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1980 GAME SURVEY RESULTS

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TIME WAR

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In This Issue

Our lead story is Aaron Allston's review of TSR's new Expert D&D. On the whole, he likes it. Find out why on page 18.

This issue ought to be arriving on or about April 1. That's our only excuse for a few of the other things within these pages. It's nice to let off a little steam once in a while!

As promised, we have the survey results this time. Compiling our annual survey becomes a more massive job every year. This year we used a computer, and still almost didn't survive. Special thanks to Elisabeth Barrington, Earl Cooley and Mark Richmond for designing the program, and to Elisabeth, Dennis Loubet and Chad Irby for hours over the CRT inputting millions of numbers.

Not in this issue (sorry — we lied last time) is the "Conan's Greatest Hits" article. The PRESTAGS variant for Conan's battles doesn't yet live up to its billings.

What do you think of the gold cover? Like? Dislike? Don't care? It's another experiment — if it works, we may do it again once a year or so. Comments? —SJ

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WHERE WE'RE GOING

General status report: The next three sets of Cardboard Heroes are well along. By the time you read this, they ought to be available — see the ad elsewhere in this issue.

CAR WARS is coming along pretty well. We figured out a better way to do the armor rules. Now the big problem is squeezing everything down into the package. This is going to be the equivalent of some peoples' S6 or S7 games in a $3 ziplock.

VAMPIRE (probable title unless something strange happens) is taking a back seat at the moment. Too much else to do. Once the CAR WARS typeset draft is ready, I'll look at VAMPIRE.

***

As you probably noticed, the cover price this issue is up to $2.50, but we're back to 40 pages. Inflation forced the price increase, but we can try to make up for it by giving you more pages. (The ads in this issue, by themselves, didn't really justify a 40-pager. Oh, well.) We'll keep trying to get out 40 pages whenever we can. If you want to help, you can buy our advertisers' games ... and write to them to say you saw their ad in TSG. Advertisers go on results. From everything we can find out, TSG is a good market - but the advertisers like some specific feedback as well.

The subscription price is not going up - not right away, anyhow. So a subscription is a better deal, comparatively, than it was. Unless the economy straightens out we'll eventually have to raise subscription price as well ... but we'll hold off as long as we can, rather than contribute to the price spiral before we absolutely have to.

There have been a number of questions about our review-everything policy (one industry magazine called it a "crusade"). A few questions and answers:

Who writes your reviews? Some are written by staff members, the rest by readers. While Forrest often assigns reviews to specific people, every month we get a number of unsolicited reviews that also see print. Most "feature" reviews are by assignment, but this is not a hard-and-fast rule either.

How do you insure fairness? We can't - not 100%. If and when we let a really messed-up review get by, we'll run a counter-opinion or a correction, as necessary.

But there are several things we do to try to insure fairness. First, we will review any computer game, SF or fantasy game or supplement, SF/fantasy miniatures line we receive. It doesn't matter who published it — large or small, advertiser or non-advertiser.

Second, reviews are based on nothing but the product. In some hobbies (not necessarily just gaming), there are magazines that review everything favorably to keep potential advertisers happy. There are others that consistently puff some product lines and downgrade others. Sorry ... we don't like that, and we won't do it. Everyone will get as fair treatment as we can manage - but if "fair" means saying that a rotten game is a rotten game, that's how it is. We understand that this policy is not the optimum one for collecting big advertising bucks. That's the way it goes. We'd rather have a reputation for honesty than for always pulling punches and "getting along."

Third, every review we receive gets some kind of checking. If the company has been so kind as to send us a review copy of the game, then a staff member can check "outside" reviews against the game. Many reviews have been rejected at this stage because the reviewer clearly hadn't played the game (or had played it wrong!). If we have no copy of the game, we try to find/borrow one. If that's not possible, we tend to go on the reputation of the reviewer. With all other things equal, we prefer to deal with a reviewer

Next Issue

Our March issue will be devoted to computer gaming, with designer's notes by Lord British, creator of Akalabeth;

A featured review of Strategic Simulations' first science fiction game:

"Fantasy World," a story by Timothy Zahn;

"Computers to Go," a marketing effort of special interest to gamers;

Also, the winners of the magic contest;

And more than a few capsule reviews.
GAME MASTER

GAME MASTER exists to answer questions on your favorite games. If you have a rules question or play problem, send it in. Questions to be answered will be chosen on the basis of general interest. They will be first referred to the game publisher or designer. If no response is received, GAME MASTER will offer its own interpretation of the rule. Sorry — no individual replies are possible.

GAME MASTER also invites publishers to send errata or clarifications for their new games. They will be printed as space allows.

Raid on Iran

Great game ... but why can only one group of Americans double move each turn?
Also, since Iranians are alerted by the first normal attack, does this mean only one group of Iranians in a building, like the Chancery, can ever be surprised with a +3 bonus?

—John S. Trembley

The double-move doesn’t simulate any magical ability of one batch of commands to affect all the units in the same rank. The movement of one group of units does not affect the movement of another. It is for playability and effect — it keeps the players on their toes.

And we have even received compliments on unfavorable reviews — from publishers saying that they appreciated the comments and would change the game. Now that’s the kind of publisher our hobby needs more of.

Why should a store carry TSG when some of the reviews say “don’t buy this game”? I had this question from a big wholesaler at a convention, and it floored me. I felt like coming back with “Why should a store carry a crummy game instead of sending it back to the wholesaler?” But I didn’t — he was serious. Now it seems to me that a store would want a game magazine to carry honest reviews rather than mindless praise of everything. That way the store-owners could use the reviews to guide their buying.
I know of several retailers, and at least one wholesaler, who use TSG and other reviews just that way. But I don’t know. I’d like to get letters from retailers and wholesalers with their views on reviews.
Do you want sugar-coating, honesty, or what? And why?

—Steve Jackson

Ogre/G.E.V.

In G.E.V. standard scenarios, can you set up your immobile CP in the lake (underwater)?

—Mark Bassett

No, CPs cannot be set up (or move) on or under water. An amphibious (or wholly aquatic) CP would be an interesting option, but I’ll leave it to players to figure it out. It should be more “expensive” than any regular CP.

—SJ

Regarding George Collins’ rules for solo play (TSG 35), does the Ogre have to waste a valuable missile on a mere G.E.V. or other unit just because it’s within range? I find that by the time the Ogre is near the CP, it’s already blown its best weapons.

—Philip A. Natta

Good point. For starters, why not say that the chance the Ogre fires a missile is equal to the number of missiles it has, divided by 6? An Ogre with 6 missiles will always fire one; an Ogre with only one left will fire only on a roll of 6.

—SJ
The Double-Timing
Double-Crossing
Pick-a-Past Paradox

by Richard Kearns

It was the last noon New York City would ever see.

Lydia checked the circuits of the homemade atomic bomb one last time. It was a good job. The thing looked just like the bombs that had been found in Chicago and Los Angeles. But the police would never find this one in time.

Satisfied, she replaced the cover, set the timing mechanism, and moved back to the control panel. The entire board was lit.

New York simply would not come up with the ransom - one billion dollars in small bills, postage stamps, box tops and discount coupons. The Coalition Against Poverty - Lydia laughed when she thought about the name - would have to follow through with its threats.

She flipped the switch marked "Initial Sequence."

"Wait!"

Swearing, she whirled and grabbed for the submachine gun that lay on the work table next to the control panel. A white beam of light stabbed past her hand, fusing the weapon to the table top. She jerked her hand back and froze.

"Please try and remain calm. I am not a member of your police force, and I have no intention of preventing you from detonating your crude device."

Turning slowly, she stared at him. He was dressed in a kelly-green jump suit with a red hourglass insignia on the left hand pocket. In his right hand was a small sliver tube, half an inch in diameter and six inches long, which he pointed in her direction like a gun. He was good-looking: black hair, blue eyes, a long face, and a slender, well-muscled body.

"Who are you?" Lydia backed up against the control panel, her hands behind her, her eyes fixed on the intruder's weapon. "How did you get in here?"

"Move away from the controls, please. Slowly." He gestured with the tube. "My name is Fareek O'Houlihan. I am a Time Traveler."

Lydia moved away from the controls. Slowly. She sat down in a chair near the open doorway to the kitchen while Fareek walked over to the worktable and poked at what was left of the submachine gun. "That's really too bad," he said. "Antique weapons fascinate me. I had hoped to take this one back with me as a souvenir. But now -"

"Why are you here?" Lydia blurted out.

"Please don't be alarmed." Still aiming the tube at her, he stepped over to the control panel, studied it for a moment, turned off the switch for the initial sequence, and then shut the whole thing down. "I am here only to delay you. I have absolutely no intention of stopping you from carrying through with your intended - um - discipline." He pocketed the tube and sat down in the control chair.

"Delay me?"

"Yes. I must insist that you not detonate your device for another two and a half hours."

"Two and a half hours!"

"Yes."

"Now, all I want to do is blow up New York City. What difference does it make to you whether it's at noon or at 2:30? It's still going to be a big hole in the ground."

"Ah. That's a very good question. According to our records, Harold Finstermaker, the inventor of the time machine
and the founder of the Time Traveler Society, will leave New York City at 1:30
and the founder of the Time Traveler Society, will leave New York City at 1:30
today, alive, reaching the New Jersey state line at 2:45 in the afternoon. He
can't very well do that if you blow up New York at — he looked at his wrist-
can't very well do that if you blow up New York at — he looked at his wrist-
watch — 12:14 today, can he?"
"I can see your problem."
"I'm glad."
"But try and see it from my point of view."
"Your point of view?"
"Every minute I spend waiting to blow up New York City is another minute the
cops and the Feds have to track me down here. I can't wait around for them to
come busting through the door. Besides, I've got a reputation to maintain."
"Hm. Well, we do know that New York City was blown up today."
"That's a relief."
"Wait!" Another figure materialized by the door. It was Fareek, but with a
purple jumpsuit that had a green circle on the right-hand pocket. "Don't do it!"
"Who are you?"
"I am Fareek O'Houlihan, Time Traveler."
"You can't be Fareek O'Houlihan, Time Traveler, I am Fareek O'Houlihan, Time Traveler."
"That's impossible."
"You must be a fake."
"I'm not a fake! You're a fake!" The second Fareek drew his tube.
Lydia just stared at the both of them.
"All right," said the first Fareek, "if you are the real Fareek, then why are you here?"
"I'm here to delay the detonation of this bomb for an hour."
"An hour!"
"Yes. Our records indicate that the radiation from the explosion which is
supposed to blow up New York City today actually caused a mutation in the
genes of Harold Finstemaker while he was driving out of town. This mutation
produced his genius son Harvey, who later invented the time machine and
founded the Time Traveler Society."
"That's silly."
"It is not."
"I bet you're from the other side and you're only trying to sabotage history
and assassinate our founder so you can have the galaxy all to yourself."
"I am not from the other side. You're from the other side, you're trying to
prevent a mutant Harvey!"
"Wait!"
The three of them watched another Fareek O'Houlihan materialize at the
door, this time dressed in jeans and a red flannel shirt.

"Who are you?"
"Yeah!"
"I am Fareek O'Houlihan, Time Traveler. I've come to save the world."
"You can't be Fareek O'Houlihan. We are."
"At least I am. He's not."
"Liar!"
Lydia blew the rape whistle she wore on a chain around her neck. Fareek, Fareek,
and Fareek shut up. "I know a way to solve this."
"Good."
"Great."
"What is it?"
"Who won the World Series of 2027?"
"The Cubs."
"The Mets."
"There was no World Series in 2027."
"Oh my. That didn't work at all."
"Hey — how could the Mets win? Didn't they get blown up with New York?"
"Yeah!"
"They moved to Cleveland."
"Wait!"
"Wait!"
This time two Fareeks showed up. One was dressed in a three piece grey satin
suit, with a purple ruffled shirt and two Russian Wolfhounds on leashes. The
other was stark naked.
"I'm Fareek O'Houlihan, Time Traveler, and —"
"Wait a second. I'm Fareek O'Houlihan, Time Traveler."
"Aren't you a little overdressed for the part?"
"You're not so bad looking yourself, sweetheart."
"Hey, you guys can't be Fareek O'Houlihan. I'm Fareek. You're all impostors."
"No! I'm Fareek!"
"When did the Mets move to Cleveland?"
"Three years from now."
"Oh."
"Wait!"
"Harvey Finstemaker was an ass!"
"No! It was really his father, Shirley, who was responsible for founding the
Time Traveler Society."
"Harvey never had a sister!"
"But if we don't blow up New York in the next half hour, Harold Finstemaker
will call and interrupt his ex-wife and her husband, Sol, who will die of a heart
attack and they'll never conceive Herbie Schumaker, founder of the Time Traveler
Society and inventor of the time mach-
TSG BACK ISSUES

Did you miss an article you wanted to read? Some back issues of TSG are still available:

No. 15. Wizard and Olympic designer intros; Robotics in Traveller; Floating Hulks; Ogre Update; Ores and their Weapons; computer gaming.
No. 16. WarpWar article; Classics Simulated in Melee; Alpha Omega; Demons! (Moties in Melee); 1977 game survey results — and a LOT of reviews.
No. 17. GEV designer's intro; strategy for Chitin; I; variants for Imperium; Melee, and a combination Ogre/Rivets variant; WarpWar Fiction.
No. 18. IceWar designer's intro; variant scenarios for Invasion: America and War of the Ring; additional equipment for Traveller; mounted Melees; "Referee, Declare Thyself!" (role-playing GM technique).
No. 19. POND WAR; variant units and scenarios for GEV; combining Imperium and WarpWar; Battlegoat Mars variant; reviews of Swords & Sorcery, Runequest, and Raumkrieg; MicroGame design article.
No. 20. Olympia tactics; PsiOnics in Traveller; TARTARS & MARTYRS; Reality in Melee; designer's optional rules for Ice War; designer's article on Starships & Spacemen; "Rip-Off Blues" (wargaming frauds).
No. 21. Interview with Dave Arnessen; running a MicroGame tournament; tactics for Ogre and GEV; spaceship miniatures; Black Hole variant rules, putting the Desyni into Melee; more reviews.
No. 22. Ice War tactics; Black Hole physics; PARTY BRAWL; 1978 SF/fantasy game survey results; Fantasy Trip short story.
No. 23. Invasion of the Air Eaters designer's article; Ogre meets Ice War; Sticks & Stones expansion; Vikings and Valke in The Fantasy Trip.
No. 25. Stellar Conquest issue . . . designer's article, tournament tactics, and variant scenarios. Also — strategy in Rivets; benefit-cost analysis for Ice War; "Everyday Life in The Fantasy Trip."
No. 26. OneWorld designer's intro; tactics in GEV; variations on Wizard; computers in wargaming: Life-sized Melees, and a variant that puts human forces into Rivets.
No. 27. Hot Spot's designer's intro; Time Travel: Nuke the Air Eaters (gaming atomic war); Weapons for Hobbits in TTF; Muskenets in TTF; Game Design Part I; 5 pages of game reviews.
No. 28. 1979 Game Survey results; Overmen in TTF; A Guide to SF/Fantasy Game Publishers; Task Force Games report; Writers' and Artists' guides; 7 pages of reviews; Game Design Part 2; Deus Ex Machina.
No. 29. Fantasy Trip designer's intro; Painting Fantasy Miniatures; Fantasy and SF game magazines surveyed; Game Design Part 3; more Deus Ex Machina; 7 pages of reviews.
No. 30. KUNGFU 2100; Painting Fantasy Miniatures Part II; Index to Game Articles; Game Design Part IV; Programmable Calculators; 10 pages of reviews.
No. 31. "Sam Beovulf" 1980 Game Software survey; Game Design Part 5; Random Number Generators; 9 pages of reviews.
No. 32. Traveller issue . . . Alternate Character Types, reviews of play aids, scenarios, and variants; also Game Design Part 6; Deus Ex Machina; "Minus Two Reaction", software survey update; Yaqunto Games report; 9 pages of reviews.
No. 33. Play-by-mail issue . . . Feature reviews of four PEM games, a Warp War Campaign, Survey of PEM companies; also, Contest Report; Company Report from Schibel and Son; "End Game" GEV scenario; Game Design Part 7; Deus Ex Machina; The Good Guys, Part I; and 10 pages of reviews.
No. 34. Miniatures issue . . . Cardboard Heroes Designer's Notes, LOTR Miniatures, Painting Fantasy Miniatures Advanced Techniques, Survey of miniatures manufacturers; also "The Challenge," Artifact Designer's Notes and Expansion Rules; 3-D Displays II; Game Design Part 8; Wish Contest winner; and 8 pages of reviews.
No. 35. The 1980 Game Survey; Solid Ideas Ogre; Notes for Novice DMs; The War of the Worlds featured; Insane Variants on Stomp!; Character Contest results; More Psionics for Traveller; Game Design Part IX; Deus Ex Machina; and 9 pages of reviews.
No. 36. Computing damage in Star Fleet Battles; The Fire Web; Artifact for Traveller; a Featured Review of Akalabeth; Eon Products Company Report; The Ten Deadly Sins of Computer Game Programming; Computer Graphics contest winner; and 8 pages of reviews.
No. 37. Gaming the Alien; Hyborian Risk; Improved Mission Resolution for Freedom in the Galaxy; Troubles in Vaulia; Cosmic Encounter Review; FGU Company Report; Winners of the Weapons Contest; Ten Deadly Sins Part II; and 6 pages of reviews.

Send $2.00 per copy, plus 50 cents per copy for postage and handling, to TSG, Box 18805, Austin, TX 78760.

If you are a TSG subscriber, you can get discounts on back issues. Use the order form on the mailing cover of your subscription copy.

The driver chuckled and moved out into traffic. "Did Fareek number seven show up with his Borzoi?"
"I'm not sure — how do you tell them apart?"
"It's easier when you've visited their worlds, I have to admit. Fareek number seven's timeline worships Borzoi in much the same way that your ancient Egypt worshipped cats."
"Oh, Well, there was one Fareek with a couple of Russian Wolfhounds. Does that count?"
"I think we're going to be in trouble," said the man in the back seat.
"Yeah?" Lydia peered at the pocket calculator he held in his hand. "Why?"
"We were only expecting seven Fareeks. If I run through the calculations with eight instead of seven, I find that they will reach 112 half an hour earlier. That means chronologic critical mass will be achieved before we get a chance to get far enough away. We might not survive their explosion."

Lydia looked back at the driver. "Is that true?"
"No. The calculations have to be based on the number of Fareeks actually inside the apartment during the first half hour. We have to take into account a restricted area when calculating critical mass."
"Oh."
"I hope you're right," said the man in the back seat. "I am."

It was a tense trip out of town. Until they reached Plainsfield. There, they pulled into the first burger joint they spotted, bought a mess of fish sandwiches and fries, and headed back to the edge of town. They cheered and toasted Queens with paper cups full of Coca-Cola when it finally went. The brief fireball bathed the trio in a bright violet glare.

Harold Finstermaker muttered beautifully.

So did his wife Lydia.
After it was over they stood, arm in arm, admiring their descendant.
"We could never have done it without you, Fareek," said Lydia.
"I feel ashamed that I ever doubted you," said Harold.
Fareek O'Houlhan, Alternate World Traveler, blushed. "Aw, it was nothing." "Promise us that you'll come to visit." "Or at least call." "Sure, I promise..."

They kept their farewells short. It was too glorious a moment to be dimmed with tears.

The cosmos was safe for Alternatocracy.
FEATURED REVIEW:
TIME WAR
by
Forrest Johnson

Yeaquinio is the publisher of TIME WAR, a good game that might have been great.
The subject is almost unique. Each of 2 to 4 players controls an autocratic
government, ruthlesslv trying to alter
history for its own benefit. “History” is
represented by a colorful game map.
There are concentric circles to divide the
various epochs, and radial lines (“time
flow lines”) to indicate alternate courses of
history. There is always one “time
flow arrow” counter in each epoch to
mark the ever-changing direction if his-
tory.

Briefly put, the object of the game is
to line up the arrows on your home time
line, thereby insuring the triumph of your
autocracy. You draw mission cards
(e.g., “Sigmund Freud must not be potty
tained until the age of three.”), and send
agents back to the appropriate epoch.
If nothing goes wrong, your agents will
alter the flow of time, moving the time
flow arrows in the desired direction.

But almost anything can go wrong.
Time projectors vary in efficiency, but
even the best will occasionally leave an
agent stranded in a strange era. The
agents also vary in ability. A bad roll will
send history lurching off in an unwished
direction.

All missions are plotted in advance.
All changes are cumulative. A change in
the distant past will affect all subsequent
epochs. History can get a bad case of
whiplash, if two or three players happen
to be pushing it in the same direction.

By the middle of the game, arrows are
scattered all over the board, and players
are groaning as their efforts cancel each
other, or work unwittingly to someone
else’s advantage.

Supporting the main action, there are
a lot of intriguing little subgames. For
example, when competing agents land in
the same era, they shoot it out. Things
can get exciting when two big expeditions
run into each other. Towards the end of
the game, play becomes cutthroat. Play-
ers assign guards to protect their temporal
turf, and send “seek & destroy” missions
to seize other time lines.

Meanwhile, the home front is always
busy. There is a flowchart routine for
training agents, with quantity vs. trade-
offs. Optional rules allow for budgeting,
research and improved technology.

Like I said, TIME WAR could have
been a great game. Maybe it was... or
will be. If I could only get a hold of a
projector...

Mission – 1979. Convince Steve Peek
his company should establish a reputa-
tion for quality. Teach him about
blindtesting. Show him how to write
game rules more lucid than a trigonom-
etry text.

Mission – 1980. The second printing
of TIME WAR must include some im-
provements besides a prettier box. Sure,
it’s the package that sells, but the con-
tents are what draw repeated business.
At least straighten out the obvious in-
consistencies in the rules. Also, make
sure the game includes some decent
screens. (The present ones would hide
nothing from an average-sized mole.)

Also, take advantage of the talent avail-
able in this period to rewrite the rules for
the next edition. That will take a little
time away from work on new releases,
but it will give your customers the (not
altogether ill-founded) notion that you
give a damn about them. Gamers aren’t
dumb. If you care about them, they’ll
care about you.

(Hey! We don’t need a projector for
that last mission!)
# 1980 Game Survey Results

E. Barrington & D. Loubet

The 1980 Game Survey appeared in the January issue (35) of TSG. 218 replies were received. Readers were asked to rate the publishers, magazines, and games on a scale of 1-9, with 9 being the highest. If they had never heard of a game, they were asked to give the game (or whatever) an X. The percentage following the rating is the number of respondents rating the game or whatever. The percentage following the rating is the number of respondents who never heard of it.

## Publishers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California Pacific Computer Co.</td>
<td>83 (54.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Five Software</td>
<td>80 (51.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Designers' Workshop</td>
<td>76 (51.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated Simulations</td>
<td>75 (52.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powersoft, Inc.</td>
<td>75 (44.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Simulations, Inc.</td>
<td>74 (39.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Jackson Games</td>
<td>73 (41.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metagaming</td>
<td>72 (41.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.</td>
<td>72 (8.3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games Workshop</td>
<td>72 (39.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gameworks, Ltd.</td>
<td>70 (44.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Gamers Association</td>
<td>70 (39.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muse Software</td>
<td>70 (44.0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Software Factory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gameshop</td>
<td>69 (45.9%)</td>
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<td>Midkemia Press</td>
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<td>Task Force Games</td>
<td>69 (4.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yatzino Publishing, Inc.</td>
<td>69 (2.8%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clemens &amp; Associates</td>
<td>68 (46.8%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detroit Gaming Center</td>
<td>68 (46.3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avalon Hill</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baron Publishing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fantasy Games Unlimited</td>
<td>66 (13.8%)</td>
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<td>Chasnot</td>
<td>65 (5.5%)</td>
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<td>Judges Guild</td>
<td>65 (3.2%)</td>
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<td>Simulation Software</td>
<td>65 (38.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Gamenmaster</td>
<td>65 (39.0%)</td>
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<td>Simulations Canada</td>
<td>65 (29.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulations Publications, Inc.</td>
<td>64 (5.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Software Exchange</td>
<td>64 (36.2%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discovery Games</td>
<td>63 (27.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programma International, Inc.</td>
<td>63 (45.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSR Hobbies</td>
<td>62 (8.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant Software</td>
<td>61 (39.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superior Models</td>
<td>61 (28.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econ Products</td>
<td>60 (15.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Buffalo, Inc.</td>
<td>60 (51.8%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>McAllister &amp; Trampier</td>
<td>60 (52.8%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Software</td>
<td>60 (40.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synergistic Solar, Inc.</td>
<td>60 (52.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Computing Software</td>
<td>59 (26.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Wargames Workshop</td>
<td>59 (34.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Milliken Co.</td>
<td>58 (45.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontrollable Dungeon Master</td>
<td>58 (53.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zocchi Distributors</td>
<td>58 (2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rainbow Computing, Inc.</td>
<td>58 (46.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De Jager &amp; Co.</td>
<td>57 (32.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group One</td>
<td>57 (38.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyr GameWorks</td>
<td>57 (47.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage USA, Inc.</td>
<td>56 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix Games</td>
<td>56 (21.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schubel &amp; Son</td>
<td>55 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratagems</td>
<td>55 (45.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron Crown Enterprises</td>
<td>54 (41.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinity Co.</td>
<td>54 (44.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Space Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dark Stars</td>
<td>80 (3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingress</td>
<td>75 (4.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stellar Conquest</td>
<td>74 (3.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Fleet Battles</td>
<td>72 (2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starfire</td>
<td>69 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godbfie</td>
<td>66 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow Stars</td>
<td>66 (14.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trionig</td>
<td>65 (35.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>63 (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark Nebula</td>
<td>63 (6.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warp War</td>
<td>63 (2.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starforce</td>
<td>59 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double Star</td>
<td>58 (8.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battleship</td>
<td>57 (3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach</td>
<td>56 (8.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Empire</td>
<td>53 (25.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebula 19</td>
<td>48 (26.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starfall</td>
<td>45 (11.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vector 3</td>
<td>40 (5.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Killer</td>
<td>34 (6.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SF Tactical Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G.E.V.</td>
<td>78 (9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ogre</td>
<td>77 (1.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashtar Command</td>
<td>76 (6.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asteroid</td>
<td>71 (7.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>66 (5.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Awful Green Things From Outer Space</td>
<td>65 (3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Creature That Ate Sheboygan</td>
<td>65 (5.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starship Troopers</td>
<td>65 (4.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intruder</td>
<td>64 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice War</td>
<td>63 (2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine</td>
<td>63 (7.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Warrior</td>
<td>63 (34.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kung Fu 2010</td>
<td>62 (14.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robotech</td>
<td>62 (12.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension Dimensions</td>
<td>61 (41.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Spot</td>
<td>61 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Tripper</td>
<td>59 (10.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Soldier</td>
<td>56 (8.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wreck of the BSF Pandora</td>
<td>52 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifact</td>
<td>51 (5.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War in the Ice</td>
<td>49 (10.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Titan Strike</td>
<td>48 (9.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SF Strategic Games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Game</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bloodtree Rebellion</td>
<td>70 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom in the Galaxy</td>
<td>61 (10.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invasion of the Air Eaters</td>
<td>60 (4.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The War of the Worlds</td>
<td>52 (7.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Fantasy Role-Playing Supplements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supplement</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cults of Prax</td>
<td>77 (17.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Test II</td>
<td>77 (5.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cities</td>
<td>76 (32.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Test</td>
<td>74 (34.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grail Quest</td>
<td>74 (11.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swords &amp; Sorcerers</td>
<td>74 (20.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Carse</td>
<td>73 (32.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Test</td>
<td>73 (4.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolkien's Lair</td>
<td>71 (6.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharaoh</td>
<td>70 (41.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saurians</td>
<td>70 (23.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C&amp;S Sourcebook</td>
<td>69 (18.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arena of Khazan</td>
<td>68 (22.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle of Ice</td>
<td>68 (28.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duck Tower</td>
<td>68 (17.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Toughest Dungeon in the World</td>
<td>65 (18.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book of Treasure Maps</td>
<td>63 (18.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Terrors</td>
<td>63 (24.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City State of the World Emperor</td>
<td>63 (16.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure of the Silver Dragon</td>
<td>63 (8.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape from Asgard's Lair</td>
<td>61 (27.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellspits of Nightingale</td>
<td>61 (20.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Arden ........................................ 5.8 (33.0%)  
Gateway Bastardy .............................. 5.7 (25.7%)  
World of Greyhawk .......................... 5.7 (11.9%)  
Broken Tree Inn ............................... 5.6 (18.8%)  
Queen of the Demonweb Pits ................ 5.6 (18.3%)  
Wutherland of High Fantasy .................. 5.6 (22.5%)  
Plunder ........................................ 5.4 (34.4%)  
Skinwalkers & Shapechangers .................. 5.4 (32.1%)  
All the Worlds Monsters ....................... 5.3 (13.3%)  
Sword of Hope ................................ 5.3 (27.5%)  
Wizard's Aide ................................ 5.3 (34.4%)  
Abys ............................................ 5.2 (30.7%)  
Completist Fantast ......................... 5.0 (26.1%)  
Fortress Ellendar ............................. 5.0 (28.0%)  
Goblin Lake ................................... 5.0 (17.9%)  
Mines of Keradon ............................... 5.0 (31.2%)  
Slave Pits of the Undercity ................. 4.7 (26.6%)  
Moonguard .................................... 4.0 (28.4%)  
Nine Doctrines of Darkness .................... 4.0 (32.6%)  
Manual of Aurania ............................. 2.5 (39.0%)  

**SPACE MINIATURES**

Starfleet Wars ................................ 6.6 (21.1%)  
Star Fleet Battle Manual ...................... 6.0 (9.6%)  
Sigma Omega .................................. 5.9 (28.4%)  
Alien Space .................................. 5.9 (16.0%)  

**SF TACTICAL MINIATURES**

Strike Team Alpha ............................ 6.3 (11.5%)  
Space Marines ................................ 6.2 (15.3%)  
Star Company .................................. 5.9 (24.8%)  
MAATAC ........................................ 5.3 (22.5%)  
Final Frontier ................................ 5.0 (18.8%)  
Galactic Grenadiers ............................ 4.6 (14.2%)  
Laser Tank ...................................... 4.5 (21.5%)  

**FANTASY MINIATURES**

Emerald Tablet ................................ 7.0 (27.5%)  
Witches Cauldron ............................. 6.5 (18.3%)  
Knights & Magic ............................... 6.0 (22.0%)  
Caverns Deep .................................. 5.9 (15.1%)  
Crypt of the Sorcerer ......................... 4.6 (24.3%)  
Chaining ....................................... 4.4 (14.2%)  
Swords & Spells ................................ 4.3 (19.3%)  

**COMPUTER WARGAMES**

Computer Ambush ............................. 7.1 (25.7%)  
Computer Bismarck ............................ 6.7 (13.9%)  
Global War ..................................... 6.0 (29.4%)  
Winged Samurai ............................... 5.5 (33.9%)  
Ants ........................................... 5.0 (40.4%)  
North American Convoy Raider .............. 4.3 (17.4%)  

**PBM GAMES**

Universe II .................................... 7.2 (27.1%)  
Pellic Quest .................................... 6.3 (19.3%)  
Wofan .......................................... 6.3 (34.9%)  
StarWeb ........................................ 6.2 (7.8%)  
The Amastean Quest ......................... 6.0 (12.4%)  
Star Cluster Omega ......................... 6.0 (28.4%)  
Warp Force One ................................ 5.7 (19.7%)  
Nuclear Destruction ........................... 5.5 (19.3%)  
Battle Plan .................................... 5.1 (30.3%)  
Star Master ................................... 5.1 (17.9%)  
Galaxy II ....................................... 5.0 (22.0%)  
The Tribes of Crane ........................... 5.0 (11.0%)  
Empyrean Challenge ......................... 4.7 (16.0%)  
Arena Combat .................................. 3.8 (31.6%)  
Lords of Valetta .............................. 1.8 (16.5%)  

**CARD GAMES**

Nuclear War .................................... 6.9 (16.1%)  
Squirm ........................................ 4.4 (26.6%)  
O.K. Corral .................................... 4.3 (33.0%)  

**SPACE GAMER READER QUESTIONS**

The second part of the survey dealt with what our readers wanted to see in TSG, and how they liked or disliked the various contents.

**CONTENTS**

Rated on a 1-9 scale. Readers were asked to rate "the following KINDS OF MATERIAL as content for TSG."

- Capsules ................................... .8.0
- Game reviews in general ................... .7.8
- Annual Game Survey ....................... .7.8
- Featured reviews ........................... .7.0
- News & Plugs ................................ .6.7
- Game variant articles ..................... .6.7
- Artwork ...................................... .6.6
- News about gaming companies ............. .6.6
- Complete game adventures/scenarios ....... .6.5
- Strategy hints for specific games ........ .6.5
- Letters to the editor ...................... .6.5
- Designer's articles ....................... .6.4
- Advertising .................................. .6.4
- News about tournaments ................... .6.3
- Contests ..................................... .6.3
- Cartoons ..................................... .6.2
- Color artwork ................................ .6.1
- Editorials .................................... .6.1
- Complete game some issues ................ .5.8
- Gamematified fiction ...................... .5.8
- Continuing comic strips ................. .5.7
- Humorous articles ........................... .5.6
- Science fiction .............................. .5.4
- Articles on how to design games .......... .5.4
- Science fiction articles & SFL gaming ....... .5.4
- Monsters for role-playing games .......... .5.4
- Articles on computer gaming .............. .5.4
- Convention news ............................ .5.4

Program listings ................................ 5.2
Historical fact articles specifically related to FRP gaming .................. 5.2
Review of gaming figures ................... 5.1
Interviews with designers and publishers .... 5.0
Convention reports ......................... 4.8
Accounts of actual game sessions .......... 4.6
Miniatures gaming ............................ 4.6
Articles on miniature games ................. 4.5
Articles on wargames other than SFL & F ... 3.9
Science fact articles in general ............ 3.8
SF movie reviews ............................ 3.6
Fantasy movie reviews ...................... 3.6
Upcoming SF & F book news ................. 3.5
Historical fact articles on specific battles ..... 3.4
SF book reviews ................................ 3.4
Fantasy book reviews ....................... 3.4
SF fandom coverage ......................... 3.1
Articles on boardgames ...................... 3.1
Military history book reviews .......... 2.4

**LIKES AND DISLIKES**

Readers were asked to fill in their own "most want to see" and "most do not want to see" types of material. Responses were varied. The "most want to see" answers saw a large number of "more variants and/or strategic articles." Readers also wanted hints on playing specific games, and many said merely "I like TSG the way it is. Keep it up." The "most not want to see" answers were more varied. A lot of people said merely, "anything not SF or fantasy." Some came up with "Computer stuff - I don't have a computer." Also, bad art, bad fiction, "bad" anything, apparently. The stress seemed to be on the quality of material we publish.

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

84.7% of the respondents subscribe to TSG. On the average, these readers have subscribed for 2.4 years each.

Average age: 27
Average income: $17,000. (Many make more, but some are students with little or no income.)

Average number of readers per copy: 3.1.
Years of formal education: 0-8: 12%; 9-12: 16%; 13-14: 42%; 15-16: 15%; 17+: 15%.
54.4% of our readers are predominantly students.
27.9% own a home computer.
51.7% more have access to a computer.

**SUBJECTS OF INTEREST**

Readers were asked to check the subjects that interested them. The percentage is the number of respondents who checked that area.

- SF games .................................. 57.3%
- Role-playing games ...................... 55.0%
- Fantasy .................................... 51.2%
- Computer games ........................... 34.4%
- Historical games ......................... 33.9%
- Contemporary wargames ................. 23.9%
- Historical simulations ................... 28.7%
- Contemporary simulations ............... 24.8%
- Plastic gaming ............................. 24.3%
- Miniatures gaming ....................... 24.3%
- Plastic model building .................... 17.4%
- Miniature dioramas ....................... 10.6%

For those who wonder why we don't have a monthly survey... surveys are a pain. They are to man-hours as the proverbial gopher hole is to water. We missed our deadline this issue in large
part because the editor, publisher, typesetter, and even art director spent about a week fiddling with survey forms.

Evidently, a lot of you agree that surveys are a pain. Only 218 of you responded, which is something like 1% of our readership, and a decrease of 178 from last year. Apparently the number of responses is inversely proportional to the length of the survey.

It was a long survey, 50% longer than last year. The number of game categories increased from 12 to 19. The number of game companies shot up from 27 to 82.

For all that, it was not a complete survey. We had to be representative rather than complete — otherwise, issue 35 would have been our “Special Survey Issue.” Our apologies to the gamers (and publishers) whose feelings were hurt by the omissions.

Well, few people like to fill out surveys, but a lot of people like to read them. (The survey itself ranked 78.) Those who returned their forms were supposed to rate the games on a scale of 1 to 9, with 9 being the highest. An “X” indicated that person had never heard of that particular game — “X”s have been tabulated as a percentage following each rating. (Bear in mind, a 40% “not known” response does not necessarily mean “known to 60%” — some people were a little slow to use “X”s.)

There are no perfect “9”s here, and no “1”s — we struck them on the grounds of an insufficient sampling. There are a suspicious number of whole-number ratings left, perhaps more than chance alone would produce. Is Dark Stars really the hottest space game on the market? (Don’t ask us; we’re still looking for a reviewer.)

Also, there were a lot of let’s-rate-us responses. The highest-ranking company was something called Daystar West Media Productions. It isn’t listed because we’re not sure it exists; it doesn’t answer mail sent to its supposed address. On the other hand, there were a number of let’s-get-these-guys-ratings — enough to pull down the averages on some pretty credible companies.

Some of you may be puzzled by the number of high ratings. Most games got at least a “5.” The reason is that many of the least popular games didn’t make the survey in the first place.

It is also a little surprising that five of the top-ranked companies specialize in software. This may reflect the increasing popularity of computer games. (About three-fourths of you now have a computer or access to one.) On the other hand, it may be that only enthusiastic computer buffs rated those companies at all.

The “one” that is not a computer company is GDW. While one can get paranoid visions of GDW staffers sitting around late at night, filling out dozens of survey forms, it is easier to believe GDW came out on top because of genuine merit. Certainly its games are highly rated.

Lastly, in reading this survey, you should remember this is a survey of TSG readers and, for the most part, subscribers. It is not at all surprising that TSG finished first in the magazine category. A survey, say, of Ares readers would have had a different result. That doesn’t mean that our ratings, in general, are much different; in most cases they parallel those published in Ares. TSG readers apparently tend to rate Metagaming products a bit higher, and SPI products a point or so lower. But when you compare the ratings for, say, GDW’s Imperium or TFG’s Star Fleet Battles, you find a great similarity between the results of this survey and those run in SPI’s magazines.

COMMENTS

For every comment it seemed there was a counter-comment. Some examples:

The Survey

“I am surprised at the jump in the number of games, companies, etc.”

“This one was too long and tough. Next one should be 2 pages max.”

“Next time, put more games on the list, or let us put down our own.”

The Magazine

“The overall level of material in The Space Gamer has improved since the change in ownership. I hope this improvement continues.”

“You magazine has gone downhill since MCG gave it up.”

“I think ever since Steve Jackson took over TSG, there have been nothing but improvements in the magazine, customer relations, and graphics. You’re doing a great job and keep up the good work.”

“TSG was much more informative and friendly back in the ‘old days’ (issues 1-25).”

“I feel that the subscription rate is too high. (This was a common point, usually accompanied by comparisons with bimonthly or quarterly publications.)

Reviews

“Keep up the great capsule reviews, but how about increasing the number of featured reviews.”

“Not so many capsule or featured reviews in TSG. Even low quality articles are better than reviews.”

Contests

“The traps contest was great, as are most of your contests.”

“The Space Gamer contests are getting pretty bad.”

Computer Gaming

“Would rather see less on computer gaming.”

“I especially like Deus Ex Machina.”

“Please, less computer articles in TSG. They are fine for those who have access to computers but such articles are completely worthless to the rest of us.”

“Even though I don’t have access to a computer, I need your reviews to help decide what to buy and where to get software when I’m ready to get one. Creative Computing stinks in this department; you are the real leaders here.”

Miniatures

“You really shouldn’t get into reviewing miniatures. Different Worlds does a great job of that already.”

“The Different Worlds practice of detailed reviews of 25mm figures is excellent and an idea you should copy if you want to make me more happy with The Space Gamer.”

Conclusions

Other than the greatly increased popularity of computer games, the market looks like last year’s. Fantasy and sf are still popular, and little games are more desired than big ones. The top-rated games in each category score better than the category itself does, suggesting that quality of a specific design is more important than the general type of games. An individual company may have some high-rated games and some low-rated games — though in general the rating of a company correlates with the average rating of its games... suggesting strongly that company name, as a rule, is not an indicator of design quality. (An exception here is GDW, which had, almost exclusively, winners.)

Reviews got the highest ratings. We’ll try to run a few more featured reviews, and to make sure capsule reviews get as much information as possible into a limited space.

Fiction: Some like it, some don’t. Our best compromise seems to be VERY strict adherence to the “keep-it-game-related” rule, even if the story is otherwise good. I (SJ) have misgivings about the fiction in this issue, for instance. It’s an excellent story, and relates to the Time War review, but I wish we had a game scenario for it.

News: Everybody wants more. There were several specific requests for news of Metagaming. We print everything we get from them, as it is... but that’s limited to new releases and an occasional “upcoming.”

Things NOBODY wants include historical material, SF book reviews and movie fandom, et cetera. Obediently, we shall continue to leave this out.
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The Complaints Department

WARNING: The following material is fiction. Any resemblance between any character and any person, living or dead, is purely coincidental. Those who take this material seriously do so at their own risk.

It may surprise our readers to learn that The Space Gamer is prepared in an abandoned defense complex deep within one of the limestone cliffs of Austin. I am rather new to the Organization, as it is sometimes called, so my security rating is only "Confidential," and I have never known what to make of the people in black uniforms I sometimes see in the corridors, playing with blackjacks and electric cattle prods. Someone told me that they work for the Complaints Department.

All I know is, one day I was carrying some old mailing lists to the shredder and I found it gummed up with a file which was not completely shredded. I believe the contents speak for themselves. And I believe the world should know how TSG really operates. Even now, as I feed this introduction into the terminal, I may hear a knock and... What? Wait! AAH!

Got him!

Is he dead?

No, but he won't wake for hours, and he won't remember a thing.

Where's the file?

Damn! It's already set. Stop the press!

Can't. It would take too long to get authorization... Why not blow up the printing plant? We could blame it on a competitor.

Too risky! Look, the terminal mike's still on. Damn.

Hold it. I got it... We'll just put a little note in at the beginning... .

To: Merton Crock
President
Gougem Games

You certainly have reason to be unhappy about our review of BananaQuest, your latest release. It is quite probable that the "libelous" statements will hurt your sales. After all, few people would want to buy a game that has "unintelligible rules," and "no play balance," and "gets worse every time I play it."

Also, we realize how irked you are by the advice of Gougem Games. You should find a new Xerox copier for its map sheets.

However, we had good reason to print these statements. The reviewer did not like your game. Neither, for your information, did any of the other six people who tried it at our playtest session.

Regarding the "error of fact" you refer to, we will of course inform our readers that BananaQuest includes 98%, not 100, counters. Sorry, our mistake. (Actually, we feel the cute number of counters is the nicest feature of the game.)

TSG
Complaints Dept.

To: Jimmy Ruscone
Ex-subscriber

Okay, punk. They sent you the card with the picture of one of our hit jobs, and they sent you the card with the picture of a collection agent, but you never sent them a check. So they turned the case over to us.

We'll make it short. You resubscribe within 48 hours, or you'll find a catastrophe in your mailbox. What's a catastrophe? Wait 48 hours and you'll find out, but we don't think you'll be telling anyone else... .

TSG
Complaints Dept.

To: Merton Crock
President
Gougem Games

Regarding the recent letter concerning your advertising account:

1. No, we don't think you deserve the 15% agency discount just because you created the Gougem Agency in order to obtain such discounts.
2. We are not surprised to learn that the response to your latest ad has not been very good. A typewritten ad with the lines pasted together crooked is not likely to get the much response in the best of circumstances. If you dealt with a real agency, you would not have these problems.

To: Vlad Viapiitusi
Acrimony Games

In response to your inquiry, no, we do not trade advertising for sweet reviews. When you send us a game for review, you are taking your chances. If you get a bad review, you can: (1) cancel your advertising, (2) send us a nasty letter, or (3) hold your breath until you turn blue. The above methods would all prove equally effective. The only way we have found for a company to guarantee itself consistently good reviews is to publish consistently good games. It's surprising how few people think of this.

No, we would not be interested in an expose of your former employer, Mr. Merton Crock.

According to our Billings & Assinations Department, you are now three months behind in your accounts. This fact might lead a reasonable person to believe you are insolvent and preparing to file for bankruptcy. While we hope it is not the case, another month arrear might convince us, in which case we would not fail to alert the public.

TSG Complaints Dept.

To: Fred Lamear
Author

We certainly sympathize with you, following the rejection of your story “Big Fighter-Little Thief.” It is true that Mr. Johnson did tell you it was “inexp,” “hackneyed,” “a rip-off.” However, we do not think it quite fair to call Mr. Johnson “*****” or “*****.” If we did not have “*****” or “*****” like Mr. Johnson in the office, we would probably have to hire one.

You are free to submit “Big Fighter-Little Thief” to another publication.

TSG Complaints Dept.

To: Mr. Fritz Toggele
Superfluous Games

We certainly understand your distress at our failure to print all of the publicity releases you have sent us on your new game Mystery of the Blitwitz. It must be frustrating to go to so much trouble as you have to plug this game, only to find that it gets no more News & Plugs space than any other comparable system.

However, that's the way the ball bounces. We don't print long press releases verbatim just to fill space. A new game is a new game, regardless of hype. If you want an ad, buy it.

Incidentally, if you'd spend half the money on design and components that you've invested in news releases and publicity gimmicks, you'd probably sell more games.

TSG Complaints Dept.

To: Robert Streeter
Subscriber

You're right. Your last TSG didn't reach you, and it was our fault. We had the address wrong.

Your threat to turn us over to the Postal Inspector if we don't immediately send you a replacement has us all shaking in our boots. Needless to say, it's on the way to you.

If we shoot the manager of the Circulation Department, fire all his assistants, burn down the houses where they live, and sprinkle the rug of their office with salt, will you forgive us?

TSG Complaints Dept.

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**BANANA QUEST**

It is January, 1942. The German Sixth Army is starving at Stalingrad. You, Hans Helmschtucker, are also starving too. You hear a call for brave volunteers. Bravely, you volunteer. Somewhere in the underground underworld underneath Stalingrad, the Russians have cached a huge store of provisions, including 2½ million bananas. Only you, Hans Helmschtucker, can find the bananas and save the Reich.

**BananaQuest** is an innovative game, with rules for NKVD, other VD, mines, ore deposits, exploding sewer gas and seven monstrous logical Russian monsters. All this in a geomorphic box with 98 extra counters, a 2-color 8½"x11" map, 4 pages of rules, 10 pages of errata, and 2 three-sided dice.

Available only from:

**GOGuem Games**
Selling Your Article
by Lewis Pulsipher

Many of you have thought of writing an article about fantasy or science fiction games. No single magazine is the best forum for every kind of article. This is a report for would-be authors about the professional magazines which cover fantasy or science fiction gaming, based on a questionnaire sent to them at the end of 1980.

It should go without saying that all articles must be typed, double or triple spaced. Editors don't have time to decipher handwriting, nor will typesetters work from untyped manuscripts. Always include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of an unacceptable article. If you can, send a good photocopy rather than the original. About 5% of all unprinted articles won't get back to the author because of postal errors or loss in editorial procedures. (If the article is printed, the manuscript definitely is not returned.)

If you intend to write a long article you can save yourself some headaches. Write to one or more magazines describing your ideas. The editor may tell you he already has a similar article, or that it isn't suitable, or he may suggest improvements. (He'll also send a writer's guide, if the magazine has one.) Remember, editors reject articles, not authors. An editor might reject one idea or article you submit but accept another later. Nor are editors infallible. Just as a book as successful as Watership Down suffered more than a dozen rejections before a publisher accepted it, so your article might be rejected by several magazines before it is accepted. You may think of your article as a gem of informative clarity, but to the editor it may be just X number of column inches. Whether it is printed may depend more on the subject matter, or even the length, than on the quality of the article. You may also find that your crystal prose has been chopped or altered in the interest of fitting the article into a given amount of space, though this varies from magazine to magazine.

Don't despair if your article is rejected. It may be a poor article, but instead it may be only too long, too short, or the wrong subject or approach for the magazine you sent it to. Improve it if you can - some editors may offer suggestions, but don't expect them to - but do send it to another publisher. If you are easily discouraged you'll have a hard time. Unless you're an experienced writer you must be prepared for rejections and requests to rewrite your material.

Don't send the same article to more than one magazine at the same time. If you are impatient you can state a date - about three months hence - after which you'll assume that the article has been rejected, and after that you can send a copy to another magazine.

An article may be "accepted" but never see print. For some reason, though simultaneous submission is considered unethical, it is all right for an editor to accept an article, hold it for more than a year, and then return it unused.

Unless you arrange otherwise, when your article is printed, it will be copyrighted by the magazine, and henceforth the latter will have full control of its use. For example, if your FRP monster is printed and you later want to use the description in a published adventure module you will have to rewrite it entirely or obtain permission from the magazine to use the original. A few magazines (Different Worlds, Dungeon) have published articles copyrighted by the author, but this may involve some expense. It should also be possible to sell serial rights only to a magazine; consequently, though the magazine would copyright the article, you would have all rights after it was printed. I know of no one who has done this, though it is common in other fields.

You must recognize that the author is a supplicant and the editor holds the whip. Each magazine seems to have sufficient contributions, and rarely needs to go out of the way to accommodate more contributors. If you write many articles you are likely to have an article accepted but returned over a year later without publication, others delayed 18 months before they're printed, and so on. Let me describe a few frustrating examples from actual experience.

1) An author was asked to write a series of articles about an FRP game for a magazine as rapidly as possible; but for various reasons, the first installment was printed more than 15 months after he submitted the first half of the series.

2) After some discussion of contents and approach, a magazine agreed to print three articles about playing Diplomacy. But while the articles were being written, the magazine's editorial policy changed, so the articles were returned.

3) An author had an article - he doesn't know which one! - published in Dungeon, but despite several inquiries he does not have the relevant issue, though he was paid months ago.

These are the responses to the questionnaire sent at the end of 1980 to all SF/F games magazines. Where appropriate I include a comment of my own. If no response was received, the entry is derived from personal experience and statements made at Origins '80, last summer.

Editors were asked to state whether they accept fiction, miniadventure scenarios or modules for role-playing games, or minigames. If one of these subjects is not mentioned, therefore, it is not desired.

A pay rate "by printed page" generally doesn't count artwork not supplied by the author - "printed page of text" might be more accurate. The number of words on a page varies with type size. Generally, I've found, $15-20 a page is a higher rate than 1 cent per word, while Dungeon's column rate approximates 1 cent a word. Payment is on publication, not on acceptance; which is to say, you'll probably receive your money some weeks after publication. All magazines except Dungeon give a contributor a copy of the issue where his work appears.

"Wait" is the average time between submission and acceptance or rejection of an article. "Interval" is the average time between acceptance and publication of work. "Not printed" is the percentage of contributions accepted but never printed. If the magazine has a style guide for contributors, this is stated.

ARES, 257 Park Ave, South, New York, NY 10010. Editors Redmond A. Simonsen, Robert J. Ryer, Michael E. Moore. Print run 18,000, immediate distribution 13,500. Wants short analyses of SF/F games (no reviews), fiction, science fact, historical myth and fantasy articles. Pays 3-6 cents/word for fiction, 2-4 cents/word non-fiction, variable for art: cover $350, interior full page black and white $100. Wait 45 days, interval 2 months. Not printed 1% of articles, 0% art. SASB for style sheet (which is for fiction only). Additional comment: "Fiction should be action-oriented, with strong central conflict and interesting characters; a sense of 'strangeness' is desired. Non-fiction should be of interest to gamers in particular. 3,000-7,000 words for fiction, 1,500-
THE TRIBES OF CRANE

You, task chief of the Leopard people wandering tribe of crane, sit in your great wagon awaiting news from your swift searching outskirts. Suddenly hoot beats approach. The outskirts leap from their mounts to your wagon flushed with excitement for they know full well the meaning of their news. But one sector to the North the rural merchants of the Impala people has been overruled. The order is given. "To arms... to arms!" You snap your orders. "Gather my captains of hundreds. Let all know the tactic will be enfilade right. Now my arms, my mount." You heard that Kate, chief of the Impala people, has chosen a stand and defend tactic twice before. Will he again? You know also that the Impala people are line warriors are as all the people of the many tribes. This will be no raid of the strong on the weak. But rather a mighty clash of the TRIBES OF CRANE... 

1979 Schubel & Son

SCHUBEI &SON
PO Box 218448
Sacramento, CA 95821

The Tribes of Crane is a unique correspondence game allowing for interaction between players and the fantasy world of Crane and each other through a continuous game that may be entered at any time. As a new player you will start as the chief of one of the many wandering tribes of Crane. Perhaps your tribe will be of the Sea people or Caravan merchants. As chief you will know many secrets of your people and their lands, but there will be much you have still to learn of the lost secrets of Crane. Will it be you who decide if your people will remain in their familiar homelands or begin a journey to new lands as you strive to increase your powers, to gain new allies, and to learn the lost secrets that can move your people toward prosperity and dominance.

The land of Crane is a complex fantasy world with a full range of geography from the permanent ice of the polar regions to the deserts, and tropical forests of the equator. Cities dot the continents of Crane providing centers of trade and homes for the powerful Shamas and Kingslords. The creatures of Crane are as varied as its geography. Cattle, goats, and the camels are the many of the tribes, depending on the geography. But horses and the great menacing war hawks are important to the fierce warriors. Many undomesticated creatures also inhabit Crane such as the Euparika, a huge bipedal lizard that feeds on cattle in the grasslands of Crane. Interaction between players is very common. Alliance, trade, and combat are always possible. Combat is determined in part by a comparison of tactics used by the antagonists, the relative number of warriors, and the geography.

The games objective is to increase the relative strength and prosperity of your tribe which is measured by different criteria, depending upon the type of tribe, and thus obtain points. Players try to obtain high average points per turn thus placing new players on a par with those who have been playing for some time. The Tribes of Crane may be entered for $10.50 which includes the first two turn, set up turn, a rule book and all necessary material (except return postage). Thereafter, turns are $3.50 each. A rule book may be purchased for $3.50.
designer's notes for

Lords of UnderEarth

by Keith Gross

LORDS OF UNDEREARTH is an underground labyrinth adventure, one of the most popular subjects in fantasy gaming. It uses tried-and-true wargaming techniques such as odds-ratio combat, movement allowances, and terrain effects charts.

The game is set in an underground dwarf city. The five scenarios depict battles and other actions from throughout the city's long history. The scale is much larger than T&T or D&D; most units represent groups of thirty people, and hexes represent 30 meters. The rooms and corridors are city-sized rather than dungeon-sized. Limited intelligence rules are important, as is morale. "Napoleonic warfare in a dungeon," one playtester called it.

History

The first incarnation of LORDS OF UNDEREARTH saw life in 1975. I had been playing Dungeons & Dragons, after long experience with Avalon Hill wargames. I liked the ideas of D&D, but was annoyed with the ambiguities of the first edition. I tried to design a game which would combine the subject matter of D&D with conventional wargame mechanics. Unfortunately, playtesting showed that this first version was too complicated, and more important, the game nearly always became a stalemate once the defender blocked the passageways. An army can't mount a good attack on a front only a few feet across.

LORDS OF UNDEREARTH collected dust until early 1978. I had been involved with playtesting at Metagaming, and had done the editing for Olympica, and now I wanted to design a MicroGame. I did some work on simplifying and re-designing LOU, but then I got busy with final exams, and then Ice War, and I forgot about it.

Work began again in December, 1979, while I was a full-time member of Metagaming's staff. I dusted off LOU, and tried to make it into a quick-playing, easy-to-learn MicroGame. Some new design concepts solved the stalemate problem and made the game more fluid, and also greatly simplified it. LOU went out for playtesting and went through a few more rules drafts, and was finished by the end of February, 1980, when I left Metagaming.

Rationale

The map depicts the central portions of the dwarven city of UnderEarth. It is geomorphic: it can be cut into thirds and rearranged or expanded if players wish. UnderEarth has an East Gate and West Gate, leading to non-underground areas, each with an overlooking battleline. It has the Great Hall in the center, designed as a gathering place for the dwarves. North of it loops a wide and level "turnpike" corridor, used by caravans as a cut-through through the mountains. A subterranean lake, in the northwest, provides a water supply. The East Hall, with a pit and several locking doors, provides an interior defense. The barracks area in the southeast is the dwarves' living area. Also included are the throne room, a dungeon, mines, a stairway to the top of the mountain, and numerous smaller rooms. UnderEarth is loosely patterned after Moria in Lord of the Rings, though it is smaller.

The counter mix includes a small army of dwarves and unarmed dependents, as well as individual captains, sentries, and a scout; and the dwarf lord. Similar, but smaller, forces of humans and orcs are included. Other units are a large dragon, a single company of goblins, and miscellaneous individual creatures.

Mechanics

An important concept which provides a great deal of the game's flavor is alerting. Usually, defending units begin the game with "unalerted" markers on them, and cannot move until either an enemy unit or an already-alerted friendly unit moves adjacent to them. This prevents units from being moved in a strategically useful manner before they even know that a battle is going on. Sentries have a vital role, because they can use horns or drums to alert friendly units up to four hexes away. Adding to the "fog of war" is the fact that units are often inverted.

Infiltration is a special type of movement. When two units are in a melee, the attacker can go through the defender, in some cases. Combat uses a conventional odds-ratio system. Companies and individuals both
have combat strengths, but those of companies are higher. Companies suffer severe penalties when attacking in narrow corridors and tunnels, because only a few of their 30 people can fight at a time. The CRT is rather biased towards the attacker, because this makes the game more fluid.

In fantasy combat, bravery and heroism should be as important as simple force-of-arms. This is reflected in the morale rules, which gives odd-columns shifts when leaders are with companies and when individuals are involved, alone, in combat against companies. The leaders, sentries, and scouts, as well as the creatures, are stronger and bolder (or more ferocious) than average warriors in the companies. For the dragon, particularly, the element of fear is more important than the actual (parody the pun) firepower.

A rules section was added for combining LOU with *In the Labyrinth*. These are guidelines for GMs rather than explicit rules, for the most part, but being a GM takes work and creativity anyway. The "Passage of UnderEarth" scenario of LOU might make an interesting ITL adventure. The 14-hex dragon and huge groups of orcs will be too strong for most parties to fight, but UnderEarth offers lots of escape routes and hiding places.

Absent from LOU are magic and missile weapons. The original magic system was too complicated, and I didn't have time to develop a new system which was both simple and compatible with *The Fantasy Trip*. The game works well without magic. Multi-hex missile fire was dropped because the line-of-sight rules got to be a mess. The effects of doors, curving interiors, etc. all had to be pinned down. For the same reason, charting and the inverted-units rules are based on adjacency of hexes rather than line-of-sight. An assumption is made that all companies have a mix of weapons, including a few bows, and that UnderEarth is dark.

I readily admit the influence of *Lord of the Rings* on *LOURDS OF UNDEREARTH*. I have been a long-time Tolkien fan, while I'm not particularly interested in swords-and-sorcery.

*LOURDS OF UNDEREARTH* is a good way to introduce FRP gamers to boardgames. It is simple and easy to learn — the basic rules are only nine 4" x 6" pages with lots of diagrams — and games rarely take more than an hour to play. The game design uses familiar systems with a few new twists, rather than groundbreaking game systems, and the background is based on Tolkien and familiar fantasy themes rather than a totally new world. But *LOURDS OF UNDEREARTH* is playable and (I hope) fun, and that's the most important thing.

Errata for *LOURDS OF UNDEREARTH*

1. On the sample unit on page 3, the label for "Movement Allowance" and "Combat Factor" are switched.
2. Companies and Individuals counters are not clearly distinguished. Note that the Dwarf Dependents and the Goblins are Companies, and that Companies generally have much larger combat factors than individuals.
3. "North" is towards map section A. The East Gate is the door next to the white (outside) hexes on the right side of section A. East Hall is the large room with a pit, next to the East Gate. The Great Hall is the large room in the center. West Gate is the door going to the Outside hexes in the southwest corner.
4. The set-up rules for "Pursuit" (scenario 20.1) should say that a Captain of the Dwarves' Garrison is placed on the "Lord" (abbreviated "L.") hex of the throne room.
5. In the "UnderEarth Dwellers'" section of scenario 20.5 ("Gold"), the following list should be inserted in rule 2, after ""All UnderEarth dwellers except the Dragon": (1-35 of Goblin Company, 2 Trolls, 1 Wolf, 1 Bear, 1 Gargoyle, and 1 Giant Scorpion).
6. The rules for "Gold!" should state explicitly that players may attack each other, as well as the UnderEarth dwellers.

—Keith Gross

In the March issue of

**Gamer's Guide**

there were reviews of Nova Game Design's *The Hammer of Thor*, SPI's *Fifth Corps*, and *TimeTripper*, GDW's *The Battle of Lobositz*, TSR's *Boot Hill*, and Avalon Hill's *Magic Realm*. There was also "Spotlight", an inside view of game publishing companies. This issue looked in on Nova Game Designs, Inc.

**GAMER'S GUIDE** is a bi-monthly independent critical analysis of the adventure gaming industry. Besides reviewing games and providing "Spotlight", we also have Gamer's Classified, a section of the magazine similar to the classified section of your newspaper, except that it's free. Anyone, subscriber or not, may submit an ad for Gamer's Classified.

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FEATURED REVIEW:

Expert D&D
by Aaron Allston

In the beginning there was Dungeons and Dragons™ — Original Dungeons and Dragons, later called the Collector’s Edition. Then there were Greyhawk and Blackmoor and Eldritch Wizardry, which were essentially Expanded Original D&D. Then came Advanced D&D (which was advanced Original D&D), and Basic D&D (which was basic Original D&D). And, ultimately, we have Expert D&D, which is expert Basic D&D, not expert Original D&D, or expert Advanced D&D; and Expert Basic D&D brings it all to the same approximate scope as Original D&D. One gets the impression that the TSR crew spends its off-hours designing mazes for rats to become lost in.

In essence, Expert D&D is an expansion kit for Basic D&D. Basic introduces the gamer to FRP gaming and provides for characters and encounters of 1st through 3rd experience levels. Expert elaborates on the system and provides for characters to attain up to 14th level. A planned supplement to the series, the D&D Companion Set, will allow for characters and encounters of up to 36th level.

The Basic D&D series, naturally enough, is incompatible with any other version of D&D. This game is rather strange, even for Dungeons and Dragons. For example, the character classes available are Fighter, Magic-User, Cleric, Thief, Dwarf, Elf, and Halfling! The first four are strictly human classes. The dwarf is a fighter, with the racial characteristics you’ve come to expect. All elves are fighter/magicians. The halfling class is a small-scale fighter with stealth and spying, but not thief, abilities. (Actually, the halfling class rules take the little fellow closer to the Tolkien origins; see Ron Pehr’s article in Different Worlds 11 for more on the same theme.) Gone are options for pure elf magicians, or dwarf fighter-thieves; gone are the paladins, rangers, bards, illusionists, assassins, monks, and druids. A desire for simplicity undoubtedly brought about their removal, but some of the color is gone from the game. Perhaps the companion set will rectify this.

Alignment has been returned to its original state — no more Lawful/Good, Chaotic/Neutral, Neutral/Evil, and so forth; all we have are Law, Neutrality, and Chaos. Most of the game’s systems also return to the original — combat, types of weapons, armor class, equipment lists, etc. Monster and spell descriptions are arranged as per AD&D. Some things like the effects of high character attributes (strength, etc.) are unique to this version.

Overall, the Basic series is a good set of rules, but only as a series. A beginning gamer will find Basic D&D well-organized and playable, but so limited as to soon grow pale and rapid. With Expert, the scope is increased to acceptable levels, with rules for adventuring beyond the dungeon — wilderness, aerial, naval, the world at large — but this doubles the investment required.

Expert D&D is practically valueless outside the series. It duplicates materials in Original D&D and AD&D, and breaks no new ground. Its use with other RPGs is questionable, except for the section on castlebuilding, which few other games handle in detail. It is, however, well-arranged and invaluable in the context of the series.

I wish I had had the Basic D&D series when I began gaming. The rules sets are legible, indexed, punched for 3-hole notebooks, reorganizable, and, best of all, understandable. One actually can learn the game from the rules, something not possible with Original D&D.

That is, however, perhaps the most annoying part about this set of rules. With sufficient playtesting, it could have been released seven or eight years ago, instead of the original set. This series is the product of hindsight.

And yet... if they’re going to release another version of the game incompatible with other versions, why not release one which corrects the long-standing problems with the rules? Combat, for example, is not noticeably different from the way it was in the original rules, and it still bears no similarity to reality of any sort.

Some problems from the original are corrected, though. Provisions for a character’s literacy and linguistic ability are included. The coin-weight measurement system has been improved upon. Rules for automatic hits and misses in combat, regardless of level or armor class, are given.

Overall, I must recommend this series so beginning role-playing gamers, perhaps with the incorporation of Greyhawk, Blackmoor, and Eldritch Wizardry rules from the original series, or perhaps the Companion Set will cover the essentials there. The cost of the rules set is not prohibitive, the components are good (though TSR’s art and dice always need improvement), and the whole thing is likeable. Experienced FRP gamers, though, will find nothing novel here.

Basic D&D (TSR); $12. Boxed with 64-page rulebook, beginning dungeon module (“Keep on the Borderlands” — reviewed TSG 37), polyhedral dice (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20), crayon. New revised edition published 1981.

Expert D&D (TSR); $12. Boxed, with 64-page rulebook, beginning wilderness module (“Isle of Dread” — reviewed this issue), polyhedral dice (as above), crayon. Published 1981.
**Who Dares Challenge The World of VALETIA?**

Do you dare? Will you challenge the lofty mountains, the darkling woods, the vast oceans of the world of Valetia?

If you do, you can find great adventure and enjoyment. Not only is this the original postbox role-playing campaign, but after 2 years of redesign and semi-computerization, Lords of Valetia comes to you with the best quality entertainment you can afford. This is the campaign you have been waiting for. Not like other postbox games, this is no wargame, but a true role-playing campaign in the fine tradition of Dungeons and Dragons or Tunnels and Trolls. With its own unique, realistic systems for combat, magic, and nature, Lords of Valetia can allow you to explore virtually any dream you wish to act out in its setting.

If you do join the ranks of LOV players perhaps your adventure will be exciting enough to be written up in Valetia, but even if it is not, you can experience the rich fabric of the continuing story that is Valetia.

Here are just a few of the personalities you may meet or be affected by:

- **Darathon**, High Lord of Valetia. A king of Tar-Ras, the southern isle, he was proclaimed Lord of Valetia after repulsing the invasion of an evil wizard, which resulted in the northern kings demise. He founded the esteemed Order of Peregrinators as guerrilla fighters, rangers, who eventually could achieve ruler of cities... but the High Council and City Lords didn't like this and demanded an end to the Order once the peril had vanished. Now, a weak-seeing Darathon accedes to their request, and grows defensive.

- **Gyles**, son of Meren, the late northern king, and Prince of Tar-At, the north central isle of the 4 Island Valetian Archipelago. Bitter that Darathon from Tar-Ras was made king in his place, Gyles has ruined the wilderness planning revolution. Now his plans are ripe...

- **Korloth**, evil Sorcerer who led the defeated invasion from the eastern isle, and tried to cripple At with snow and sandstorms the year after, while he built a stronghold there. Now he is free, without sign of the next attack he may make or its direction.

- **Mizar**, a Young Peregrinator, and elf-sage who has yet to find magic, sleeps in Berios in the house of a great wizard with a Dwarf, a brave region Captain, and an enigmatic man of mysterious powers, awaiting the morning signal. If his companions can keep him from being herded back to Tar-At, and prison, he must decide whether or not to take what might be the greatest quest yet discovered, though it takes him to the ends of the earth.

- **Gummel**, hero of the Dark Time, who tore down Korloths stronghold and sent him reeling from At. He met privately with Darathon, but what he learned turned him cold and he stalked out of the Golden City of Vanne, and sailed away from Ras with what plan in mind.

- **Zindas**, Minister of Tai, and powerful sage; virtual ruler while the citylord is ill. He has been to search for the greatest good wizard alive, who disappeared within the last two months, Alrewon, but Zindas has not yet sent out any searchers, and word gathers that Tai will break from the Empire...

- **Sand**, Lord of Pasarasset, and chief of the Elves of Tarpanwood. She declares for freedom, with the Hobbits of the wood and Men of Tai. To her ears have come tales of kidnap and torture of her brethren, and this may mean the greatest war since the ancient conflicts with the Dwarves.

- **Ronth**, Marshal of the Golden Paladins of Vanne. He is beset by self-doubt as he follows the command to round up Peregrinators, and even more dismayed by news that Darathon has called in his personal legion from Tar-Ras, to come to Vanne. Will he fight them or stand aside as the foreign army comes to the Palace. Having served his city since Meren was king, a short 3 years ago, Ronth knows his choice is crucial.

- **Augustus Oriluce**, Marshal of the famed Faerie Guard, that selfsame personal guard of the arch king Darathon, marches with pleasure to the greatest city in the world, to protect his king and at the same time, perhaps, to win his way to lordship as a favorite of the court...

- **Denmed**, a Dwarf and a seasoned veteran of the constant bitter struggle between his kind and the mountain Ranks and Trolls. He is Captain of two companies of dwarves dispatched from Lufgard by request of Darathon, to march against the insurgents. Does he hold the power of neutrality, or is he ordered to obey regardless of his judgment...

- **Rutilus Confinicus**, only a Lieutenant, and would-be noble, commanding a rag-tag collection of the Messenger's Guard, but his connections and desires have brought him into contact with a secret organization, which may be the answer to dreams of power second only to those of Korloth himself.

- **Dodrio**, a fine Peregrinator, and rediscovers of the ancient Palladithen Arm, a formidable weapon. Will he return to Tai to fight for his city, or will he succumb to the honors he received from the emperor in Vanne?

- **Eishein**, second Guardian at floating rock, against the reappearance of Korloth, and Sorceress of Green Robes. An elf maid, strong of will, who guards her land from evil; why would she suddenly flee Meton, and seek out the cold peaks of Kip-Umbra, in the common tongue, the Dark Mountains.

- **Kear**, Marshal of the Legions of Meton, a small city strategically halfway from Vanne and the Empire's strongholds, and the cities of Tai and the woodlands where the Elves live, where there has been talk of disaffection, or supporting Gyles. He controls the middle point of the southern coast. Who will he strike for?

- **Melador**, barbarian general of the east isle, Tar-Tar, that leads the armies of Korloth, and was thought in his small shire players he has hidden disguised for over 2 years. Waiting, watching, he now signals that the time is ripe for yet another leap to power...

- **Corlindra**, mistress of a dozen adventures, and intimate of the court of Meren, who fled when Darathon took command. She plies the northern coast in search of pirate strongholds... to conquer!

- **Thon**, Captain of Peregrinators, the first of those still living, to have joined the Order. As senior Peregrinator he has worked with great stealth to unstop the forces of evil. Now he must choose between his pledge, and his sense of justice...

- **Tomark**, a strong voice in the council of seamen of Tellos, second greatest seaport in Valetia until leveled during the invasion. He seeks from the city of Vanne a monopoly on eastern trade, and the traditional rivalry between Tellosian and Taleis provides the one for Tomark to offer to his vessels to Darathon... as Privateers against Tai.

- **Xergon**, Master of the Gulf of Assassins, sole holder of the rank of Zai Kal, the 12th and most powerful level of the plan. Forced by war to flee to the city of Tai, he is approached with an offer he must ponder. 1000 talents of gold to kill the sage Zindas... or if he will undertake to murder Darathon... an equally tempting offer, of power undreamed, by a wizard skilled enough to make good.

These are but a few characters, player and non-player, who populate the fascinating world of Valetia.

The quarterly magazine VALIENCE contains the latest Valetian "proclamations," dramatizations of encounters by the most resourceful players, rule modifications, and a continuing history of the world of Valetia. A 12-tum subscription to LORDS OF VALETIA is $25.00. The rulebook, a subscription to VALIENCE, for as long as you remain a player, and all starting materials (maps, supplements, etc., except for return postcards) are absolutely free to players. If dissatisfied with the Initial materials, new subscribers must return the Rulebook and will then receive a full refund.

Lords of Valetia is an Adult game open to anyone 18 years of age or older living within the continental U.S., Residents of Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, or those having APO/FPO addresses will only be accepted on a provison that the customer realizes there may be excessive postal delays to those areas at times. All funds must be paid in U.S. currency.

Gamesmasters Publishers Association
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YA WANNA BUY A USED SHIP?

by Tim Brown and William A. Barton

Since construction times for ships in Traveller are so incredibly long, many players have been unable to purchase new ships. Therefore, I have developed a system for generating used ships for sale. Using this system, players may effectively ignore construction times (the ships have already been built) and may even obtain a ship for a cheaper price than normal, although there may turn out to be a few problems with a used craft.

Ships may be found for sale only at Type A starports, since this is where most potential buyers would congregate in search of vessels. Once players have arrived at such a starport, the referee should make one die roll with a six-sided die on Table I, cross indexing the result with the population of the world on which the starport is located.

Table I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 0 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0 0 0 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 0 0 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0 0 0 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0 0 0 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 3 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This will provide the number of individual ships for sale at that starport. As the number of ships for sale may change over a period of time, players may elect to remain at the starport in hopes that more suitable vessels may be offered for sale as they wait. However, a maximum of one roll on Table I per week is allowed.

For each individual ship up for sale, the referee must generate various information, such as ship type, its cost and the condition of the ship. The type of ship available is easily determined by rolling one six-sided die on Table II.

Table II, Ship Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Ship Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Scout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Free Trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Free Trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Free Trader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Subsidized Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Other (Roll on Table III)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scout: As newer ships are constructed for the scout service, older vessels are often phased out and sold to the general public. Though usually around 40 years old, these ships are, on the whole, in good condition and have had annual maintenance since construction. Used scout ships no longer have an air/raft when offered for sale by the service, but retain double turrets — void of weaponry. They are, in all other aspects, identical to those described in Traveller Book 2.

Free Trader: The fact that a free trader is for sale indicates that its owner was an unsuccessful merchant who has been forced out of business. The ship has been repossessed by the bank and placed on the market in an attempt to recover the bank's investment. Since the former owner was undoubtedly in financial difficulties during the final months of ownership, and the bank has probably not bothered to do so, the ship will not have undergone annual maintenance in some time. The first course a new owner should take is to initiate a complete overhaul of the drive systems and the electronic circuitry. This will require an expenditure of CR 500,000 and a one-week stay at a Type A or B starport. Should the new owner elect to forego the overhaul, the referee should secretly roll twice on Table V in addition to the initial roll (see below), adding a die modifier of -4. Two out of six free traders offered for sale will have one double turret, but no weaponry will be installed. Otherwise, the ship is as outlined in Book 2.

Subsidized Merchant: There are two types of subsidized merchant vessels commonly found in a Traveller universe. Most are Type R; one in six, however, will be a Type M (see Book 2 for stats). Subsidized merchants of either type are usually sold by the government should their captains fail to complete their agreed-upon duties before receiving full title. The government has repossessed the vessel and offered it for sale at the nearest starport. The ship has undergone annual maintenance at government expense, but still may be subject to faults. Players buying such a ship from the government have no obligation to cover its previously assigned route and are free to roam the galaxy.

Other: Ships in this class may be of custom design, created on demand by the referee. General features such as engineering design, hull type, fuel requirements and base price of these ships are all that the ref need generate, unless the ship is actually purchased. In such a case, he might want to design the ship in greater detail. Or, if the referee prefers, he may use Table III.

Table III, Ship Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Ship Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Custom Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Corsair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Seeker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Lab Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Safari Ship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cruiser (1-2)/Yacht (3-6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Corsair: A captured pirate ship, put up for sale by the authorities. As outlined
In *Citizens of the Imperium*, but minus weaponry and variable identification features (which can be restored by new owner, if he desires, at any shipyard on a law level 0 planet, for one-quarter the ship's base price).

Seeker: Seekers on sale will usually retain their mining laser (four in six chance), but will probably be old and battered due to their use in asteroid mining and the fact that no better would sell his ship unless it was defective or he was unsuccessful at his trade (in which case it is doubtful he'd have kept up its annual maintenance). Roll twice on Table V for any Seeker for sale, and two more times if new buyer fails to overhaul it, as with a free trader.

Lab Ship: As outlined in *Citizen*, minus air/raft and ATV. Offered for sale by a scientific foundation unable to obtain enough research grants to keep the vessel. Usually in good shape. No laboratory equipment will remain aboard, however.

Safari Ship: As outlined in *Citizens*, minus air/raft. Only two in six will retain caging areas and trophy room (always void of trophies in any case). As safari ships on sale usually belong to failed hunters or spoiled nobles who have tired of them, they probably won't have undergone annual maintenance for some time, and will need overhaul as with a free trader. Note: The safari ship as outlined in the book has no jump drive. Players purchasing such a ship will find it necessary to install one after purchase. It is possible, however, that some (one in six) may have had a jump drive added by the previous owner.

It is also possible that a Type C cruiser or a Type Y yacht may be up for sale, though these will be less common due to the quasi-military nature of the first and the penchant nobles have for keeping the second in their own ranks. These are exactly as outlined in Book 2 except that all weaponry and auxiliary vehicles have been removed.

The price for which the owner will sell his ship is calculated by rolling two six-sided dice and checking the result against Table IV. The result will be the percentage of the base price of the ship in question (when built at a starport) which the owner will accept as payment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Percentage of Base Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roll</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Power plant malfunctions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maneuver Dives malfunction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Misjumps one out of six times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Periodically loses cabin pressure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>No defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>No defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>No defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>No defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>No defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>No defect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Turrets jam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a player with Engineering-2 or better inspects the ship before he buys, these faults will be identified before any money actually changes hands. The party may then decide whether or not they wish to buy a faulty vessel. If so, the owner will offer a 20% reduction in price. Otherwise he will have to repair the ship to the party's satisfaction. If this inspection is not made, any defects in the ship will surface in one to six weeks (roll one die) after purchase. The referee may wish to place actual breakdowns at critical times during the ship's operation to make such crises more interesting.

Players may also want to sell their own vessels to obtain additional credits. Note that a scout ship received as a mustering-out benefit may never be sold or disposed of in any manner while the player to whom it was awarded is alive. This applies to lab ships as well, should they be used. Any other ship is eligible to be sold. The referee should decide at random how many potential buyers will examine any given ship for sale, and then determine how many actually have the money for such an expenditure.

This system of pre-owned starship purchasing should smooth out the flow of any *Traveller* game in which players are looking for their own means of transportation, yet find themselves short on time and credits. It may even encourage more people to visit your universe!

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Combination Game Contest

The contest in TSG 35 involved the creation of peculiar combinations of games. Responses were less numerous than in some of the other contests—but what they lacked in numbers they made up in ingenuity.

First place (a 12-issue subscription) goes to Theodore Miller (Howard Beach, NY) for:

The Creature that Ate Lunch

This variant combines The Creature that Ate Sheboygan with Food Fight (from Dragon 44). Food Fight is set up normally, but on the 2nd round a monster enters (roll on Monster Origin Table).

Monster Origin Table

1. Fictional creature come to life—enters from library.
2. Evolved from leftover meat loaf—enters from kitchen.
3. Berserk robot built by shop class—enters from shop.
4. Evolved from dirty sweatsocks—enters from gym.
5. Evolved from greasy rags—enters from janitor’s vault.
6. Created by science class demonstration—enters from lab.

The monster is a normal one from Creature, although reduced in size, with the following rules additions/modifications:

Turn sequence. The monster movement phase and combat phase are added to the Food Fight sequence just before students’ turns, starting on the 2nd round. Game length is 10 rounds.

Movement. The monster may move diagonally. It may not enter a square with a table, garbage can, or human, or move through a wall. It may slip on food, but appearance damage has no effect, and stun becomes lose one point from strength.

 Destruction. The monster may use its destruction value on inanimate objects in adjacent squares. It may destroy interior walls which border its square, including the walls of the garbage counter area, principal’s office, and faculty/staff lounge. Defense strengths are 4 for a table, 2 for a garbage can or wall (1 square side); and 1 for a tray, pumper or bowl.

Effects of destruction. A table becomes clear spaces, and any trays and food on it are placed at random in these squares. A garbage can is removed from play, and its garbage spilled normally. A tray, pumper, or bowl is removed from play; if it contained food the monster eats it (1 movement point per item).

A destroyed wall becomes clear square side. When appropriate walls are destroyed, the garbage area has fullness rolled for each square; the principal’s office has the principal, an immobile F/S, placed there; and the F/S lounge has a random F/S placed there.

Attacks. The monster may attack any humans in adjacent squares, dividing its attack value between them. If the attack value vs. the human’s speed on the Creature CRT indicates damage for the defender the human is stunned for that many turns; damage for the monster and retreats have no effect.

Monster hunger. When the monster starts in or enters a square containing or adjacent to food (including garbage counters or stunned humans), a die is rolled. On a roll of 1 or 2 it stops to eat all such food, in whatever order it chooses, at 1 MP for a food item or garbage counter and 2 for a human. If its remaining move is insufficient it eats as much as possible, and rolls again on its next turn. Any food sticking to the monster is eaten before rolling, at the same MP cost. If the monster is adjacent to a table, roll for the number of items on it.

The monster may enter the line area but moves along it one space at a time, and only eats food line items when in the space they are served to.

Special abilities. These have normal effects except as follows:

Fire breathing — may not be used.

Lightning — tables and walls block line of sight.

Web spinning — a student may enter a web, but must spend the next 2 turns cutting out. Webbed food may not be taken by students. Webbed students may be eaten.

Fear immobilization — immobilized humans must be stunned to be eaten.

Mind Control — a controlled F/S has characteristics rolled like a student, and may take and throw food. A controlled principal is still immobile, but may release students.

Students. Students follow normal Food Fight rules, except as follows:

Students may attack monsters, but appearance damage has no effect, except that the food sticks to the monster. Physical damage doesn’t stun, but these items have an attack strength; stun 4-6 becomes strength 5, stun 5-6 becomes 3, and stun 6 becomes 2. Monster damage and retreats are normal, attackers are unaffected.

Students may enter the food line through destroyed walls, taking food from that point on, and may leave through destroyed walls, taking food to that point. If the principal has been eaten, apprehended students may leave the office once the apprehending F/S has left.

Faculty/Staff. F/S treats monsters and controlled F/S as students, once they have taken food or attacked someone. If apprehended the monster can immediately use all or part of its attack strength on the F/S. If successful it then takes its turn with any remaining strength; if unsuccessful it is taken to the principal’s office, and starts its turn there.

Victory conditions. Students have normal Food Fight conditions, but may avoid being eaten as well as apprehended.

The monster receives victory points as follows:

10/human eaten
1/food item or garbage counter eaten
5/table destroyed
3/garbage can destroyed
It is trying for twice its initial point total.

Variants. Balance may be adjusted by changing the monster’s probability or movement cost to eat, or altering its characteristics. Students may be assigned special abilities; e.g., Lenny the Loser may not be recognized as food by the monster, science students may discover a weakness, etc.

Second place (a 6-issue subscription) goes to Lawrence Person (Houston, TX) for the even stranger (but less playable) TIME WARP WAR. Of all the entries we got, this one used the largest number of games.

Time Warp War

The situation: A sudden time warp has appeared on a Northern European battlefield in the year 2090. It carries an Ogre Mark V back to Gettysburg battlefield on the third day of the battle. The Council of 144 decides this could change the
This month's contest is a puzzle supplied by Phil Remmert (Houston, TX). It's based on Ogre/GEV. As far as we can tell, there's only one correct answer. Prizes will be awarded as follows: For the first correct answer from within Texas, a 6-issue TSG sub. For the first correct answer from the rest of the U.S., another 6-issue sub. And for the first correct answer outside the U.S., a third 6-issue sub. This should help make up for the vagaries of the Postal Service. If anyone comes up with a better answer than Remmert, we'll give the first one to do so 6 issues as well. The answer and the winners' names will be given in TSG 41. All entries become the property of TSG. Please note: WE can't write all wrong answers back to explain where they went wrong — so please don't ask. Wait for the answer.

Puzzle

The game is Ogre/GEV.; you are the commander of a Pan-European battalion heavily engaged with Combine forces in the fighting following the collapse of the 47th cease-fire. At the moment, you are 1 point behind, and your main command post is threatened. Furthermore, the 48th cease-fire has been agreed to, and is about to take effect; there is only one complete turn left in the game.

Fortunately, there is a way you can snatch victory from the jaws of defeat, and in fact, you can do it no matter how bad your luck is and how good your opponent's is. It's your move; your troops await your orders.

The fires involved are those shown below; no other units are in the vicinity. Your Ogre Mk. V has fired two missiles but is otherwise completely brand new; the enemy Ogre Mk. III is badly battered, with only one secondary, five AP guns, and two treads remaining. The victory point rules from G.E.V. apply, but you don't get the 100 points for his Ogre unless you TOTAL it (all weapons and treads destroyed). You are now 1 point behind; the 68 points of damage done to his Ogre and the 2 points (missiles fired) done to yours are included in that number. Your command post is movement 0, defense 3, and is worth 25 victory points.

In any conflict between G.E.V. and Ogre rules, use G.E.V. rules; in particular, the G.E.V. overrun combat rules are used (but ramming of or by Ogres is allowed, at the end of the first overrun fire round; resolve as in Ogre). No optional rules are in effect, and cities, roads, and bridges cannot be destroyed.

To reiterate: you get a turn, then your opponent gets a turn, then the cease-fire inspectors arrive and ALL shooting stops (you don't even get to finish off crippled Ogres). Your strategy must win the game regardless of what your opponent does, even though all your die rolls give the worst possible result, and all your opponent's give the best possible result (for him).

Indicate the moves of your units below, shooting each hex moved through, overrun attacks if any, and targets and odds in the overrun combat, targets in the fire phase and odds, and (for G.E.V.) second phase movement and overruns. Using the G.E.V. board, set up the following units in the hexes given:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PanEuropean forces</th>
<th>Combine forces</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0514 – HVY TANK</td>
<td>0712 – 1 INF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0513 – Ogre Mk. V</td>
<td>1813 – 1 INF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0512 – G.E.V.</td>
<td>1914 – 1 INF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1117 – 1 INF</td>
<td>1015 – HVY TANK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1016 – G.E.V.</td>
<td>1014 – LT TANK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0711 – 1 INF</td>
<td>1013 – 1 INF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0811 – 3 INF</td>
<td>1113 MSL TANK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0709 – G.E.V.</td>
<td>1212 – Ogre Mk. III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0911 – 1 INF</td>
<td>1113 – 2 INF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1412 – CP ALPHA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On a copy of the answer sheet below, show movement, overruns, fire, and second movement/overruns (if any) that you would command for each unit.
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Coming soon: Monsters... undead... giants... and some surprises...

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**Deus Ex Machina**

**Fragment 2**

by Joseph Power

One of the first routines a gamer with a computer will want to write is a dice rolling routine. This is normally coded in the following manner:

```
8000 PRINT "HOW MANY DICE ";
8010 INPUT N
8020 PRINT "HOW MANY SIDES ";
8030 INPUT S
8040 R = 0
8050 FOR I = 1 TO N
8060 R = R + 1 + INT( RND(1) * S)
8070 NEXT I
8080 PRINT "RESULT IS ", R
8090 GOTO 8000
```

There are several advantages to this initial method. It is easy to code, easy to understand, and it seems to be the way people actually roll dice. It has, however, three disadvantages. The input format is awkward, the time it takes to compute the routine depends on the number of dice rolled, and there is no protection from user error.

"Fragment 2" is a different version of a dice rolling routine. It is longer and more complicated than the first version but it overcomes all three shortcomings. A closer look at what was used to correct these problems will prove beneficial to the novice.

**Parsing.** Instead of having a separate input for the number of dice and the number of sides, the new version takes requests of the form NDS[op M] where N is the number of dice, S is the number of sides on a die, op is + * or /, and M is a modifier. All numbers must be integers and anything in [ ] may be omitted. The act of dividing this request into the various parts of information is called parsing the input. Another example of parsing you’re probably familiar with is diagramming sentences. Lines 8090 through 8290 chop R$ into N, S, OP, and M. The subroutine 8500-8560 turns a string of numeric characters into a number.

**The Bell Curve.** By employing an equation that returns a value between 0 and 1 with the same probability as the dice would have returning a specific result between the minimum and maximum rolls, the number of random numbers generated can be kept constant. The result can then be scaled up into the range of possible dice rolls. Lines 8340-8350 compute the dice roll. Line 8360 then applies the modifier if there is one.

**Idiot Proofing.** No, I’m not calling you an idiot! Most programmers use this term instead of "error detection and correction." When you make a program idiot proof you add code to either prevent or correct invalid inputs.

If you were to use this fragment in a larger program you want to be sure that it doesn’t blow up, forcing you to rerun the program. Idiot proofing is intermixed throughout the fragment. I used correction instead of prevention because I wanted to allow the user to just lift return to get 1d6. Thus, if you type d10 the roll will be 1d10 while 3d returns 3d6. The default for modifiers is to have none.

After the roll has been computed you are shown what the computer thinks you wanted. An input of d222+7 would get back an answer of the form:

```
FOR 1 d 222 + 7 RESULT IS 127
```

One of the most common mistakes made by computer novices is to see a program in a magazine and to enter it in at once. These are the same people who wonder why programming is so hard and why every program written in Basic won’t run unmodified. (Experienced people are amazed that ANY Basic programs can run unmodified.) Study programs before spending hours at the keyboard—you’ll have lots more time to run them afterward.

Any comments or questions can be sent with a SASE to:

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E. Lansing, MI 48823

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### Fragment 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8000</td>
<td>PRINT &quot;ROLL &quot;;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8010</td>
<td>INPUT R$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8020</td>
<td>P = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8030</td>
<td>N = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8040</td>
<td>S = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8050</td>
<td>OP = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8060</td>
<td>M = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8070</td>
<td>LR = LEN(R$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8080</td>
<td>IF LR = 0 THEN 8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8090</td>
<td>GOSUB 8500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8100</td>
<td>N = Q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8110</td>
<td>IF P -&gt; LR THEN 8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8120</td>
<td>P = P + 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8130</td>
<td>GOSUB 8500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8140</td>
<td>Q = S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8150</td>
<td>IF P -&gt; LR THEN 8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8160</td>
<td>OP = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8170</td>
<td>IF QS = &quot;*&quot; THEN 8250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8180</td>
<td>OP = 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8190</td>
<td>IF QS = &quot;/&quot; then 8250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8200</td>
<td>OP = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8210</td>
<td>IF QS = &quot;*&quot; THEN 8250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8220</td>
<td>OP = 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8230</td>
<td>IF QS = &quot;/&quot; THEN 8250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8240</td>
<td>OP = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8250</td>
<td>IF OP = 0 THEN 8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8260</td>
<td>P = P + 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8270</td>
<td>IF P -&gt; LR THEN 8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8280</td>
<td>GOSUB 8500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8290</td>
<td>M = Q</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8295</td>
<td>IF M &gt; 0 THEN 8300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8297</td>
<td>OP = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8300</td>
<td>IF N &gt; 0 THEN 8320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8310</td>
<td>N = 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8320</td>
<td>IF S &gt; 0 THEN 8340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8330</td>
<td>S = 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8340</td>
<td>R = INT(S * N * (S - 1) * RND(1) + N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8350</td>
<td>IF RND(1) &lt; 0.5 THEN R = N * (S + 1) - R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8360</td>
<td>ON OP GOSUB 8420, 8440, 8460, 8480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8370</td>
<td>PRINT &quot;FOR &quot;; N; &quot; &quot;; d ; &quot;; S ;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8380</td>
<td>IF OP = 0 THEN 8400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8390</td>
<td>PRINT MIDS(&quot;+/-&quot;,&quot;/&quot;,OP,1) M;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8400</td>
<td>PRINT &quot; THE RESULT IS &quot;; R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8410</td>
<td>GOTO 8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8420</td>
<td>R = R + M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8430</td>
<td>RETURN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8440</td>
<td>R = R * M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8450</td>
<td>RETURN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8460</td>
<td>R = R + M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8470</td>
<td>RETURN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8480</td>
<td>R = R / M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8490</td>
<td>RETURN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8500</td>
<td>Q = 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8510</td>
<td>QS = MIDS(R$ P, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8520</td>
<td>IF VAL(QS) &lt; ASC(QS) - 48 THEN 8560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8530</td>
<td>Q = Q * 10 + VAL(QS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8540</td>
<td>P = P + 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8550</td>
<td>IF F = LR THEN 8510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8560</td>
<td>RETURN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GAME DESIGN:
Theory and Practice

Part XII:
Components

by Nick Schuessler and Steve Jackson

A vital part of game design — especially if you want to have your game published — is proper design of the “physical systems” or game components. Component design begins the moment you start to invent a game; you’ll have to keep it in mind constantly. If you write and playtest rules that involve an impossible component, you’ve painted yourself into a corner.

The important constraints on component design are:

**Game format.** If you’re designing for a major publisher, there will be certain parameters you have to follow — tight or loose, depending on the publisher and the type of game. A sample format might be “112 half-inch counters, 11” x 17” map sheet, 8-page 8½” x 11” rulebook, and one letter-sized page for charts and tables.” This is a very restrictive format — you might have more options to choose from. But a restrictive format is not always a bad thing; when you start with many of your format decisions made, you can immediately get down to the problem of designing the game.

**Budget.** If you’re working in a specific format already, your budget has been pre-planned. If you don’t have a format in mind, you’ll have to develop one . . . a compromise between your “ideal” game and the money available for printing. Don’t design a game that has to have a thousand full-color counters if your total budget for the job is $450. The best sequence here: (1) rough out the design; (2) list the components it would take to achieve it; (3) find out what those components would cost to produce; (4) if you’re over budget, start trimming.

**Convenience.** Whatever you do, you must design your components to make play easier. This is why playtesting with actual component mock-ups is so important. Some interesting designs have been badly flawed by fairly trivial component problems: *Knights and Knaves*, with its incomplete tables, monochrome counters that need to be colored before you start play; *Godsfire*, with a dozen “planet sheets,” each covered with cardboard chits, that must be protected from breezes or careless elbows; *Zargo’s Lords*, with hexagonal counters that obscure the whole hex . . . you can add to the list as you like.

**Assembly.** Remember that eventually you’ll have to get all of your components into a box, bag, or envelope. Make sure they fit. This may seem like a trivial piece of advice — but don’t forget it.

**Salesability.** If you’re designing for the market, your final package must (a) be something that can be produced at a profit — which means absolutely no more than 1/5 of the final selling price can be spent on printing; (b) look like it’s worth the final selling price. A pretty $20 game with lots of useful components will sell more than a sad-looking $5 game with a few shoddy sheets of paper; (c) be something the market wants — which is beyond the scope of this section.

**Accuracy.** You don’t want missing names on the maps, misprints on the counters, errors on the charts and tables. You absolutely don’t want mistaken figures and examples — these are things that drive the customer mad. Which means playtest.

Component Playtesting

It’s just as important to test the components as it is to test your rules. Component playtesting goes through two stages:

**Design test.** Make up fairly close mock-ups of your maps, counters, etc. — but especially the charts and tables — as you think they will be in the final version. Then use them in play. See what works, and what may be misleading or inconvenient. If anything is too inconvenient, change it and start over.

**Proofreading test.** Very few game companies go through this stage — it’s troublesome in the extreme, and slows their schedules — which is why so many games are so full of mistakes. To try it, proceed as follows: after all your maps, counters, charts, rulebook, etc. are laid out in their final form, make copies of them — just as they’ll be in the finished version — and playtest. Don’t just proofread — PLAY. You’re trying to eliminate small typographical errors — but you’ll find errors, playing, that you won’t turn up in any number of “cold” readings of the rules.

It’s hard to sit on an apparently complete set of paste-ups for a week instead of taking them to the printer. But it’s better than printing an errata sheet two weeks after the game comes out.

Get to Know Your Printer

In general, the more you know about printing, the more you’ll get for your money when you start producing components. Talk to your local printers; find out which ones are cooperative. A printer who understands what you are trying to do can often make valuable suggestions. A printer who has no idea what you’re doing can destroy you totally.

**Rules**

The first component you’ll deal with is the rulebook. This is also the easiest — just a little booklet. If your game is boxed, the booklet can have a plain cover. If it’s to be sold in a bag, you’ll want to give the rulebook the prettiest cover you can manage.

If your rules are very short, you may be able to fit them onto a single sheet of paper. One warning: sheets larger than about one legal-sized page are hard for the readers to manage. A couple of my own first game releases had single rulesheets more than twice that size, and many people had trouble manipulating them. It seems to be easier just flip through the pages of a standard rulebook, and that’s probably the way I’ll do it from now on.

In general, the rulebook should be as neat as possible. It should be indexed if the rules are more than about 500 words long; a non-indexed rulebook is a crime
against the gamer, with heinously increasing as the square of the number of pages. You should number the rules sections, or the pages — preferably both. Use dark-colored ink (preferably black) on light-colored paper. Fancy ink colors are expensive and hard to read.

Maps

The amount of information that can be presented on a map is, in large part, a function of your budget. A multi-color map not only looks much better — it can offer more data, and in clearer form. But those of you who are limited to one color shouldn’t despair. It’s with a single-color map that your graphic talent (or lack of it) will show most clearly.

The most important point in designing a game map is to make it clear. Names and symbols absolutely must be readable; they must be large enough to see; and they must stand out from their background. Terrain symbols must be unambiguous; boundaries must be clearly shown. Show different sorts of areas by color, shading, etc. If you are using different symbols that will be unfamiliar to your readers, make them very legible, and provide a key — preferably on the map itself, so any colors on the map can also be shown on the key. A scraggly-looking map is the first deadly sign of a quick-and-dirty game production.

Next: make it attractive. Even the most serious fan would rather play on a good-looking board than an ugly one. If you have no sense of design, find a friend who does. It is always possible to blend symbols, colors, type styles, and the rest of the map information into a coherent whole that advances the “feel” of the game. Do it! Too many low-priced games (for that matter, too many expensive ones) suffer from ugly maps because the designer (or publisher) couldn’t be troubled to produce attractive ones. (While you’re at it, resist the temptation to print with orange ink on lavender paper.)

If you want to decorate the map with marginal illustrations, calligraphy, etc., etc. — go right ahead. Look at Chaosium’s boxed games for some beautiful map examples.

Finally, make your map helpful. This will come in playtesting, and is another sign of finished design as opposed to quick-and-dirty. Watch for additional bits of special information that don’t have to be on the map — but help play. Add setup and reinforcement information; whatever the design requires. Often you will be repeating information given in the rulebook. That’s all right. A certain amount of redundancy makes a game easier to understand and play. And information right there on the map is better than data you have to pull from the book.

Depending on your budget, you may be able to backprint the map. If you do, be careful what you put on the back. NEVER put the game rules on the back. Optional-scenario rules, maybe. (I did that in Raid on Iran, rather than leave the scenario out, but I’ll change it in the second edition.) Good things to put on the back of the map are advertising; historical information; hints for strategy; or even just artwork. As a rule, put things on the back of the map if and only if they will be of interest to the gamers before or after play, but not especially during play.

Mounted maps are a feature of some of the more expensive games. This is purely a sales decision. A mounted map is a bit more convenient, and usually more attractive — but it doesn’t affect the actual design much. The stability of a mounted board makes “geomorph” maps — multi-section maps that can be assembled in different ways — slightly more feasible.

Charts and Tables

Some material absolutely has to be presented in tabular form — combat results tables, for instance, or weapon effects. Other rules information leaves you more of a choice. Terrain effects, for instance, may be tabular, or may be presented in the text. Before you put material in a table, think. Too many charts and tables can befuddle the player (especially the first time he picks it up). Some material is better placed in textual form — or even directly on the maps or counters.

The best way to handle charts and tables is to print them on a separate sheet of paper. You may even want to provide two copies of any especially important tables.

Second-best is to place a table on the map. This may actually be best in some cases. If you have a two-player game and can fit a copy of the CRT on each end of the map, fine. But a chart placed on the map in such a way that only one player can read it... that’s a nuisance.

Just as bad is a chart placed in the rulebook. Eventually, one player will need to consult the rules while another player looks at the chart. Inconvenient.

Absolute worst is a chart placed on the back side of the map. Don’t laugh. I’ve seen it done. But don’t you do it.

Graphic design of charts and tables is a neglected art. SPI uses color-bars to make it easier to read across their tables — not a bad trick. Even more helpful is the use of art. If you table concerns units, put unit silhouettes on it (e.g., Kung Fu 2100) to make it easier to use. If you’re tabulating terrain effects, show the terrain symbols. Use your imagination.

Proofread your tables over and over again.

If you’ve got a high budget, you can print charts and tables on cardstock, to make them last longer. Role-playing games often use “referee shields” — large folded pieces of cardstock, with various useful tables on one or both sides, to hide the GM’s map from the players.

Record Sheets

In many games, a single counter is used on the board to represent a unit with many different attributes. These attributes are noted on a “record sheet.” A simple record sheet (i.e., for Ogre) can be drawn up by hand before play. If your record sheet is a complex one (i.e., for Dragonquest), playtest it extensively. You must include space for all necessary data; headings must be clear and easy to find, and spaces must be large enough to write in. On a record sheet, pretty pictures are less important that total clarity. I recommend including one or two copies of a complex record sheet, and letting players photocopy their own (see Play Aids, below). Alternatively, you can make a record sheet permanently by printing it on plastic or laminating it, so players can mark it with grease pencil and erase it. Very nice, but costly. Star Fleet Battles uses an ingenious acetate folder to hold record sheets.

Some games include permanent record sheets on which cardboard chits can be moved around to indicate changes in status. The theory is all right, but can give problems in practice. Such a sheet is hard to move and cannot be stacked. The more (and bigger) your record sheets are, the less workable they become.

Counters

Design and production of game counters is often a stumbling block. Counters are small... and expensive. Counter design depends largely on your budget — so we’ll deal with production options first.

The cheapest way to do counters is to print them on ordinary paper. The customer must glue them to cardboard and then cut them out. This is fine in theory;
in practice, a pasted-down counter has a tendency to peel off. This option is therefore acceptable only in an amateur production; it would be scoffed at in a "professional" effort.

Any professional design, then, will have counters printed on cardstock. As a rule, heavier is better. However, cardstock with a "natural" cardboard back should be avoided. It is inexpensive, but has a tendency to split apart in layers. It also cannot be backprinted.

Die-cutting is a "status symbol" in game production. Personally I don't like it; it's expensive, often inaccurate, and produces counters with fuzzy corners that interfere with stacking. But some customers prefer it, and game reviewers are impressed by it.

My preferred alternative is to supply the customer with a totally uncut piece of cardstock — let them cut it out themselves. This is cheaper, eliminates the problem of inaccurate cutting, and gives more leeway in counter design. But it's not as convenient for the buyer. Right or wrong, die-cutting is a mark of the "expensive" game. If you decide to go with die-cutting, either supervise it yourself, or get a guarantee from your printer. Quality varies greatly, and a bad job of die-cutting will make the counters both ugly and unusable.

A compromise occasionally seen is strip-cutting — that is, cutting the counters in one direction only. This is cheaper than die-cutting, but no more accurate. It avoids "fuzzy corners," but the buyer still has to use his scissors. I don't recommend it.

The next budget question is color. Talk to your printer. Sometimes two colors are almost as cheap as one, or four as cheap as three. Find out what his press can do. The more colorful the counters, the better. Color-it-yourself counters are only for the amateur publication.

Should you backprint the counters? Some game systems simply will not work unless the counters are printed on two sides. In other situations back-printing can halve the number of counters needed. But it's expensive. Each counter sheet must run through the press twice. Furthermore, the back of each counter must be aligned perfectly with its front — and any die-cutting must be aligned with both front and back. This increases waste and therefore cost. Don't do it unless you really need to.

If your budget allows you to do everything with the counters that the game design calls for, you can start to work on the individual counter designs. Otherwise, you need to change your ideas about the game, or find more money.

Number of counters. This must fit within two parameters: the game requirements and the requirements of the format. If your format doesn't allow you all the counters you need, re-design or change formats. If you have room to add extra counters, be careful. Adding extra unit counters without playtesting the new counter mix can ruin your game balance.

Artwork. Each counter will contain pictures, words, letters, numbers . . . something to show what it represents. A typical wargame counter has a central picture (usually a silhouette); numbers giving its abilities; and a name or number for identification. Study your game library for ideas. The objective is to give maximum information with maximum legibility — and make it attractive, too. You should use the largest type you can (which means few numbers and short words). Pictoral symbols should be easily distinguishable from each other. Don't carry the graphics all the way to the edge of the counter; leave a margin for cutting. This is especially vital if the counters are to be die-cut. Talk about tolerances with your printer. Uncut counters can use more of their space; scissors are more accurate than die-cutters.

Size. If your counters are to be die-cut, your die governs the size counters you can use, and that's that. (If you're playing in the leagues where the company will make a special die to fit your designs, have fun, and think kindly of us peons.) If your counter sheet is uncut, you can tailor the size (and shape) of your counters to fit design needs.

Color. The general wargaming convention is that color is used to distinguish the different sides. Even if you have only one color of ink (say, black), you can get three legible colors: black-on-white, black-on-gray, and white-on-black. (This last effect is called a "reverse.") Make sure your printer can do it before you take him the finished art.) The more colors you have, the prettier you can get. When you get to full four-color process, your counters can quit being symbols and turn into actual representations of the object.

Backprinting. Usually a backprinted counter is used to show one unit in two different states: alert/sleeping, full strength/depleted, healthy/wounded, loyal/rebel, . . . whatever the design requires. Sometimes it's just a way of getting twice as many counters: put Russian tanks on one side of the counter and Americans on the other, and let the side turned up depend on whether today's battle is East Front or West. You can also do "customer backprinting." If you're on a low budget and (for instance) have to distinguish between units with different values, all of which seem alike until encountered, you can have your customer mark them himself by writing on the backs. Definitely a low-rent operation, but acceptable if you're publishing on an amateur basis.

Cards

Many games require cards, of one sort or another, as components. These may be small (Stellar Conquest) or enormous (the alien cards in Cosmic Encounter) pieces of cardstock. Or they may be laminated like playing cards.

If you're going with cardstock, treat them as though they were counters. You've got all the same problems and choices: color, artwork/photos, lettering, die-cutting. (With cards you have an alternative to die-cutting: perforation. Less expensive, but not as nice-looking.) Of course, a card can carry a lot more information and/or more detailed art than any counter can.

If you want playing-card quality components, you had best seek out a professional card printer. Check the Yellow Pages in your nearest large city.

Boxes

To box or not to box? That's basically a budget-and-sales rather than design decision. If you do box your game, you may want to print some of the rules (or charts) inside the box lid, so it can do double duty. In a role-playing game, the box can make a GM's shield.

A box is primarily a sales aid. It can make a game look more expensive — therefore it can sell for more. It's also a status symbol. When you have a boxed game, you're in the big leagues. The one practical purpose a box serves is to keep the game components together and protected — and a ziplock bag does this job better than some of the flimsy boxes on the market now.

If you do decide to box your game, try for a solid box. It will resist shipping better (which will keep the retailers happy), and last longer once bought (which will please your customers). And remember: the box art sells the game. Some companies seem to put most of their budget into designing brightly-colored and attractive boxes. The contents may be badly playtested and shabby, but those boxes will sell lots of games. I can't say I recommend this approach, but there's a lesson in it. If you have a box, make it pretty.

If you don't box a game, you can put it in a bag (ziplock or otherwise). Ziplock is an added expense, but worth it. Or you
can sell it in a paper envelope, as SPI does with some of their mail-order games. Ya-Quinto has recently introduced their "album games," packaged in a sort of double-record-album affair. This is the first new idea in game packaging to come around recently, and it looks to be successful. The albums look expensive and glossy, but are cheaper than boxes.

**Play Aids**

This category takes in the various items that you need in order to play the game — but which are available separately. The more expensive the game, the likelier it is that the customer will expect play aids to be included. A $20 game without dice will surprise the buyer; a $5 without dice seems reasonable.

My own view is that no play aid should be included if the customer can get it at the corner store. You may need a pencil to play some games — but you don’t expect to find one in the box. It would be a pointless increase in cost. Similarly, graph paper (unless it’s non-standard) can be omitted. You might give the buyer one sheet, to get him started. If he wants more, let him make copies.

Likewise, you don’t want to include a whole pad of character/ship/city/planet/unit record sheets. Include one copy in a small game, or a half-dozen in a big game and let the buyer make copies as needed.

Dice are a special case. Six-sided dice are a standard item and can be omitted in low-ticket games. (Tiny dice are a novelty item, not a play aid. If you can’t include dice of a useful size, don’t include any.) Polyhedral dice are rare enough, even today, that a boxed game which requires them should include them. (TSR, I’m happy to note, has finally realized this.)

Too often, a few cheap play aids are included in a boxed game in order to justify a high price. Now that I’ve dutifully mentioned this strategy, let me ask you, as a designer, not to use it.

**Oddball Components**

Sometimes a game may require an unusual component, e.g., Triplanetary’s first edition included a large sheet of acetate, and some International Team games have fancy “combat wheels.” In general, avoid these things unless they’re absolutely necessary to the game. If they’re expensive they can drive you to the wall. Even if they’re cheap, they can keep you from selling the design to a major company: “Nice idea, Mr. Jones, but it doesn’t fit our format.” Case in point: Triplanetary’s acetate sheet caused GDW all kinds of problems with packaging, and has now been replaced by a plastic map. And have you seen International Team’s prices?

Not that originality in component design is bad. Cosmic Encounter is a classic, and practically all its components are non-standard. But they happen to be integral to the game, and the game happens to work. (I don’t understand how Eon can make money on it, though.) Experimentation is great. Just remember that if you keep your experimentation along relatively standard lines your risk is less.

My own first set of games was an experiment in component design: the map, sheet, rules, charts, and tables for each game were supplied on a single sheet of paper, which the gamer cut apart. This proved workable — but (as mentioned above), the oversize rule-sheet was less convenient than a rulebook would have been. I’ll modify the format somewhat for the next games published, but I won’t scrap it entirely; I like the flexibility it offers.

**New Directions**

The future will surely see some worthwhile innovations in gaming components. High-ticket games may well start including actual miniatures (metal, plastic, or cardboard) for play. Certain “family” wargames (e.g., Feudal) already do this, and some miniature sets already include (very brief) game rules.

Counters don’t have to be made out of cardboard. Our technology isn’t quite up to solving all the problems that would come with plastic counters — but it’s just a matter of time. A few years ago, plastic maps you could write on and erase were a pipe-dream. Now we have them in some games, and we will in others.

As computers continue to interface with wargames, a floppy disk or tape may become a standard component in some games.

At the other end of the scale, a “macrogame” could be run on a web press like a newspaper, getting the rules and map all in one press run. Quality would be poor compared to some present-day products, but a truly gigantic map, and many pages of rules, could be produced for ten dollars rather than fifty or sixty.

There will definitely be advances — and each advance will suggest new directions in design. The only thing we can be sure the future holds is more variety.

---

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Games for which reviews have been assigned or received include: Attack Force, The C&S Sourcebook, D&D Dungeon Geomorph, Duel Arcane, Flying Saucers, Furioso, The Hammer of Thor, High Guard (2nd Ed.), Nebula 19, Sewers of Oblivion, Swords & Sorcerers, Thieves' Guild, and The Warp Factor.

Specific games for which we are seeking reviews include: Apocalypse, Dark Stars, The Dragonlords, IPSP/ISIS Maps, Kung Fu 2100, and FireEater.

ARENA OF DEATH (SPI); $6.00. Designed by David James Ritchie. Boxed, with a 13-page 8½” x 11” rulebook, 100 die-cut counters, a 17” x 22” mapsheet, and one set of randomizer chips. Two or more players; playing time varies. Published 1980.

ARENA OF DEATH is a game of arena combat using the combat system developed for DragonQuest (reviewed, TSG 31). Each player controls one or more combatants chosen either from one of five character races (human, elf, dwarf, halfling, orc), or from a list of monsters. Characters who survive the combat accrue experience points which may be traded in to increase a character attribute. The method for designing characters is: pick a race, assign the attribute points; select armor, shield, and weapons; start fighting.

The high point of ARENA OF DEATH is its combat system, which is based very closely on DragonQuest. Unfortunately, the result is a dull game. One-on-one combat amounts to a die-rolling contest. A free-for-all might be more interesting, if you could convince people to play.

The only people to whom I can recommend this game are fantasy role-players interested in adapting ARENA OF DEATH's combat and maneuver rules for use with their FRPG. DragonQuest is probably a better buy; for four dollars more you get monsters, magic, and other skills, and a slightly more complete combat and character generation system.

—Eric Paperman

DR. WHO (Games Workshop); $20.00. Designed by Derek Carver. Box includes 16” x 22” mapboard, 239 counters, 6 plastic tokens, 6 reference sheets, one 12-sided die, 2-6 players; playing time 1 hour. Published 1980.

This boardgame is loosely based on the British science fiction serial of the same name. The board is divided into 80 zones. Each contains an alien, a gadget and (possibly) part of the Key of Chronos (a super artifact in the game). The object of the game is to collect a complete set.

The rules are brief and clean. However, there is little else to say for this game; it is too simple for most adult gamers.

Recommended to die-hard Dr. Who fans or to those who are beginning to find Candyland a little dull.

—Forrest Johnson

DUNGEON, 2nd Ed. (TSR); $10. Designed by David R. Megarry. Box includes 18” x 21” mapboard, 165 cards, 125 counters, 8 plastic tokens, 2 dice, 1-8 players; playing time 1-2 hours. Published 1975, revised 1980.

This is a boardgame, not an FRPG. Your character is an elf, hero, superhero, or wizard. The map represents a dungeon of six levels, with rooms, corridors, and stairs. Movement is simply 5 spaces a turn. Combat is resolved by simple dice rolls.

The graphics are improved over the earlier edition. Play is much cleaner. No longer is the map cluttered with cards — you draw a monster card when you enter a room, and a treasure card if you kill a monster. There is no more combat between players. A wizard can no longer win the game by immobilizing a few elves and heroes.

Unfortunately, a wizard can still win by cleverly killing the upper levels, forcing the weaker players to enter the dangerous part of the board. The dwarf class has been eliminated. The alternate classes from Dragon have been excluded. Whoever decides to make this simple game even simpler should have his brains pounded before he does more damage.

Recommended to rank beginners and the hopelessly drunk.

—Forrest Johnson

THE FURY OF THE NORSEMEN (MegaGames); $3.95. Designed by Keith Hendry. Boxed, with 16-page rule booklet, die, 126 die-cut counters, and 17” x 14” map. For two players; playing time about one hour. Published 1980.

THE FURY OF THE NORSEMEN is a historical game simulating Viking raids on Western Europe during the 9th and 10th Centuries. One player controls the Vikings, while the other player controls the English. The Vikings try to pillage and plunder the village. The English try to puzzle the Norsemen with his household cavalry and small garrisons of soldiers.

The rules are complete and easy to understand. Combat is quick and simple. At first glance this game seems to be one-sided in favor of the Vikings but the villagers have a neat trick up their sleeves. They can say one little prayer: "From the fury of the Norsemen, oh Lord, deliver us" and invoke the Divine Wrath. Then the Vikings better do some praying of their own.

THE FURY OF THE NORSEMEN might get repetitive after a few games unless the players themselves really get "into" it.
THE FURY OF THE NORSEMEN is a quick playing, easy game. If you have courageous and barbaric spirit (as I'm sure most of us do) then this game is for you.

—Paul Manz

KINGS AND CASTLES (Athena Games, POB 9, Ames, IA 50010) $10.00. Designed by Sven Bauer. 32-page 5½” x 8½” rulebook, 105 die-cut counters, 50 2” x 3½” cards, reference sheets, 2 dice, bagged, 2-8 players; playing time 3-6 hours. Published 1980.

KINGS AND CASTLES is a fantasy board game. Players are individual warring kings. "Diplomatic, as well as, strategic qualities become more and more evident as players attempt to overthrow one another in the KINGS AND CASTLES arena." Each player plans, simultaneously, his movement for an entire year (15 turns) on the yearly program sheet. When everyone is finished plotting the players move one turn at a time. If two opposing forces enter the same area, there is a chance of conflict. Combat takes place with each side adding up combat factors. For each factor, a card is pulled and the result applied to the enemy.

The greatest thing about KINGS AND CASTLES is its production and movement system. Players can build armies, cavalry, fortresses, and ships without anyone else knowing. Then you are allowed to maneuver these forces in such a way that it is practically impossible to predict the end location. Confrontations are the exception, not the rule.

KINGS AND CASTLES has some problems. There is no explanation why you are at war. Also the graphics are not the best. The map has several names on it, most of them illegible. The biggest "waste" of time in KINGS AND CASTLES was in the game company's advertising campaign. What? You've never heard of KINGS AND CASTLES? Then you understand what I mean.

KINGS AND CASTLES is one of the best fantasy wargames that I have played in a long time. It has a high excitement value and is definitely worth buying. You won't get "stuck" with this one.

—Jerry Epperson

THE LORDS OF UNDEREARTH (Metagaming); $3.95. Designed by Keith Gross. 22-page rulebook, 84 die-cut counters, 12½” x 14” georphic map, one die, plastic pouch, boxed. One to two players; playing time 45-90 minutes. Published 1981.

Subterranean warfare—elves vs dwarves vs humans vs monsters in an underground labyrinth — is the theme of Metagaming's latest micro, THE LORDS OF UNDEREARTH. This is one of the better introductory fantasy games to come along for a while. The premise, a city one of Metagaming’s best non-TFT offerings in some time. Old-time fantasy gamers will probably find nothing new in THE LORDS OF UNDEREARTH, but newcomers—or old-timers looking for an hour or so of simple fun—will go far wrong with this one. The game plays well; the rules are clearly written and scenarios are generally well thought out and fairly balanced.

The map for TLOU is nicely detailed—more so than most MicroGame maps—with rooms, stairs, tunnels, corridors, and hazards and can be cut up and rearranged for variety of play, though this isn't necessary for the scenarios included. The rule on cutting down the strength of a company unit attacking in or through a narrow corridor or tunnel is a nice touch—refreshing compared to some systems’ handling of the same problem. And the game—though still boxed—is wrapped in an inner plastic pouch, just like the old micros (possibly in deference to those of us who care not at all for the cheap, fall-apart Milk Duds-like boxes?). The die is bigger, too!

The die is bigger, too!

There are problems. The die-cut counters are thin, flaky pasteboard type rather than the sturdy, partially-cut cardboard ones still used in TGT modules. Some of the rules are less than satisfying, such as the two- or three-column favorable shift given on the CRT to individuals fighting companies. The infiltration rule, which allows even a company to "slip through" an alerted enemy company in an adjacent hex, is mismatched at best. Some of the conversions from TLOU to IL and vice versa are rather ambitious. And there are several errors in the rules.

In spite of these difficulties, THE LORDS OF UNDEREARTH still qualifies as a game to be recommended to novice fantasy gamers and aficionados of The Fantasy Trip role-playing system. Fantasy veterans might find it an interesting diversion from their more complex endeavors as well.

—William A. Barton

SPACE WARRIOR (Argon Games, POB 12341, Raleigh, NC 27605); $3.95. Designed by Robert J. McCrease and Stephen G. Walburn. 6-page 5½” x 8½” rulesheet, 11” x 17” mapsheet, 40 super-thin counters, 3 charts, bagged. 2 players; playing time 30 minutes up. Published 1980.

SPACE WARRIOR is a science fiction combat game. Players are either a boarding party or the crew of the defending spaceship. The designers assume that the combatants are mindless barbarians who kill without quarter. SPACE WARRIOR plays very simply. It is

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a fast and dirty blood-bath type game. Fun, but not for serious gamers.

The designers assume that the reader is an experienced gamer and will know enough not to shoot or move through a wall (a fact that is only mentioned in the charts, not in the rules). Also the reader is called upon to figure out the effects that reloading a power-pack have on the weapon’s ammunition supply. (I'm not sure that I understand it myself.)

SPACE WARRIOR could have used a little more work in the playtest and editing. If you do not like simple “move-in-flight-and-move-on” games, it is not for you. I would suggest SNAP
shot as a better alternative.

—Jerry Epperson

STAR FLEET BATTLES Designer's Edition (Task Force Games); $12.95. Designed by Stephen V. Cole. 44-page rulebook, one 22” x 20”
map, 216 die-cut counters, 10 chart and table
sheets, two plastic page protectors, two marking
pencils, two dice, boxed. One to two (or
more) players; playing time 1-5 hours. Published
1979.

STAR FLEET BATTLES (reviewed TSG 25) is Task Force Games' simulation of ship-to-
ship combat in the Star Trek universe. The
improvement over the earlier pocket version is
extensive. Certain ambiguities in the rules have
been corrected or classified; several important
new rules have been added as an “advanced
game;” there are twice as many counters, some
representing new ship types, allowing more
action and variety; the Tholians and Orion Pi
nates have been included; the Klingon fleet has
finally become a force to be reckoned with,
sporting attack shuttles, carriers, and more
drones. The impulse movement system, though
it may take a few playings to get used to, is
far superior to either the old “move-then-fire;
you-move-then-fire” or “simultaneous-written-
order” movement systems used in other space
battle games, allowing for more realistic simul
taneous movement and for weaponry fire
during movement. This avoids the ludicrous
situation in which both sides pass each other at
optimum firing points yet must wait until end of
movement to fire, as can happen in some
games. The free movement method of advanced
game even eliminates the basic game nuisance of
plotting movement for each turn. This speeds up
play and allows course changes to counter
enemy action during a turn. However, I recom
mend plotted movement for ships moving at
high speeds even if free movement is used —
even computer reaction time is sure to be
reduced at Warp-3 and above.

With a game as ambitious as STAR FLEET
BATTLES, there are bound to be problems.
Oversights are still evident in the rules, especially
in the advanced game (though many are cor
rected in the new expansion kit). And there are
minor omissions in some of the SSSDs. Not
enough counters are provided with the game to
play some of the scenarios (my biggest gripe)
unless two or more games are combined. TFG
should seriously consider selling counter sheets
separately. And some aspects of the game re
main unbalanced: The point system for rating
ships is quite misleading. Anyone doubting this
should pit a 20-point Federation Destroyer against
a 21-point Kzinti Light Cruiser.

All in all, I’d have to give my whole-hearted
recommendation to STAR FLEET BATTLES. I
find it a most satisfying game. I would, how
ever, caution Trekkers who are inexperienced at
simulations gaming to start with a less complex
space combat game before trying SFB. But
those of you who are old hands, if you haven't
yet taken the helm of the U.S.S. Enterprise or
one of its sister ships, then boldly go to your
local game store and pick up a copy.

—William A. Barton

VOYAGE OF THE B.S.M. PANDORA

(SPD); $6.00. Designed by John H. Butterfield
with Edward J. Woods. 16-page 8½” x 11”
rulebook, 11½” x 17” mapsheet; 100 die-cut
counters, 2 dice, boxed. One player; playing
time one to three hours. Published 1981.

This game simulates the hypothetical voy
age of a biological survey mission space ship in
the distant future. The player attempts to cap
ture as many alien creatures and artifacts as
possible, with a minimum loss of life and equip
ment.

The game is amazingly realistic, with eight
possible land surfaces and extensive planetary
data squeezed attractively onto the

The first several games are interesting
and exciting, but the game becomes boring and
repetitive as the player becomes familiar with
the narrative paragraphs. As a game, the VOY
AGE OF THE B.S.M. PANDORA lacks durability,
although the game-life could be extended by
the release of additional paragraphs.

Overall, I would recommend this game to
anyone who enjoys science fiction literature and
has an itch to be a character in the
book. The game is an excellent compromise
between a novel and a role-playing game.

—Milo B. Shiff

WARLOCK (Games Workshop); $20 (about
$4 cheaper in England). Designed by Bob Con
nor. Rigid 9½” x 11½” map, 156 illustrated
cards, 24 plastic tokens and counters, 6 record
sheets, boxed. 2-4 players; playing time 2
hours. Published 1980.

WARLOCK is a card game. Wizards duel by
confronting dragon, dwarves, heroes and so
forth, sometimes casting thunderbolts or faced
lightning — the spell tables are extensive. Losers
go to limbo, and may return as long as they
have magic points. Usually, there can be but
one winner . . . though shared victory is possi
ble.

The play can be exciting — as your magic
points get low, as your opponent frantically
searches his hand for something to reflect a
gorgon's stare, as you check to see whether
someone else's trolls are going to wander off
and attack you by mistake. The components
are top notch; the art is masterful.

Unfortunately, some of those beautifull
components are redundant. (This is a card
game; it needs a map about as much as poker
does.) Searching extensive spell tables is no fun;
a lot of that information would have been
better placed on the cards. Some of the rules
are ambiguous. (Is it cricket for one wizard to
poke another wizard with his magic sword?
Why isn't it on the table?)

WARLOCK is too complicated for a parlor
but does not allow enough strategy for a
good wargame. A nice try, but oversimplified,
overpackaged, and overpriced.

—Forrest Johnson
SUPPLEMENTS


An introductory scenario must, first and foremost, be an enjoyable adventure. It must also provide a "working model," so that beginning DMs can see how to construct and organize an adventure. And it must be easily read, that the novice referee not become lost and confused with travelling from Crypt 1 to Village 3.

This adventure goes a long way towards accomplishing those goals. The scenario itself, set on an island whose simple human culture bears tinges of Polynesian and Amerind societies, is relatively tame, but provides some tense moments. Enough variable situations are presented to keep the whole thing from becoming static. More important, in this instance, is the module's organization as a prototype. It does well here, too; almost all the maps can be removed and the appropriate text descriptions are clearly keyed to the proper maps. This scenario cannot be played cold, which is also a necessary experience for a novice DM; it must first be read through and assimilated.

No real problems evidence themselves. As noted, this adventure will not appeal to experienced players; there is a certain lack of color or sweep to the whole thing.

Recommended to beginners only -- but it says so on the cover.

--Aaron Allston

LEVIATHAN (GDW): $4.98. Designed by Bob McWilliams. Adventure for Traveller. One 6" x 9" 44-page booklet. One referee and four to eight players; playing time indefinite. Published 1980.

LEVIATHAN takes player-characters into the Oxitrim Veldh, an area beyond the established borders of the Imperium, fraught with danger from pirate corsairs, Zhodani patrols, rival merchant cartels, unknown worlds, and even the Imperial Grand Survey Branch of the Imperial Scout Service. As with all Traveller adventures, LEVIATHAN is complete with rumors, library data on all topics relevant to the adventure, and pre-generated characters for use as player-characters or NPCs. This adventure also includes complete data on two new subsectors and deck plans and full specifications for the Leviathan-class Merchant Cruiser.

Of particular interest to Traveller players will be the two new subsectors, Pax Rulin and Egyn, located to rimward of the Spinward Marches. Pax Rulin includes a new client state, the Semisi Foederate, and Egyn features several "asterisked" star systems -- unknowns the players must explore for possible sources of trade. The Leviathan-class cruiser will prove a welcome addition to the Traveller fleet, useful in many other situations beyond the present adventure. And we at last learn the specifics concerning the ubiquitous Zhodani Slave-class patrol frigate, tantalizingly mentioned in Twilight's Peak.

The only problem evident with LEVIATHAN is occasional sketchiness. Just enough information is given in the library data and elsewhere to merely whet the appetite of the confirmed Traveller-addict. Also, some ref's may miss the programmed aspects of adventures such as Twilight's Peak and Research Station Gamma in LEVIATHAN, which is much more open-ended than those two, more like Adventure 1, The Kinamin. (Others will no doubt rejoice in the greater freedom of such an approach.)

Whatever a ref's individual taste, he will surely find LEVIATHAN a worthy addition to the expanding universe of Traveller -- and a pretty good adventure to boot.

--William A. Barton

SECURITY STATION (Metagaming); $3.95. Designed by John W. Colbert. Adventure for The Fantasy Trip. One 48-page rulebook, 1 sheet of counters, 13½" x 8½" map, 1 die, boxed, 1-5 players; playing time indefinite. Published 1981.

One to three characters brave the corridors and rooms of an "ancient" high-tech fallout shelter, transported to Cdiri cins ago by Mnooren magic. SECURITY STATION is suitable for use as a solitaire game, a 2-4 player game or a full-blown refereed adventure. All necessary rules are included, so those who own only Melee and Wizard will have no problems playing -- though In the Labyrinth is recommended for fullest enjoyment. Players may portray experienced characters of any humanoid race except centaur or giant. SECURITY STATION has several noteworthy features. Players may not just take any weapons they wish; the station is located in a metal-poor region. A die roll determines

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how many large metal weapons or sets of armor are allowed. The high-tech nature of the labyrinth makes for some unique twists also — warped magic areas where spells cast twice or half as much as usual, strange artifacts, and some pretty nasty traps.

Unfortunately, the technological labyrinth idea was not fully developed. Too many of the battles turn out to be with the same old giants, dragons, giant snakes and fighters. A combination of highly experienced characters and a good roll on the weapons table can unbalance a lot of the situations. Also, the numbered instructions seem incomplete in places.

In spite of such flaws, SECURITY STATION should prove an interesting and possibly profitable/fatal adventure for your TTF characters.

—William A. Barton

TRADERS & GUNBOATS, Traveller supplement 7 (GDW); $3.98. Designed by Marc Miller (with Frank Chadwick, John Hearn, Loren Wiseman and Bob Lieberman). One 48-page 6” x 9” booklet. Playing time and number of players indefinite. Published 1981.

TRADERS & GUNBOATS, GDW’s 7th supplement for its SF RPG Traveller supplies descriptions and deck plans for eight major ship types and four small craft to be found plying the spaceways of the Imperium. Stats, plans, and illustrations are provided for the Xboat and Tender and the Type S Scout/Courier; the Type R Subsidized Merchant, and the Type A2 Far Trader; and the Type J Seeker; the Type CE Close Escort, and the Type SB System Defense Boat; and the launch, ship’s boat, pinnace, and cutter. Also covered are the air/raft, a special launch for the Type R, a seeker buggy for the Type J and an armed gig for the close escort.

While several of these ships have been at least partially described or laid out elsewhere, others are brand new to the Traveller universe.

The ship plans are all nicely conceived and well detailed. Especially welcome will be the Xboat Tender and the System Defense Boat with its detachable jump-cable shuttle. The special features of these two ships — such as the “pop-up” turret on the Tender and the underwater capabilities of the SDB — make them particularly nasty vessels to use as corsairs in pirate encounters. The new encounter tables make possible much more interesting situations than the regular tables, even allowing encounters with the Kinmouse-class battlecruisers, Azami-class frontier cruisers and Leveleigh-class merchant cruisers.

Also, not all is perfect. Various areas on the ship plans are numbered, yet not explained in the accompanying text, leaving it up to the player to guess at what is what. Some of the illustrations are a bit difficult to reconcile with the plans. And the Merchant Encounters table instructs that a −4 DM is to be added to systems inaccessible to jump-1 ships, yet renders this useless in some cases. Finally, it is interesting to note the significant differences between earlier versions of some of these ships and those in TRADERS & GUNBOATS. The Type S Scout differs in internal detail from both the Judges Guild and Snapshot plans; the Type R is radically dissimilar to the Guild version, its illustration looking like nothing so much as a flying humpback whale; and the close escort displays substantial changes from its earlier incarnation in Traveller’s Journal 4.

Overall, TRADERS & GUNBOATS’ assets far outweigh its few liabilities, making it a work of value to all Travellerites.

—William A. Barton

PLAY AIDS

THE ASTROGATORS CHARTBOOK (Judges Guild); $3.98. 94-page 8½” x 11” booklet. Published 1980.

THE ASTROGATORS CHARTBOOK includes three sets of mapping grids and a solar system display, all in black on heavy paper. The first set of blank hex grids in the unusual triangular shape used in Traveller planetary maps. On the same page with these hexahedron maps is the solar system display which consists of two lines marked off in millions of miles and kilometers, for placing planets and asteroids. The second set of the standard numbered hex grid in hex shape from JG’s “Campaign Hexagon System,” usable to enlarge any one hex of another map. The third set is composed of one-inch grid cards which is suggested to be used for buildings and structures.

 Judges Guild has done their usual efficient job in supplying an indexing page and planet, terrain, and building notation keys for use or adaptation. On the opposite side of each map is a lined page for notes, names, locations, and such. And JG has graciously allowed, in writing, players to photocopy all of these for personal use.

Considering the cost of photocopying all these maps out of a friend’s copy, it is worth buying the book. The types of grids picked for inclusion are the most current in Traveller usage. It is a must for all Traveller reference.

—Richard A. Edwards

CARDBOARD HEROES (SJ Games); $3.00. Painted by Denis Loubet. 40 cardboard 25mm figures, multi-colored. For use with fantasy role-playing systems. Released 1980.

For those of you who want miniatures but don’t have the artistic ability to paint them, and for those of you who can’t afford a nice array of fantasy miniatures at today’s ever-increasing prices — this is a problem solution to your problems. CARDBOARD HEROES is a set of multi-colored 25mm fantasy figures printed on hard cardboard stock. The figures in this first set are ideal for player characters in most fantasy role-playing systems, and future sets of baddies and monsters are planned. The cardboard is uncut, and sprayed in a plastic bag the size of most “micro” games.

All you have to do is look to see the strong point of this set… the figures are beautiful! Denis Loubet has outdone himself on these tiny little artistic endeavors, and if I ever meet him, I’ll be the first in line to shake his hand.

Whether this type of so-called miniatures set is weak or not is strictly a matter of taste. Even though I can’t paint them well, I like traditional miniatures. To me, these are weak substitutes — but again, that’s a matter of taste. Another complaint that I have is that the figures are not die-cut. It is explained that this keeps down the cost and that the machines, in their inaccuracy, might scar the characters. Still, an elbow jostled at the wrong time or a slip of the scissors could cut off the foot of my favorite character. Machines, with their nice straight lines will still do a better job than many humans. I’d have preferred them precut.

There isn’t much more to say about these — they are beautiful, they are inexpensive, and if you like them and have no objection to cardboard, they are certainly worthwhile.

—Martin Feldman
GORP (FIC); free with playtest sessions. One large can, yellow lid, varying amounts of peanuts, peanut sticks, yogurt raisins, sunflower seeds, cashews, dried fruit. Designed by Forrest Johnson.

This substance, created by the popularizer of the Inane Bedroom Door Bulletin Board, is provided free to numbers of unwitting laboratory rats on a weekly basis. It is touted as being "compatible with any fantasy role-playing game...or any game, for that matter," but is not necessarily compatible with all sorts of digestive systems.

GORP is a fine item for the gaming world, and is a very versatile play aid. It may easily be ground into any carpet style, as it tends to blend in with any color scheme. Different scenarios are presented each week as the formula changes.

It's suffered some problems in recent months, though. The withdrawal of the M&M squadron for political reasons put off a number of GORP's regular followers. Some variations fail utterly, leaving the frustrated games unwilling even to throw particles down opponents' V-necks and blouses.

I'd give GORP a qualified recommendation, for sheer perseverance and occasional high points.

-Errant Allsone


This is a compendium of "original" deities not specifically drawn from real mythologies. Each god or goddess is set up as per Deities and Demigods, with the addition of a "disposition chart." Roll 1d6 and you know that Vidnor, Bee Goddess, is hot-tempered today.

There are a number of good points to THE UNKNOWN GODS. The deities given here represent most human or demi-human species and classes, as well as worms of nature and emotion. Each deity has notes of varying completeness as to his personality, totems, and battle tactics. An illustration accompanies each description: most of the art is by Paul Jaquays. The disposition roll is elegant and useful, though in very few cases will different rolls produce the same disposition in a god; most deities appear to spend equal time among six different attitudes. Some of the deities are quite intriguing and original.

Others aren't. I'd like to know which of the authors claimed to have created Thanatos, God of Death, for example. Some gods are just dull — "Let's choose a topic and make up a god for it." Who cares about Erion, the Dog God? Also, the book by its very nature is composed of fragments. There is no effort toward arranging pantheons or notes giving recommendations on how to do so. Mortal heroes and demigods are also absent, though some of the gods listed are of such low power and hit points that they could be demigods instead.

This could be a volume especially for DMs whose players are too familiar with the traditional gods. I'd recommend it to referees who suffer from a difficulty in creating deities.

-Aaron Allston

MINIATURES

WIZARDS AND LIZARDS (Superior Models, Inc.); varied prices, most over $1 per figure.

25mm lead fantasy miniatures. Sculptor unknown. Released 1980. These are beautiful figures — up to Super- ior's usual quality. The style is very similar to Ralph Partha's...in fact, once painted, they could be played with Partha figures with no problem at all. Detail and posing are excellent, proportions good to fair. Many of the figures are very imaginative, especially the "Dark Lord," the "Knight," and the "Super Hero." One set of these figures is straight fantasy, and one is Arthurian series. There's also a "Norse Gods" line, which we haven't seen, and a dragon who is well enough designed that his wings will actually stay on once glued.

The only nit I can pick is with the price. At $4 to $4.50 for a set of four 25mm figures, these are at the top end of the market. Our local hobby shop breaks down the packages and sells figures singly, which will make it more convenient for buyers (the packaging is nothing special, anyway). If you're into 25mm lead, these are a "must see." Even at these high prices, there will be some you'll want.

-Steve Jackson

HELLFIRE WARRIOR (Automated Simulations); $39.95. Designed by Jeff Johnson and Jon Freeman. Program on disk or cassette for the Apple, TRS-80, and PET. One player; playing time hours or days. Can be saved. Published 1980.

This is the latest in Automated Simulations' Dunjonquest series (reviewed TSG 31). There are four levels, supposedly stacked below the Temple of Aphel. Somewhere on the bottom level lies the warrior queen Brynhild. Every level is accessible from the surface, but your long-term goal is to find Brynhild and drag her unconscious body past the dragons, demons, and undead creatures guarding it. Oh...and be careful not to step in any hell fire...and look out for Death...and...

This is definitely the most ambitious Dunjonquest to date. The "luggage" subroutine has been expanded; there is now an "apothecary" and a "magic shoppe." One can buy a draught of "Troll's Blood" (I recommend it!) or have his sword enchanted. The characters are

COMPUTER GAMES

GALACTIC TRADER (Cybernauts, P.O.B. 40112, San Francisco, CA 94140); $14.98. Tape for 16K Level II TRS-80. 10 levels of play. One player; playing time approximately 10 hours.

The object of GALACTIC TRADER is simple: make money. You were once a great general but now the war is over and you command only one small ship. With your ship, 1000 credits, and 1000 liters of fuel, you must travel the galaxy and trade your goods for other goods which are worth more (or less if you are not careful). (The galaxy consists of about 15 planets.) Running out of fuel will often turn a rich man into a dead one.

The game allows for a variety of commands. Each game is different in that planets are randomly placed at the beginning of each game. The program also restricts the player from returning to a base by introducing the possibility of assassination and the formation of cartels. The computer also proves to be a tough trade partner.

Unfortunately, once a figure is entered it cannot be changed. (This may sound trivial, but oftentimes it is deadly.) Yet the biggest problem is that the game is made too easy. The problem is the central computer, which will tell the player how much fuel is needed to reach a given planet, provide trade records, etc. Overall, a good game despite its flaws. Although the $14.95 price tag might be a bit high, I must recommend this game for anyone who likes playing games against the computer.

-Glenn Mai

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more powerful, and the monsters fiercer, than in the previous adventures. HELLFIRE WARRIOR can be exciting, but it also can be monotonous. My character, Sansson, killed over a hundred monsters on one trip. The hundredth fight was definitely not as interesting as the first. The hacking can get tedious; some of the monsters have a billion hit points. Your character's attributes seem to go down a lot faster than up. Worst, finding Brynhild is purely a matter of luck; most players will have to deduce the hints given in the rulebook.

Still, I won't forget my last view of Sansson — badly wounded, crawling desperately towards the exit, with sweet-but-cumbersome Brynhild in tow and an outraged fed at his heels. If you enjoyed the earlier games, HELLFIRE WARRIOR is a must.

—Forrest Johnson

LABYRINTH (Med Systems Software, POB 2674, Chapel Hill, NC 27514); $12.95. Cassette for the 16K TRS-80 Level II Model I. One player; playing time many hours. Can be saved. Published 1980.

Unbelievable! When you are at a crossway between paths and look down the hall you actually LOOK DOWN THE HALL! The walls recede in the distance, with the various doors and pits clearly visible. Slowly your torch flickers and your food supply gets eaten. The command list seems large, but all normal movement is via the arrow keys. The clues and tools that will allow you to kill the Minotaur are scattered through the maze. There are endless twists and turns and I freely admit to having not yet gotten it all together before a strange fog envelops me and I am ripped saunter again.

The program's strongest feature is undoubtedly the graphics. None of this description nonsense. What you see is what you get. The machine language graphics are literally faster than the eye and there is almost a motion picture effect as you run down a long hall.

The flaws are fairly minor. The lack of a keyboard debouce can leave a player hopelessly lost as your single left turn occurs three times. The walls are mostly identical, so take a lot of backtracking to insure you really are where you plotted yourself to be. I also think the program could have been enhanced with some sort of sound routine. Lastly, I would prefer some caution for the instant-death events that do occur. It is possible to escape the oncoming Minotaur in certain situations, but frequently one dies without a note of warning.

This is truly one of the best adventure games by any criteria. At $12.95 it borders on unbelievable. Believe it. Buy it.

—J. Mishcon

PARSECTOR V (Synergistic Solar); $19.95. Cassette for the TRS-80 Level II Model I. Three levels of difficulty. One or two players; playing time 3 hours. Cannot be saved. Published 1980.

Using a split screen, each player maneuvers on his own board while trying to scuttle the opponent's monsters. Your mother ship uses her limited allotment of time to produce three types of fleet battle craft ("Fyers, cruisers, and bases") or fire energy weapons. You can win by owning 68% of the galaxy or draining your opponent's energy banks.

The game is very complex and the instruction manual only gives the barest guidelines on how best to play. Fortunately, the computer opponent does make for interesting play. I can probably many hours of study on how best to play any given situation. The split screen adds lovely "fog of war" touch. The graphics are quite adequate and a photocopyable navigation chart is provided to ease play.

My only complaint might be that this long and complex game cannot be saved. If you're like me it's hard to leave any one thing on the computer for so long a period of time.

This is worth a try for all those who enjoy complex games with the "fog of war.

—J. Mishcon

SLAG (Adventure International); $14.95. Cassette by Mr. Eastman for the TRS-80 Level II, Model I. One level of difficulty. Two to twelve players; playing time more than one hour. Cannot be saved. Excellent manual. December 1980. Published 1980.

Each player is given a nation. One then is given the choice of building industry, ABMs, ICBMs, subs with missiles, bombers, ASW aircraft, and a spy network with your limited output. The object is to totally destroy all other players' industry.

This is a fine example of good balancing of options. The ABMs are half the price of ICBMs but do no damage. The bombers are twice as expensive as ICBMs but may be reusable. The sub launched missiles are very expensive, but unlike all other forms of attack, they do not give away who the attacker is. The spy reports are quite clever and may give false or incomplete information. No one attack is likely to knock out one's enemies. A very nice job. My only complaint is that wonderful play at diplomacy and purchasing can go all to pot if you can't aim the ABMs. (This is purely my pet beef and if you are into coordination games this might be the best of all possible worlds.) Nonetheless, I feel the czar or president is unlikely to be sitting at the firing station aiming his ABMs as the missiles and bombers fly overhead. Each bomber or missile you let through destroys one industry.

All in all a well balanced game with a lot of very nice options, but a game that heavily depends on your hand-eye coordination to shoot down those missiles. Buy it only if you're really into coordination.

—J. Mishcon

WRITING REVIEWS FOR THE SPACE GAMER

Capsule Reviews
Most of the reviews we print will be "capsule" reviews—400 words or less. We pay $5 for each capsule review accepted. We want to run a review for every new sf or fantasy game or supplement.

Each capsule review should be five paragraphs long and contain:

1. Basic information. Present these facts, in this order: NAME OF GAME (Publisher); price, Designer. (If applicable: "Supplement to ___, Companion to ___," or similar note.) Format: list of components, with sizes of maps and rulebooks, number of counters, etc. Number of players; playing time. Publication date.

2. A general description of the game: background, setting, plot, features, etc.

3. Strong points. Discuss what is good about the game; in every game, there IS something worthwhile. "Fun" is a useless adjective. Be specific.

4. Weak points. Every game has its problems, too. If the only faults you can find are minor ones, say so. If the game is fatally flawed, come right out and SAY SO. If you can phrase your criticisms as suggestions for improvement, do so.

5. Summation. Your overall opinion of the game. Who should and should not buy it, and why.

All reviews must be signed; the reviewer's name will be printed. No game may be reviewed by its designer, by a playtester, or by an employee of the publisher. (Designer's articles are welcome, but must be billed as such!)

All notes: If you can write a complete review in less than the full 400 words, by all means do so.

A capsule review is not a complete analysis. There are those who want to read longer reviews, each issue will have one or two.

Featured Reviews
These will be game reviews 1,000 to 2,000 words long. They should contain all the above information, plus whatever else the reviewer wants to say. They may be written in any format. A featured review may cover either a new game or one that has been on the market for some time. If TSG has not already printed a capsule review, write one and submit it at the same time. We may even use both.

EMPYREAN CHALLENGE

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I would like to reply to Mr. List’s letter in issue 36 concerning our advertising of our basic turn fee. Mr. List was upset that we did not detail the turn fees for optional turns. Many hundreds of players have found StarMaster and The Tribes of Crane quite enjoyable without ever using any optional turns and so only paying our basic turn fee. It is true that some choose to expand their play by using optional turns often and this of course means additional turn fees; however the choice is theirs.

I don’t feel our advertising is misleading. Automobile advertising lists a basic price, but does not list the prices of all their optional equipment. We show our basic turn fee in the same way.

Mr. List, or anyone else, is entitled to a full refund if he is not satisfied with anything about our game when he receives materials or takes his first turn. I think our policy is completely fair and Mr. List’s complaint unfounded.

George V. Schubel
Schubel & Son

I am moved to write concerning the advertisement in TSG 36 for Schubel & Son, especially as you have invited comments following the Steven List letter. In the ad, Schubel & Son claim “Fast turnaround times for turns.” This has not been my experience.

I sent the initial turn of StarMaster on 15 May, 1980 and received turn 1 in mid-June. Turn 2 arrived back in 5 weeks. After waiting 8 weeks I concluded that something had gone astray with turn 3 and sent it again. In 4 weeks the return came informing me that they had received the previous submission and had returned it by surface mail. It arrived one week later. Turn 4 was returned immediately and sent in the first week in December. I have seen nothing more in 7 weeks. In summary I have received and sent to Schubel & Son 4 turns of StarMaster in 8½ months!

I trust that international airmail is slow I would point out the following. In 4 years of playing FGD’s StarWeb I have received and sent over 400 turns and perhaps 3 times that in private correspondence to the U.S. Airmail takes an average of 7 days and 5 days is not uncommon. Finally, I also play Universe II, Clemens & Associates return my turns in 3 weeks and FBI turns around in less than 4 weeks nowadays.

A.D. Young
Mt. Eliza, Australia

Unfortunately, some errors crept into my review of Paranoia Press’ Traveller record sheets in TSG due to my having access to an earlier printing than the sheets currently available. Don Rapp of Paranoia has kindly provided me with the following corrections. First, all sheets come in pads of 25 and cost $2.50 per pad (the prices quoted in the review were the cost out-put prices one dealer was offering on the early runs). Each pad has a cover sheet, some of which provide extra information (i.e., the System Data sheet cover gives an expanded star system generation method.) So far, only the Starship Log sheets, System Data sheets and a set of Planetary Data sheets have been approved by GDW for Traveller, according to Paranoia. The Planetary Data sheets provide a blank hexagonal-surfaced dodecahedron map grid for mapping planetary surfaces. The errors mentioned concerning the Personal Data sheets were in a section on skills which has been replaced in the new edition with a service record section. Pads can be ordered from Paranoia’s business address: Paranoia Press

I apologize for any inconvenience these errors may have caused readers of TSG or Paranoia Press.

Forrest invited me to comment on Space Opera and War of the Worlds, since my other commitments prevented me from reviewing the two games themselves. First, War of the Worlds. I have mixed feelings about this game. Tony’s review pointed out much of its good points quite admirably. While it isn’t a bad game system and even plays quite well as an introductory level game – it isn’t one of the Worlds! I understand that the game had to be adjusted to remove the novel’s imbalance, but I think Task Force went a little too far in the opposite direction in seeking balance. When a single 19th-century horse cavalry unit can be the most effective piece in the game against a Martian Battle Machine, something is wrong somewhere. The lack of ranged combat rules for heat rays and artillery are sorely missed. And surely Black Smoke could have found its way in as an optional rule, couldn’t it? From the company that gave us Star Wars, Arthur Welles is a let down. Particularly when all we’re getting in a $10 game are the usual contents of a $5 capsule game plus an extra counter sheet and a box (and less rules than many of TFG’s capsules have), I expected so much more. I hope TFG will at least consider an advanced version of the game or an expansion set to the real War will someday be available.

On to Space Opera, another disappointment. On first glance, the game looks so good! I snatched it right up, thinking Traveller was a worthy rival at last. On deeper inspection, I realized GDW has no worries. Space Opera has much to commend it: the character’s skills, the varied planets, the alien characters, the weapons and the equipment – my God! – the equipment! As for playability, forget it! The whole thing I could complete as a PhD thesis to unravel it all. Characters take hours to create – and seconds to die. And the typos! Why a major company like FGD can’t hire a proof reader (if one did read the proofs before they were printed, he should be fired) is beyond me. Whole scenes are dropped; vital numbers are replaced with punctuation marks; information and sections are mentioned which don’t exist; contradictions abound. I get the feeling that buried somewhere amidst typos, bad grammar, contradictions, and omissions, there may be a

Rudy Kraft
Palo Alto, CA

The letter is prompted by your request for comments on the letter from Steve List in TSG 36. I, too, have had experience with StarMaster. I sent my $10 based on their ad stating that the turns were $2.50 each and the initial $10 covered the pad and the first three turns. I was surprised, when I received the rules, to read about the “optional turn sheets at $2.50 each. I decided to go on with the game because the rules looked interesting and I had the impression that the extra turn sheets would not be used very often, WRONG! I did manage to get my three turns without using any of the optional turn sheets but I could tell that as one got more involved with the game, the cost would probably climb to $5 to $10 per turn.

The optional turn sheets are necessary. I was unhappy with the game for many other reasons. A game of such complexity is bound to generate many questions. I usually had about 2 pages of questions to send in with each turn. Although the questions were answered promptly, I felt that the answers often didn’t make sense in the context of the game. Also the answers given on one turn would conflict with the answers given the next turn. I asked several occasions that the person answering the questions be identified either by name or by some type of code. They never did, and I never knew how to address my questions to or if the same person was giving the answers.

For the above reasons I decided to quit the game after my initial $10 expense and try Empire Challenge. This is also a very complex game that generated many questions on my part. I have not yet received my first turn, but all my questions were answered quickly, by an identifiable person and the answers seemed to make sense. I am looking forward to the start of the game.

Jeffrey M. Katz
Riverside, CA

When I saw your review of my Duck Pond in TSG 36 I couldn’t resist dropping you a short note.

My desire to do Duck Pond was indeed prompted by the review of Duck Tower in TSG 29. I seem to react to favorable reviews. A favorable review of Portals of Torsh in The Dragon prompted me to do another Portals project (“Portals of Irontooth”). Have no fear, though. Your most recent review has not convinced me to do another Duck Project. I am now into Baboons.

Rudy Kraft
Palo Alto, CA
a valid question, assuming belief in other-worldly powers. Personally, I think that D&D is all right, and I used to run my own campaign. I even think that Demons (SPI) is OK. Games aren't "about" anything—they are abstractions. On the other hand, I can see the point that some people are making. I know that I wouldn't want to be in the room when someone was seriously trying out the optional demon conjurations from Demons!

The world is not so narrow that there can't be honest disagreements about D&D.

W.G. Armintout
Toole, Utah

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NOVA GAME DESIGNS

As Mobius' ship came out of the jump he glanced at the relachron. "Loral Fifty years out already! We've only been gone three weeks! Mobius to crew", he barked over the intercom, "be alert! I don't think we're going to like what we find."

Moments later the com rasped nervously.

"Captain! Sensors indicate enemy ships in jump and tac mode in this sector — watch! Computer analysis indicates tac mode 'ships' are not ships but some form of advanced projectile can't identify! Computer estimates Tech level at least one higher than ours!"

"Damn!, Mobius fumed. This was not the first time Home Base calculations had been off. Mobius gave what was to be his last orders. "Communications! Send off comwo to Base 2 immediately to inform them of their screws!! Con' Evasive action!"

Timelag is a strategic science fiction game of combat across the reaches of outer space where Einstein's time dilation directly effects the flow of play in the game. As the years wear on, the warring civilizations reach higher technological levels. Subsequently, they produce ships which are better than the ships sent out previously.

Timelag comes with 120 die-cut counters, a 3 color map and more!

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Force point value</th>
<th>Tech level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 - 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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April 4-5: UNHSCC Spring Gaming Festival. Con featuring miniatures, board games, and RPG. Contact R. Bradford Chasse, UNH simulations Games Club, Memorial Union Building, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824.
April 9-12: COLLEGECON 2. F&SF con. Contact CollegeCon 2, c/o Larry Taylor, University of Houston, N-23 UC, Program Council, 4800 Calhoun, Houston, TX 77204.
April 25-26: MADCON III. Con for all kinds of gaming. University of Wisconsin Union South. Contact Pegasus Games, 222 W. Gorham, Madison, WI 53703.
May 1-3: USACON 3. Gaming con for SF&F, RP, and boardgaming at University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL. Contact Leo Vaulin, 5856 Listy Dr., Mobile, AL 36608.

May 22-25: GRIMCON III. F&SF gaming con. Oakland Hyatt House, 455 Hegenerger Road, Oakland, CA 94612. Contact P.O. Box 4153, Berkeley, CA 94704.
May 29-31: COMPUTERFEST '81. Computer hobby show. SASE to MAAC, P.O. Box 20265, Columbus, OH 43220.
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August 13-16: GENCON XIV. F&SF & new gaming releases. Contact GenCon XIV, P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.
September 3-7: DENVECTION TWO. SF con. Contact Denvection Two, P.O. Box 11545, Denver, CO 80211 or (303) 433-9774.
September 4-7: GLACIE VI. Simulation gaming con, including monster games. Contact GLACIE Secretary, c/o E. Daniel, 20550 Wyandotte St., Canoga Park, CA 91306.
September 11-13: DRAGON FLIGHT. A FRP con, to be held in Seattle. Contact The Brass Dragon Society, P.O. Box 35872, Seattle, WA 98113.
September 25-27: Babel Con '81. Star Trek, F&SF con. Contact Steven Hines, Babel Con '81, 1355 Cornell SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

CONVENTION ORGANIZERS - let us know about your con! Free publicity never hurts.

News & Plugs

SPI, continuing its association with current movies, is offering Dawn of the Dead. Upcoming non-movie offerings include Spies.

Gougem Games has released the second edition of BananaQuest. The new edition features better-quality counter sheets and actual human play aids. An erasable sheet for the first edition is available from the publisher for $8.95.

Game Designers' Workshop has sold the Grenadier to Jeff Tibbetts, owner of Armageddon Distributors. His first issue will appear May 1.

New album games scheduled from Yaquinto include Battle, Roaring 20's, Neck & Neck, Market Madness, Fall of South Vietnam, Apache, Supertorty, and Adventurer.

Eon is planning two more supplements to Cosmic Encounter - each with 15 new aliens.

The deadline for Origins awards nominations ballots has been extended to May 8.

New and impending releases from Task Force Games include Federation Space, a boxed version of Operation Pegasus, boxed SwordQuest, Power Play, Paycheck, Utra Warrior, Survival / the Barbarian (a double game), and Battlewagon.

Broadword Miniatures (1591 S. Hidden Hills Parkway, Stone Mountain, GA 30088) is a fairly new miniatures company. Their line includes a number of detailed 25mm fantasy figures, as well as a few 54mm and 90mm offerings.

Archives Miniatures has a new address: 1015 Howard Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94401.

According to the Science Fiction Review, the magazines Galileo and Galaxy have folded.

Turnelag and Hammer of Thor are both being re-issued with improved maps and other components, according to the publisher, Nova Game Designs.
RAID ON IRAN

Can you free the hostages? A simulation game about the U.S. raid into Tehran. If the raid had gone in, Special Forces teams would have battled Iranian fanatics with the hostages' lives in the balance. An alternate scenario explores the possibility that the Ayatollah might have been the raid's target. Rules cover U.S. surprise, mob action, helicopter breakout (of course!), undercover aid, panicked/berserk militants, and more. For one or two players; playing time under 90 minutes.

RAID ON IRAN includes a full-color 16" x 21" map of the embassy grounds, 119 counters in 3 colors, illustrated rules sheet, and table.

Game design by Steve Jackson.

KUNG FU 2100

For years the CloneMasters have ruled the world. Their only foes are the Terminators trained from birth in the martial arts. Now you are a Terminator. With only two companions, you must smash your way into the fortress of the CloneMaster - to destroy him forever.

But his guards are many and loyal. Like you, they can kill with a single blow. And time is against you...

KUNG FU 2100 includes 114 counters in 3 colors; 16" x 21" rules sheet; 10" x 21" color map; extra CRT and record sheets; ziplock bag. For 1 or 2 players; plays in under 1/2 hours.

Designed by B. Dennis Satture. Edited by Steve Jackson and Forrest Johnson.

CARDBOARD HEROES

FULL-COLOR 25mm miniatures - printed on heavy card stock. Each figure will form its own base. Front face printed on one side (see above) - Your own!

There are now FOUR sets of Cardboard Heroes! See page 24 of this issue for details - and of course, Cardboard Heroes as miniatures as pictured as well!

For all your games: men, - , dwarves, halflings, fighters, wizards, clerics, thieves... 40 figures in all... only $3.

ONE-PAGE BULGE

It started as a challenge: Design a good war-game with only one page of rules. ONE-PAGE BULGE met the challenge! A regimental-level simulation of the Battle of the Bulge - with complete, detailed rules - including weather and Allied air superiority, German supply and isolation, and optional rules for bridge destruction and capture of Allied supplies.

Components include 16" x 13" full-color map, 112 counters in 3 colors, turn record track with CRT, ziplock bag, and one page (6" x 11", both sides) of rules. For 1 or 2 players; playing time 1 to 2 hours.

Game design by Steve Jackson.
EARTH EDITION
THE MARTIAN CHRONICLE
BY PHOBOS PUBLISHING
Win Your Character in Metal
...Martian Metal

Martian Metals & Phobos Publishing
ANNOUNCE

"Can You Guess Your Own Name"
CONTEST

MARTIAN METALS announces the first annual "Guess Your Own Name" contest. Any one can enter and anyone can win. No expensive equipment necessary.

You are not doubt wondering what you have to do to enter this contest and what you can win. Well, enter by filling out a handy dandy entry form found at your local hobby or news shop, or on this form, you will find only one question to be answered:

"What is your name, address and phone number?" After writing down your guess, mail this form and one deck (that's a proof of purchase) found on the back of your MARSHAL STARR 206 or 171 and any of the ad sections in this ad, then enter form must be accompanied by a check or at least one postcard from any of the MARTIAN METALS dealers or the top of a TRAVELER package. Approximately it's worth, this is 37.5 Recondos. So if you want to know who you would do this, simply, if you are correct your entry will be eligible for the grand drawing to be held at COMICON in Houston, and will be four winners chosen at random names drawn to zip code. The United States Air Mail system has been divided into four automatic areas. Area #1 Canada and Mexico. Areas #2, #3, #4, and #5. All winners from each area will be chosen and notified by mail and/or phone. All four winners will receive their own personal character analyzed and manufactured by MARTIAN METALS. This will be your choice of toys whether fantasy, sci-fi or anything else and must be Zip or last is for winners. This contest will not be discontinued in any way until what you want your one and only character all to yourself. Just think, some one made here just for you. All winners must supply a brief description of the shape and nature of the figure they desire to have made.

This Contest will begin on March 11, 1981, and will end on August 15, 1981. All entry forms are not available in your area, but your closest TRAVELER dealer will have them at MARS 778 or MARS 838 and all entries must be accompanied by a check, or postcard. Get your store to participate because we have a special prize for the store whose name appears on the winning entries.

This offer void in VENUS & MERCURY. All entries become the property of PHOBOS PUBLISHING and cannot be returned. Limited entry to those who have not yet found us.

HANDY DANDY ENTRY FORM

"GUESS YOUR OWN NAME"

NAME?
ADDRESS?
STATE?
ZIP?
PHONE?

send to:
MARTIAN METALS BOKS 778 PHOBOS PUBLISHING BOKS 838
CEDAR PARK, TX. 78613

EARTH MAY BE HIDEOUT
Reward Offered By The Imperium

Imperial Security Forces Public Information Office has released a galactic-wide APB on the individuals pictured above. These two men, as shown by a security force-Martian resolution, are believed to be the leaders of a band of those with a large responsibility

reward. These were witnessed to the UFO's in a distant planet. All criminals are being sought by the ISSP. The A. B. C. A Burks at

remember. All均由 your local shop, and stated that they feared not an investigation. Well, we must not have coordinators (address)

SPORTS BRIEF

Quartendon Tryouts

HEADLINES: The tryouts for the quartendon team will be held on Olympus Nova on Dorsia 22, 24, and 25. Let's have a good turn out.

TROLLBALL SCORES:

6-2, 9-5, 1-4, 12-0

Catalog: MARS BOKS 778 CEDAR PARK, TX. 78613....EARTH