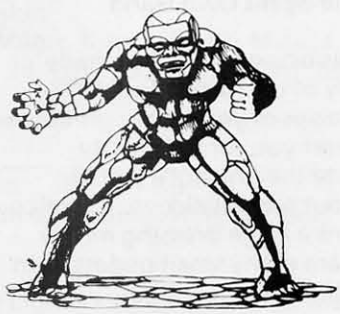
18. OTI'S HALL

TRAP: Freezing water
MAGIC MOUTH:
Crystal clear is sometimes nice,
You can take a drink, but don't choke on the Ice.

This hall appears to be made of a clear crystal substance. A 30' x 30' pool of water occupies the center of the hall. There are steps leading down into the water on both sides of the pool. In the back of the hall is a platform with a quartz chest encrusted with diamonds.

If any character touches the 10' sq. area in the center of the pool the water will instantly freeze, trapping the character in the water for 15 minutes of **REAL TIME!** The water is 4' deep in the middle. Save vs. paralyzation each 5 minutes or die. If the save is made, take 10 points of damage due to hypothermia. If a Control Temperature 10'Radius is cast, it will release the character immediately, and keep the water from freezing. In the chest is an elemental gem.

19. HALL OF GLASS



MONSTER:
Glass Golem
HD: 15 #atk: 4 Dam: 3D12 (x4)
AC: 4 Hp: 70
Special: Emits fumble spell 20' r.
Edged weapons save vs. spell or become glass (save does 1 pt. of damage)
Cold based spells do half damage
Shatter spell does 1 pt. of damage per level of caster

Disintegrate spell does 2 pts. of damage per level of caster
Slow spell - Full effect
Not affected by any other spell
25% chance of spell reflection

MAGIC MOUTH:
To win o'er the one in the middle,
Use weapons that are all brittle,
And speed you by if you are fast,
Or this big brute will cream your @.

This octagonal room is covered entirely with non-reflecting glass. You can see the earth and stone behind the walls, ceiling, and floor. In the middle of the hall, is a giant glass statue.

Glass weapons (such as the player's have hopefully found) will do double damage, and negate the fumble spell for those weiding them. Blunt weapons do normal damage, if magical. The golem will animate and attack immediately when the party enters the hall.

20. THE HALL OF MIRRORS

SPECIAL: Mirror of Trapping/ Mirror of Opposition
MAGIC MOUTH:
Do not be deceived, by what you See,
Less than Four could find the Door,
Or give you a Key to how a man may Die By his Own Hand.

This octagonal hall is made entirely of mirrored glass. Reflections of your party greet you wherever you turn. Directly opposite the entrance you can make out a small alcove. The alcove contains a large dressing mirror. There are many small pedestals in the hall.

On closer inspection:

The mirror is in a frame which is attached to a stand that completely surrounds it. The mirror can revolve completely around its center in the frame. The pedestals have small indentations in the top.

There are actually only four pedestals (the extra ones are reflections). They are placed so that

CELL ROSTER (just in case)

1. Babu (MM2)	AC: -3	Hp: 54
2. Aurumvorax (MM2)	AC: 0	Hp: 75
3. Grell (FF)	AC: 4	Hp: 35
4. Bodat (MM2)	AC: 5	Hp: 70
5. Beholder (MM1)	AC: 0/2/7	Hp: 65
6. Bullette (MM1)	AC: -2/4/6	Hp: 60
7. King Rogan - Ftr 15	AC: -2	Hp: 115 *
8. White Dragon (MM1)	AC: 3	Hp: 56
9. Hill Giant (MM1)	AC: 4	Hp: 60
10. Rust Monster (MM1)	AC: 2	Hp: 35
11. Spectre (MM1)	AC: 2	Hp: 55
12. Skeleton Warrior (FF)	AC: 2	Hp: 80

*(Longsword + 4 Defender)

TOURNAMENT CHARACTERS

Davney the Pious 8th Cleric Human CG 57 Years Old AC: 2 Hp: 48

STR:	14
INT:	12
WIS:	18
DEX:	13
CON:	12
CHA:	13

+ 2 Mace, Plate Mail, Shield, Holy Water (2 vials), Holy Symbol, Backpack; Potions: Healing, Neutralize Poison
Scroll: Protection From Evil, Feign Death
Spells: Cure Light Wounds(x3), Destroy Water, Light, Chant (x2), Find Traps(x2), Silence 15' Radius, Cause Blindness, Prayer (x2), Continual Light, Lower Water, Cure Serious Wounds (x2)

Gnimble Toes 8th Thief Gnome NG 399 Years Old AC: 3 Hp: 38

STR:	12
INT:	13
WIS:	12
DEX:	18
CON:	13
CHA:	14

+ 2 Short Sword, 4 Darts, Dagger, + 1 Leather, Small Bag Of Holding (250gp), Thief's Tools, Bag of Coins (13cp, 2sp), 4 Spikes with Hammer, 50' Rope, Mirror
PP: 75; OL: 77; F/RT: 70; MS: 77; HIS: 64; HN: 35; CW: 81; RL: 40; Backstab: x3

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they form a square in the middle of the room. The mirror is dual sided, one side being mirror of opposition and the other being a mirror of life trapping. The mirror of life trapping is where the king is held. The "cell number" was identified in the study's spell book.

The mirror of life trapping is facing the party when they enter the room. If all four elemental gems are placed on the pedestals, and the proper cell number is spoken, the king will appear. At the same time the rings will start glowing. The king has a scroll of plane shift, with which the party can transport themselves, the king, and the four elemental gems back to their world. There is a 25% chance per gem not used that the mirror will revolve to reveal the mirror of opposition, at which time the party member in front of the mirror will have to win in a battle against himself, or be destroyed forever. If the wrong cell number is spoken, a random monster will trade places with the party member. The mirror of life trapping will not trap anyone unless the wrong cell number is spoken. If the mirror is shattered, ALL monsters will appear, as well as the king. **(GOOD LUCK, BUNKIE!)** The mirror, of course, gets a save vs. crushing blow.

If the party revolves the mirror so that the mirror of opposition is to the front, the person in front of the mirror will automatically have to face that challenge.

TOURNAMENT CHARACTERS

Sparks the Aniode 9th Magic-User Human LG 47 Years Old AC: 4 Hp: 45

STR:	10	+ 1 Ring of Protection, + 2 Cloak of Protection, + 2 Dagger, Staff
INT:	18	of Striking (8charges), Small Bag of Holding (250gp), Backpack,
WIS:	14	Tinderbox, 2 Flasks of Oil, Mirror, Bracers of Defense (AC 7).
DEX:	13	Spells: Read Magic (x2), Shocking Grasp, Magic Missile, Detect
CON:	16	Invisible, Knock, Shatter, Dispel Magic, Slow, Polymorph Other,
CHA:	12	Remove Curse, Transmute Rock to Mud

Mudders the Doomslayer 10th Magic-User Human N 41Yrs. Old AC: 4 Hp: 32

STR:	10	+ 3 Ring of Protection, + 2 Cloak of Protection, Staff of
INT:	18	Striking(10 charges), Dagger, 4 Darts, Tinderbox, Backpack, Small
WIS:	13	Bag of Holding(250gp), Scroll: Disintegrate
DEX:	15	Spells: Read Magic(x2), Shocking Grasp, Shield, Darkness 15'
CON:	11	radius, Shatter(x2), Knock, Dispel Magic, Gust of Wind, Haste,
CHA:	12	Plant Growth, Ice Storm, Cone of Cold, Passwall

Jean the Generic 8th Fighter Human CG 37 Years old AC: -1 Hp: 60

STR:	18/31	+ 2 Longsword, Mace, Potion of Healing, + 1 Plate Mail, Shield,
INT:	12	Tinderbox, Waterskin, Backpack, 5 Torches, 2 Flasks of Oil
WIS:	13	
DEX:	16	
CON:	13	
CHA:	14	

Merri d'Fensque 4th/4th Magic-User/Thief Elf 380 Years Old AC: 4 Hp: 25

STR:	13	+ 1 Longsword, 8 + 2 Arrows, Bracers of Defense(AC 7), + 1 Ring
INT:	17	of Protection, Potion of Healing, Dagger, Longbow, 50' Rope,
WIS:	13	Thief's Tools, Backpack, Waterskin
DEX:	16	Spells: Friends, Shatter, Read Magic, Knock, Magic Missile
CON:	15	PP: 50; OL: 37; F/RT: 35; MS: 38; HIS: 35; HN: 20 CW: 88, RL:
CHA:	12	25; Backstab: x2

Neughleaf 9th Druid Human N 60 Years Old AC: 6 Hp: 54

STR:	17	+ 2 Scimitar, + 1 Leather, Potion of Healing, Holy Symbol,
INT:	12	Wooden Shield
WIS:	16	
DEX:	13	Spells: Detect Magic (x7), Cure Light Wounds (x5), Heat Metal,
CON:	11	Protection From Fire, Cure Disease, Water Breathing, Protection
CHA:	14	From Lightning, Control Temperature 10' radius, Control Winds

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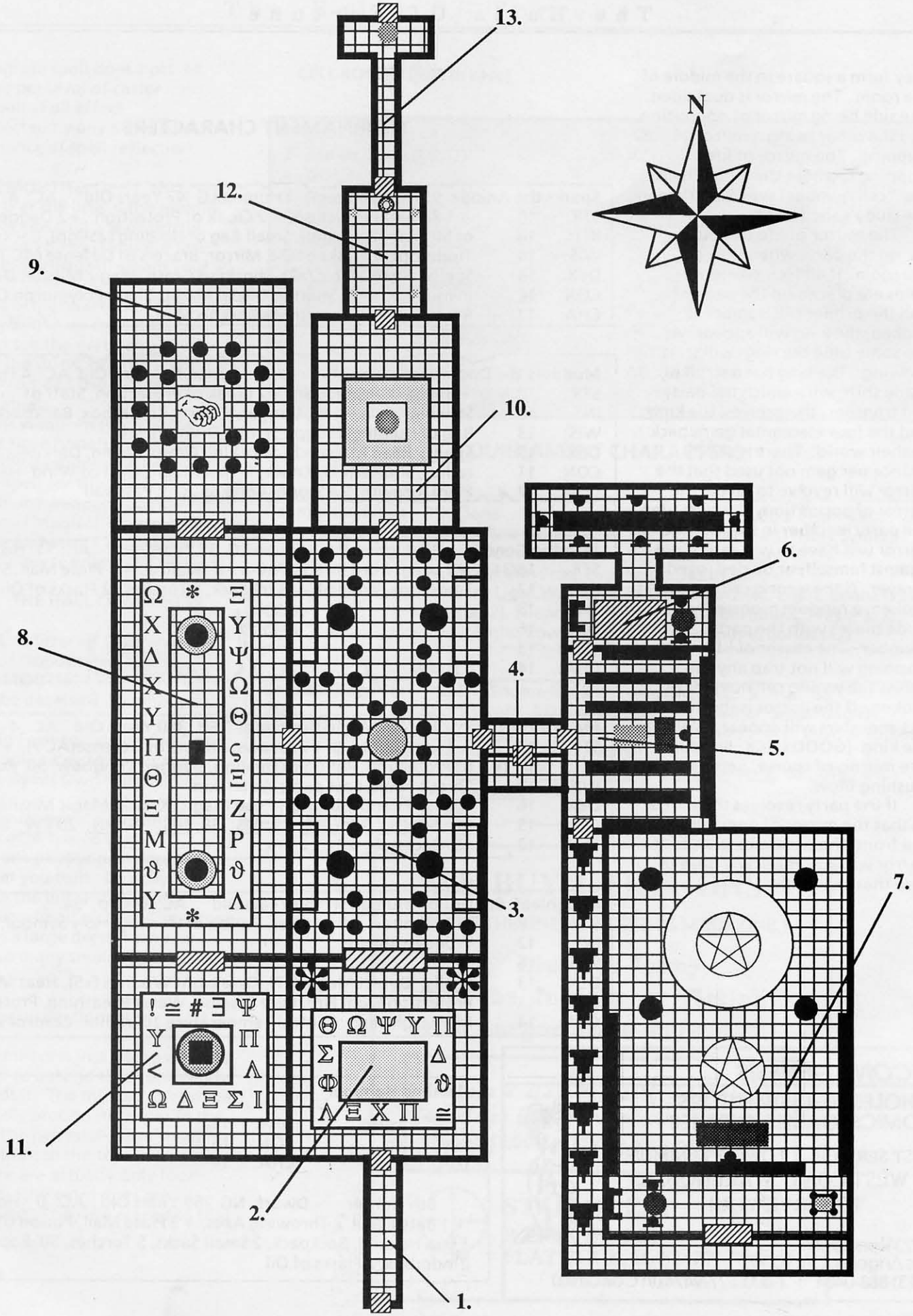


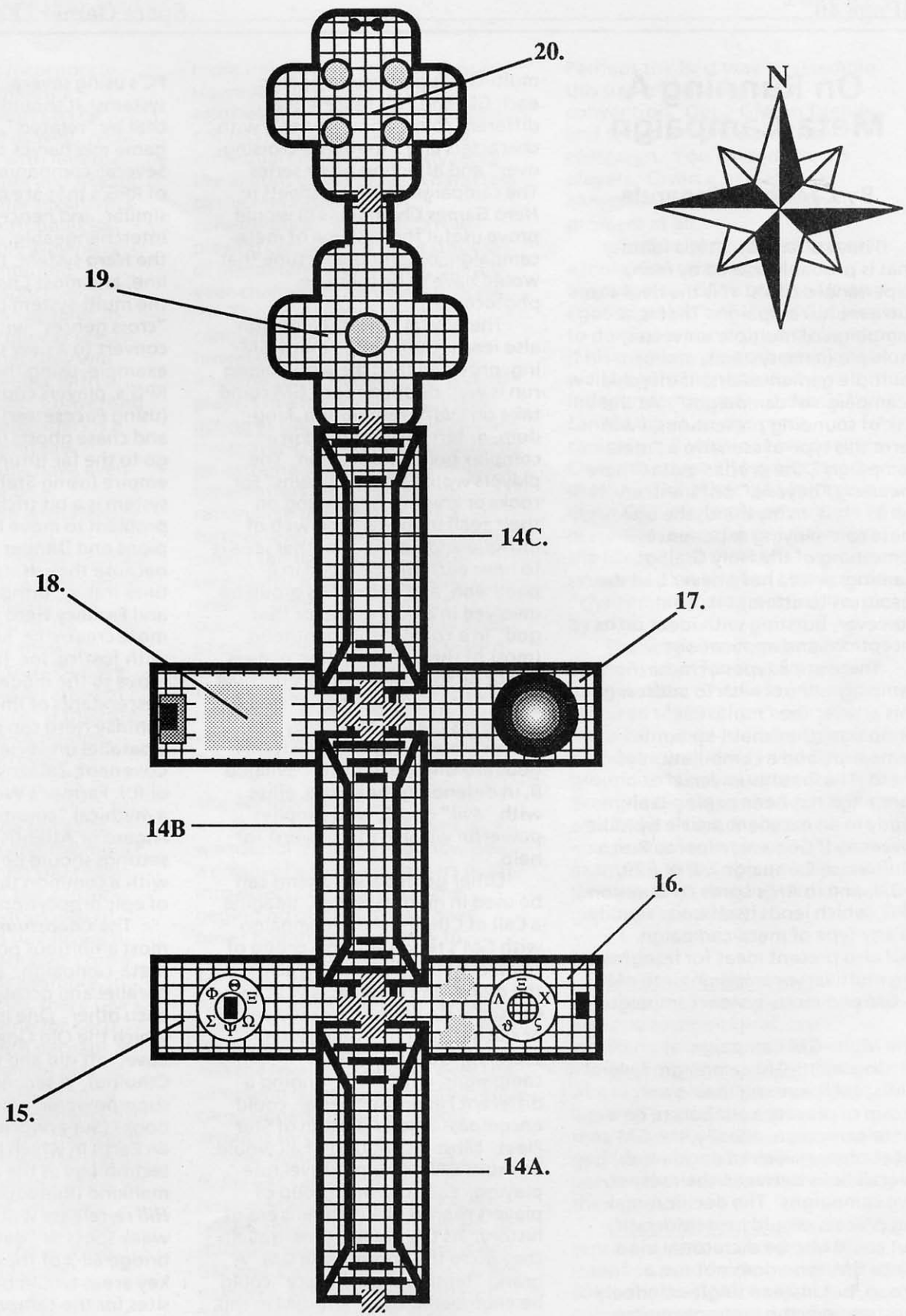
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Armand Hammer

STR:	18/40	DEX:	13
INT:	10	CON:	16
WIS:	11	CHA:	14

8th Fighter Dwarf NG 269 Years Old AC: 0 Hp: 70
+ 1 Battle Axe, 2 Throwing Axes, + 3 Plate Mail, Potion of Extra Healing, Backpack, 2 Small Sacks, 5 Torches, 50' Rope, Tinderbox, 2 Flasks of Oil


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On Running A Meta-Campaign

By J. Michael Caparula

I have a fantasy. It is a fantasy that is probably shared by many experienced GM's. It is the desire to run a multi-campaign. That is, a campaign of multiple universes, multiple game systems, and/or multiple gamemasters. If effect, a "campaign of campaigns". At the risk of sounding pretentious, I will term this type of scenario a "meta-campaign", the prefix "meta-" here meaning "beyond" or "transcendent". It is, in my mind, the ultimate role-playing experience, something of the Holy Grail of Gaming, since I have never had the resources to attempt it. I am, however, bursting with ideas on its inceptions and applications.

There are 3 types of meta-campaigns that I wish to address in this article; the "multi-GM" campaign, the "multi-system" campaign, and a combination of the 2. The "multi-universe" campaign has been explored already in an excellent article by Mike Sweeney ("Godwar: How to Run a Multiverse Campaign", **DW #29**, 6/83), and in ***AH's* Lords Of Creation** RPG, which lends itself quite readily to any type of meta-campaign. I will also present ideas for integrating multiverse campaigns into multi-GM and multi-system campaigns.

The Multi-GM Campaign

In a multi-GM campaign, several GM's, each running their own group of players, collaborate on a meta-campaign. Ideally, the GM's meet once a week to decide the overall links between their respective campaigns. The decision-making process should be democratic, but could also be dictatorial via a meta-GM, who does not run a group, but instead single-handedly masterminds the meta-campaign.

The mulit-GM campaign in applicable to many genres. The one that first comes to mind (mainly because I'm aware that it's been done) is superhero RPG's. In the multi-GM superhero campaign, each GM and PC's represent a different comic book "series", with characters and situations "crossing over" and affecting other series. The campaign planning sheets in ***Hero Games* Champions III** would prove useful for this type of meta-campaign, despite the fortune that would have to be spent on photocopies.

The typical fantasy campaign also lends itself well to multi-GM-ing, provided that the world being run is well-defined. Each GM could take on a different nation, kingdom, or territory involved in a complex political situation. The players would be the "pawns" (or rooks or knights, depending on their zeal) in the tangled web of intrigue and deceit. Another idea is to have each GM be a god in a pantheon, and each GM's group be involved in a holy guest for that god. In a competitive pantheon (most of them are), certain players might be spies or saboteurs for rival gods. For example, "good" god A geases his players to destroy the nasty shrine of "evil" god B (both gods are GM's, of course). Evil god B, in defending the shrine, allies with "evil" god C, who supplies powerful wizards (his players) for help.

Other genres and systems can be used in multi-GM play. Imagine a **Call of Cthulhu** meta-campaign with GM's representing a group of related mysteries occuring across the globe. In **Traveller,** GM's can run separate planets, star systems, or sub-sectors (Think big, even sectors!). **Star Trek** meta-campaigns, with a GM running a different Federation vessel, could encompass a good portion of Star Fleet. Most fascinating of all would be multi-GM's in time-travel role-playing. Each GM and group of players represent a different era of history. As the players time-travel, they go to the appropriate GM. A grand "temporal conspiracy" could be engineered by a meta-GM in this type of scenario.

The Multi-System Campaign

A multi-system campaign is one where a GM runs the same group of PC's using several related game systems. It should be emphasized that by "related", I am referring to game mechanics and not genre. Several companies produce a line of RPG's that are mechanically similar, and hence, interchangeable. Examples include the ***Hero*** system, the ***Pacesetter*** line, and most ***Chaosium*** games. In the multi-system campaign, PC's can "cross genres" without having to convert to a new system. For example, using the ***Pacesetter*** RPG's, players could time-travel (using ***Pacesetter***) to the gothic past and chase ghosts (using **Chill**)., then go to the far future and battle the empire (using **Star Ace**). The ***Hero*** system is a bit trickler. It is no problem to move between **Champions** and **Danger International** because they share a contemporary time frame. Bringing in **Justice, Inc.** and **Fantasy Hero** requires a little more creativity. My idea is to start with **Justice, Inc**. (circa 1930), then move to the modern era via family descendants or immortality drugs. **Fantasy Hero** can come into play as a parallel universe (as in **Thomas Covenant,** Zalazny's **Amber** series, or P.J. Farmer's **World of Tiers**), or as a mythical "counter-earth" like Asgard or Atlantis. All of these settings should be tied together with a common theme or storylike of epic proportions.

The ***Chaosium*** games provides most ambitious possibility for a meta-campaign. 3 universes parallel and occasionally overlap each other. One is our own Earth in which the Old Ones of H.P. Lovecraft did and still exist (**Call of Cthulhu**). A second is the superpowered world of comic books (**Superworld**), and another is an Earth in which magic overcame technology as the dominate tool of mankind (**Runequest**, the ***Avalon-Hill*** re-release will do). Certain weak spots or "gates" exist that bridge all 3 of these worlds. These key areas would be the adventure sites for the campaign, as elements from the three universes would "leak" into each other. Imagine superheros and rune magicians side by side battling the Edler Gods! (I

challenge readers to incorporate **Ringworld** into this milieu.)

Other game systems can be mutually compatible as well. Most ***TSR*** systems convert with minimal work. ***FASA's* Star Trek** and **Doctor Who** have many similar mechanics (Kirk and Spock against daleks!). ***ICE's* Middle Earth** role playing is little more than a simplified **Rolemaster**; their respective modules are interchangeable. In fact, if a company produces several RPG's, you can bet that they will often be interchangeable with a small amount of effort. Converting games of different publishers is a much more challenging task (though several groups have even made this possible, e.g. supplements playable with ***Hero*** or ***Chaosium*** RPG's).

A final note on the multi-system campaign concerns the emergence of several new generic systems, intended to cover any genre. Time and testing will tell if these all-purpose systems are truly flexible enough to encompass all areas of role-playing adventure. If they are, then running a meta-campaign should be easier than ever.

Thinking Big

If you can manage both the multi-GM campaign and the multi-system campaign, then you ready for a combination of the 2. The easiest and most obvious way of accomplishing this is having each GM in a multi-GM campaign run a different system. For example, in my ***Chaosium*** proposal, there GM's would be required, one for each universe (system), with perhaps a meta-GM on the sidelines master-minding the entire operation, If each GM was highly experienced in his or her chosen system, this could be the most efficient way to run a meta-campaign. It would allow for a high degree of specialization without spreading one's self too thinly. This resolves the one big drawback of a multi-system campaign.

Indeed, the role of "meta-GM" could open up a whole new area of RPG specialization. The lack of responsibility for running a group of players leaves the meta-GM with more time for the creative process. However, he should not dis-associate himself from the players entirely. It would be up to the individual GM's to regularly report the actions of the player-characters to the meta-GM for his consideration. After all, a role-playing campaign is not a static set of pre-determined events, but an ever-changing interactive process.

The potential of the meta-campaign does not stop here, however (hold on to your seats). Imagine the possibilities of several players in a meta-campaign <u>also acting as GM's!</u> This would require the player-characters in question to be extremely powerful (demi-gods, timemasters, and the like) to rationalize their power. At a further level of complexity, consider what I call the "nested" meta-campaign. In this, a meta-GM runs several subordinate GM's as powerful players (preferably gods of some type). These GM's in turn run a group of demi-gods, who in turn run a group of high priests, ad infinitum! There are hundreds of variations on this possibility that daring gamers may want to try.

The Bottom Line

Okay, all of this armchair looks wonderful on paper, but how does a group of ambitious gamers put it into effect? As I stated at the beginning of the article, I have never had the opportunity to attempt a meta-campaign, except for some crossovers in the ***Hero*** system. Clearly, the multi-system campaign is the most practical and adaptable; there is only one GM, and the level of "control" over the campaign is great. Beginning meta-campaigners should probably attempt this first.

For those wishing to run a multi-GM campaign, several resources are in order. The most important one is lots of gamers. A standard role-playing group is one GM and 3 to 5 players (Total: 4 to 6 gamers.). A meta-campaign of 3 GM's requires 12 to 18 gamers. Since we gamers are something of a minority, this is s difficult figure to achieve. Additionally, not all players like to GM, and vice versa. Perhaps the best way to assemble this size of a group is at a convention. Get 2 GMing friends and set up a multi-day meta-campaign. You'll need 9 to 15 players. Given a size-able convention, this should be no problem at all.

Another important resource in a multi-GM campaign is agreeability. GM's tend to be an egotistical lot, and if one GM wants to dominate the project by bending it his own way, the others might as well be running their own independent games. If the GM's cannot agree on the meta-campaign, 2 solutions are possible. One is to scrape the project (rather drastic). The other is to bring in a meta-GM. Here, the advantage of a meta-GM is that he can assimilate the ideas of all the GM's into one universal plot. He can also act as "chairman" and determine the plot by vote.

The single most important element of any meta-campaign is imagination. The time and effort required to construct and run a meta-campaign is meaningless without a well-conceived back-ground to merit its existence. If the examples I gave in the body of this article didn't spark your imagination substantially, the examples below should help pave the way to an exciting and unique gaming experience.

More Ideas

<u>Magic vs. Technology:</u> 2 overlapping "planes", one magical and one technological, are wrestling for domination.

<u>Twilight of the Gods:</u> The gods of a higher plane are dependent on worship from a lower plane for their survival. Factions of an evil god (demons and the like) plot to pervert the worshipers and destroy their gods.

<u>Global Conspiracy:</u> Multi-GM's represent various secret societies intent on world domination. In this scenario, the GM's would be competing amongst themselves.

<u>Fiction is Stranger than Fact:</u> One PC is a writer, whose stories are materializing in the form of a separate campaign!

Psionics For Everyone

Psionic Skills For GURPS

by Michael DeWolfe

Only selected, special characters have psionic powers. But, some characters may be able to attain psionic skills and advantages, useful only when in the presense of psionics. These skills versus powers are like holy symbols versus vam-pires. They can be learned at psychic institutes, from mystics, psychics, parapsychologists and those who are familiar with psionics, their strengths and their weaknesses.

For a character to use the default value of a psionic skill, the player has to consider using something and then making an IQ (or Occultism) roll to think of using the skill (at its default level). Psionic powers cannot be used at the default value unless the PC has purchased some level of power and skill for that power.

PSIONIC ADVANTAGES

Psychic
15 points for first level
10 points/level afterward

You are potentially psionic. You have the ability to use psionics (with training) and are more receptive to psionics used on you. Your mind may even be picked out from many for the reception of visions or telepathic messages. If a character is psychic, he may (with the GM's discretion) add on personal psionics at an opportune time.

When you learn psionics, you learn psionic skills or skills for psionics as if your IQ were instead IQ + aptitude. Power is not affected. Psychic as an advantage is not required to learn psionic skills, it only helps greatly.

PSIONIC SKILLS

Confuse (Mental/Very Hard)
See above; Defaults to IQ-10

This skill makes it difficult for a telereceiver to get a clear image of someone's thoughts. Before a telepath begins recieving images, this skill has to be used successfully once. Then, the character must concentrate for a full minute and make a skill roll every (IQ) minutes until he wishes to drop the effect. While the skill is in play, it gives any telepath -3 to his telerecieve skill use.

Close Mind (Mental/Very Hard)
See above; Defaults to IQ + Strong Will -10

Close mind gives the character the ability to shut his mind to telepathic attempts, resisting them better than otherwise possible. The character has to concentrate for a full uninterrupted minute, make a roll once before any telepathic attempt has been made and then make a contest of wills (their close mind + strong will versus the others' telepathic skill + telepathic power). If the character wins, the attempt is staved off (but doesn't fail -- a repeated attempt by a telepathic to "attack" again is not treated as such in this case, in game terms -- he may try again as though he had yet to fail even once). If the telepath is successful, the character is vulnerable to all future attacks as per normal until his close mind skill is initiated once again. If, in the contest of skills, the character makes a critical failure, he is automatically open to any telepathic attempt by that one telepath over the next hour.

Meditation (Mental/Very Hard)
See above; Defaults to IQ-8

This skill allows a character to rest in a trance. During meditation, the character may arrange thoughts, experience an out-of-body experience or enhance psionic abilities. A character can meditate for five minutes by making a skill roll, every doubling of time gives a -1 modifier (eg. 10 minutes of meditation has a -1 penalty, 20 minutes of meditation has a -2 penalty, etc.). While meditating, a character can't be disturbed by the outside world. If something great enough (eg. scream, earthquake, bee sting, etc.) does occur near, or directly to, a meditating character, make an IQ roll (adding any levels of strong will). If the roll fails, all that the meditating characters had attempted fails. If a character was meditating while using a psionic power and someone screamed in his ear, he might lose his concentration; the energy spent and the time used is absolutely wasted. While meditating, all Telepathy skill rolls are at + 3 and all ESP skills rolls are at + 5. Psychokinetic powers aren't enhanced during meditation.

Open Mind (Mental/Hard)
See above; Defaults to IQ-8

This skill allows a character to open his mind to the telepathic fears of others. If successful, the character gives + 3 to the telepathy attempts of anyone else for the next one minute. A character can specify this openess to one or two psis at -3 to their success. If it fails, the psis have whatever chances they normally had. If it critically fails, all benign telepathic contacts are at -3 for the next hour.

Mental Shock (Mental/Very Hard)
See above; Defaults to IQ-10

This skill is used to drive a telepath from the mind of your character. What it does is it creates a series of thoughts and images that "shock" the telepath so much, that he stops the use of his power and retreats. This skill is complex:

First, when the character detects (or suspects) the psi's presence, he takes 1-2 minutes to conjure a shocking mental image. With this image in mind, the character makes a skill roll to be able to use it. Modifiers: If the character has sadism, he's at + 3 to thinking up a doozy of an image; if he uses images that will trigger a psi's phobia (he must know already what phobias the psi has) he's at + 2; if he has eidetic memory, he's at + 3 (those nasty images come in extra clear with their type).

Second the character makes a quick contest of skills. The amount that the character succeeded by in developing the image is added to his skill when he makes the contest of skill roll versus the telepath's telepathic skill + telepahtic power + strong will. If the character fails, his image won't work and he has to concentrate to imagine another. If he succeeds, the telepath retreats. Morever, the amount that the character succeeded by in his contest of skill is applied to the Fright Effects Table **(GURPS Horror p. 6-7)**. The result there is the effect the telepath has to contend with as part of his mental shock.

Mertwig's Maze

Published By: *TSR, Inc.*
Designed By: Tom Wham
Price: $10.00
Complexity Level: Introductory
Rules Clarity: Good

Reviewed By: Richard Edwards

Tom Wham has done it again. Another strange, cartoon illustrated boardgame. This one puts each of two or more players in the role of royal heirs trying to prove their royalty by gaining a royal treasure and a royal birthmark. In order to do this, it is necessary to gain followers in the town and then go out adventuring until you gain the treasure and birthmark you need. Then, it is a race to the mystical **Mertwig's Maze** to see who can get to the king first and claim his inheritance. Of course, since the king is old, he may die before anyone can gain his favor, thus making the richest character the winner.

The game's main focus revolves around the use of cards. There are over 190 cards in the game, all humorously illustrated, divided into character, encounter, treasure, magic, arms, and player character decks. Each player starts with a character and two followers and some gold. In the town you may buy/hire arms, magic, and characters (hirelings).

Once your party is together, you head for the wild adventure areas, such as the Burial Mounds of Rhygn or the Caves of Congor. Each adventure area is a mini-map which has all the rules necessary for its use printed right on it, except for the occasional travelling encounter. It is in the adventure areas that you will fight the monsters and gain the treasures. Movement distance is random by rolling dice. Combat is based on die rolls and the attack and defense values of the characters involved. Magic is powerful and the rules summary gives full spell details for ease of use.

All in all, this is a fun little beer and pretzels game for an hour or two of enjoyment. The humorous touches are up to Tom Wham's usual style and the rules are so well written and placed exactly where you need them (on the cards, on the boards). But though there are some decisions as to where to go and who to hire, most of the play is randomized in card draws and die rolls. While those gaming groups looking for a short diversion will enjoy a couple of games of **Mertwig's Maze**, it is unlikely to see much repeated use.

GURPS

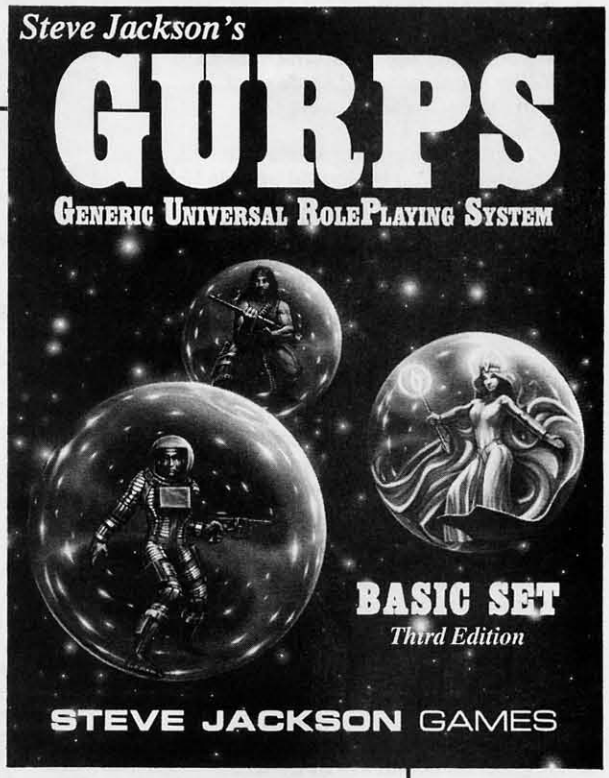
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by J. Michael Caparula

Humor and SF have always had an uneasy relationship, given the field's desire to be taken "seriously" as a form of transcendent literature. In fantasy, comedies are more prolific, because of its cliches and stereotypes that can be parodied. Recently, humorous fantasy and science-fiction has grown into a noticeable force, with some writers, like Harry Harrison and Robert Lynn Asprin, making names for themselves as comic writers. This issue features four works on the lighter side of imaginative fiction.

Douglas Adams is known for making the world laugh with his **Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy** series in all its incarnations. I for one grew tired of the series' overkill after the third book, so I relieved at the more subtle and cerebral humor that permeates **Dirk Gently's Holistic Detective Agency** (***Simon & Schuster***, 247 pp., $14.95). A plot synopsis eludes me; suffice it to say that a number of extraordinary things happen one evening to software designer Richard MacDuff, including the discovery of a horse in a university professor's bathroom, and the witnessing of his late boss's ghostly appearance on a deserted highway. These and other synchronous events lead to an accusation of murder, so MacDuff enlists the services of Dirk Gently, a "holistic detective" who feels that to solve a case, the mysteries of the universe must first be uncovered. MacDuff's case leads to the discovery of a time machine and an alien race stranded on Earth a millennia ago, all of which seems to tie in with the presence of a sofa stuck halfway up MacDuff's staircase.

This is an amazing book, one that represents a new technological trend in SF writing. Adams wrote the book on a Macintosh Plus, and it is clear that his careful orchestration of the book's plotting was helped a great deal by the computer's software capabilities. As the title of the book implies, everything connects with everything else, and Adams makes good use of telephone calls, tape recorders, and shifting perspectives to make it all fit together. The writing is wry and quite British, and the novel's quirky spirit is reminiscent of Rudy Rucker's mathematical farces. A nice change for Adams, proof that his talent goes far beyond the meandering **Hitchhiker** saga.

While reading Thomas R. McDonough's **The Architects Of Hyperspace** (***Avon***, 265 pp., $2.95), I was reminded of computer text adventure games, where the player explores a labyrinthine alien complex in an attempt to puzzle out its origin and purpose. That is exactly what happens in this fast-paced, humorous tale, which is strongly grounded in science, but owes much of its spirit to Campbellian pulp SF. Ariadne Zepos, noted oceanographer, receives an interstellar message from her long-lost father Alexander, telling of an astounding discovery. Zepos hires space rogue Sean O'Shaughessy and his boorish friend Plum to take her to the place of the message's origin in an attempt to discover Alexander's fate. What they find is a tremendous alien structure made up of concentric rings, which seems to draw its power form a neutron star at its center. While exploring the enigmatic artifact, our heros discover that their plans are being sabotaged by Ariadne's greedy ex-boyfriend, and the race is on to discover the aliens' secret. This is a high-spirited jaunt, filled with good humor and plenty of action. The characters are colorful, despite the often corny dialogue, and there is a particularly memorable robot that is programmed to gloriously dramatize the action. While I find the concept of benign trans-galactic intelligences somewhat overused, McDonough's scientific imagination lends credibility to the story, making for a satisfying read.

K.W. Jeter is an up-an-coming writer who was very prolific last year, turning out no less than four new books (including two notable horror novels, **Mantis** and **Dark Seeker**, both from ***Tor*** paperbacks). **Infernal Devices** (***Signet***, 239 pp., $2.95) is billed as a "mad Victorian fantasy," and it is indeed that, owning much of its inspiration to Jeter's so-called "steam-punk" cohorts, Tim Powers and James Blaylock. George Dower, the epitomy of Victorian clockwork sensibility, is thrust into a dastardly plot involving the nefarious mechanical creations of his father. During his fast-paced escapade in foggy England, Dower encounters a man from the future, a plan to split the earth open, and the survivor of a doomed undersea race (much like the one in **Dirk Gently**, only more Lovecraftian). I loved this book, given my penchant for Victoriana, and also because of Jeter's colorful characterizations, superb plotting, and luminescent writing style, which recalls that of Blaylock. What's more, humor abounds, especially in the character of Scape, and in the irresistable ending, which is too good to be true.

I enjoy **Star Trek** as much as anyone, but I view **Star Trek** novels almost to be trite and unimaginative, with one major exception, that of John M. Ford's **The Final Reflection**, which had the guts to leave the Enterprise crew out of the story and focus on a klingon character. His new **Star Trek** novel, **How Much For Just The Planet?** (***Pocket***, 253 pp., $3.95), is equally refreshing because of its comic situations, giving the **Star Trek** novels the kind of humorous fresh air that **The Voyage Home** gave to the movies. The situation is quite simple: The planet Direidi is rich in dilithium, and is in the Oragian Treaty Zone, making it equally contestable by The Federation and The Klingon Empire. The Enterprise crew arrives along with the Klingon cruiser "Fire Blossom," each attempting to diplomatically win the planet. However, both parties find themselves victims of a series of practical jokes that seem to be engineered by the Direidians themselves, whose society has largely been influenced by the comic cinema of 20th-Century Earth. While the first half of the book meanders a bit, the last half is worthy of a Marx Brothers film, as Kirk and the Klingon commander Kaden, along with their respective mistresses, run amok in a madcap bedroom farce involving costume changes and mistaken identities. The ending is all too predictable, but the reader is having too much fun by then to care. It's all light reading on the lighter side of **Star Trek**... which is perhaps the best side of all.

Reprints and Anthologies:

Synergy (***Harvest/HBJ***) is a series of short fiction collections assembled by Geroge Zebrowski. The first volume features a Frederick Pohl horror story, poetry by Gregory Benford, plus short works from Ian Watson, Rudy Rucker, Brian Aldiss, et al. Keep an eye out for the ***Ace*** reprint of Bruce Sterling's first novel **Involution Ocean**. Other recent reprints include Philip K. Dick's classic **Time Out Of Joint** (***Carroll & Graf***), Joe Haldeman's excellent **Mindbridge** (***Avon***), John Sladek's robot comedy **Roderick at Random** (***Carroll & Graf***), and **The Other Log of Phileas Fogg** (***Tor***), one of Philip Jose Farmer's many marvelous pastiches. One final note: Robert Heinlein's **The Moon is a Harsh Mistress**, one of the greatest SF novels of all time, has just entered its 38th printing (***Ace***).

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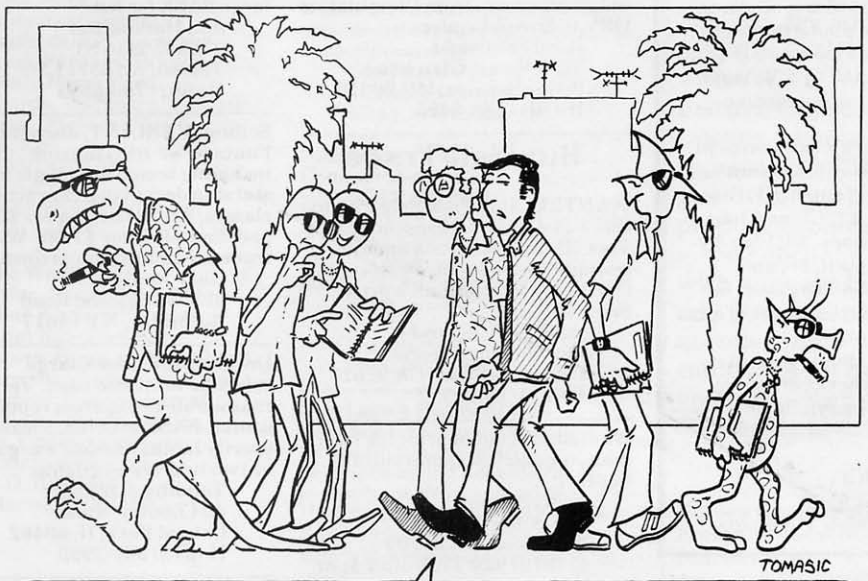
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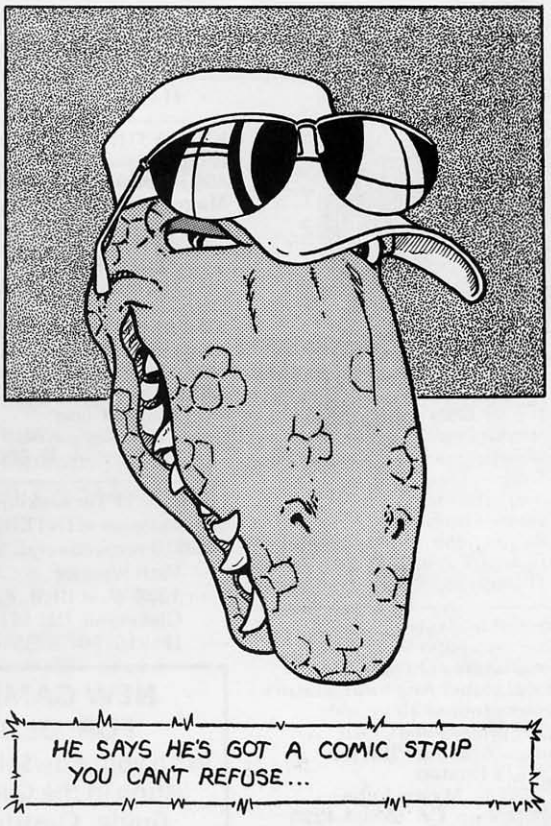
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PO Box 47132
Seattle, WA 98146
(206) 340-1218

WARCON'89
February 3-5, 1989
c/o MSC NOVA
PO Box J-1
College Station, TX
77844

JACKSONVILLE SKIRMISHES
February 3-5, 1989
Skirmishes
PO Box 2097
Winter Haven, FL 33883
(813) 293-7983 or
(904) 246-1325

GENGHIS CON X
February 17-19, 1989
Denver Gamers Association
PO Box 11369
Denver, CO 80211
(303) 433-3849

ORCCON 12
Feburary 17-20, 1989
STRATEGICON
PO Box 8399
Long Beach, CA 90808
(213) 420-3675

OMACON 8.5
February 18th, 1989
Star Realm
7305 S. 85th St.
Omaha, NE 68128

CALCON 4
March 10-12, 1989
CALCON IV
PO Box 204, Station M
T2P 2H6 Calgary,
Alberta
Canada

MAGNUM OPUS CON
March 17-19
Magnum Opus Con
4315 Pio Nono Ave.
Macon, GA 31206

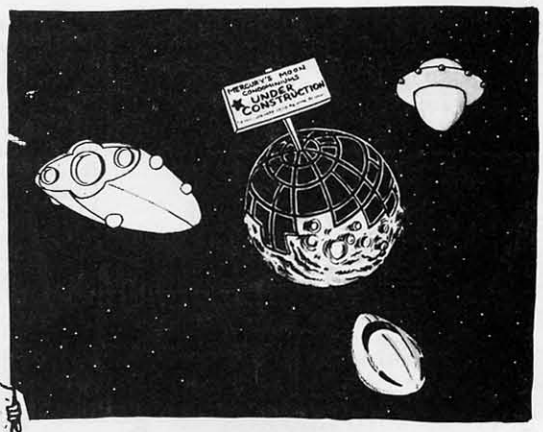
OWLCON X
March 17-19, 1989
RSFAFA
PO Box 1892
Houston, YX 77251

UMF-CON
March 25-26, 1989
Table Gaming Club
Student Center
5 South St.
Farmington, ME 04938

March Fantasy Revel
March 31-April 2, 1989
March Fantasy Revel
2432 Park Ave., Apt 6
West Bend, WI 53096
(414) 338-8498

CONNCON
April 1-2, 1989
Hobby Center
366 Main St.
Danbury, CT 06810

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By Tim Callender

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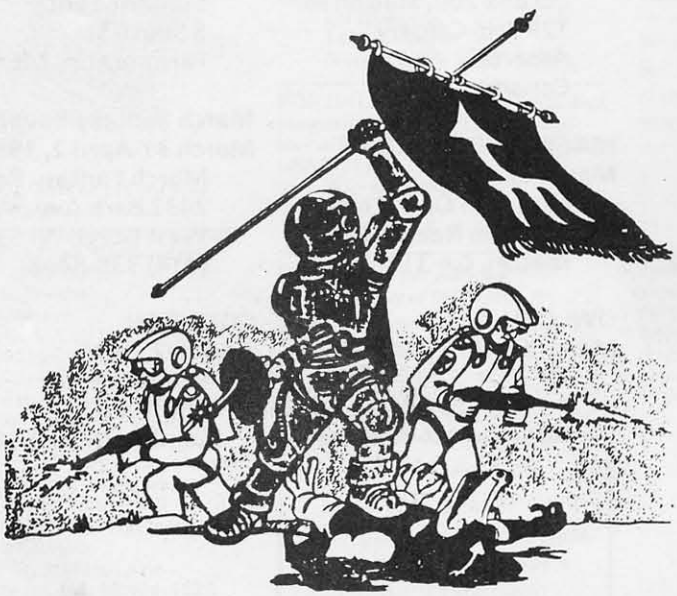
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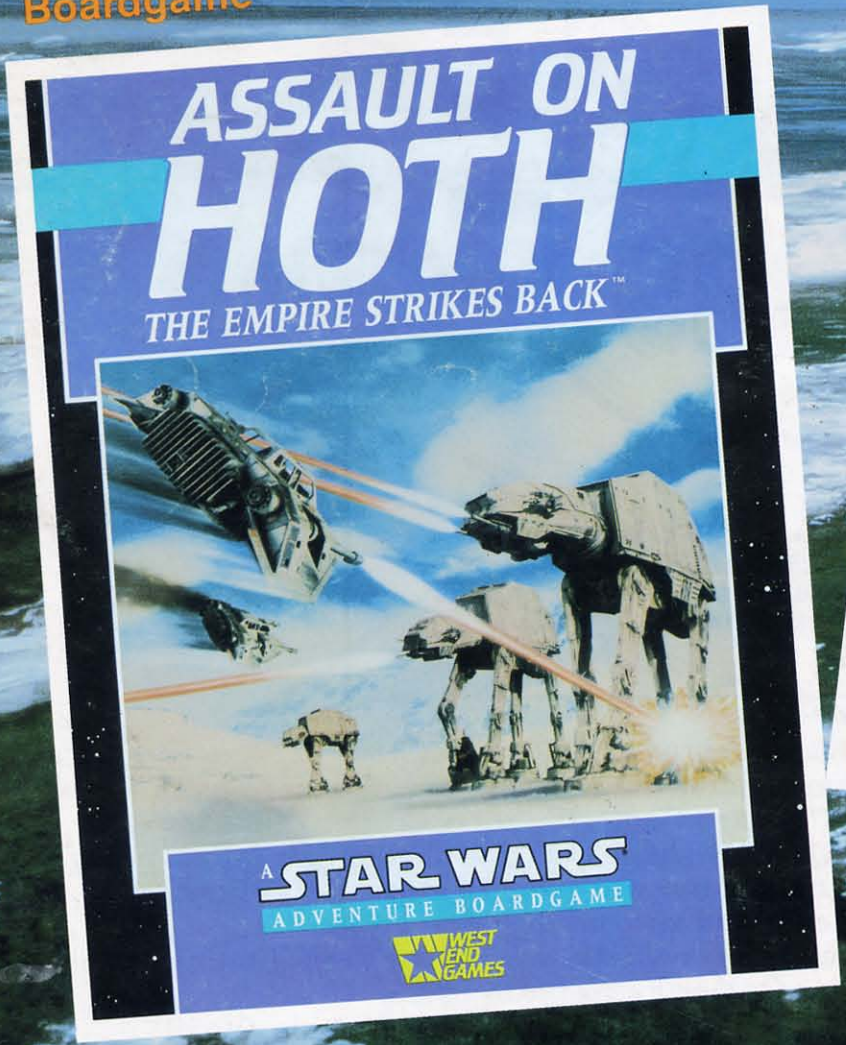
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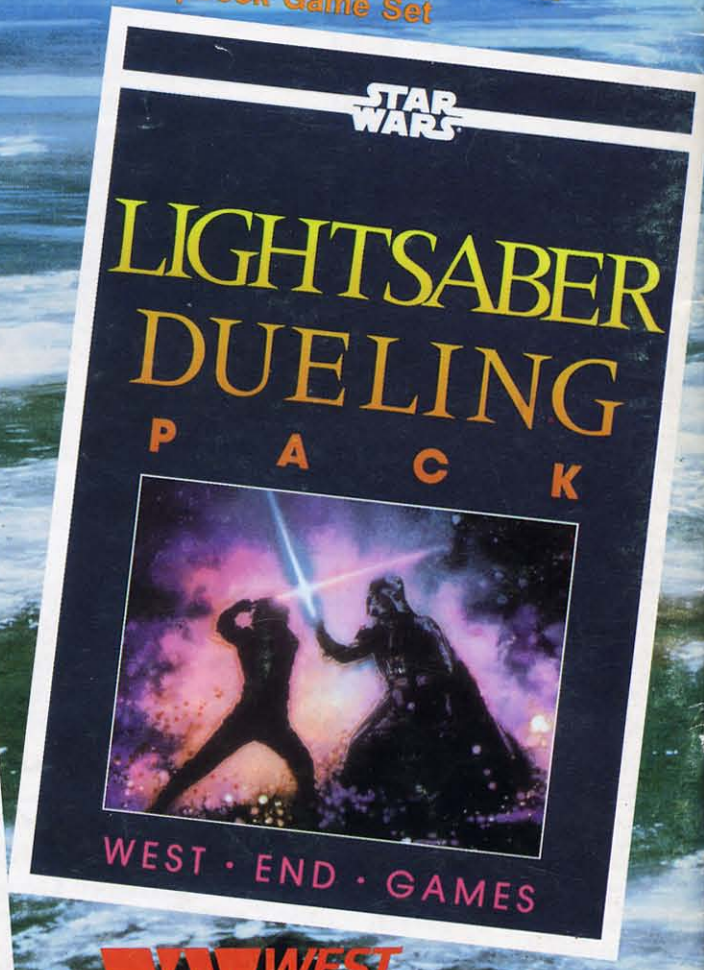
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