THE BEST OF
WHITE DWARF
ARTICLES
Volume II

Selected material from White Dwarfs 15 to 30, including An Introduction to D&D, The Dungeon Architect and Backdrop of Stars.
# ARTICLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Dungeons &amp; Dragons, Parts I-V</td>
<td>Lew Pulsipher</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to get the most from your game</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversion</td>
<td>Roger Musson</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Clerical ability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backdrop of Stars</td>
<td>Andy Slack</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleshing out the Traveller campaign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dungeons &amp; . . . Dragoons</td>
<td>Phil Masters</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical troop types in FRP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbase</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveller Campaigns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Chest</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amulets &amp; Talismans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Spell Caster's Guide to Arcane Power</td>
<td>Bob Milne</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A spell point system for D&amp;D</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Patrol</td>
<td>Andy Slack</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expanded scouts in Traveller</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Dungeon Architect, Parts 1-3</td>
<td>Roger Musson</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to construct credible dungeons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbase</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ship's Library</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Chest</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spells</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Lose Hit Points and Survive</td>
<td>Roger Musson</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survival for D&amp;D characters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD&amp;D Character Classes</td>
<td>Lew Pulsipher</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing a balanced class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Self-Made Traveller</td>
<td>Trevor Graver</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative prior experience system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiend Factory</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Top Ten monsters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starbase</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mudskipper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Chest</td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic Items</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Detective</td>
<td>Marcus L. Rowland</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New D&amp;D character class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

All subject matter in *White Dwarf* is copyright of the publishers Games Workshop Ltd. All rights on the contents of this publication are reserved. Nothing may be reproduced in whole or part without prior consent of the publishers. © Games Workshop Ltd., 1983.

Dungeons & Dragons® and Advanced Dungeons & Dragons® are registered trademarks of TSR Hobbies Inc.

Traveller® is a registered trademark of Games Designers' Workshop.

The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the publishers. Display advertising rates and trade enquiries are available on request.

The editor will be pleased to consider any previously unpublished articles or artwork for inclusion in *White Dwarf*. Contributions should be typed, double spaced on one side of the paper only.
An Introduction to Dungeons & Dragons
by Lewis Pulsipher

This article is the first in a series written for those who have little or no experience of playing Dungeons & Dragons. More experienced players will discover something of interest in most of the articles, for as Gary Gygax (the game's co-inventor) says, there are few DMs so skilled that they cannot improve their campaigns.

Dungeons & Dragons and its successor Advanced Dungeons & Dragons are usually referred to collectively as D&D. D&D is a "role-playing" fantasy game, that is to say, each player acts as an individual hero, wizard, priest, or other character out of the fantasy traditions of J.R.R. Tolkien, Robert E. Howard, Fritz Leiber, Michael Moorcock, and other authors. Pretending to be Conan, Aragorn, Gandalf, Eric, or your own made-up hero is part of the fun. A referee or "DM" (standing for "Dungeon Master") is required to establish places of adventure, and to control monsters and non-player persons which the players will encounter. The game is best with about four players plus a DM, but any number of people can play. Though competition can be arranged, normally players do not fight each other; they are on the same "team", and play against the sinister creatures controlled by the DM.

Players create their game personae or "characters" with the aid of dice rolls, and each uses the same character in each game session, trying to become more skillful, wealthy, and powerful, and pursuing whatever other goals they desire. Characters are far from Conan's equal when they begin, and death is an ever-present danger. Commonly, in a game session a group of players will explore a "dungeon" or underground labyrinth (perhaps like Tolkien's Moria), an outdoor wilderness, or a town mapped and populated beforehand by the DM. They hunt for evil monsters to kill, maidens to rescue, secrets to unravel, gold, and magical items. An adventure can take two hours or twelve, depending on the desires of the players. The average group plays once or twice a week.

Appearances notwithstanding, D&D is not a pastime for crackpots. It isn't necessary to believe in the occult, astrology, or other such things to enjoy D&D; in fact, few players do, and their ranks include lawyers, doctors, executives, and scientists - hardly crackpots. Nor is it necessarily a "kid's game"; one of the designers is in his early 40's, a minister and former insurance executive - the average age of players is around 21. Some players are accustomed to games of mental skill such as chess, others are parlour game fans, and others still don't play other games.

Anyone who reads fantasy literature knows that a willing suspension of disbelief is necessary to enjoy these works. The same principle applies to D&D, and once you accept the game within its own magical context, you can participate vicariously to a depth not found in any other game.

Although Advanced D&D consists of over 400 pages of rules, the Basic version is only 50 pages long and either version is very easy to play - you can imagine yourself in the situation the DM describes and tell him what you intend to try to do. If no rules cover your idea, the DM invents them on the spot. Special 4, 8, 12, and 20-sided dice are used as well as the ordinary 6-sided kind; these are referred to respectively as d4, d8, d12, d20, and d6, and are used to determine the success or otherwise of certain actions which have less than a 100% chance of success.

Of course, the best players and D&Ds know the rules fairly well, but there are many play- aids to make the DM's job easier.

An example, the dialogue during a small part of an adventure might go something like this ...

Referee: ... you come to the bottom of the stairs. A corridor 10 feet wide and 12 feet high - stone, of course - runs east and west.
Players: We go west.
Referee: You travel 50 feet without any change in the corridor. Then you come into a large chamber. 12 kobolds are in the northern part, where you also see a chest. A fungus on the walls dimly lights the chamber.
Players: (After consultation) Brak casts a sleep spell, Kranor and Rill shoot their bows, and the rest of us rush the kobolds.

(A brief battle ensues, with all concerned rolling dice to see if their weapons land, and if so, how hard they hit; the DM does this for the kobolds.)

DM: OK, so there are 8 kobolds lying still on the floor, one grazed by an arrow but still standing, one definitely dead; the remaining ones run north, shouting ...

And so on until the adventurers leave the dungeon or die. If a player imagines himself actually participating in the adventure, if he keeps alert, then he can have a fine time while knowing nothing more about the rules than he can learn from this article.

The DM is the vital figure in a D&D game. He must be willing to exercise his imagination to the utmost. Unlike games such as chess, in which the players know all the rules and can extrapolate all possible outcomes, D&D has non-rigid, open-ended rules. This is inevitable when one tries to create an entire world; the DM must not only be able to find quickly what he does not know and be familiar with all the rules, he must also make up his own rules for specific situations.

Much of the attraction of the game is the fear - or anticipation - of the unknown. There are always unusual statues, pools, traps, and monsters.

The DM must devise the dungeon or wilderness in which the players adventure. Though there are rules to help him, it is still a matter of long thought and hard work. The dungeon is usually mapped out on graph paper, and a typical one might have 5-10 levels, each on one sheet. The DM draws all the rooms, corridors, caverns, pits, stairs and other features, and records in a notebook the contents of each. Despite the work involved, many players sooner or later build their own dungeons.

In 1972 Dave Arneson described the original campaign to me, although I didn't know it would become D&D. It sounded like a normal armies vs. armies campaign, but the role-playing element existed in the background. In the next year Arneson got
together with Gary Gygax, who used his Chainmail fantasy rules (written with Jeff Perren) as a base for emphasizing the individual action of the game. The result was Original D&D, three 40-page rule booklets. Chainmail was needed to conduct combat, and the whole game suffered from rushed production. It isn’t surprising that the major wargame companies wouldn’t publish such a revolutionary and undeveloped game; Gygax decided to publish it himself.

D&D was the first role-playing game and the first fantasy game to be marketed commercially.

The rules problems, derivation from miniatures rather than from boardgames, a high price, and limited distribution all meant that the game did not immediately become the remarkable phenomenon that it is today. However, with the publication in 1975 of a supplement, Greyhawk, D&D began to take off. Greyhawk introduced a new combat system and clarified many ambiguities of the old rules. It was so popular that three other supplements were produced: Blackmoor, Eldritch Wizardry, and Gods, Demi-Gods and Heroes were published in 1976 and 1978. By this time, however, many other role-playing games were on the market, some threatening to overtake D&D.

Gygax then began to revise the rules completely. The result, Advanced Dungeons & Dragons, is much larger, more detailed, and far better produced.

All three versions have much in common, but anyone who intends to move around should learn Basic and then Advanced D&D, because those who prefer the original are becoming a distinct minority. A number of D&D play-aid s are available. These include maps of dungeons and wilderness, ready-made lists of room contents, inhabitants and treasures, composite game charts, and complete adventure "modules". The latter include everything a DM needs to run a game, so that the time-consuming setting-up can be avoided. Experienced DMs only occasionally use such aids, preferring to devise their own worlds, but novices will find them quite useful. So you’ve just heard about this amazing game, Dungeons and Dragons. How do you find other people to play with, in particular a reliable group you can comfortably play with frequently? That’s an easy problem for experienced wargamers who live in big cities, but the average novice sometimes sees it as an insurmountable difficulty. I’ll now try to help these unfortunate, and perhaps more experienced players as well.

Firstly, I’ll assume that you don’t own the D&D rulebook; after all, some people want to play before they buy a game. This eliminates the most common way to find other players — teach your friends — but leaves many possibilities.

If there’s a game shop near you, ask the proprietors if they know of any local groups open to new players. There may even be a weekly session at the shop. Addresses of players might be found on a notice board. If all else fails, you can ask permission to put up your own notice — be sure to state your age and experience as well as address/phone. Unfortunately, many groups are “closed shops” because they already have enough players; and in many cases age counts for a lot, as schoolkids may not want a 25 year old player, or college students may not want schoolkids. There are so many different styles of D&D that a newcomer often doesn’t fit into an established group, and age differences can exacerbate different views of what the game ought to be like. Don’t be discouraged if your first contact with D&D players is disappointing; the next group may be different. I know of people who tried D&D and didn’t like it, but who became enthusiastic about it as played by my group; and there were those who played frequently elsewhere but never cared for our kind of game.

(By the way, I don’t want to emulate Emily Post, but I must say it is bad form to drop in on a group without giving prior warning, unless the group’s announcement invites people to do just that. Write or phone first. This also could save your a wasted trip if a meeting has been cancelled for some reason.)

If you’re in a school or university, scan the local notice boards and newspaper for references to wargames clubs. Put your own notice on boards or in the paper. You’re having rotten luck if you can’t find anyone this way; every fair-sized university seems to have a group.

If you’re still empty-handed, don’t despair; there is at least one active player per 2,000 people in the country, so unless you live in a remote area there should be players near you. Look at the “opponents wanted” and other ads in wargames magazines. Don’t look just for D&D — any wargamer living near you may know of local groups even if he doesn’t play himself. Write to anyone near you and explain your problem. Sometimes you won’t get an answer, because some gamers don’t care about other people, but others go out of their way to help newcomers.

If there are no promising ads, consider placing an ad in the magazine yourself. There may be someone just across the street who reads the magazine, but who never needed to place an ad.

By this time, though, if you still haven’t found any players you like to play with, you’ll have to give up or buy the game and start a group the hard way, by teaching people how to play after you’ve taught yourself. Brothers and sisters are useful first recruits; even if they lose interest, they’ll help you play the first few times. Tell your friends, especially those who enjoyed The Lord of the Rings, about the game. If you know a local science fiction club you might recruit players there. Many schools and universities allow informal groups to reserve rooms and use regular channels to announce meetings. For example, at Duke University (USA) in 1975 I reserved a room in the name of Duke Gamers, put an announcement in the university paper, and appeared at the appointed time. Fortunately I had earlier encountered someone who played — he was the only person to turn up. But the next week more people came around, and when we changed the time of the meeting, yet more appeared. One needs to persevere. Virtually none of these people had played before, and many had never heard of D&D until they saw my announcement. After several months, though, I was finally able to play myself, rather than DM, and by the end of the year we had six to eight DMs. In a situation like this you should encourage the new players to become DMs; though not immediately, and have them start with a level appropriate to the state of the campaign. For example, at Duke we ended with a 6-level dungeon and associated wilderness, two independent wildernesses, a third, a fourth, and a sixth level dungeon. If everyone starts with a first level dungeon you soon have nowhere for the more experienced characters to go. The average newcomer won’t want to construct more than one level in his first six months of play.

TSR’s ready-made dungeon modules can help you establish a new group. You can rely on the author’s experience to establish a good adventure situation, but be sure you get a beginners’ module and not one for ninth-level characters. When the players you’ve taught gain some experience they can run other modules before they devise their own places of adventure.

(Incidentally, I returned to Duke four years later and couldn’t find a group, so I advertised in the newspaper for wargames players. Several days later someone came by and told me about the D&D group which still exists, but which doesn’t announce its meetings in the paper. I was able to steer to this group nearly a dozen D&D players who didn’t know about it. Moral: never quit looking.)

Part II will contrast and compare Dungeon Mastering styles.
Part II
Dungeon
Mastering
Styles

by Lewis Pulsipher
The most important thing to remember about D&D is that the nature of play depends on the DM. If you try it once and dislike it, in many cases it will be dislike of a particular style rather than of the game itself. I have known players who tried "absurd D&D" and decided D&D was a lousy game, but when persuaded to try "wargamer's D&D" they loved it.

Consequently, the first thing you must decide when you start constructing your own world is "what style do I prefer?" Usually you'll want to DM the kind of game you prefer to play.

Basic D&D style ranges from the "simulation" through "wargame" to "absurd" and finally "novel". As one moves along this continuum the DM's procedures become less rigorous - remember that no DM uses every rule. At one extreme we have a DM who uses a pocket calculator to compute results, at the other a DM who makes up almost everything as he goes. Most campaigns fall toward the middle of these two extremes.

The simulationist wants to reflect reality as much as possible. A fight with broadsword and chainmail ought to work just as it did in the Middle Ages. Coins should be worth what they were in the same period. Some players recreate feudalism and chivalry, and model their magic after the traditional magic of the period. These people have no place in D&D; D&D is solidly in the wargame camp, and simulationists should try Chivalry & Sorcery or make up their own games.

The "wargame" style is how D&D is designed to be played, though this doesn't mean you must play it this way. Players don't play against each other, but can still "win" or "lose" according to whether they survive and prosper. As much as possible, all that happens should be believable. My standard is: could you believe the event if you read it in a fantasy novel?

Now the "absurd" style condones unbelievable occurrences. Much that happens seems arbitrary. There is often plenty of battle, but such a game is a war game. Monsters such as a "spelling beast" may appear, causing magic-users to foul up spells by misspelling them. This style is good for laughs when played occasionally, and some players prefer to play it exclusively. The average game tends to fall between wargame and absurd game.

Finally we have the "novel" style. In effect, the DM writes an original novel in which the players are participating characters. This can be pretty bad, but the players don't mind because they're helping to "write" it. In such games the DM may make up everything as he goes along.

As one passes along the continuum one finds that players are most passive in the novel style and most active in the wargame style. (The simulation style stresses realism so much that characters tend to be hostages to the dice, the rules, and the DM.) When you choose a style, keep the preferences of your potential players in mind. In addition to choosing a style, consider other facets of the game. First some DMs rely on fighting to provide action and interest to players, while others rely on a variety of puzzles. The average DM or player prefers fighting with an occasional puzzle to vary the pace. Unless you're good at devising puzzles you'll probably take the same line. Beware: a few players become bored with frequent fighting, but most become bored with numerous puzzles.

Another choice concerns magic. Are only the spell-casters, rare items, and even rarer areas magical, or is magic almost everywhere? I prefer the former, less "supernatural" alternative, for there is less luck. After all, magic can do anything if you let it, and if you do players won't know what to expect.

You must choose some relationship between risk and reward. When characters often die and only slowly rise in level, players may become discouraged. Risk is thus a conditioning re-ward. On the other hand, when reward is higher than risk some players become bored. Level of risk and reward should be roughly the same. I prefer low levels of both. In this case experienced players seldom lose characters, but around ten adventurers level is needed to raise a character one level. Other players like a game with 25% or 50% casualties per adventure, with just a few adventures required per experience level. The problem with the latter is that it becomes difficult to run the game, which isn't designed to cope with characters above fourth level becoming too powerful, and options available are so numerous, that the DM becomes lost in details and possibilities. D&D is most fun for third to sixth level characters, who are strong enough to adventure without fear of immediate death, strong enough to have more combat options than flight, melée, and sleep spells, but not so strong that they can laugh at monsters.

Another aspect of risk and reward is whether players earn their rewards. Risk can derive from frequent monster encounters, or it can come from unavoidable traps and unexplored areas. For example, an old dragon flies to a party of first level characters and makes them work. At that level players can do nothing - the dragon could kill all of them with a yawn. This is arbitrary risk. Reward can be similarly arbitrary. For example, a player can pull three levers and gain two intelligence points, or a party can kill five orcs and find 5,000 gp. The players haven't earned these rewards. Whatever relationship of risk and reward you choose, avoid arbitrary types.

To say that risk and reward in a given campaign tends to be arbitrary is another way of saying that luck plays a great part in the campaign. Many wargamers dislike luck, for who wants to play well and still "lose"? D&D can never be a game without luck, but the DM can choose the extent to which luck dominates a game. My objective is to force the players to make choices. The more often they must choose, the more often the skilful player can make the better choice and increase his chance of survival. For example, some DMs allow a sword with detecting powers to operate at all times. Consequently the players gain the advantages without needing to make a choice. Better to allow the sword to detect only when the owner stops for a few rounds to concentrate on detection.

The DM's attitude affects his style. Some DMs just want to see what will happen; others want to be entertained. This is a difference between impartiality and egoism. Is the DM a neutral party or is he a "god" who demands that his subjects - the players - entertain him and do his bidding? Ideally, the DM is serving the players, not vice versa; one supposes that the DM enjoys his job also or he wouldn't do it, and many enjoy it without egoism. One may enjoy the sight of one's ideas being useful, one may enjoy enabling one's friends to have fun, or one may DM with philosophical resignation; someone has to do it.

Another form of egoism is a DM's inability to distinguish between himself and his creations. A strong sense of identification is an asset when you play but not when you DM. When the DM conceives of the monsters which inhabit his dungeon or world as extensions of himself, rather than external creations which he manipulates according to settled procedures, he loses any semblance of impartiality. You may know the type - his favourite dragon gets killed so he says "I'll get you for this" and of course any DM can kill off a group without difficulty.

Granted there are players who want the DM to manipulate their characters. They won't mind who want the DM to manipulate their characters. They won't mind egotistical DMs, may even prefer them. Role-playing fantasy is big enough to offer a place for all tastes, but it is sad when inexperienced players who want to play a game get stuck with a DM who wants to play god.

A new DM who has considerable playing experience will be able to choose a campaign style intelligently, but the novice may feel lost. In this case it is best to begin with a ready-made module. After you've played D&D a while you'll know what style of game you want to run. Whatever you choose, be consistent. There is nothing more annoying to a player than a DM who sometimes runs something one way, sometimes another. If you find you've made a mistake in choice of style, don't be afraid to change, but stick with the change - don't vacillate.

Part III to follow will look at the spell-using character classes.
Part III: The Spell-Using Classes

by Lewis Pulsipher

The Magic-User
Fifteen large hellhounds approach down a long corridor. What can the adventurers do to avoid crippling damage? "Step aside," says Orion the Mage. From his finger a spark flashes, becoming a deafening, raging bolt of energy as it streaks down the corridor. When their eyes readjust, the adventurers see five dead hellhounds and ten more running away. "Twas nothing," says Orion, modestly.

A magic-user's strength is in his spells; everything else is weakness. About one quarter of a party will be magic-users; many of them elves. Magic-users should be protected by armoured characters, but able to see beyond the front or back line of the party. Since they represent the party's last line of defence, they should be close-protection. Each spell they must use for their own survival is one less for the party to call upon at need. A party with only one magic-user is asking for trouble, since a single charm or magic missile can incapacitate him.

Most magic-users pick a dagger as their first weapon, but a few like darts; throwing either weapon can be surprisingly effective.

TACTICS
A magic-user can play many roles, some of which are:

- Commando: This role calls for high hit points, or magical protection such as Bracers of Defence, and some kind of invisibility. The ideal is a fighter/magic-user. The character uses spells to penetrate enemy defences, then strikes from the rear, a favourite target being the strongest enemy magic-user. Careful planning is required, or poor co-ordination may leave him stranded. Common infiltration spells are fly, invisibility and dimension door.

- Radar: Detect magic and detect invisible are often used. The latter is vital when magic-using enemies are expected. Wizard eye is good for scouting complexes or dark chambers.

- Information gatherer: A charmed person can reveal a lot. ESP and clairvoyance/clairaudience are used to 'case' a place for a future attack. Read language and identify can only be taken if you have spells to burn.

- Decoy: Dancing lights or phantasmal force combined with audible glamer or ventriloquism can play a big part in evasion or attack. The illusionist subclass is better suited to this.

- Defence: A web is good defence in a dungeon, and so it's the most commonly used second level spell. Stinking cloud also stops pursuit. Both spells can be used offensively as well. Hold portal, wizard lock, protection from evil, invisibility, haste, and dispel magic are all commonly used.

Anti-individual: Charm, hold person and banishment are often used against powerful individual opponents. To petrify a small group, a magic-user can use a phantasmal force of a medusa head.

Provider of cannon fodder: Charmed persons can sometimes be persuaded to open doors or fight for the party. More fun are charmed monsters, if you can speak with them. Learn to offer, a regenerating charmed monster is worse, any two others. Before an adventure a magic-user can polymorph an insect into a troll, then charm it. What a bodyguard! And it impresses the yokels.

Artillery: Most players prefer to use magic-users as heavy artillery. When tough monsters appear, lightning bolt, fireball, fear, and confusion are unlimbered. Although charming a dragon is elegant, blowing it up is more exciting. Nonetheless, a magic-user who relies on brute force will meet a bad end. There are many possibilities for the victory of brain over brawn - don't waste them. In your spare time, read through the spells to think of new uses and combinations. For example, ventriloquism can be used to convince ignorant creatures that a skull is a god. Some spells are ends; others are means.

Most magic-users try for a homunculus when they reach seventh level, depending on their hit points and the availability of the necessary spells. Most ignore the find familiar spell, because the average familiar's powers aren't worth the loss of hit points when it dies.

Much of this applies to illusionists as well as the standard magic-user. This subclass lacks the heavy artillery, though; spells tend toward deception and uncertainty. The illusionist player must be more cerebral.
The Cleric

A bedraggled, sorrowful band of adventurers carries a body to a temple at dawn. "O enlightened high priest," pleads the paladin, "Ammonu, the ranger gave his life to defend us, killing four goblins before he fell. Is there no way to restore him to our ranks, to be an example to all by his deeds and dedication to our cause?"

The priest ponders, then intones: "In the name of our patron saint Georgias, I beseech thee, O Lord, to restore life to our lost comrade-in-arms. Let him once again smite thine enemies, for thy Name's sake."

And the dead man awakens!

Raising the dead is the most unusual move in gaming. It is the definitive attainment of any good cleric, and its opposite, slay living, is the aim of any evil one. Since most clerics are good, this advice is addressed to them; just remember that evil clerics are in every way opposed to what the good clerics stand for, though tactics are occasionally similar.

In D&D, clerics are religiously inclined warrior-spellcasters. They are not such a popular class as magic-users or fighters, but this stems partly from misconception of their role. A cleric who merely casts spells while watching events is wasting his potential, for many of the best warriors in D&D are clerics. Their spells are comparatively unspectacular and weak. A cleric might hang back when first level for lack of hit points, but thereafter he should smile in his god's name whenever a good chance appears. The cleric has no outstanding strength, but no weaknesses; in many ways, this is the most interesting character class.

Roughly 20% of a party will be clerics; they take positions near the front or rear of a party, where they are well-placed to drive away undead or cast spells as well as fill a hole in the front line during a fight.

There are three good choices for a cleric's first two weapons: mace, hammer and flail. A mace does more damage, but requires twice as much room as a hammer; a flail is useful only outdoors or in large rooms.

THE CLERIC'S ROLES IN A PARTY

Despite what I've said above, the cleric must think of spells first and fighting second. On the other hand, the stereotype of the healing cleric wastes the character. Options are:

Healer: Cure light wounds is the most common first level spell. Cure serious wounds, raise dead, neutralize poison, and others all serve the cleric-as-medic.

Radar: Detect magic and especially detect evil can be useful. Know alignment can be useful in town, dealing with artisans and merchants—just don't let them know you're using it. Commune is a marvelous source of information which many players fail to use.

Defence: Speak with animals is excellent outdoors, since it often prevents meaningless fighting. Protection shouldn't be forgotten, especially when demons and devils are around. Continual light should be cast on objects well before an adventure, since it lasts until dispelled.

Offence: Silence is great against spellcasters or when you want to sneak about. Light and darkness are also useful. Hold person is better than the magic-user's charm. Bless should be used against opponents of good armor class. Command can be used in some situations—usually 'surrender' is the word.

Many players avoid cleric characters because they prefer neutral or non-religious types. The good cleric must concern himself with the conversion of unbelievers, kindness to the innocent, and devotion to his gods. In some campaigns he will not want to hurt a fly, but more often he is a church militant willing to smite evil whenever necessary. Even so, he must not turn a blind eye to unnecessary violence. He is the strongest proponent of teamwork in a party.

Subclasses

Monks are closer to fighters than clerics, and will be dealt with next issue. Druids are really a separate class, with strong, specialized outdoor magic. They should use the animal friendship spell and speak with animals to gain scouts and bodyguards—even a trained dog is a match for most first level characters. Space precludes dealing with them in any detail though.

Part IV examines fighters and thieves and how best to play them.
Part IV: Fighters and Thieves

by Lewis Pulsipher

THE FIGHTER
The list of heroic warriors in epic fantasy stretches endlessly. Even though magic-users are more popular in *Dungeons & Dragons* than fighters, the latter are preferred to clerics and thieves, probably because of the close identification with the literary origins of the game. Magic-users are the bad guys in fantasy if they figure at all—a “hero” is by definition a fighter. Yet there isn’t much one can say about the D&D fighter, for this is the most limited of the classes in its fields of action, though very efficient and powerful within this narrow sphere. Fighters have more hit points than other classes, the best armour, and the best weapons. They defend the spell-casters, attack when necessary or when spells must be conserved, and do those deeds which require toughness.

On the other hand they can use few magic items not related to melee, their save vs. magic is poor, and they probably take more casualties than other classes by virtue of being more exposed. Where the magic-user is finesse, the fighter is brute force; but even the most avid MU cannot deny the joy one feels at chopping a barioq or giant.

A party of about 12 characters will include about five fighters, two or three in both front and back lines as the party marches down a corridor. Often a bow-armed fighter will follow a dwarf fighter. Dwarf fighters are popular, but elf fighters are rare. Combination fighter-magic-user, thief-mage, or cleric is also popular and are the most powerful characters at low levels.

The fighter has a broader weapon choice than any other class. Normally a fighter will choose a longbow, one outdoor weapon such as a lance, one sword, and one weapon good against plate mailed opponents. A composite longbow is the best, though some DMs don’t allow use of any longbow indoors. Silver tipped arrows are a must. Heavy lance is an extremely useful weapon for horseback—3-18 damage to larger than man size is hard to beat. Longsword is superior to broadsword or shortsword against good armour classes and large opponents, but 20% of magic swords are broadswords, so a few characters may lean toward them. The bastard sword is an excellent compromise for the aggressive fighter, but very few magic ones exist. Remember that fighters choose another weapon at fourth level, so they can learn to use a magic sword if they obtain one of inappropriate type. A military pick is the best weapon vs. plate and shield; against a monster with AC 2 you’ll use whatever weapon does most damage since hit probability modifications don’t apply. Some bronze or stone weapons should be carried for use against rust monsters.

Often parties are cursed with hack-itis.

The fighters are so eager to lay steel on flesh that alternatives are neglected. Some DMs alter the rules to encourage this. For example, most “spell point” magic systems allow clerics to cast large numbers of cure spells. The party hacks anything it sees, the fighters are cured, the party hacks, cure, hack, ad infinitum. This is a perversion of the game, and boring to boot. In a good campaign those with hack-itis will die of it. Fighters should fight only when no other course of action offers a better chance of success. A sensible fighter will want the odds against him reduced by magic or other means before he wades into the fray.

Another aspect of hack-itis is poor organisation. Fighters should arrange themselves to have the maximum number attacking the minimum number of enemies. A replacement should be ready if a wounded man must disengage. Except in desperate circumstances, or during a mop-up, several characters able to melee should wait in reserve. Some fighters are big dumb guys with muscles, but thought is needed in any battle.

Subclasses
The really interesting fighters are the ranger, paladin, and (somewhat oddly) the monk. These classes fight often, but they have other powers. The monk’s ultimate role is to fight, but he can use his thief-like abilities to gain an advantageous position before he dives in. Even at low levels when hand-to-hand combat can be dangerous, a monk can contribute by throwing darts, speaking with animals (“keep the mules calm”), or scouting ahead.

Paladins and rangers are closer to normal fighters, and the uses of their powers are obvious. Don’t waste a paladin’s laying on of hands to cure hit points; disease is a more fearsome enemy. Any cleric can cure hits, but a fifth level cleric is needed to
General Party Tactics.
If you can, first read Gary Gygax's advice on pages 107 and 109 of the Players Handbook. Knowing when to fight, when to run away, when to go home, are essential to survival. If you're not sure you can beat the enemy, don't attack. Ascertain enemy strength and location using spells like detect magic and detect evil. Always question non-player adventurers, local rulers, and denizens of inns and taverns, to discover what you might encounter. If an encounter looks too tough you can come back later fully prepared to attack. DON'T BE GREEDY. In a good campaign those whose avarice exceeds their wisdom die.

THE THIEF
"Someone's coming," whispered the elven thief. "Let's wait back there," he said as he seemed to disappear into the shadows of the corridor. Soon two men in armour, followed by another in robes, advanced confidently down the passage; the fighters charged the adventurers while the MU began a spell. "CRUNCH!" - the MU fell as the thief cleaved his skull from behind; and soon after the enemy fighters died or surrendered. Thus a first level thief inflicted 14 hits on a fourth level magic-user, killing him from behind in one blow. This is the stuff of thieves' legend, but the over-confident thief's fate is a warning; later on he tried to sneak down a corridor during an archery "firefight", but the enemy saw him and shot him dead.

The average D&D player treats a thief as a weak, sneaky fighter or chest opener. But to succeed as a thief one must think thievishly, to accomplish tasks by stealth rather than force. The strengths of the class are the ability to move silently (and hide in shadows when not moving), to go where no one else can (climb, open locks), to strike swiftly (backstab). Thieves are poor warriors owing to poor armour class and low hit points. And while they're good at opening chests, this is a minor facet of their abilities. Most neutral thieves are non-human, not only to gain bonuses to abilities but to have infravision. A human thief in the dark isn't much use to anyone.

A dungeon party of about 12 characters normally includes just one thief (and occasionally a monk with thief-like powers). The thief usually lurks in the middle of the party until his skills are required. The thief is by far the least liked of the four main character classes, though not with complete justification despite the weaknesses. A player who uses his thief abilities fully has more options than a fighter and more chances for glory than an MU. Look at the roles the thief can adopt:

Purge Thief. Sadly, a thief in a dungeon or wilderness has many more chances to steal from his supposed friends than from non-player characters. This can be unhealthy, for many players happily (and justifiably) kill anyone who tries to steal from them. For a thief to steal from NPCcs consistently he must adventure in a town, either alone or with other thieves: thieves are so unpopular with players partly because the average DM doesn't provide enough opportunities for theft. Moreover, stealing is a dangerous vocation - traps and wary NPCcs can kill a low level thief pretty easily. Consequently, many thieves reach fourth level without stealing anything - except from their associates.

Scout. My thieves like to scout ahead of the party, especially when a friendly MU has turned one invisible. An invisible (and possibly silent) thief is pretty safe if he has infravision, and he may be able to steal something before he returns to tell his associates what is ahead. Plots are a danger, but one can never be completely safe. The party is safer with a scout ahead, and for that reason they're likely to offer invisibility to a thief unless they distrust him. It isn't always in the thief's interest to steal, especially from a predominantly good party. Of course, with a bunch of evil characters the thief must look after number one.

Commando. A brave thief can cause havoc to enemies by raids into their rear. The thief who killed the fourth level MU is a good example. More commonly, thieves depend on their ability to climb and disappear from sight to engage in one-man flanking movements. A high level thief reading a scroll can be devastating. A successful raid can pick up choice treasure before the party arrives. But careful planning is needed. In all cases thief and party must work out recognition codes so that the party won't accidentally kill the thief. When raiding, always kill magic-users first, for they are most powerful offensively and weakest defensively of all classes.

Cheat Opener. Thieves are good at de-trapping and unlocking chests. A smart thief doesn't depend solely on the dice for safety; positioning and investigation may reveal something or save the thief even if a trap is sprung. Don't stand right in front of a chest! And before you try to unlock it, be sure it's locked - I've seen thieves inadvertently lock unlocked chests.

Missile Flirr. Any tall thief can help a party by throwing darts or daggers during melee. If he can climb to a balcony or tree-branch he can have a field day, but this is not recommended if the enemy carry bows. Sometimes misfire is more effective, and safer, than a backstab.

Reserve. A thief can fight passably for a while; with high constitution or good magic items he can be a formidable opponent, but thieves should fight only as a last resort.

Miscellaneous.
For his first two weapons a thief usually chooses longsword and darts or daggers. A thief's most prized magic item is a Ring of invisibility. This, combined with silent movement, trebles the thief's power. Hiding in shadows is uncertain and cannot be combined with movement, a weak thing compared to invisibility.

A smart thief will devise simple objects to aid him: A hollow breathing tube allows the thief to sneak through shallow pools and rivers out of sight; a rope ending in a three-pronged hook, a kind of extensible pole, and piton rings all help climbing; caltrops slow pursuit; and a fake magic item or two may scare the rubes. Some thieves like to dress as magic users to sell fake scrolls, especially when an accomplice can cast Nystul's aura or magic mouth on them.

Always "case" a target for several days; if you blunder into a thief head first you'll end up without a head. Try to "frame" someone so there will be no pursuit after a theft. If the heat's on, get out of town and stay out. Some victims go to great lengths to revenge themselves on a thief. A thief who steals from the powerful must be prepared to migrate periodically!

Subclass.
Assassins are similar to thieves but for their avowed purpose. Assassins may choose to scare people and build a reputation, or to seem like a normal thief. Naturally assassins often work alone or with evil rather than neutral or good parties. Much depends on how your DM structures the world.

Part V following will give some hints on role-play.
Part V: Characterisation and Alignment

by Lewis Pulsipher

The average Dungeons & Dragons player is not the stuff adventurers are made of — otherwise he would be doing something more active. But the player must act as though he were an adventurer. There are two ways to approach this characterisation. Most wargamers tend to put themselves into the game and the character’s goals are the goals the player would pursue in a fantasy world. The character’s personality is not too different from the player’s.

Many non-wargamers, on the other hand, create elaborate personae for their characters different from their own. The idea is to play in accordance with the strictures of that persona. For example, if the character has a low intelligence the player will refuse to mention things which he is intelligent enough to perceive but the character would not. If for some reason the character is terrified of rats he will flee from them, even though the player knows there is little danger. The character becomes a separate person with a will of his own.

One player succeeds by acting out an interesting persona, while the other succeeds by acquiring make-believe power, wealth, or whatever. There is nothing wrong with either method, they are just different ways of viewing the game. The two kinds of players can play together, though with some friction, as long as the DM does not force players to play in persona.

Some players want to create personalities for their characters different from their own, but don’t know how. The easiest method is to adopt a fictional personality — Conan, Fafhrd, or Gandalf. Don’t let sneers from experienced players bother you — they started the same way. Another method is to roll a personality using the Non-Player Character tables on pp 100-102 of the *Dungeon Masters Guide*. A third method is to die for the character’s reactions to events during his first few adventures. Write down how he reacts and after a while you’ll know his personality. (I sometimes leave a character unnamed for several adventures so that I can pick a name appropriate to the character I slowly perceive.)

The final method is to choose one or two peculiar characteristics — say dislike of certain weapons or races — and work from their consequences. In any case, you should develop the character’s background — where he was born, what happened during his childhood, etc. Don’t forget that personality doesn’t remain static, it develops. (I remember the cleric who, after a bad experience, collapsed in terror whenever he met a kobold, though stronger monsters didn’t scare him.) One more thing — don’t feel that you can’t play a character of the opposite sex. Even the most macho male can learn from ‘being’ a woman for a while, and vice versa.

Every D&D player must adapt a persona to some extent, unless he plays only one character alignment, the one corresponding to his own. Those who dislike the idea of alignment are usually extreme proponents of the ‘I am my character’ idea, though occasionally a persona-creator objects to the limitations of only nine alignments. Alignment is a simple method of representing religion and introduces elements of fanaticism and war. Religious war has been responsible for innumerable deaths and frightful devastation, and a fantasy world is a good setting because the gods do exist and can affect human actions.

The reason for the penalties for changing alignment is that otherwise players change alignment whenever it suits them, and alignment then has no meaning. Moreover unless there are advantages to being good or evil, everyone will be neutral. The obvious advantages of being good are a more positive response from people of different alignments, and resurrection. In my campaign, it is easier for a good character to find a means of resurrection than a neutral or evil character. If the DM allows neutrals to be resurrected as often as good types, or allows neutrals to attack anyone at any time without alignment change, then everyone will be neutral and the whole point of alignment differentiation of character would be made irrelevant.

How do you force chaotic players to be disorderly and unpredictable? Few game players have naturally chaotic personalities. A few roll dice to determine what their chaotic characters do, but you can’t force this on everyone. Nonetheless, there are several ways to force disorder on them.

First, remember most DMs do not force players to make decisions in ‘real time’, as fast as the character would in the actual situation. The rules recommend real-time play, but most players prefer a more relaxed atmosphere. After all, though the characters are trained adventurers who make life and death decisions in seconds, the players are just people who play once a week. Why expect them to make snap decisions?

Having said that, the way to force players to act chaotically is either to require immediate decision, or force players to write down what they’ll do, without talking to each other. Don’t allow standard plans or code words. The idea is to make the players’ actions unpredictable.

Treasure distribution also offers an opportunity to force chaotic behaviour on players. Lawfuls might distribute treasure evenly, but chaotic might roll dice separately to see who gets each item or bag of coins, or a ‘grabber’s keepers’ rule might be used.

Finally, give experience points for deeds outstandingly consistent with alignment. For example, if good characters save a village from destruction, or evil characters destroy a (non-evil) village, 1 to 5 experience points per villager should be divided among the party. Double experience should be given for a creature converted to a good player’s alignment, or formally tortured and sacrificed by an evil player.
A New Clerical Ability by Roger Musson

It has been remarked before now that venturing down dungeons, treasure-seeking and killing monsters is a very strange activity for a man of God. Clerics tend to behave in a not-very-clerical fashion in D&D, except when actually casting spells or turning undead, and any attempt at any experience point system that is based purely on class-related activities tends to get into difficulties over the matter of clerics. The following proposal is, I hope, one of getting over the problem, and making clerics a little more colourful. However, I will admit that what follows is a basic plan rather than a fully worked-out and tested system. In the following text, the way, the word "cleric" should always be taken as meaning any clerical class, certainly including paladins, and to a lesser extent monks.

My basic premise is that clerics have no great wish to kill, but rather to convert their enemies to the One True Faith. This certainly ought to be the main aim of any paladin (consider Sir Galahad); the only time I have seen a paladin played really well was a character who used to apologise to monsters before killing them, that he was truly sorry they wouldn't listen to reason, and that they really left him no alternative but to remove their heads. Therefore:

1: Clerics may, at any time, attempt to convert a monster or non-player-character to their own alignment and religion. They may also attempt to convert other clerics.

2: Whether the intended convert wishes to listen to the cleric's casuistry is another matter. If a cleric boldly walks into an ogre's lair and greets him with "Good Evening, I wonder if I could interest you in the One True Faith" he may simply get his head bashed in. In any situation, the DM must determine the likelihood of the cleric getting any sort of audience, and this will probably depend to a high degree on charisma. However, there is no reason why a cleric should not attempt conversion in circumstances where he has definitely not got the upper hand; for instance, if a party had been captured, and were chained up in a cell, a cleric in the party could always deliver a homily to the jailor, who might well be bored enough to listen.

3: The conversion procedure is rather like combat, consisting of an indefinite number of rounds in which each side attempts to score points off their opponent. Think of it as argument and refutation tossed to and fro. In each round, both sides throw for initiative in the usual way for combat; highest throw speaks first, and throws 1d20. To score, he must roll higher than his opponent's wisdom. Then the other side throws in the same manner, etc. Applicable die-roll modifiers are as follows: clerics add one to their roll for each experience level above first; non-clerics add one to their roll for every two hit dice. Clerics and non-clerics alike may both add one to their die-rolls if they have charisma in excess of 15.

4: When one side or the other has scored a total of six points, the argument is over and that side has won. If the winner is the cleric, the loser immediately changes alignment to that of the cleric. This change is permanent in the case of humans; in the case of chaotic non-humans, the force of the cleric's arguments may wear off with time. In the case of Chaos converted to Law, the convert will feel grateful to the cleric for opening his eyes, but when Law is converted to Chaos, dependency is likely to override any gratitude.

5: The argument may be curtailed before coming to its conclusion, either by outside interruption (in which case the argument ceases without effect on either side), or by the withdrawal of the cleric (if he's making heavy weather of it). In the latter instance, the cleric is subject to certain penalties according to the number of points his opponent has scored against him (how many points he himself has scored has no effect). The penalties are as follows:

   Points scored against cleric Penalty
   1 No effect
   2 No effect
   3 Experience points reduced to minimum for level
   4 Loss of one level
   5 Loss of one level plus disillusionment
   6 Conversion or total disillusionment

A cleric who suffers disillusionment may use none of his clerical powers until he has performed some severe penance. A cleric losing six points to another cleric is converted to the other cleric's faith; if he loses to a non-cleric he suffers total disillusionment, loses his clerical powers, and may never enlist in the service of the same god again; to regain clerical abilities he must find some other religion of a different alignment to his previous one. Experience point loss in such a case is at the discretion of the DM.

6: When two clerics debate with one another, neither may withdraw voluntarily from the argument.

7: If a cleric tries to convert a group of monsters, the group will respond as the wisest member of the group. If the wisest member is converted, the whole group will be converted. If two clerics of the same religion wish to combine forces in an argument, only the wisest of the two will actually have any effect.

8: Members of the cleric's party should not be allowed to interrupt a debate whenever their cleric is losing; they should be considered to be entranced by the exchange of theological niceties, unless some outside interruption (wandering monsters, etc) occurs.

9: Intelligence is not considered to affect the debate; though the less intelligent may be less able to refute clever sophistries, they are also less able to understand them, and therefore less likely to be swayed by them. However, there is a lesser likelihood of creatures of lowish intelligence joining in a debate in the first place. And no, you may not try and convert an ophidian jelly!

Other points: for the calculation of a monster's wisdom, I'm afraid you must fall back on your own resources, but I think a basic range of 3-18 with a few modifiers should be sufficient most of the time. Players who traffic in very high-level characters (anything above tenth) should scale down the die-roll modifiers for debates. Note that monsters converted to Law will not just give up their treasure on that account, and if they are lawful, other lawful (in the party) can't attack them for it. Give clerics experience points for converting and not killing creatures, and you should get a nice clash of interests within a party, always a thing to spice the game up a bit.

Obviously, some monsters are totally unsuceptible to conversion; undecided for instance. But the prospect of converting a roomful of goblins to Reformed Calvinism ought to appeal to all those with a fondness for leismism...
One major problem in Traveller campaigns is the question of 'background' — or rather the lack of it. This article proposes some ideas on how the problem can be solved.

To make Traveller interesting, it must be defined. As used here, 'background' is a solid, believable and consistent campaign world; if a campaign has the background, then characters become 'real' people rather than statistics. When background is present, there are times when the players literally see through their characters' eyes, and identify with them to a degree impossible in lesser games.

It is this which distinguishes a good referee from a bad one. A good game master will create a good background, and as a result games in that campaign will be good regardless of which rules and scenarios he is using. A campaign without a detailed background causes problems, the games master who can't think of a scenario, the player with a new character saying 'What shall I do with him? What's the point of the game?'

A referee should try to gain a better understanding of Traveller is particularly prone to these problems.

Like myself, most Traveller players started out in D&D. This game has few flaws — it's累了, and is a basic backdrop for his campaign, thanks to hundreds of shiny talcs, firms, comics and books absorbed almost from birth, you needn't spend hours designing the world, although you certainly need hours, or what a horse looks like; you simply say 'You enter a village,' 'They have cross bows,' or 'You see a horse in front of you.'

There is likewise no trouble in developing a personality for a character, complete with objects. Looking at die rolls for characteristics, you can see that Traveller is different. Once a character is chosen, a rough sketch of the character is already present; a paladin will be gentle and kind to small children and animals, a monk may imitate Gashopper or Shang Chi, and so on.

Most fantasy role-playing games are similar. D&D, CSS, T&T, TFT, and so on, all work in a background of wizards and warriors ingrained below the conscious level in most of us. There are a few on an other kind. These games do involve an immediately familiar backdrop, but instead describe a novel one. RuneQuest is the prime example of this. After reading the description of Garthona, looking over the map, and diving into its rich, valuable, developing world, or what a game is 'meaning'. Garthona may be strange, but a crossbow is still a crossbow, a horse is still a horse, and trails still behave like the trails of familiar, inhabited statistics.

A Traveller referee cannot draw on historical prototypes for his milieu. Thus statistics rarely become dressed in flesh; referees give up because the game lacks something, players discuss D&D trips in little novels with real people in it, and everyone talks about their back to their Traveller reference, a book produced by GDW, a background in The Shinward Marches, the Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society and other sources. However, this service can be for Traveller referees who don't want to buy their supplemental materials. Here then, for what they're worth, are some tricks that can be used to get around this problem of background. Nor are they limited to Traveller, these ideas will be useful in other games and have probably been thought of by a lot of other DSMs.

Rolling Your Own

Don't be afraid to plagiarize. If you see a good idea anywhere, grab it and widen it on. After a while your campaign doesn't look much like anyone else's, but that's part of the fun of playing games. By adding and deleting rules, scenarios and so on, you eventually wind up with a game that has been tailored to your own group's preferences. A lot of people refuse to use anything but what they know, or think they know, don't be one of them.

Don't try to roll up a million planets right away. This makes it difficult to generate anything. Even if the players have a starship to begin with, start with something very limited in depth. (Once you want to move on, and you want them to stay, either to admit that you haven't worked out anywhere else — most players will understand — or impose a vaster world on characters they can't leave, and grab guys, see if any of them are interested. The next step is to find something that doesn't need many DMs.

You'll have to wait for the mail.)

With the statistics, and ask yourself: Why did these come to be? With a little luck, the dice rolls to inject variety, you'll be generating immensely delicious and interesting backgrounds in no time at all. Don't recoil non-mental rules until you're sure you can explain them. Don't ever struggle with the players to come up with a game. This gives them some kind of overall goal which will carry them through several early advent, until they find purposes for their characters. It's far for boring, frustrating, and most of all, for them, not for you. Ultimately, characters don't care for long-term goals — this can be anything up to and including ruling the galaxy. Often this will mean they abandon your carefully plotted goals (let them).

If a struggle is present, the players can side with one party or the other, or play both ends against the middle. Where possible, work on several layers of plot, then interesting rumours and encounters can surface. Some useful struggles that could be set up are:

1. Mission: Impossible

This is typified by the Sable Rose Affair in White Dwarf 17. Here we have a group of players who have been recruited by a highly secret organisation to perform tasks which cannot be openly communicated; of course, while all possible aid will be given, the players must work out their own methods, and should they be caught or killed, the Imperial Senate will discover all knowledge.

Tasks here are numerous and will keep most characters useful employed. Possible operations set up by the referee, acting as the group's Civic Officer, include assassinations, blackmail, espionage, murder, paramilitary commando raids, piracy, etc.; the list could go on for pages. Bear in mind, though, that these will usually be several government agencies only directlyａfferal to the mission, and that often, the trouble will be for appropriations and that unfriendly towards each other. Myself, I own Covert Survey Bureau spends more time trying to discredit Naval CounterIntelligence than it does breaking up Zhozani spys...

2. Punishment Battalion

This plot involves a war, and is suited to militaristic or 'back-and-slay' players. Players represent the villainous psychopaths their stellar empire has produced. These have been hired together for convenience and sent off on a suicidal mission. Each player is to be supported by all known loyal forces. This leads to fairly straightforward bloodbaths and some enjoyable table-topping.

3. Where No Man Has Gone Before

Here the group has been given the task of exploring a new sector — this one is obviously good for solitary play. In a suitable Exploration ship, the crew proceed from world to world, mapping the sectors as they go. Depending on whether they are supported by a government or a merchant company, their opponents may be hostile aliens, native life forms or explorers from other organisations. Their objectives may be to negotiate trading deals, diplomatic treaties, or simply establish a naval or trade base.

4. Shogun

This does not take place on the frontier of your empire, but near the capital worlds. It is postulated that the emperor is involved in some form of power struggle, where the main and other powerful beings of the empire have split into factions, each vying for control of the throne. This scenario lends itself readily to assassinations and underworld dealings, and players will be hired by one faction or another, and from these events will proceed much as in case 1, Mission: Impossible, with the difference that the enemies are the imperial ones rather than the rebels.

5. Star Wars

In which the heroic (or villainous) players strive to overthrow (or preserve) the corrupt and tyrannical empire. Or the hideous barbarian attempt to sack the ancient galactic civilization, it's up to you.

Other set-ups will suggest themselves; this list is by no means exhaustive. It is perfectly possible for a campaign to have several plots running at once. Once a campaign has been going on for some time, such cut-and-paste will no longer be needed as players develop their own goals, but will still be useful background material, providing opportunities to the group.

Methods

There are several methods of generating backgrounds besides working it all out from scratch. These vary in usefulness, and are presented here without comment.

1. You generate a character for yourself and run solo trips for this character, noting down all encounters for use in later games. By means of asking the dice questions and noting the answers, a background quickly appears. This can be for one or more of the non-players encountered by the group be 'personality non-players': that is, NPCs who have been worked out in considerable detail like a real-player character. These people will have their own names, and plots which may or may not involve the players. How to do this, will be covered later in the description of patrons.

2. Write up the trips and adventures of your band as stories and circulate these among the other players. This tends to encourage players to think about their characters, and their development. Involving the players in the plot as it unfolds and equips them with the players. And once these descriptions have been circulated, people all know what a phase-interlocked garbage plotter (or whatever) looks like. This is important for the 'feel' of the game, if someone in the group has artistic talent, drawings are even better.

Let the players work out some of the background for you. They, too, are the players, an alien, a ship sometimes develops into whole
subsectors run by another gamemaster. In which you can adventure.
You will find that after a brief period - usually a few months - the campaign becomes self-sustaining; the characters already know a great deal of background information by themselves. Often thereafter, you will find that you are observing your universe as it unfolds rather than consciously creating it.

Players' Complaints
The first one to arise will be: "What character class shall I be?" In other words, which cards in the star deck do I choose to play? The best method for a new player is to ask him which faction he'd like to imitate and then give him an appropriate character. Alternatively, pre-dice a character, then sit down together and, at the beginning of play, take a long time to dice up, during which players may wander off and join another game. At the other extreme, there are those who don't actually play, but enjoy coping up characters. Unfortunately, since those people are away from the game, you need to have a ready-made supply of NPCs. (Something I've not actually tried yet is making new players start as Barbarians from Supplement 4, so that they become involved in the background adventure as characters.)

The next problem will be choosing a long-term goal for the character once he's been ditched up. Many players will expect the illusion of the game to be left to their own devices. The first few sessions are crucial because everyone involved has to learn their way around your universe. For really bad cases of confusion, use the method suggested for generation prior to the advent of Traveller.

Soon (particularly if hardcore S.D.O. players) your group will ask the embarrassing questions: How do I improve my skills? (Translation: Where are the experience points?) Every class is unique, but Traveller is the only one possible, and its experience system is designed to make it. Just make it real, very real and very difficult. For example, most people in my group (including myself, maybe) can't get experience points. Some have a system that varies depending on the difficulty of the task and the quality of the skills roll. Others have a system that depends on the job being done and the success of the skills roll. Experience is required, and the Traveller system makes it impossible for two people to have a set up in any skill by experience. It's far faster to use a friendly instructor, and since Traveller is a turns-based game, you can save time and energy by having him teach you the skills you need. The first few sessions are crucial because everyone involved has to learn their way around your universe. For really bad cases of confusion, use the method suggested for generation prior to the advent of Traveller.

Next we come to the花花绿绿, or play-by-mail. Traveller is not a role-playing game. It does not require characters, but Traveller is the only one possible, and its experience system is designed to make it. Just make it real, very real and very difficult. For example, most people in my group (including myself, maybe) can't get experience points. Some have a system that varies depending on the difficulty of the task and the quality of the skills roll. Others have a system that depends on the job being done and the success of the skills roll. Experience is required, and the Traveller system makes it impossible for two people to have a set up in any skill by experience. It's far faster to use a friendly instructor, and since Traveller is a turns-based game, you can save time and energy by having him teach you the skills you need. The first few sessions are crucial because everyone involved has to learn their way around your universe. For really bad cases of confusion, use the method suggested for generation prior to the advent of Traveller.

One of the major issues in Traveller is that players are the only ones who can perform actions. This is problematic when, for example, a player is stuck in a room with a locked door and needs a key to open it. The key is held by a NPC, and the player needs to use the NPC's skills to get it. However, since the NPC is not part of the game, the player cannot interact with it in any meaningful way. This is problematic for a number of reasons.

First, it is not fair to the player. They have paid for the game and expect to be able to interact with their characters. Giving them the ability to interact with NPCs is one of the main selling points of Traveller.

Second, it is not fair to the gamemaster. The gamemaster is responsible for creating the universe and its inhabitants. They know the NPC's abilities and are able to create situations that are challenging and realistic. Giving players the ability to interact with NPCs means that they are taking control away from the gamemaster.

Third, it makes the game more complex. It requires more time and effort to design and run a game with full NPC interaction. This is especially true for one-shot games, where the gamemaster may not have the time or resources to create complex NPCs.

There are a few ways to address this issue. One is to allow players to hire NPC's for specific tasks. This is similar to the system used in many board games, where players can hire NPCs to perform specific actions. However, this is not a perfect solution, as it still gives players control over the game.

Another is to create a system where NPCs are controlled by the gamemaster, but players can influence their actions. This could be done through a system of rules, where the gamemaster must follow certain guidelines when creating NPCs.

Ultimately, the best solution is for players to create their own NPCs. This gives them control over the game, and allows them to create their own unique experiences.

The most important thing is to remember that Traveller is a game, and that players should enjoy it. If they are not enjoying it, then they are not playing it correctly. The gamemaster should be willing to listen to player feedback and make changes to the game as needed.
Dungeons &... Dragoons?

Authentic Historical Troop Types in Underworlds and Wildemesses.

by Phil Masters

The majority of role-playing games take place in vaguely "high medieval" universes. A world of knights and bishops, feudal keeps and fifteenth-century technology is implicit in Dungeons & Dragons, explicit in Chivalry & Sorcery. To be sure, Glorantha and Tekumel have their own characteristics and the science fiction-based games are another matter again, while both D&D and C&S take the Middle Ages as they saw them, rather than as they really were—hence the monsters and the magic. But only one small part of European history justifies plate armour and jousting without gunpowder or heavily centralised government. Strangely, however, some umpires import troop-types as well as monsters from other eras and areas, while others drop unfortunate characters through time-wars and dimensional nexus-points into very different settings. Some such encounters are pure fantasy — I know of both German storm troopers and U.S. marines on the loose down underworlds—but it is possible to find historical warriors who can provide our plate-clad, spetum wielding heroes with a fair fight; the notes that follow describe a few possibilities.

The troops described are my attempt to give a general impression of the typical warrior of one area and time. Remember that most armies varied in quality and equipment over time, and virtually all employed auxiliaries, scouts, supports, levies and guards, who would be very different from the "typical". (About half the Roman army was made up of auxiliary skirmishers or cavalry; this article mentions only the famous legions.) To a certain extent, also, these notes show nations as they saw themselves, rather than as we see them; hence the Romans are supremely disciplined, Picts have druidic leadership, Vikings have lycanthropic berserks, and so on. This, it is felt, matches the "medieval-romantic" view of medieval troops taken in the published rules, with their saintly paladins and miracle working priests.

Troops are defined in a number of ways:

Quality:
This will be one of four ratings:

Poor: Troops will be 75% 0-level fighters; 20% 1st-level; and 5% 2nd-level.

Average: Troops will be 50% 0-level; 30% 1st-level; and 20% 2nd-level.

Good: Troops will be 40% 0-level; 30% 1st-level; 20% 2nd-level; and 10% 3rd-level.

Elite: Troops will be 20% 0-level; 25% 1st-level; 30% 2nd-level; 15% 3rd-level; and 10% 4th-level.

Armour Class
AC in all these ratings is based on the Advanced D&D system; it is left to umpires to make any adaptations necessary for other systems. The class given is that of a normal man in the most prevalent type of armour in the force.

Alignment (Gods)
This is a very rough guide, given that any man is free to choose in such matters. All that is attempted is a rough guess at the position of the troops' civilization on the Lawfulness/Cosmic, Good/ Evil axes, with, in parentheses, the name of the god(s) or powers most likely to be worshipped by the troops. Note that, although Gary Gygax regards both Olympian and Gladium as Chaotic Good, many of the deities involved must be rated very Lawful and/or Evil. Note too that few civilizations regard themselves as basically Evil, or even Chaotic, although those following individualistic codes of honour or chivalry are probably best rated as Chaotic Neutral or Chaotic Good.

Organisation
This is rated on a five-point scale, 1 indicating a rabble of near uncontrollable individuals (e.g. berserks), 5 a tightly-knit, well-disciplined elite.

Morale
Also rated on a five-point scale; 1 suggesting quivering peasants, 5, unspeakable heroes. Men particularly prone or immune to being worried by displays of horror are noted as such.

Weapons (Adjustments)
This lists the troops' usual equipment, or their nearest equivalent in the D&D Players' Handbook lists. Some troops were especially good with particular gear; a few were notably bad. Such specialities have been indicated by bonuses (or penalties) "to hit" (NOT on damage). And so to cases. Only pre-gunpowder armies have been considered; rules for firearms in D&D don't appeal to me!

Egyptians

Quality: Average
Armour Class: 9
Alignment (Gods): Lawful neutral (Egyptian Pantheon)
Organisation: 3
Morale: 3
Weapons (Adj): Mixed; all have daggers and one other (see below)
Middle-Kingdom Egyptians were able, disciplined troops, infantry with a sprinkling of light two-man chariots from which fought the noble Elite; all would tend to feel contempt for non-Egyptians, and magic would hold few terrors for followers of their potent religion. Weaknesses include arrogance, over-confidence and bronze weapons — umpires may develop their own rules on these, but remember that a good bronze blade is better than a poor iron one. Little or no armour was available, but all save nomad's bare leather shields of various sizes. Many different types of weapons were known to the Egyptians; reckoned on perhaps 40% of units carrying spear, 20% bow, 15% three javelins, 10% sling, 5% long sword, 5% maces and 5% battle axes, with archers and battle-axe men AC10.

Allow for one officer per 20 men, a three-level fighter with mace and shield.

**ASSYRIANS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armour Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment (Gods): Lawful neutral, evil tendencies (Assyrian pantheon, notably war gods).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (Adj): Mixed; see below</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Assyrians were an unashamedly aggressive, arrogant nation, with one of the best armies in history. A wide range of armour and equipment was known and used, giving possible AC ratings from 4 for a few "ultra-heavy" to 10 for light skirmishers. 5% of units would be Elite guards with AC5 with shield, short sword, spear, bow and dagger; 60% would be other heavy types with spear and shield or bow (all have sword or mace and dagger) and the rest, light skirmishers with javelins, slings or bows. Similarly equipped but shieldless men rode horses or huge chariots.

Officers – one per fifteen men – would be fourth level fighters with mace and shield.

**HEROIC-ERA GREEKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Elite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armour Class</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment (Gods): Chaotic good (Olympian pantheon).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (Adj): Spear, javelin, short sword (+1); 40% add short bow (+2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are the Greek nobles of the Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer; they fought on foot or from light chariots, with support from large numbers of spear or sling-armed peasants (0-level). Armour was primitive bronze plate and bronze-faced shields, and most weapons were also bronze. There is a 15% chance that any group would have a paladin leader of level 3-12, with 15% chance of magical arms or armour.

Greek warriors of this era would be confident and prepared to fight vigorously if necessary. The Odyssey is recommended for further reading.

**GREK HOPLITES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armour Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment (Gods): Lawful good (Olympic Pantheon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (Adj): Spear (+1), short sword</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were the well-drilled citizen militia of the later Greek city-states; they operated with long thrusting spear in close order. Shields were large and bronze-faced, armour could be leather, canvas or bronze, and weapons (as with all troops described hereafter) were iron. Support came from light troops of variable quality and inferior cavalry.

From the time of Philip of Macedon (Alexander the Great's father) on, Macedonian tactics came to predominate. These involved rearming with pikes and small shields, and an improvement in the quality of support troops.

The famous Spartans were generally better armoured and should be rated as Elite quality.

One man in four (1st level or better) would have NCO rank. For every twenty men, there would be an officer (first to fourth level) of respectable intelligence and wisdom.

**PERSEAN IMMORTALS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Elite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armour Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment (Gods): Lawful good (Auramakusa)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (Adj): Spear, dagger, short comp. bow (+1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Immortals (so called because unit numbers were always kept constant, casualties being replaced immediately) were the elite palace guard in the early days of the Achaemenid dynasty. They were iron scale armour and rich robes, and carried wicker shields. Support came from cavalry, other infantry and chariots of distinctly variable quality.

Fourth level fighters would act as officers, and would be of fair intelligence. The Persian religion before Islam was highly lawful and strongly opposed to the chaotic power of magic.

**HAN CHINESE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armour Class</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment (Gods): Lawful neutral (Chinese pantheon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (Adj): Long sword, plus spear (50%), polearm (30%) or heavy crossbow (20%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

China has been ruled by many dynasties with many different types of army; the Han, who ruled from the 2nd century B.C. to the 2nd century A.D., were one of the most able and military-skilled. The heavy infantry backbone of the army was well supported by lighter foot, heavy and light cavalry and chariots.

Armour was leather reinforced with iron rings, and wooden shields were employed. Polearms included halberds, glaves, guisarmes and related types. Lighter troops made effective use of bows, crossbows and other missile weapons.

For every ten men there would be a third level officer of good intelligence and wisdom.

Note that earlier Chinese dynasties had feudal armies with nobles fighting from ornate heavy chariots, followed by mostly inferior infantry, while later armies tended to use mainly heavy cavalry of varying armament and skill.

Chinese religion and philosophy is a complex subject, but is based on the idea of a highly ordered, "lawful" society.

**ROMAN LEGIONARIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Average (45%) or good (55%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armour Class</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment (Gods): Lawful neutral tending to good (Greek &amp; Roman pantheons, Mithras, many others)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morale</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons (Adj): Plumb (see below), dagger, short sword (+2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These were the famous legionaries who carved out and kept the Roman empire. They were highly disciplined and trained, although some units sank below par (and some others were very good indeed), and carried large wooden shields and good weapons. Armour was segmented iron, roughly equivalent to chain mail. The plumb was a heavy javelin, barbed and with a soft iron shaft which bent after use, making it useless for throwing back. It cannot be used at long range, but if it is thrown at a shielded man and misses, it has a 20% chance of lodging in his shield and making it useless (1 to 4 rounds to dislodge if the shieldbearer stops to try).

Support came from a wide variety of cavalry and light infantry (MO chariots – these were used for racing only), mostly with javelin or bow. Later, more use was made of such light forces, and the legions had to make do with leather armour instead of metal.
Dungeons & Dragons?

Bodies of eight or more legionaries would have a 50% chance of being commanded by a centurion—an NCO of fair intelligence and high wisdom, second to fifth level, with sword and dagger only. The Roman empire was strongly aligned to order and law, but legionaries had a high degree of freedom of religious choice; soldier-gods such as Mithras were apparently preferred.

Franks were similar to Celts, but not so impulsive; all can be classed as chaotic, and instead of javelins, they used heavy spears or throwing axes, both similar in effect to the Roman pilum.

Visigoths were similar to Franks, but preferred javelins.

OSTROGOTH
Quality: Average
Armour Class: 7
Alignment (Gods): Varies (varies)
Organisation: 2
Morale: 4
Weapons (Adj): Two javelins, spear, broad sword

These were the Gothic cavalry that helped destroy the Roman Empire. Armour varied from chainmail through leather to none, wooden shields were employed, and some of the spears may have served as cavalry lances. Lesser tribesmen served as archers. Generally, the highest-level men present lead, but exceptional types may be allotted as for steppe nomads in the Monster Manual.

Originally, the Goths worshipped the usual chaotic tribal gods, but later they were converted to a neutral good variety of Christianity; note that this is regarded as a heresy by conventional Christians.

HUNS
Quality: Good
Armour Class: 9
Alignment (Gods): Chaotic evil (tribal deities)
Organisation: 2
Morale: 4
Weapons (Adj): Two javelins, short comp. bow (+2), short sword (~)

The Huns fought China, Rome, and virtually everyone in between. They were a martialistic and savage race of light cavalry, living off their flocks and their victims. They conform to the class of steppe nomads in the Monster Manual in many ways. Apart from small leather shields, the only armour or protection was the miscellaneous loot picked up by a few nobles, who also used lances; others much preferred to skirmish.

Many later steppe races, such as the Turks and the Alans, conformed to this description.

BYZANTINES
Quality: Average
Armour Class: 3
Alignment (Gods): Lawful good (Christianity)
Organisation: 5
Morale: 3
Weapons (Adj): Long sword, three darts, heavy lance

While not as ferocious as European knights, the cavalry of Constantinople were usually better drilled and more intelligent in their tactics. Horses might be barded, and mounted archers were often mixed into lance formations.

Indeed, the better-trained if lighter-armoured early Byzantine cavalry carried bow as well as lance and darts. Infantry could be as well-armed as cavalry, with similar armour, long spears and darts. Light missile troops, both horse and foot, were also extensively employed, as were foreign mercenaries.

One man in ten (determined randomly) should be considered an officer of reasonable intelligence and wisdom. Note that although the city now known as Istanbul was renamed Constantinople in the days of the Roman Empire, its people still called themselves Byzantines!

ARTHURIAN BRITONS
Quality: Good
Armour Class: 4
Alignment (Gods): Lawful good (Christianity)
Organisation: 3
Morale: 4
Weapons (Adj): Dagger, bastard sword, spear, two javelins

The Celts included both the Gauls and the Britons of pre-Roman conquest times. They were brave warriors, but rather lacking in tactical intelligence—in short, they just charged the enemy as soon as possible. Armour was scarce, but large wooden shields were standard. Supporting troops were light missile infantry and noble light cavalry.

Generally, the best fighters present served as leaders, but chiefs and priests may be included as for tribesmen in the Monster Manual... British chieftains rode light chariots. Make 50% of Celtic tribes have Druidic priests, the other 50%, more normal chaotic clerics.

(Note: fans of Asterix the Gaul may have their own ideas as to how to organise Celts... . . . . )

The following races can also be considered here:

Germans fought similarly to Gauls, but were still more primitive and even more ferocious; 10% may be considered berserkers (see Monster Manual). Weapons were javelin, spear and dagger.

Picts were very primitive, wood-painted savages. All would be Druidic neutral. Nobles rode chariots, a fair number of archers were employed, and the rank-and-file had spear and dagger. Arrows were flint tipped but carried a weak poison; ~1 to hit, but with a 40% chance of contracting some kind of disease from bolts. Picts surprised on a 1-4 in outdoor situations and all have ranger tracking abilities.
Despite the Hollywood myth of plate-armoured idiots, there is good evidence that the knights of Arthur (or Arturus) were a real force, who fought for some time to hold back the Saxon invaders. They wore chain mail, carried wood-and-leather shields, and fought from horseback supported by a feudal levy of spearmen and archers.

Third level fighters act as officers. For every man in a force, there is a three percent cumulative chance of an additional officer, level three to eight, with a forty percent chance of paladin status.

**CAROLINGIAN FRANKS**

**Quality:** Good  
**Armour Class:** 3  
**Alignment (Gods):** Lawful good (Christianity)  
**Organisation:** 3  
**Morale:** 4  
**Weapons (Adj):** Bastard sword, spear

These were the knights of Charlemagne, or Charles the Great. They were raised by a feudal system, and so had a wide variety of infantry as support troops. Shields were large and wooden, armour was of several different types, and a few may have used lance rather than spear.

For every man there is a four percent cumulative chance of an officer, AC3, level two to five, with a twenty percent chance of paladin status.

**VIKINGS**

**Quality:** Good  
**Armour Class:** 5  
**Alignment (Gods):** Chaotic neutral (Norse pantheon)  
**Organisation:** 2  
**Morale:** 5  
**Weapons (Adj):** Varied; see below

The Vikings were a very varied bunch; even assuming that we are dealing with a fairly successful raiding party, armour can range from none to good quality splint mail, and weapons from dagger-and-bow to bastard sword, spear, javelin, hand-axe and pole-axe. If necessary, dice for the number of weapons borne by a man — from two to five — then select from those named above, plus long sword, broad sword, battle-axe and club; swords should be near universal, and bows and axes widespread, with the latter claiming a +1 adjustment. All fight on foot, of course.

For every five men, include an additional berserk, level 0 to 2, as per the Monster Manual, but each such has an (Independent) 80% chance of being a lycanthrope; either werewolf or werebear (equally likely). Parties of twelve or more Vikings will have a leader-type, level four to nine, and a five percent chance of a cleric; 35% of these will be druids, 65% chaotic neutral. In either case, level is one to eight.

**MONGOLS**

**Quality:** Good  
**Armour Class:** 5  
**Alignment (Gods):** Neutral, varying tendencies (Mongol pantheon)  
**Organisation:** 4  
**Morale:** 4  
**Weapons (Adj):** Long sword, mace, axe (hand), heavy lance, short comp. bow (+2), long comp. bow (+1)

The Mongols were one of the most powerful armies in history; each man was a skilled and well-equipped horseman, either heavy cavalry lancer or lighter types with javelin. Support came from similar but less well organised or equipped steppes cavalry, or later from various kinds of infantry. Armour varied from splint with horse boarding to leather. The lasso was sometimes used in melee.

Mongol religion involved the worship of a number of nature-gods, and a healthy respect for, but not terror of, magic.

Each Mongol has a four percent chance of being a chaotic good ranger. Third level men act as officers.

**SAMURAI**

**Quality:** Elite  
**Armour Class:** 4  
**Alignment (Gods):** Chaotic neutral (Japanese pantheon)  
**Organisation:** 5  
**Morale:** 6  
**Weapons (Adj):** Short sword, bastard sword (+2), long bow (+1)

The Japanese Samurai knights were brilliant individual warriors, but their obsession with individual codes of honour and bravery could prevent effective use of any complex group tactics. However, Samurai would never show fear or surrender.

Japanese armour was intricate and highly useful, being flexible but strong and comprehensive. Shields were not employed, as the preferred weapons were two-handed. Note that the short sword was generally more ceremonal than anything, although quite usable, and that a few spears and pole-arms were also known. Support troops were mainly infantry, ranging from peasant spearmen to well-equipped professionals.

Two percent of a Samurai force might be unusual types; one percent paladins, one percent ranger. In addition, any group has a ten percent chance of a leader of fourth to thirteenth level.

We may also note here the Ninja, the historical group coming closest to the D&D "assassin" character class. If the rather superfluous Ninja character class is not being employed, treat these specialist killers as assassin guilds, but with guild headquarters more hidden in a wilderness area than inside cities. Weapons are as per Samurai, with the addition of miniatures and bows capable of easy concealment about the person. As the Ninja carefully studied any and every method of concealment and murder, 1–6 members of a community will rate as monks of levels one to eight, and there is a forty percent chance of one to three illusionists; the first as a fourth to seventh level master, the others as apprentices of level one to four.

**AZTECS**

**Quality:** Good  
**Armour Class:** 5  
**Alignment (Gods):** Lawful neutral (Aztec pantheon)  
**Organisation:** 5  
**Morale:** 4  
**Weapons (Adj):** Spear, "sword-club" (see below)

The Aztecs were perhaps the most sophisticated stone-age culture in history; they created a remarkably complex society, with a priestly and army, yet without horses, oxen or camels, and with weapons and tools edged only with obsidian (which actually does a great deal of damage to flesh, although –1 against heavily metal-armoured opponents).

Armour was made of padded or quilted vegetable fibres, and shields were of hide; all equipment was highly decorated and patterned. Offensively, heavy spears and javelin were employed, the latter being given an increased range (say 50% extra) by means of a "throwing stick" akin to that employed by Australian aborigines. The "sword-club" was a flat, heavy wooden weapon, edged with obsidian, which can be equated in effect to a battle-axe. Light support infantry would have short bow or sling and club.

For every twenty men, there will be an additional officer of level five to eight, with a twenty-five percent chance of being a cleric; religion played a key role in Aztec society, and one of the functions of warfare was to obtain victims for human sacrifice, which was deemed necessary to feed the gods for their struggle against darkness and chaos. War-gods, Sun-gods and Earth-gods were amongst the most important.

Aztec youths were brought up in Spartan conditions and were trained for warfare. Their belief in a warriors' heaven, combined with the money and position awarded to great warriors, ensured bravery and determination, but Aztecs, being used to victory, were easily disheartened by defeat or unfavourable omens.
THE BEST OF STARBASE

Welcome to the Best of Starbase. The following suggestions were the first ever Starbase column that appeared way back in WD20. Since then Starbase has covered a variety of topics, all of which were of some use, I hope. Traveller Campaigns and the two Starbases to follow were chosen on the basis of referee utility. They should provide some useful tips and play-aid.

TRAVELLER CAMPAIGNS...

SETTING UP

First, you need an idea. There are many sources — SF novels, magazines, films and TV shows, plus your own imagination, though often an idea I think is original turns out to be from a story I read years ago. Be prepared for a lengthy search, and be ruthless about throwing out ideas that don’t make the grade.

Keep notes, even of ideas that don’t work — they can stop you from making the same mistake again, or they might work out at a later date. Stay on the side of simplicity; a simple idea can be embroidered as much as you like, but a complex one is difficult to handle and there may only be one solution which the players unerringly discover in ten minutes. Disguise the origins of your ideas; you can almost guarantee that one of the players has read the same book.

Start out with a simple encounter if you haven’t played before; a party of player-characters against brigands, law officers or animals would be suitable. Then go on to another similar encounter, adding a little more detail and complexity at each occasion; before you know it a campaign is in progress. Make sure that you as the referee can sustain the adventure at the level you have chosen both in terms of preparation and control over players’ actions — another reason for keeping things simple until referee and players gain confidence. None of this will be wasted; you will be committing to memory some of the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the rules, which will stand you in good stead later.

I cannot stress enough the importance of thorough preparation for a playing session — the referee needs to have all the background information, carefully divided into what the players know at the start, what the players may find out, and what the players should not know. The referee should anticipate likely responses to situations. Allow plenty of time for preparation; have a clear idea of the length of time available, and tailor the adventure to suit. You may be able to continue later if you underestimate the time needed, but, if you overrun, avoid skipping over important parts of the game as playing, rather than finishing, is the essence of the game.

PURPOSE

The main ingredients of a good situation (not usually all at once) are:

1. personal danger
2. monetary gain
3. improvement of personal skills or characteristics
4. job prospects
5. social advancement
6. expunging some force of evil (or good)
7. satisfying curiosity through exploration/investigation

These ingredients are as they are due to the nature of the ‘reward’ in Traveller. Due to the influence of other role-playing games, it has come to be accepted that characters should be rewarded by achieving experience points and rising in ‘levels’; this is not to be found in Traveller. It is in keeping with the logic of the game system, and more truly ‘role-playing’, that it is the player rather than his characters who is rewarded by the increasing facility with which he negotiates the rules of the game and the situations thrown at him by the referee; he becomes more skilled at coping with the universe as, one hopes, all of us do in the real world. I feel that players enjoy participating, rather than ‘winning’, much more when freed of an artificial system of measuring their ability.

Despite all that I have just said, player-characters have to eat, so one of the most important factors to be considered is whether the possible rewards match the dangers, difficulties and expense involved. Players can expect a reduced reward if they fail to solve problems, but having worked hard to find their only recompense doesn’t even pay for the ammunition used may lead to thoughts of grievous bodily harm on the person of the referee. Only in campaign play should ‘lean’ periods be considered. Make sure also that player-characters are suited to the situation, particularly with regard to skills required. There is no need to go overboard about this — no player can expect that every skill he possesses will prove useful each time he plays. Players can however expect a fighting chance. This applies overall; facing players with impossible situations will only leave everyone frustrated. There is no necessity for a solution to be easy, but it must be possible.

BACKGROUND

It is unlikely that you will be the master of every skill required in Traveller. A background in science fiction and fact is required to play and referee the game well. The referee needs to keep the game universe as consistent and realistic as possible, and this often entails areas of science with which you are unfamiliar. Two general references I use in this respect — apart from the usual things like a good dictionary and encyclopedia — are Asimov’s Guide to Science (2 vols, Pelican) and Chambers Dictionary of Science and Technology (2 vols, Chambers). For dealing with the social side of planetary affairs a good historical grounding is invaluable.

SUMMARY

To sum up then, the essentials when considering whether an idea will make a good adventure are:

1. Will the adventure stand up as worthwhile; is there enough interest in the situation? Is the idea sufficiently, or apparently, dissimilar to previous recent adventures?
2. Can the referee cope with the background preparation required and the subject matter involved, and the possible directions players may take?
3. Does the situation fit into the time frame envisaged, and is there a possibility of a further playing session if it overrun?
4. Are players’ likely rewards commensurate with the risks involved?
5. Are player-characters’ skills at least reasonably matched to the tasks they might have to undertake?

I hope this is of some interest to budding Traveller referees and, will give some appreciation of all the work that goes into producing an adventure. I am aware that I have not dealt with the details of the process, which is a subject that I shall treat in a future issue. For now, good travelling.
Amulets & Talismans
by Lewis Pulsipher

Talismans and amulets, derived respectively from Arabic and Roman traditions, often play a part in medieval fantasy but are rarely seen in D&D. Technically, an amulet is a passive defensive device while a talisman confers some power or ability. In either case only the wearer benefits from the magic. Anyone may wear an amulet or use a talisman provided he knows the magic command word.

In D&D an amulet provides protection against a particular spell, while a talisman enables the wearer to use a particular spell even if he is not a spell-caster. A given amulet or talisman may be ‘tuned’ to only one spell, but an individual may wear any number of such charms at one time. Sometimes the amulet or talisman will fail to operate, and each time it is used there is a chance that it will disintegrate after use. A method is provided below to enable spell-casters to construct these charms, but their primary function should be as minor magic treasure items where a more powerful item is not justified.

The determining factor in creation, operation, and disintegration of charms is the level of mastery of the creator, that is, the number of experience levels he has advanced counting from the level before he became eligible to construct charms of the order in question. Only a character class which can cast the spell can create the amulet or talisman — for example, a cleric cannot make a fireball amulet. The caster must be of sufficient level to create the object, as shown:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charm Order</th>
<th>M/U/Illusionist Level</th>
<th>Class Cleric/Druid Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, a magic-user must be at least ninth level to make a second order amulet or talisman. The sorcerer would be at third level of mastery for first order charms, first level of mastery for second order.

Amulets

Each amulet takes two weeks per order number to make, and costs the order number squared, times 100 gp. Time and cost are assessed even if the amulet is a failure.

The chance of successfully creating an amulet is 10 times the level of mastery of the creator, plus 20%. The chance of successful operation of the amulet when the specified spell is cast at the wearer is 10% times the level of mastery of the creator, plus 10%. If failure results, the amulet has no effect. If it operates, it gives an additional saving throw versus the spell, or a save against a spell that normally allows no save. (If two saves are successful against spells which may do half damage, such as fireball, they do quarter damage.)

When an amulet operates, there is a chance that it will disintegrate after operation. This is 100% divided by one plus the creator’s level of mastery.

For example, a wizard (eleventh level) makes a second order amulet. Cost is 400 gp and four week’s work. Chance of success is $10 \times 3 + 20 = 50\%$. If the wizard succeeds, the amulet will work $10 \times 3 + 10 = 40\%$ of the time. When it works it will disintegrate on a roll of 1-25 (100 divided by 4 = 25%).

Talismans

A talisman takes two times the spell level of weeks to make, and costs 1,000 gp times order level. Costs apply even if the creation fails.

Chance of successful creation: 5% times creator’s level of mastery, +20%. Chance of operation: 5% times creator’s level of mastery, +10%. Chance of disintegration is 10% times spell level, rolling after the wearer attempts to operate the talisman even if he is unsuccessful.

When the talisman operates it treat as though the wearer has cast a spell of the specified type.

The following tables list all spells for which amulets or talismans can be created. The number and letter following the spell name indicate spell level and class (C = cleric, D = druid, I = illusionist, M = magic-user).
A Spellcaster's Guide to Arcane Power
by Bill Milne

This article describes a system which relates spell casting to a numerical value for the power that causes spells to take effect. Each and every spell user is capable of handling and manipulating, for whatever purpose or cause, this other-plane energy, in limited amounts, dependant on ability and experience, without incurring any untoward physical penalties. Should they try to exceed their allotted power handling capacity however, spells may misdirect or miscast, and possibly affect the spellcaster (as DM's discretion). Likewise the inexperienced (spell user or other) may be tempted to try to cast spells, with similar tragic results. This power is the energy which also causes magical artifacts to cast their charges or take effect, and is available for manipulation by ALL characters and classes. But, it is only effectively usable for spell casting by the clerical/neuromantic fraternity, through experience, training, and mental ability. It is dependant to a small extent on race, and experience increases are reliant on class. By this latter method, the system attempts to alleviate some of the advantages accrued by class (in particular multi- or dual) ability and race, but yet allowing the classes reliant on magic, a greater scope and usage of their craft.

Determination of Base Power Handling Levels
As aforementioned, all characters have a basic handling capacity. This level is calculated from initial ability scores, by allotting 2 points each, for every point of intelligence and wisdom, to a maximum of 19 & 18 (35 & 35 for power) respectively, and 2 points for each point of constitution below 20, i.e. a constitution of 19 scores 2 points and the minimum of 1 point scores 38 points. It is unlikely that characters will appear with the maximum levels, and still be non-spell using classes, as the higher scoring abilities help to determine choice of class, and, in addition, within this system, low constitution is an advantage to spell users. So in the initial ability/class fixing stage of character creation, this system may assist in determining or channeling personalities, by racial/ability limitations, and base power calculation, toward appropriate class. Also, in those initial stages of a character's existence, this system will allow the best in each class, the greatest use of their craft, and those of lower ability minimal or lesser use, again discouraging the less suitable.

Experience Level Development Scoring
As each magic using class magic using class advances in experience, so through the normal means of prayer or meditation, and training, they are able to develop their ability and increase the power levels they are capable of wielding. Each class is capable of developing and achieving this power handling capacity, but at differing rates; magic-users/illusionists for example, being more reliant on, and spending a greater proportion of time in research and development of this skill, gain in power usage levels more quickly than other classes. Thus the resulting power level gain per experience level is;
Spell Casting Cost
The basic idea behind this system is to allow the spell caster the opportunity of casting the same spell on more than one occasion in a campaign, within a short space of time, without resorting to rest and spell recovery. This is achieved by "spelling cost" i.e. to cast any spell, not only must it be known, and the material components be available (where necessary), but it will also require the release of a certain amount of energy. Thus the spells are given an energy cost rating applicable to class as shown in the chart (note: D.M.'s may cost permanent effect spells at double the normal level). These spell costs have been calculated from the maximum power score available to each class, at each level, to enable 3 castings, within a short period, of the maximum level spell available; e.g., a 6th level Druid with maximum power handling capability, will be able safely, to cast a 4th level spell 3 times (or lesser ones more often).

base power + level score = 102 + (6 x 15) = 102 + 90 = 192
4th level spell cost = 60 thus 3 spells cost 180.

However this may be adjusted (as may be the whole system), to any point scoring base (e.g. 1st, 2st, 3st upward...), that will suit the individual D.M.'s requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spell &quot;Cost&quot; per Class</th>
<th>SPELL LEVEL</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic User</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illusionist</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Druid</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleric</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paladin</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bard</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic User/Druind</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1st level Magic user spells at double "cost".

Examples:

a). Human Illusionist 1st level
   Int. 7th Wsd. 14 Const. 15
   Base level = 92
   Exp. level = 30
   Spell "cost" = 40 thus this character may cast 3 spells in any period (one spell 3 times) without resorting to spell recovery, or losing any one spell on one casting.

b). Elf Cleric 1st level
   Int. 13 Wsd. 15 Const. 12
   Base level = 82
   Exp. level = 10
   Spell "cost" = 35 thus 2 x 1st level spells.

c). Human Ranger 9th level
   Int. 17 Wsd. 15 Const. 15
   Base level = 74
   Exp. level = 54
   Spell "cost" = 45 Magic user thus 2 x 1st level spells.

Power Recovery
Although the powers detailed in this article come from agencies external to the spell caster, some time must be spent in rest and prayer/meditation, to restore the power handling levels of the spell caster. As with the current ADD&D spell recovery procedure, these levels may be restored in a similar manner, depending on class. In addition to this means (rest/prayer/meditation) it is possible to recover energy over a longer period of time, without rest, in the normal course of study at the rates shown until the current maximum level is reached.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>per hour</th>
<th>per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Magic user</td>
<td>25 pts</td>
<td>5 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illusionist</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
<td>4 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Druid</td>
<td>12 pts</td>
<td>2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleric/Ranger/Poladin</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
<td>2 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bard</td>
<td>8 pts</td>
<td>1 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Multi and Dual Class Characters
Where a character opts to include a spell casting role in a multi- or dual class, only the experience level calculation will be affected.

When a multi-class character has a dual spell casting role, e.g., cleric/magic-user, experience level points are gained at the rate of half the combined class total; thus, for the previous stated case it is at the rate of 25 pts per level (½[10 + 40] = 25.) If the class includes only one spell casting role, e.g., fighter/magic-user then the experience level gain is at the rate of half the single class score. The calculation of base rates and the cost of spells remain the same for each class.

In the case of human dual class characters, the role being played after the changeover determines the experience level gain. If the previously stated cleric/magic-user class becomes a human dual class, then the character is played as a cleric to the required level at 10 pts per level, and then as a magic-user at 40 pts per experience level. At the changeover, only the base power level is retained, all experience level gains for the cleric will be disregarded when operating as a magic-user. However, if it is wished that the player operate as a cleric, then the experience level power gained as that class may be utilised up to the level reached. (Note: the base power level will be the same in both classes.) At no time may either class use any experience level energy gained within the other class. This will prevent the possible occurrence of, for instance, a high level magic-user employing that class's high power handling capacity to operate as a lower level cleric, thus gaining the ability to cast numerous low level clerical spells without resorting to power restoration.

In conclusion, I feel that this system (being somewhat similar to paonics, which may also be adapted to fit), will allow the spell casting fraternity a greater flexibility than the current system, without allowing the game to degenerate into one of magical spell battling ad infinitum! It achieves this by limiting the highest level spells available at each level of experience, to be cast only 3 times without power restoration and by causing greater thought to be given to energy expending, due to the length of time taken to restore power handling abilities. For example, a 5th level spell user (dependant slightly on class), will regain the equivalent of one 5th level spell in 6 hours, and two in 12 hours. Under the current ADD&D rules it would take 8 hours to regain as many spells at that level as he/she is entitled to know. This spell system allows greater spell usage but longer renewal.

In developing this system I have tried to calculate levels and scoring to allow each class optimum spell use, taking into account factors such as spell level to experience level rating, additional means of attack/defence, class spell type, and the basic premises of spell use put forward in the Dungeon Master's Guide, whilst trying not to leave the game open to unlimited spell use. I have yet to incorporate the use of magical artifacts into this system.

As might be gathered, my sympathies lean more towards sorcery than swords. I'm also fond of Dragons!
SPECIALITY SELECTION

0  Security
1  Security
2  Support
3  Support
4  Flight
5  Geology
6  Ecology
7  Contact

Security Specialists are charged with protecting the personnel of the other five groups from hostile life-forms and other hazards. Support Specialists ensure the continued functioning of the many and varied items of high technology equipment used by the Service; Flight Specialists have the responsibility of delivering the other groups to their destination intact. The first three groups are therefore concerned with enabling the personnel of Geology, Ecology and Contact to perform their tasks free from distraction; these tasks are relatively simple, mineral resources surveys, surveys of current and potential flora and fauna, and liaison with local cultures. Flight Specialists are also concerned with Remote Sensing of systems and the construction of astrogation charts.

Once a Speciality has been selected, a character may only change it by cross-training in the Speciality he wishes to transfer to, then re-enlisting in that Speciality at the beginning of a new four-year term.

Basic and Advanced Training

This occupies the first assignment of the first term. The character rolls for two skills on his Speciality Skills Table.

ASSIGNMENTS

Each assignment is resolved separately. This is a three-stage process: first, the character determines if he has been placed in command of a Scout team. Roll 2d6; if the result is less than or equal to the character's current Grade, he has been placed in a command position. Second, the character rolls 2d6 on the Specific Assignments table to determine his assignment for that year; and lastly, the assignment is resolved. Four rolls (each on 2d6) on the appropriate Assignment Resolution table are required:

1. Survival: To survive an assignment, the character must roll the indicated number or higher on 2d6. Since duty in the Scouts is particularly hazardous, if exactly the number stated is thrown, the character has received some crippling injury in the line of duty. One of his physical characteristics is reduced by one point (roll 1d6: 1 = Strength, 3,4 = Dexterity, 5,6 = Endurance) and his next assignment is automatically to a Base Hospital, where he spends the year recovering. However, since the Service does not believe in wasting manpower, roll 4+ on 1d6 to receive a level of expertise in each of the following skills: Admin, Computer, Instruction.

Optionally, characters failing to make their survival roll are allowed a saving throw against death. If a character rolls his Endurance or less on 2d6, he is considered not to have been killed, but instead to be so severely maimed that he is granted a incurable discharge on medical grounds. He musters out immediately, without completing any remaining assignments of that term; he does not receive for Bonuses, Promotion, or Skills for that assignment, and Strength, Dexterity, Endurance, and Intelligence are reduced by one point each.

2. Bonuses: Characters may receive Bonuses for ingenuity. If the indicated number or higher is rolled, a Science Bonus is awarded. The character is allowed a DM of +1 on the next roll for promotion. If the number rolled is at least three higher than the indicated number, a Prize for Outstanding Contribution to Science is received. This allows a DM of +2 on the next promotion roll. If the number rolled is at least six higher than the number stated, a First Contact Bonus is received. The winner of a First Contact Bonus immediately receives a Social Standing, is allowed a DM of +3 on the next promotion roll, and may choose his next assignment.

A character who has consistently been awarded at least one Bonus per term of Service receives a DM of +1 when rolling for benefits upon mustering out.

3. Promotion: There are no actual ranks in the Scout Service; a fluid structure assigns individuals on a basis of ability. However, an individual's Pay Grade increases with experience and responsibility. The Pay Grades used in this article are exactly parallel to the Enlisted ranks in Mercenary and High Guard.

BACKGROUND

The Scout Service of the Imperium has many tasks; probably the most widely known is its survey function. Traveller Book I provides a character generation system for general adventurer characters; this article presents an expanded procedure for more experienced Scouts of the Survey Arm.

The Scout Service Survey Arm performs astronomical and planetological surveys of unexplored subsectors. It Lost Colonies or alien life-forms are discovered in the course of these surveys, the Service makes recommendations as to the advisability of contact, exploitation, and trade. Suitable planets are recommended for colonisation, in which case the Service provides liaison personnel to advise and protect new colonists. Due to their intimate knowledge of certain systems and superior sensor equipment, Scout personnel are often seconded to the Navy as pathfinders, guides, or interpreters; particularly if aliens or exotic environments modes of assault are to be involved.

Retired Scouts are much in demand by the smaller governments and larger corporations of the Galaxy for their own exploration/exploitation projects. Such projects tend to be less fastidious than the Imperium about possible effects on local ecologies and populations.

NOTE ON SKILLS

To conserve space, definitions of the skills acquired have not been included; therefore, persons using this article will need:

1) Traveller, Book 1
2) Mercenary, Traveller Book 4
3) High Guard, Traveller Book 5
4) Citizens of the Imperium, Supplement 4

If Mercenary and High Guard are not used in your campaign, this article will probably give Scout characters too great an advantage over other classes.

Weapon Combat

This skill may be taken as Blade Combat, Gun Combat, or Brawling at the player's discretion.

ENLISTMENT

A throw of 7+ on 2d6 is required to enlist in the Scout Service. A DM of +1 is allowed for Intelligence 6+, and a DM of +2 is allowed for Strength 8+. These DMs are cumulative.

ACQUIRING SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

Upon enlistment, a character embarks on a term of service lasting four years. This is divided into four one-year assignments. Characters determine their assignment each year, then resolve all actions pertaining to it. Upon completing the fourth assignment, the character has concluded one four-year term, and may attempt to re-enlist (a throw of 3+ on 2d6 is required) or elect to muster out.

Specialties

When first enlisting, a character determines in what capacity he will serve the Scouts by rolling 1d6 and consulting the Speciality Selection table below. DMs: 12 if Intelligence 10+, 2 if Intelligence 8+. A further DM of +2 is allowed at the character's option if his Education is 11+.

The six Specialties of the Survey Arm are Security, Support, Flight, Geology, Ecology, and Contact.
they range from G1 to G9. Promotion may be gained as often as once per assignment; and by long-standing tradition, any Scout (except Security Specialists) returning from a Survey mission is automatically promoted one Grade.

A roll on 2d6 at least equal to the stated number indicates that the character has been promoted one Grade; on a roll of exactly 2 or 3, however, the insubordination for which Scouts are rightly famous has caused the character to be reduced one Grade of disciplinary action. A Scout reduced in Grade to G0 musters out immediately, and loses one point of social standing.

4. Skills: A character may receive skills if he rolls the indicated number or higher. Which skill table is to be consulted depends on the current assignment and the character's Speciality.

Any character may opt to roll on the Scout Life table or its Speciality Skills table regardless of current assignment. If the character was placed in a command position, he may roll on the Command Skills table. If the assignment on which the skill was gained was Battle, Pathfinder, or Colony Protection, the Combat Skills table may be used; if the assignment was Covert Survey, Colony Assessment, Colony Protection or Training the Hole Life table may be used; if the Ship Life table, if the assignment was Battle, Pathfinder, Recon or Survey.

DEFINITION OF ASSIGNMENT TYPES

Battle
The character has become involved in a naval or ground battle as a "military adviser".

Covert Survey
The character has infiltrated a society which is as yet uncontacted in order to assess its likely interaction with the Imperium. He may recommend interdiction.

Pathfinder
The character, because of his intimate knowledge of local space, has been selected to spearhead a planetary assault, guiding in the first wave of troops dropped.

Recon
The character has been ordered to make a deep penetration data-gathering sweep through hostile or potentially hostile space.

Colony Assessment
Following reports by a Survey team, the character has been picked to assess the suitability of a potentially useful planet for colonization or exploitation.

Colony Protection
The character has been detailed to protect and instruct the personnel of a new colony.

Training
The character has been recalled to Base for advanced training in his Speciality.

Survey
The character has been assigned to a mission which will map a new subsector, and search it for usable planets.

Special Duty
Roll 1d6 to determine the type of Special Duty:

1: Recruiting: The character has been assigned to Recruiting Duty, and Receives one level of Recruiting expertise. In addition, on a roll of 4+ on 1d6, a level of Admin expertise is gained.

2: Cross-Training: The character rolls once on the Skills table of any Speciality except his own. He notes the facts of cross-training in that Speciality, and may opt to re-enlist in it at the beginning of his next four year term.

3: Covert Survey: Ostensibly a school training Scouts for Covert Survey assignments, it is rumoured that this school has other uses for its graduates; this is, however, officially denied. Up to eight skills may be received; roll 5+ on 1d6 for each of the following skills: Forgery, Bribery, Interrogation, Streetwise, Admin, Weapon Combat, Recon, Combat Engineering.

Note that a Scout learning Weapon Combat in this school may elect to take one level of expertise in Bow Combat. This is the only way in which a Scout may acquire Bow Combat (Defied in Citizens of the Imperium).

4: Colony: This school teaches skills useful on Colony Protection or Colony Assessment assignments. Roll 4+ on 1d6 for each of the following skills: Survival, Instruction, Hunting, Prospecting.

5: Synergy: The character has been selected to receive instruction in a generalised, systems approach to heuristic problem-solving. One level of Jack-of-All-Trades expertise is received automatically.

6: Contact School: The character has been selected for training in the art of contacting other cultures. Roll 4+ on 1d6 for each of the following: Liaison, Carousing, Streetwise.

Multiple School Assignments
If a character is assigned to a school and already has a skill level of 3+ in one of the skills offered there, the assignment is instead to the school as an instructor; instead of dicing for the stated skills, the character receives one level of Instruction expertise automatically. Characters may be assigned to any number of times.

RE-ENLISTMENT AND MUSTERING OUT

After completing four one-year assignments, a character has concluded a four year term, and may elect to muster out or attempt to re-enlist. Re-enlistment is allowed on a throw of 3+ on 2d6. If the dice roll a natural 12, the character must re-enlist.

Muster out, aging and retirement are conducted in accordance with Traveller, Book 1. A character choosing this generation system is not eligible for term skills as detailed in Traveller, Book 1.

SERVICE ADVENTURES

An alternative to the standard Traveller adventure format is to start a character from scratch, and “live out” his terms of Service as adventures; in this case, just dice up an assignment each game year and play through the important parts.

SPECIALITY SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Security</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Flight</th>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Ecology</th>
<th>Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battle</td>
<td>G0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recon</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ship</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Wpn Chf</td>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Wpn Cbl</td>
<td>Admin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OTHER SKILLS

Remember that a Scout learning Weapon Combat in this school may elect to take one level of expertise in Bow Combat. This is the only way in which a Scout may acquire Bow Combat (Defied in Citizens of the Imperium).
THE DUNGEON ARCHITECT
Part II
THE INTERESTING DUNGEON

Have you ever wondered how to design a boring dungeon? It's easy. First, take some graph paper and a ruler, and rule out a grid of intersecting corridors, dividing up the spaces left in between into rooms. Put in doors (at least one per room), number the rooms, and add monsters. According to die rolls, put either monsters or treasure or both in some of the rooms. Continue doing this until you have decided the contents of each room, and then hang out a sign saying "open for business!"

What happens when adventurers go down a dungeon of this sort usually goes something like this:

"I go to a door and open it." (You see 50' corridor; door on right, then door on left, then door on right.)

"Go up to first door, listen and open." (You see an empty room.)

"Boring. Close door. Go up to second door, listen and open." (You see two trolls.)

"Anything else in the room?" (No.)

"We ignore the trolls. Close door. Go up to next door. Listen and open." (You see an ogre.)

"Anything else in the room?" (A chest.)

"We attack the ogre." (They attack the ogre.) "We open the chest."

"Treasure!"

"We take the treasure and go back out."

This repeats itself with minor variations over and over again, until the players begin to lose interest. At this point, two things can happen. One, the game goes on and on, and the players are bored. Two, the players give up and go on. Two, the DM will probably give up and go on too!

There are several ways to be drawn from the above. First, putting 100,000 gp in each room is no substitute for good design. You don't need to point out that your dungeon isn't a bit like the one I have just described; I know it isn't, but I know some dungeons that are, and you expect you do too.

Secondly, since disillusionment will take a couple of years to reach its final stages, it is a tribute to the strength of D&D as a game, that players stick with it that long. Name me a war-game that people play every week for two years. There are few of them around.

Thirdly, the fact that the brute works at all is quite interesting. It leads to the question of why players play D&D, magic, experience points, etc. There is the obvious answer, but there is another, which is related to the paradox that D&D is a game with no ending and no winners. A game has a winner virtually by definition, and I suspect that sometimes players are off-balance because though they appear to be playing a game, they have no prospects of winning, since there is no victory. Therefore they define for themselves a sort of "winning" which is going up experience levels as quickly as possible. In a dungeon where this is easy, they feel themselves to be "winning" more than they do in a dungeon where progress is slower. This is missing out on the potential of D&D, which is better thought of as a pastime than a game. It can be likened to fishing, in which there is again no winner.

The object of fishing is to catch fish, just as the object of D&D is to gain treasure, but the main purpose of a fishing trip is to have a pleasant time whether fish are caught or not. Similarly, one can have a very entertaining D&D session without finding treasures of treasure. It's nice if you do find a haul, of course, but that should be incidental.

For a satisfying campaign along these lines, some effort is required. The players must play imaginatively; the DM must provide scope for them to do so. This means creative dungeon design; ruler and dice alone are not enough.

Now, there is an excellent game called Sorcerer's Cave in which the entire point is to dig up treasure, and you win by doing so. It's fun for the players to do a good job, and I think it would be a good game. A similar sort of game is a Fantasy Role-Playing FRP (Fantasy Role-Playing game). The merit of FRP is that it goes beyond Sorcerer's Cave, and it is a shame to reduce D&D land to FRP. FRP seems to me to suit a certain group of players who have become too used to stepping outside dull urban existence and into the fantasy novel of your choice, Sherr escaped, but what's wrong with that? The better the escape, the more enjoyment should be obtained.

We now arrive at point one: we would have a dull novel that consisted entirely of money-grubbing expeditions which conformed to the pattern of most fiction; ad nauseam. If an FRP game is going to get anywhere, there must be provision for more than fighting and looting.

But back, I hear point two approaching. In novels characters don't go dungeon-forested if they can help it; indeed, combat stoked with goodies and every monster under the sun tend not to appear. This is true, but it is necessary to strike a balance. It is possible to have an FRP with a dungeon; Chivalry & Sorcery is that, more or less. The trouble is, the more "realistic" your fantasy world is, the more demanding the game becomes to play, in terms of time, imagination, and acting ability needed. In the perfect world there would be professional gamemasters, and these who wished could become professional players. But we do have to make a living in other ways, and that reduces the time available for creating whole countries in minute detail. The advantage of dungeon-bashing is that it provides structure while allowing freedom for development. There is no need to feel "what do we do now?" at times. Sometimes the game-master will come up with some new idea, but sometimes his imagination will let him down. One can get up to all sorts of adventures, but when this falls down, there is always the staple to fall back on - the dungeon.

The argument so far, then is that D&D in its highest form allows players the fun of actually taking part in a fantasy novel, but not such a high level as to demand that each player should be Sir John Gielgud.

To digress, I believe that the restrictions on some character classes, though they might be viewed as disadvantages, are more the reverse. Restrictions make it easier to play "character" by dictating necessary attitudes. A paladin should be noted by his largeness and flamboyant effect of glory; these make him more interesting than a stereotyped fighting-man.

What are the ingredients that the DM should provide to make his dungeon interesting? If the game is to generate the same interest as a novel, it must have the same ingredients: characters and plot. It is not necessary to construct the entire dungeon from the outer, but it is necessary to plan it. This planning includes the creation of a cast of non-player characters, the characters generate plots, into which the players may step. The characters and plots together generate the content of the dungeon.

I must emphasise the importance of a strong cast of NPCs in any dungeon that is intended to be used continually over a period of time. It is only possible to make a dungeon interesting without them, but there are many efforts of imagination to keep up the players' involvement. Even then, one is missing out on some things. A con-type character is hard to play in a dungeon campaign, when there are no NPCs to con, to give this example.

It should also be emphasised that NPCs should be a lot more than just an abundance of the regulation "Little Old Men". These can provide light relief, but they are a passive figure, little more than tall wall-paper. The true NPC should be as active as player-characters. If NPCs are to appear credible, they ought to be done something, unless they have good reasons for their inactivity. And it is when the plans and activities of NPCs and those of the player-characters interact that the best games of D&D result.

Now, building your dungeon, then, draw up your main cast list. Others can be added to it as time goes by, but you need some grasp of what is going on from the beginning. NPCs can be fitted into one of four main categories: dungeon-negatives, dungeon-negatives, dungeon-negatives, and dungeon-negatives. These can be subdivided into those who are still alive, and those who are purely historical, but still cast long shadows in the shape of artifacts, legends, etc. There are also those who are believed to be historical, but are actually still around if the players know it. Let us take them in order:

Dungeon Dignitaries

There is one question you cannot escape - why is your dungeon there? The answer may be impossibly, but must exist. There are two sorts of dungeon, the accidental, and the intended. The accidental are actually created by someone, and that gives us character number one, the chief. There are lots of things you need to know about him. Is he still around? Why did he build such a vast dungeon? Why don't we have a course for the local college of magic, because his father and grandfather before them were in the dungeon-building trade; for some other reason? (By the way, I'm not saying that you should be the players' answer; you can give them clues occasionally, but they should
Zoltan among them. First, we need more information about the dungeon: where is it, what sort of country, how far from town, and so on. Who are the important figures in the town? There is some sort of governor, what's his name? What's his name? What is his name? Of course, it's Zoltan, Dillysple, Thail'd. What is he planning? To rid the town of magicians. Ah, so he's no friend of Zoltan? No. The plot thickens — the college of magic will have to be kept track of. His daughter was abducted by one. Aha, we scent another plot. Perhaps the players will find clues to the whereabouts of Dillysple's daughter. Perhaps they will try and sell him the information. Perhaps he won't believe them. Over to you.

You can build up biographies about some other local personalities: a resident alchemist, perhaps; a barrister or vestryman; the local priest (what's the local religion like? Cults? Counter-cults?) and so on. You might like a few secret societies as well just to make things more complicated. The more the players have to discuss, the more they will involve themselves with the better, and the more they will put down the dungeon. For instance, the local secret cult of the god Praxiteles had a sacred statue stolen, and the thief, finding it rather too hot to handle, hid it down the dungeon. The secret cult would like it back, but on the other hand, it is one of their rules that any non-cult member who sees eyes on it must be put to death. The players don't know this, unless one of them joins the cult, but that could cause further complications. And what the Priest of Praxiteles thinks of Franzke, or Zoltan, or Dillysple even, is another matter...

Dungeon Raiders
These are probably the least important group; deal with them when you see fit. They are adventurers attracted to the dungeon by the sight of some treasure for sale in the town.

Once again, remember that sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. The successful party is the balanced party: magic, diplomacy, and brute force are all needed. You are not likely to find a party consisting solely of one class, unless they are very well equipped. If players meet other adventurers, they are going to form a mixed party instead.

There are two types of treasure. On the one hand, monsters are a case of a larger party which split up after heavy fighting. In this case the fragment might be only too delighted with a safe escort out of the dungeon.

Some may be uninteresting, and not worth spending too much time on, but some can be more imaginative. As an example of this, I can do no better than quote M. Goergon's two paladins in White Dwarf 19. These two furnish a superb example of the sort of miniplot that players can get involved in. Basic fact: you have two paladins, one of whom is young and successful, the other being old, out-of-luck and down-at-heel. Number one is getting decidedly nervous of number one, and in the end, losing the players, the more mischievous amongst them might well be tempted to give number two a helping hand a little further down the slippery slope, while the paladins where he could seem to triumph (with a little discreet help) — though these good intentions might be thwarted by those in the party of more questionable alignment.

One way of handling these rival parties is to keep a couple of spots on your wandering monster tables labelled "adventurers", and then pick one randomly from your list of parties in the area whenever necessary. This list can be updated from time to time as you see fit.

The most successful characters are those that develop the most complete personality. And this development is not anything that can occur just through fighting and looting, but is dependent on elaborate involvement between the characters and their environment. The measure of the success of a character is not how many high-level characters it has, but how many interesting characters, random treasure tables are not enough — you must plan, and you must plot.

You haven't got to decide absolutely everything well in advance; extra ideas can be incorporated as play proceeds. A statue put in purely for decoration might reveal itself as a focus for some story, and can have a history and a magic power tucked onto it.

In the second part of this article I shall deal with the physical design of the dungeon, and population. The dungeon maps and room contents will be suggested by the plan of the campaign, as I have demonstrated. But this will only account for so much. Not every corridor will have the same important incident. The architecture and room contents will contain notable treasures or trinkets with a history. So even when you have the feel of what plots are brewing, there is still the task of putting in the routine stuff — the curs of every corridor and the contents of every room. There will be no next objects of discussion, in parts II and III.

Overground Dignitaries
Here we find all the important NPCs who live outside the dungeon.

We have to piece together the story themselves from what they find.)

Information you have, the better feeling for the campaign you will have. Start off with something simple, and keep asking yourself questions, yes or no answers. Each answer should trigger off more information, until you get somewhere.

I'll show you what I mean. Let us suppose we are starting a dungeon.

It was deliberately created by one man; let us call him Abram Franzke, a noted plunderer. The first question is: why is he taking on something like this? Yes. Is the dungeon still used in its original capacity? No. Why not? (Think of an answer — any answer.) Franzke and the director of the college had a rift — money was the director. He's called Zoltan, and he's a young man without money. No. Are Zoltan and Franzke still enemies? Yes. Are they actively hostile? Yes. Has Franzke any allies? Yes. Good or evil? Evil. Has Zoltan got Good allies? Yes, yes. Is there a local monarch or group of such? Yes. Very strong? No. Why not? He's racist. Does Zoltan send parties to raid the dungeon and attack Franzke? No. Why not? It's too strongly defended. What is Zoltan up to at the moment? Lacing the dungeon, using certain magic to make the college into the traps. Is the plan working? No. What is Zoltan doing? Trying to hire foreigners (the players, perhaps) to attack Franzke. And so on. Already the picture is beginning to build up of a conflict of the two sides which the players will gradually uncover, and then join in on one side or the other. Or perhaps they will find a third side to the dispute, or remain out of it, exploiting it. The scenario has taken longer to make up than it had type, yet it suggests themes for dungeon construction — there will be features which are relics of its old use as an assault course for magicians, and others which reflect its new use as a fortification.

With the accidental dungeon, use a similar method, but this time assume the dungeon grew up accidentally, rather than being designed by a NPCs who might have dropped in by chance, or been taken over by Orcs as a lair. One of the Orcs was a tanning Orc, who, playing around with a powerful artifact he had found, accidentally released a number of Orcs from other planes, which were then divided around the cave system. Continue from here.

In the case of Franzke's dungeon, we can assume that he makes some effort to maintain the dungeon. Traps sprung may be reset. The material for Damaged features would be repaired. To do all this, he may require some help. So, besides the chief, the elaborate dungeon, being large, has a full-scale working department to keep it in order; the adventurers are sometimes encountered by players as they go about their business.

In the accidental dungeon, there is no central organisation to repair damage, and traps sprung will be returned to their normal state, unless one of the players is a skilled repairer. Perhaps the players are caught by surprise when the monster comes down the dungeon living, then becoming subject to the necessities of beating off NPC adventurers, a curious turn-around. It does at least prove that living down a dungeon is not a totally stupid thing for an NPC to do.

With each NPC, ask yourself who are they, why are they there, where did they come from and what are they going to do next? Plus any other questions you think of. The answers to these will help you answer other questions. When you are going to be down the dungeon, you can tailor the dungeon to their needs when it comes to construction.

Another thing to remember is the Golden Rule of D&D, which is, what goes for player characters goes for NPCs as well. Ergo, you can't put a 4th level magician on his own into a room and imagine the characters are going to live there happily. The moral injury for unaccompanied 4th level magicians is very high. Anyone living down a dungeon should be provided with sufficient defence to stay alive.

There is another rule, which is that characters generate items generate plots. Suppose that Abram Franzke helped conjuring up demons, and so invited in a lich, name of Heinrich Focquellas, and gave him a complex on the 8th level. Now Focquellas, the bodyguard called Samson Spidersoul, a powerful fighter who met an untimely end when a cloud giant decided to use him as a tootbpic.

The bodyguard was a high level necromancer who had some useful magic weapons and armour made for him. And they will still be around, perhaps in the dungeon. We have the beginnings of a "collect-the-set" plot, where players hunt for all the various related magic items, either to use them, or destroy them. And all sorts of things start suggesting themselves. Perhaps someone else is trying to collect the set; perhaps for a different reason. It may be that someone else had it once and did it badly. And so forth.

The most important thing is that you should find something interesting that the party could get involved in, and that is likely to appeal to the characters. Perhaps the other adventurers find this, and the players don't. And what about that name "Spidersoul"? It was just the first thing that came into my head, but suppose it was a man with a spider.

Supposing the items connected with him have some power relating to spiders; attracting them, for example? Perhaps if a number of them are collected by one individual, a spider will come back, or perhaps you'll get a certain number of variants on the same thing. Yes. You tell me, many combinations are a help in stimulating the imagination.

Here we find all the important NPCs who live outside the dungeon.
Being a Dungeon-Master isn’t all cakes and ale. There’s lots of fun in running a dungeon, but a lot of drudgery in creating it. This task has three stages: First, planning the overall campaign, which I discussed in Part I. This isn’t drudgery; it’s the fun of writing fantasy without having to worry about structure, dialogue, or grammar. Stage two (drawing the maps) isn’t too onerous, and is our topic in this part of the article. Populating the rooms is the real chore; we’ll leave that to Part III. So let us address ourselves to rooms, corridors, and traps.

To the beginner, the first response to the immense task of preparing a dungeon may be to buy a ready-made module. This has several disadvantages, not the least being that it is harder to run someone else’s dungeons than one which you designed and are intimately familiar with.

So there are you, with graph paper and pen, ready to start drawing. The first problem is size. If a dungeon is to stand up to repeated expeditions, how large should one module be? I prefer to err on the side of too large than too small, for two reasons. Firstly, there is a danger of levels becoming exhausted of treasure before parties become strong enough to move to them. Secondly, it’s more fun getting people lost in large levels. The disadvantage of big levels is that they take longer to populate. 100 rooms a level is a good number, less below fourth. If you do make a level too small, design an extension to the main level which is connected via a secret door. If the party doesn’t detect secret doors very well, their attention can subtly be drawn to it by having a wandering monster enter or exit that way.

ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Verticals

You need three dimensions at your disposal, not two; don’t stint on number three. A simple symbolic code will take care of difficulties. Staircases between levels, yes, everyone has those, but there is scope for corridors that go in and down at equal slopes and landings, or even doors while staying on the one level. If we assume a vertical difference of 40’ between dungeon levels, that still gives you easily 20’ to play around with without overstepping. Rooms can have tiers, galleries or pits, sloping floors. Thieves have climbing abilities which are wasted if everything is at floor level. Have high-nup nooks with easy access. Have passages that start just below the ceiling of a room, leading to a monster lair which only those who can climb up to the passage will be able to attack. Extend things downwards as well. Trapdoors leading to secret passages are great fun; these can run underneath the level to otherwise inaccessible rooms. Some may be barriers that connect different levels; they may also be inhabited by whatever creature made them.

Have large features that link up several levels; a huge circular hall, the floor of which is at fourth level, but whose ceiling goes through third to second level. Galleries will go round the walls at third and second level, and a staircase might spiral down the walls connecting all three levels. Thieves big – don’t make all your rooms square broom cupboards.

Use of the vertical can make players susceptible and therefore jumpier. If players reach a corridor junction at which the ceiling gives way to a shaft ascending up into blackness, they may well be wary of things dropping down from the unseen heights. Or imagine a corridor 13’ wide where the 5’ section either side ascends by steps to run 10’ higher than the central section. Might not players be leery about walking down the middle, perhaps with good reason? Or are the side-sections dangerous? Or both? Or neither?

Rapid Travel

It is easy to think all dungeon features hostile, but some help occasionally. Imagine that after a year of play, the top three levels have been wrecked, and your players are concentrating on a distant part of fourth level. The first impression on entering would be following the same long route to get to the section of interest. Eventually players will start adventures with, “We go where we started off last trip – that room that had the weight in. Do we get there?” You either sit there for a couple of minutes doing wondering monster checks, and then describe where they meet something, if they do. (“Well, in that case we hide until it goes away and then continue.”) or you insist that they repeat the route before you grant that they have arrived. The latter is petty. Build in a teleport system that circumvents the whole issue, just inside the entrance, and others interspersed evenly about the dungeon, say, four to a level. This allows the players to get quickly to where the action is. And back, for that matter.

This encourages good play, as it aids planned adventuring. One of the most effective forms works as follows: the party first makes a trip, taking defensive spells, avoiding combat wherever possible, to note down potential targets in detail. When a promising target has been found, the party leaves, and plans a course of action. Then, laden with appropriate offensive spells, the party moves in directly to the target, hits it hard, and whilst the treasure out via the teleport.

Of course, even the best-made teleport system fail at times. Spotting trouble

These can be temporary or permanent, marked or unmarked, as you prefer – things like zones of magical sterility, zones of silence or darkness; areas subject to queer noises, gusts of wind, or what have you. Take care what you put in special areas – it is purely vulnerable to magic in a zone of magical sterility is awkward indeed.

VINDICTIVE FEATURES

Traps

I mean by “trap” an automatic device designed to harm. This most often occurs in rooms, and in rooms anything goes anyone who walks up to an unguarded chest without taking any precautions deserves what’s coming to him. But traps can lie unvisited corridors as well, though traps in corridors should be relatively rare, or look almost too obvious. A pit trap that sends characters down into boiling acid, have a pit trap that sends people down merely into an empty pit, causing no more than bruises.

The rest of this section is devoted to the fine art of getting players lost; a neglected aspect, but great fun. So often have I seen this proved: one or two players can’t find their way doing most of the trip, often drifting on the wrong course, falling in a sleep. Then come the anguished tones of the map-maker: “I don’t know where we are;” suddenly the heads go up, muscles tense and every ear is cocked.

It is worthwhile considering ways to get people lost.

Geometry

The most satisfying way is to let players get themselves lost. This can be encouraged by designing the dungeon so that it is hard to map accurately.

Hence I cite geometry as my second vindictive feature. Use irregular and non-rectangular plans. You should not bank on being able to lose players by chasing them with a wandering monster; they will just take every right turn that presents itself, with the aim of coming out of one of the many incomplete circles, and experience less from memory, and throwing the pursuit off the trail by talking as many turns as possible.

Variety

This is an obvious point. It makes things more interesting if your dungeon is not so constructed that any one section closely resembles any other. Some parts might have predominantly narrow passages, others, wide passages. Some might be rectilinear, others a tangle of curving passages. Sections might have heavy concentrations of any architectural feature, for instance, redundant stairways that go up 10’ and then down again. These may cut through an area that might be dominated by one sort of creature, as well. There are two reactions to this: players may become restless in the circumstantial. Curiosity may be evoked on first encountering a distinctive area. Or if a lost party chances upon a part of a section they have been in before, they may have a hard time finding their way back to the familiar ground. (Of course, it may be a section that duplicates one they know.)

Sublevels are an interesting way of providing variety: small, virtually self-contained levels, separated from the main level by a common main level. These can make a convenient adventure; after a race trip, a party may decide to clear out a sublevel at considerable distance from the parent dungeon; make it accessible from a single featureless corridor, say, half a mile long. By the time the players get to it, they will have having descended a level, even if the passage doesn’t slope. But they will get to it, for curiosity as to what might be at the other end.

Corridors

There’s no reason why corridors shouldn’t be made interesting as well as rooms. They might have alcoves with statues in, bits of interesting junk, or even be a chest or two as well. Certain corridor walls may have patches of vines growing. Corridors can be decorated. They may broaden into squares, they may enter squares under decorative arches. Organised beasts may take possession of corridors near their lair, barricade them, and man the barricades. One shouldn’t think corridors are purely a means of getting from one room to another.

Windows

One small feature is the use of windows, which allow a party to look into the corridor, or from another room. For instance, the party may spot a small, heavily barred window in a passage wall. Looking through, they see an empty room with gold and gems scattered on the floor. However, there is no door in the wall, so to get in they have to search for the way in round the other side. They find that the only way in is through another room guarded by oilvans. Of course, if the party find a way of getting the gems out through the window grill, then good luck to them.

Water

Yet another feature that can add character. Small pools are common, but streams or canals can be used in various ways. Some rooms might
only be accessible from waterways that replace corridors in the wetter parts of the dungeon. There are lots of different water monsters, and water-related magic, which makes sure there’s opportunity to use it. However, it would be a brave party that trusted a boat that floated downstream with the current, down tunnels. Apart from the risk of waterfalls, a alleged tunnel that blocked passage would be dangerous if the party had no way of propelling the boat back against the current. Lakes are another way of introducing water; an island in a subterranean lake makes a good lair for some villain. Furthermore, if no boat is provided, only members of the party with flying, water-walking, or swimming abilities will be able to reach the island.

Crooked and wiggly passages are better for confusing players, but are not effective on their own. A network of wiggly passageways which forms a series of roughly rectangular blocks between every four crossroads is fairly easy to map taking one block at a time. Junctions at angles other than 90° and 45° may be effective. A hexagonal plan is difficult to map if players do not realize the passages are tracing out hexagons. A long corridor that branches off at an angle less than 90°, but which can be taken for 90°, may also cause confusion. Another device is to take a distinctive arrangement of passages and repeat it, reflect it, rotate it, in different parts of the level.

Finally, long passages that are arcs of circles with constant gentle curvatures, are easy to draw with compass, but the very devil to map properly.

**Trapdoors:**

And here I mean ones that plunge the party not into a pit of spikes, but down a level or two. Then they have to find their way up from an unfamiliar and dangerous level. This can be harder by putting stairs behind doors. Then the lost party will not find those vital stairs if the monster they have to open doors.

Consider the fact that you are unlikely to get the whole party in one go. If one or two characters fall, what will the rest do? The first reaction may be to lower a rope and pull the fallen back up to safety. It is a good idea to build something to stop this. Failing that, there should be some interesting clues of conscience as to whether to jump in after the victim to help him find his way out.

A nice trick is to put a trap door at the top of an imperceptibly upwards-sloping passage; characters falling through think they have descended, but are still on the same level. This can be made more effective by designing your corridors so that those near the upper end of the trap door do not connect directly with those near the downward end.

**One-Way Doors:**

These appear as normal or secret doors but they allow passage in one direction only. If you use one-way doors, you should design a series of areas which only connect at a few points, some of which should be one-way doors. At least one path should run in the way that will ensure that the party is forced to explore for some time before finding a way back to familiar ground.

Portcullis traps work in a similar way, and can be thought of as one-way corridors. (Raised portcullises are very good for making players nervous.)

I hope Don Turnbull will not mind me revealing that in the Greenlands Dungeon all one-way doors are supplied by the Acme One-Way Door Co., which places its trademark on the back of all its products. This is a kind way of informing players that they are trapped and of enabling them to distinguish the wrong side of a one-way door from a locked door.

There is another use for one-way doors which I call the “room suite” trap. Players open a door and see a room (with one other door) containing food and treasure. So they barge in, kill the gobins, open the chest and find treasure. The monsters find that the door they came in by was a one-way door, and that the only way out is through the other door, which leads to another room containing sabre-tooth tigers,umber hulks, and copper sheets. This is a very nice little description. This is a reverse sequence of monster-then-treasure. It is especially dangerous; the party, being cornered, has no option but to fight a creature that it may not be prepared for. It is encouraged to find a way out, but not to risk it; they can work out an effective plan utilising whatever materials they have to hand; there might be something useful in the treasure. This trap provides the DM with a way of giving players a fight with a monster that they might otherwise run away from.

**Vindictive Teleports:**

These are the uncontrollable sort, that I label as above to distinguish them from functional teleports. (Of course, until players learn how to use functional teleports, these too may act in a vindictive manner.) The usual way to get round one of these is to make a complete lock and take the trap out of it. The party rushes in to take the treasure, and when it vanishes, they are not able to find their way out. The door out now looks on the opposite side of the corridor.

The alternative is teleport doors; these are doors that have teleportative properties with other doors about the dungeon. Teleport corridors are very safe.

As an example, see the diagram. Teleport doors come into three different groups: First we have the “there-out-not-back” variety. In the diagram, door A/B is the teleport door, C/D the receiving door. The party enters A/B, the door reveals the whole area; then the party goes through the door and is now at C. When they return to go home, they open door C/D expecting to see A but find instead D. So they would have to find the long way back. Should they reach B, the teleport door, when approached from this side, acts as a normal door. However, there also exists the “back-but-not-there” sort of door, which is the first type multiplied by 100%. The party crosses from A to B without trouble, but on the way back via B, the door opens on D. The party must therefore find a way around the door.

The thing is, there is no way for the party to distinguish the two types.

![Diagram of teleport doors]

When a door does not open on the prospect they expect, they have no idea whether they were teleported the first time through, and are at C, deep within the dungeon, or whether they are at B, and quite near the exit if they can only find a way round the door.

The third type works in both directions, and will teleport to C, D, or elsewhere when approached from A or B.

Vindictive teleports may send players down levels. There is a trick you can play if your dungeon is in the right situation. This is to build a sublevel above first level, and teleport parties up to it. Suspecting they have been sent down a level, the party will search anxiously for stairs, passages, but find only stairs down, which they will be reluctant to take!

**Epur si Muovers...**

The really heavy vindictive features move whole chunks of the dungeon around. The simplest is the turntable, which gives a random spin whenever players go over it. This is good fun until the players twig to what is going on. Then they walk across, check that they're come out in the right place, they haven't walked back again, check again... until they find the corridor they want. Let them find the control that operates the turntable, then they can switch it off. Much the same goes for sliding blocks, Good fun at first, but make sure they can be avoided eventually. If they occupy a strategic position, they become a nuisance.

I am not enamoured of sliding blocks, and I think space distortions are over-rated. Players are usually too cavalier with space on their maps that it doesn't matter what length you tell them a corridor is if they think it joins up, they'll join it up. Another nasty I haven't mentioned is the illusory staircase, which looks as if it goes up but goes down, or vice versa. Use to be there are only potent if trapped as well. As for the other sort of illusory staircase, which looks like stairs down, but is really an empty stairwell, comments via vis trapdoors apply.

Going back to the sliding blocks, one that never gave too much trouble was in a square with four exits, one on each side. In the middle was a large pillar. If a party entered the square, the pillar would move to block off the opening they had come in by. So they couldn't retrace their steps. After the party had left by one of the other exits, the pillar would move to block that off, instead, so they couldn't even get back to the square. After a couple of hours, the pillar would re-ut itself.

Epicly, the grand revolving dungeon. Why be parsimonious? Have the whole thing rotate? If you make each level basically circular, with exits at regular intervals and all connections between levels planned so that they always match up, then you can spin whole levels independently of one another, to the intense frustration of your players, especially if any of them happen to be engineers.

That concludes Part II. Part III will be concerned with the contents of rooms.
Part 3

THE POPULATED DUNGEON

by Roger Musson

It is one of the strengths of D&D that it possesses a marked routine. In most games you can discern routine as well as active enterprise; the proportions vary from game to game. In chess, when one cannot think of any special plan there is a routine to fall back on of making general-purpose developing moves. In something like Monopoly, most play is routine: throw the dice, move the right number of spaces and so on; one's course of action is prescribed by the game system. The greater the element of routine, the easier the game is to learn. On the other hand, it is easy to be too free with the wands and rings, with opposite results.

The best procedure works as follows. First, decide what proportion of rooms you want to be inhabited, inhabited with treasure, uninhabited with treasure, etc. Now consider what proportion of rooms in the level. If a third of the room are to be inhabited, and you have one hundred and fifty rooms, fifty rooms will have occupants. Good roll up fifty monsters. Now work out how many treasures you're going to need, and roll up that number. Now you set the allocation process - non-randomly. This way you make sure that most monsters and their treasures are well matched, (b) that interestingly-placed rooms are not empty just as a result of a die-roll, (c) that the occupants of a level are evenly spaced out, and not concentrated to leave huge empty boring areas. You also keep the right balance of force and riches.

THE IMPROVED DUNGEON

There is one problem which will soon crop up eventually, so be prepared to deal with it in advance. Sooner or later, players reach part of the dungeon which you haven't got round to populating yet. When they sally down that corridor to unpopulated tunnels, what do you say? 'Please don't go that way. I haven't done it yet. This is a quick way to burst the bubble of imagination and reduce any feeling of involvement the players might have with the flow of action. There are several better alternatives.

The first of these is the quick heavy approach. You say 'Twenty feet ahead of you, you see fifteen ogres holding an impromptu meeting in the middle of the corridor.' Each player rolls d20. The drawback is that they may think these ogres live down that way, and shun the corridor in future for fear of them.

For the second tactic, credit should go to Peter Roberts; this is the ingenious clean-up crew or dungeon master's friend approach. This takes two forms; the first is the purple jelly. This creature resembles an ordinary member of the corridor, but is purple jelly, temporarily.

The second tactic is to try and turn the dungeon as you go along. This is not as difficult as it might sound, providing you are prepared to think quickly. The only problem is keeping a record, so it is a good idea to get a secretary to keep the seconds of your actions. I had a sub-level that I never got round to building at all, so it was always improved. It was always different as a consequence. It is not a good idea to switch if the players are going to suspect.

But assuming that you have the corridors and rooms already mapped, there is a very good alternative to improvisation; the Emergency Room Register, also known as ERR. For each level, prepare a list of contents of twenty rooms or so; monsters, treasures, decoratons, etc. Number each room 1-20. If players move into an area that you haven't populated, and open a room, select a room randomly from the appropriate list in the Emergency Room Register. If you roll 11, then the contents of ERR room 11 are what the players find. Scribble down somewhere that room 73 on level 2 is equal to ERR room 211, and then later on you can copy this data over to the next level and so on. The advantage is that the players find fully finished rooms, and what they find is permanent. It is true that if they had opened the door three doors down on the right, they found a presence, but if you had a door there, then they found what they would have found, but as long as they don't know that, it won't hurt them.

THE SILLY DUNGEON

The place of humour in D&D is a matter of debate. Merely treating the conventions within the game mechanics in a totally deadpan fashion, as in a serious simulation, may make for many a hit point they've lost. However, there are limits, which is not to say that these limits cannot be transcended. There is the possibility of populating one part of the dungeon entirely with some totally Silly Dungeon. This place is inhabited mostly by feistish thieves (in black leather armour), pink homosexual kobolds, tribbles, demon teddy bears - anything that is contentiously amusing your players. The advantages with this system is that it turns out to be gold places which are chocolate when you peel the shiny.
paper away. Magic items include the celebrated Ring of Earth Walking, which allows you to walk in solid earth. It was for solid earth. The author massaged, spelled out rude words, and credited the whole place is frequently given to a wizard by the name of Prang.

There's no disputing about taste, and if this appeals to you, you might like to read and design a Silly Dungeon. The player might think that will be a lot of juggling, providing there is an understanding consideration that nothing happens in the dungeon which evades a penniless Pythosian, it may be hard to regain.

D&D can stand up to a lot of jokiness, providing there is an underlying course of seriousness to carry it through. A serious dungeon in which amusing things happen will be a more lasting source of amusement than a dungeon in which every wounding prop is thrown at the players in quick succession.

THE REWARDING DUNGEON

Dungeons have treasure. Players like finding treasure. Therefore we should put a bit of treasure in our dungeons, yes? At the outset of this series we discussed the disadvantages of putting lots of treasure in dungeon rooms for the above reason, but then it was tacitly assumed that treasure meant gold. We shouldn't be narrow-minded about this. There are other sorts of 'treasure' which are interesting to find, yet do not carry with them any dangers of over-balancing the game. We can divide these into three categories.

Maps
In the original D&D books, maps were the treasure maps of popular fiction, and therefore valuable finds indeed. Once you discovered that ancient map, there was nothing to stop you from finding the stricken oak, taking ten paces west and digging down to the basement. As DM, you might note two things about treasure in the dungeon. The degree of detail is up to you. Rationalisation of these is easy; previous parties of adventurers made maps of parts of the dungeon in just the way the present players do, and when they got killed, their maps remain. (Right)

Some rules are a bit different. These are little maps of bits of levels, or bits of several levels, which might show corridors and rooms only, or note down some of the inhabitants and contents of rooms. The degree of detail is up to you. Rationalisation of these is easy; previous parties of adventurers made maps of parts of the dungeon in just the way the present players do, and when they got killed, their maps remain. (Right)

Documents
I hope there is no question of different kinds. One is simply the map-in-box, 'I have the key, it's in the box' kind which is a sort of rule past the Hall of Wights. This isn't much help until you can find where the Hall of Wights is. Some may be clues which could lead to wilderness adventures if followed up, and others are there in the hope that you will interpret them as some of the inhabitants, masts or visitors. Fragments from sages, riddles, drawings, pamphlets, anything you like. Some may be genuinely helpful, others less so, others none at all. Some may be the contents of their own right. The best master of the latter was Nick Bee, whose dungeon was laced with application forms for such exotic things as removal of mistletoe from the knees.

Magic
Powerful magic items must be distributed with care, but shallower levels of the dungeon can be spiced up with items of limited usefulness. My own favourite is Peter Robber's Riddle of Orc Impressing. This is a little badge which you wear; if you meet a group of orcs, 1-6 of them will be impressed and give due consideration to anything you say, whatever due consideration is to an orc.

A couple of general notes: I used to keep a goodie bag of unlocated odds and ends, which I would dip into in two sorts of circumstance: one, if players were having such a sad time of it that I actually felt sorry for them; two, if a player searching in a hiding place which was so clever that I couldn't find it myself. The following notes may help you admit it. Now that I've admitted it, I shall abandon it. In D&D it isn't necessary to play by the book, but it is essential that the players shall always think you are thinking of your advice is not overdone. As with other things, if you deluge your players with curious antique scrolls the thrill will wear off too soon.

THE VAGRANT DUNGEON

My final theme is this: Think about what is going on inside your dungeon as you plan it. Think about the players' point of view. A dungeon that has internal consistency is more interesting than one which doesn't. Have as many inter-veals of relationships as possible within the dungeon.

I cherish a cartoon that appeared in Underworld Oracle, showing the interview with the 'gorgon'. She has two tails, one of whom is saying, "... so I turned to this adventurer and said to him, 'What, do you think we do when we're sitting for a six on the wandering monster roll? ...' Seriously though, what do they do? Is the whole dungeon frozen into glass except for anything within fifty feet of a party of adventurers? If the party enter into a room and see an ogre torturing a kobold, and if they leave and return three weeks later, will the same ogre be torturing the same kobold in the same room still?

Some degree of constancy is desirable, to give players a chance to make reconnaissances and then return with a plan, but how much is a moot point. I can conceive of an alternative way of running a dungeon, which is as follows. For each type of monster in your dungeon, decide on a lair (which may be one room, one party or one single room) and a population total. If you decide on, say, thirty orcs, then that's it, there are thirty orcs in your dungeon, and if the players kill thirty orcs then there are no more orcs left (but the varying orcs arrive). The lair of an intelligent species will be guarded intelligently; and magic weapons in their possession will be used if possible. Thous orcs not on duty in the lair will be roaming the streets of the dungeon looking for prey. They may be carrying treasure on their own behalf; perhaps they've just looted it from somewhere. When you populate the rooms other than those that form parts of lairs, when using this system, you need only indicate the decor and any hidden treasures that are permanent, but a list of available treasures in each room. Suppose you roll up orcs. Are there any orcs left? If the orc population is so depleted that only a small guard is left on the lair, then no encounter will take place far from the lair. If the players discover orcs in a room away from the lair area, and leave them, then return, the chances of those orcs still being there will depend on how long they've been left alone.

Non-intelligent and non-gregarious creatures will behave in a more conventional fashion — occupy any old room on a more or less permanent basis and cut anything that pokes its nose round the door. However, if this is how such creatures behave, they are less likely to be met with adventurers. And if a giant snake came slipping up the corridor, it must have left its nest somewhere — so if it is killed in the corridor, that's one more unexpected treasure lying around somewhere. Unless the orcs kill it, of course. Exactly how to organise the details I leave up to you. I only suggest the idea.

THE ECOLOGICAL DUNGEON

And here is a curious idea to finish with — have you ever considered that little-studied field, dungeon ecology? If your dungeon is awake when there are no players within fifty feet, there must be a quite a bit of in-teaching amongst the inhabitants, unless there is someone to stop it.

It becomes possible to think of the dungeon as an ecosystem, with different creatures competing for treasure rather than food. If you were a miserly ogre, maps and treasure would be a valuable commodity. Instead of there's a nice collection of jewellery, wouldn't you just flatten him and take it? Therefore one expects a hierarchy where the strongest monsters inhabit the best places (the lowest levels) and have the best treasures — which is what one finds — or is it? The interesting thing is that monsters are rated in terms of how dangerous they are to players, not to other monsters. For instance, most players would rather tackle a gargoyle than a giant, because a fight between the two, the gargoyles would come off as an easy winner, since most giants don't have magic weapons, the only means of damaging a gargoyle. Some D&D rule makers maybe magic weapons, but I remain suspicious of this. Does one grant the same privilege to elves and dwarves, for instance?

And magic or no magic, I can tell you one monster which could almost out kern others with perfect safety, and yet players laugh at it. Who? The ochre jelly — for how many monsters have flanks of oil to throw at it? A useful thought if you you ever have a charm monster spells to throw around. I am not suggesting that you build an ecological dungeon — some sins against reason are necessary to make the game play at its best. But to have conflict within the dungeon that is independent of the players is no fun. Think how you can give the impression that the dungeon is a real place, where things happen, that the players can be come involved in, the more interesting the dungeon becomes — and you needn't have any number of gold pieces in every room at all.
This being the first anniversary of Starbase, it would seem an opportune moment to take a look at a few Traveller related subjects not normally covered in this column by answering a few of the most frequent questions asked of me — and also to thank those readers who have submitted contributions to Starbase or who have commented favourably on it.

Both GDW and Games Workshop are continuing to devote considerable resources to Traveller. Having seen GDW’s advance schedule of Traveller material, you are in for some interesting times over the next year or so. As for Games Workshop, with any luck the IISS Ship Files (Vol. 1) will be in the shops soon after you read this — I hope you have as much fun using the six vessels described therein as I did designing them. Several other Traveller projects are in the design and planning stages, which will be announced as they come to fruition. When you take into account the work of other publishers — Judges Guild, Paranoia Press, Group One, and so on — the position is healthy indeed.

Apart from the question of how to set up a Traveller adventure or campaign (which subject has been covered in White Dwarf 19, Starbase, and last issue by Andy Slack in Backdrop of Stars), one of the most frequent queries is on the best science fiction novels from a Traveller viewpoint. Below I have given a very short list of novels or short story collections, chosen not on literary merit but on interesting adventure situations, background detail or ingenious characters and places. I stress that it is a personal choice — other people will have other favourites also; some of them may be out of print or difficult to get (only a US printing, for example). In this case try one of the specialist science fiction bookshops that advertise in White Dwarf:

Robert Asprin (The Bug Wars — for bug-eyed monsters);
Ben Bova (Colony — for satellite colonies);
C. J. Cherryh (Brothers of Earth, Hunter of Worlds, Serpent’s Reach — for possible alien background/situations);
Frank Herbert (Dune Trilogy, The Dossar Experiment, The Jesus Incident — for good plots and background, though difficult to translate into adventures);

Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (The Mote in God’s Eye — one of the better ‘man meets alien’ stories);
Frederick Polk (Gateway and Jam — good solid SF);
Jerry Pournelle (Future History — mercenary-types situations);
Brian Stableford (The Hooded Swan series and the Daedalus series — for adventure situations).

Almost anything by:
Poul Anderson (especially the Van Rijn/Polesotechnic League stories and the Piantry series);
Gordon Dickson (Vorsai Trilogy and others);
Joe Haldeman (especially The Forever War);
Harry Harrison (Deathworld Trilogy, Stainless Steel Rat series and others);
Jack Vance (Demon Princes series, Alastor series and many others).

Finally, to preserve a balanced viewpoint:
Douglas Adams (The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, The Restaurant at the End of the Universe);
Most books by Ron Goulart.

Once beyond the idea-forming stage, another phase of the referee’s job that I get many queries on is in producing a detailed scene — often blithely glossed over in supplements and articles with the words ‘the referee should make a map of the area/plan of the buildings to a suitable level of detail’. My advice is to use every short cut you can find. I am fortunate in that at work there is a technical library dealing mainly with architecture and engineering, but many of the periodicals should be available in public libraries. In the UK, the Architect’s Journal (AJ) and Architectural Review (AR) usually contain several building plans of everything from housing to schools and offices. Searching through back issues might turn up just the building you are looking for. Atlases and more detailed maps (in the UK, the Ordnance Survey — I’ve had everyone from Vikings to Imperial marines fight over the one-inch Tourist Map of the Lake District!) for area plans, of course.

Use lateral thinking — a lot of D&D and other games’ play aids can be used for Traveller, if only for the plans. As an example, The Halls of Tizun Thane (see The Best of White Dwarf, Scenarios) could have all the monsters and stuff clipped out and used as the residence of a petty noble that the players may have been asked to burgle, assassinate or whatever. Indeed, many of the room descriptions may need little or no change. I have even drawn a plan of the office that I work in to use in a Traveller incident — as long as the players are unfamiliar with it, it doesn’t matter what source you use — a tracing of a town centre map with the names of the roads changed becomes down town Mos Eisley or whatever; an Ordnance Survey map of the Scottish Highlands similarly treated becomes guilla country on Efathe/Regina — the possibilities are endless.

Lastly, I should like to remind readers that general correspondence on Traveller matters is always welcome, as well as contributions to Starbase. Only by making known your comments and opinions can we know how good or bad our treatment of Traveller is. And remember, we have a direct X-Boat link to Normal, Illinois — any relevant comments are passed on to GDW to let them know too.
THE BEST OF TREASURE CHEST

SPRIGS

NEZABAR'S OLFATORY DELIGHT
(Illusion/Phantasm)
by Roger E. Moore

Usable by: 2
Level: 2
Range: 6" + 1"/level
Duration: Permanent
Area of Effect: 3" radius sphere
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 4 segments
Saving Throw: Special

When cast upon a creature or area, this spell creates an invisible globe of aromatic gases that will be pleasing to all humans, humanoid, and demi-humans. Creatures with 4 hit dice or levels or less receive no saving throw against this spell; those with more than 4 hit dice or levels may save vs magic, and if they save will not notice the smell. If this spell is cast upon a living being (such as a giant skunk or otter) then the creature is entitled to a saving throw, and if it saves the spell's area of effect is transferred to the ground upon which the being is standing (leaving the being free to walk away out of the spell's range). Nezabar's Olfactory Delight is frequently cast on latrines and upon victims of a skunk or wolverine attack until such time as the musk wears off. This spell will completely negate the effects of any non-magical aroma in its area of effect. The material components are a few rose petal or spearmint plant leaves.

RESIST ELECTRICITY (Alteration)
by Steve Matthews

Usable by: Cleric
Level: 3
Range: Touch
Duration: 1 turn/level
Area of Effect: Creature touched
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 4 segments
Saving Throw: None

Similar to resist cold and resist fire, this spell gives protection from electrical attacks. It affords complete immunity to electricity received by touch (eg shocking grasp) and allows a +3 bonus on saves vs lightning bolts or blue dragon breath, and halving the damage taken (½ damage if save fails, ¼ if save made). The material component for this spell is a short copper rod.

TANGLEFOOT (Command)
by Stuart Rabson

Usable by: Cleric, Druid or Magic-User
Level: 2
Range: 1"/level
Duration: 3 rounds + 1/level
Area of Effect: One creature/level
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 round
Saving Throw: Neg

All those affected by this spell will have difficulty in moving about; any attempt to move faster than a slow shuffle will result in the victims' being tripped up by their own legs. This affects dodging in combat, and so all attacks are -2 to hit the victims of the spell. The spell only affects legs, all other means of locomotion are unaffected. The material components are a small ball of wool which has been tangled by a kitten, and three spiders (live if the caster is a Druid). In addition, Clerics require a Holy symbol and Druids require mistletoe.

THUNDERCLAP (Conjuration/Summoning)
by Roger E. Moore

Usable by: Magic-user
Level: 9
Range: 0
Duration: Special
Area of Effect: 6" radius
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 3 segments
Saving Throw: None

When the final words of the incantation are spoken, the mage brings his hands together in a clapping motion. He is unaffected by the spell, but all other creatures within 60' are subjected to an enormous blast of pressure and sound as if from a monstrous explosion. Beings smaller than man-size are knocked down, blown 0-30' and take 2-8 damage each. Larger beings withstand the blast.

In addition, all beings with less than 90 hit points will be stunned as if by a power word: stun, further, all beings in the area of effect are deafened for 3-18 rounds, during which they attack at -2 to hit.

DRAW (Alteration)
by T. S. Warren

Usable by: Magic-User
Level: 2
Range: 6"
Duration: 4 rounds
Area of Effect: One pocket
Components: S, M
Casting Time: 10 segments
Saving Throw: None - but see below

This spell incorporates limited levitation and teleportation. The caster points at the pocket he desires to affect, casts the spell, and one item selected at random from the contents of the pocket is drawn towards the Magic User at up to 10' per 3 segments. A pouch, pack sack etc. may be specified as the target instead of a pocket. The chance of this action being detected is equal to that of the victim detecting a thief of the same level as the caster attempting to Pick Pockets.

SPELL OF AWAKENING (Enchantment)
by Mark Ray

Usable by: Magic-user
Level: 1
Range: Touch
Duration: 4 hours/level of caster
Area of Effect: 1 person
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 segment
Saving Throw: None

When this spell is cast upon a person before he falls asleep, then while he is asleep any movement within 20' of him will awaken him immediately. He will not know the nature of the moving object or its location, but the spell can be 'tuned' to ignore rats, cockroaches, etc. The enchantment is dispelled when the recipient first wakes, or at the end of the spell's duration, whichever occurs first.

39
How to Lose Hit Points... and Survive

by Roger Musson

Here’s a problem for you; what have the following two grouses got in common? The first is my own; that little business of the strange fact that a dragon breathing 30 points of damage at a helpless low-level magician and dire high-level fighter frizzles the one but fails to kill the other. In White Dwarf 6 I queried whether gaining experience ought really to have this astrobosizing effect. The second complaint comes from no less a person than Gary Gygax himself. His objection (expressed in White Dwarf 7) refers to the widespread and unrealistic practice of selling more than one D&D campaign with a "Yo Olde Magic Shoppe" in it where parties may stock up with scrolls and potions for very reasonable rates, and this, as Gary Gygax very rightly points out, is neither credible nor desirable.

The answer: dissimilar as they seem, these two objections stem ultimately from the same source, as this article will show. Let’s deal with the magic problem first. One question that has yet to be answered why do these groups of magic items arise? Is it just a lot of ego-tripping, comparable to souping up the game up with "Vibro-blades"? No; much of it occurs because the D&D game system at present, a large amount of magic is necessary to make a campaign work properly. Look at it this way; suppose you have a moderately strong party interested in hauling some decent treasure out of fifth level. The first problem is getting the treasure; few DMs are going to let a party trick a monster out of its goodies, so that means a fight. And assuming the party is not well-equipped with fireball wands and the like, a fight means losing hit points, and plenty of them. So after a tough battle, the party have got the treasure. Now they have to meet the second problem — getting it out. And getting back up all those stairs without meeting a wandering monster is not going to be easy. In most dungeons the chances of meeting a really dangerous wanderer are high, and in many dungeons monsters attack automatically. If a party is already badly damaged from the first fight, they are in extreme danger.

There are two ways round this problem for the party. One is this — they must have scrolls. Not just any scrolls that they might have found, but the right scrolls. Sleep, web, protection from evil 10’ radius and fireball are the usual ones. With these, a low-level magician or magic-reading sword can stare off at least one encounter. The other solution is to have potions. Again, not just any potions that the DM has rolled randomly, but particular potions: healing and extra-healing. With these a party can get back sufficient hit points to withstand another fight. Agreed, having a high-level magician and cleric in the party will have much the same effect, but in my experience these characters are hard to come by unless they can be safely escorted to low levels in the first place so that they can find sufficient treasure to progress from adept to something more respectable. Clerics don’t gain experience very rapidly as long as a party sticks to roughing up kobolds.

So if a party are going to have a chance of (a) doing well, while (b) surviving, they usually need to be able to select the magic items they need for a dangerous expedition. But the problem wouldn’t arise if it were possible for a normal party (without heavy artillery support) to battle powerful monsters without getting hacked limbless each time. After all, would you pick a fight with a minotaur if you knew that you could not escape getting wounded? The root of the matter is this business of hit points. The Advanced D&D Player’s Handbook clearly states that hit points do not exclusively reflect physical damage, but also energy, combat ability, etc. And this is the crux of the problem, for such a definition just doesn’t work. It tries to sum up two totally different things under one concept, and that is like trying to mix oil and water. They don’t go. The party fighting minotaurs loses “abstract” hit points, but recovers them at the rate for healing wounds, while the fighter chained up in the dragon’s cave loses “physical” hit points and survives because he has so many “abstract” hit points to lose. There lies the connection between the two complaints.

Now, in my article Combat & Armour Class in White Dwarf 6 I suggested that one way to improve the combat system in D&D without overly complicating it would be to keep hit points at a relatively stable figure of around ten, while improving armour classes as characters go up levels. This involved a tacit redefinition of hit points as referring exclusively to physical damage. After some experimentation and discussion since that article was published, I now rather feel that any redefinition must be made more explicit, and also that a straight increase of one AC per experience level is probably not the best answer.

But before introducing any proposals for a new combat system to alleviate these difficulties, there is another term to define, and a ghost to lay. How often have you heard this old chestnut? “Armour doesn’t make you harder to hit — it makes you easier to hit but it absorbs the damage.” This is often voiced by exponents of Tunnels & Trolls, I understand. The basis of this complaint is simply a misunderstanding of the use of the word “hit.” In D&D a hit is not a blow which makes contact and hurts. Here is a breakdown of the results of a goblin hitting a man in plate mail. (I’m using the old AC 9–2 table rather than the new 10–2 one chiefly because I can’t see what earthly good introducing studded armour does, aside from mucking up everybody’s nice neat charts). A score of less than 10 indicates a complete miss (swinging at empty air). A score of 10 to 16 inclusive indicates that the goblin’s blow has made contact, but that the armour has absorbed the damage. A score of 17 and up shows that the blow has pierced the armour, or hit an exposed area, thus doing real damage. With that out of the way, let me introduce my suggested revisions.

Definitions

(i) Hit points: these refer to energy and combat resources at a character’s disposal, and not to physical damage. They are calculated for each character in the usual way. They are lost when a character has to exert himself to avoid injury, or when a character suffers some form of shock. This happens in normal combat, whenever an opponent scores a hit against a character in the usual way. Hits in combat are usually deemed to be blows coming sufficiently close to require evasive action, rather than actually striking and wounding.

(ii) Wounds: when a character actually does suffer physical damage, he is wounded. The amount of wounding he can take is limited by his constitution points, which are assessed for each character in the usual way. Constitution points are lost whenever a blow is sufficiently powerful to penetrate all a character’s defences. When a character is wounded, the number of constitution points lost is equal to the normal damage roll for the attack, and at least the same number of hit points are lost at the same time (see below).
Restoring Hit Points and Constitution.

Constitution point losses are healed at the normal rate for healing wounds. Thus, one point is restored each day after the first day. Hit points, on the other hand, are regained much more quickly. All the character needs to do is rest. After the first turn's rest, he regains hit points at the rate of five per turn restored. Therefore any character who has been reduced to no hit points in a fight will be able to bestir himself again (with one hit point) after 12 melee rounds of resting. Healing potions and spells restore both constitution and hit points simultaneously by the same amount.

Striking Wounds in Combat.

In hand-to-hand combat, a hit usually reduces a character's hit points only (just as usual). However, a wound is struck if the score to hit exceeds the minimum needed to hit by 5. Thus a goblin would not be able to wound a man in plate in hand-to-hand combat. A minotaur could on a roll of 17 (12 to hit AC2 + 5 = 17 this figure is -1 for melee attacks), however, where as a character goes up in level sufficient to put him in a higher bracket on the Men Attacking combat table. The rule is that the plus he gains on hitting is added to the wound level. Thus, a 4th level fighter or 5th level cleric in plate could only be wounded by a minotaur on a roll of 19 (12 + 5 + 2). The breakdown of the combat score of a minotaur attacking a 5th level cleric in plate mail is as follows: 1-4, misses completely; 5-11, armor absorbs; 12-15, accurate blow which the cleric has to dodge or parry, thus tiring himself (cleric loses hit points); 16-19, blow gets past defences and actually wounds the cleric (loss of constitution and hit points). Since wounds are struck so much less often, it now becomes much more practicable (should one want to) to use a hit location table to see where people are wounded; when only hit points are lost, this will not, of course, be used.

Striking Automatic Wounds

The general rule here is that if a creature has either no knowledge of an attack on it, or no possible way to take defensive action, all hits automatically wound. This goes for attacks from the rear, dropping stones on people from above, missiles that cannot be dodged or parried, etc. It is also true of any "other" weapon which, however, when a character actually parries or dodges the weapon, the helper. Thus a goblin archer firing with surprise on a magic user would need a roll of 10+ to inflict a wound of 1-6 constitution points.

Effects of Loss of Hit Points

If a character is reduced to zero hit points, he is deemed to be incapable of further action. Hurricanes have, indeed, dropped anything he might have been holding, and generally has his back to the wall, either metaphorically or literally. Excess hit point damage (e.g. in the case of a man with 1hp receiving six points of damage) can be deducted from constitution as wounds at the discretion of the attacker. If the attacker merely wishes to subdue his opponent he need not inflict wounds. A monster reduced to zero hit points may be taken as subdued if the characters so wish it, but obviously the degree of cooperation they will get from it when it gets its wind back will vary with the monster concerned. If a creature is down to zero hit points and is still being attacked, the attacker will not only hit at +4, but can deem any hit actually struck to be critical at his discretion. (In other words, he can go for the vital spots.) But note that he does have to administer the coup de grace; no-one dies just through having no hit points.

Effect of Loss of Constitution Points

A character reduced to zero constitution points through wounding is dead. In addition, special things happen when he loses points to the extent that he has %, %, or % of his constitution points remaining. Firstly, whenever a character loses constitution points, he loses the same number of hit points (minimum). But when he passes the % level, he can posses a maximum of % of his hit points until his constitution is restored. Also, he will fight at -1 on hits, damage and defence, and there is a % chance that he is mortally wounded. (Example: a fighter has 20 hit points and a constitution of 12. He is wounded, and takes 5 points of damage. His constitution goes down to 7, and his hit points to 15. Having passed the % level he cannot have more than 15 h.p. but since his loss of 5 h.p. has already brought him to that level, no further h.p. are deducted. Had the damage been 3 points, his h.p. would have been adjusted first to 17, then to 15 to take % mark into account.) When the halfway mark is passed, hit points are, at the maximum, half their normal total, the character fights at -2, and there is a % chance of a mortal wound. (If the fighter had taken a point of constitution loss, his points would have gone down to 10.) At the % level, hit points are down to of their normal maximum, the combat handicap is -3, and there is a chance of fatal injury. If all constitution levels are passed simultaneously, count only the lower one. In the case of awkward fractions, round all fractions down.

Mortal Wounds

If a percentage check shows a character to be mortally wounded, the will die in one turn +1d12 melee rounds if he keeps perfectly still and rests. If he exerts himself moderately, he will die in 1d12 melee rounds, if strenuously (e.g. fighting) then 1d4 melee rounds. However, a mortal wound may be cured by a cure serious wounds spell, or equivalent.

Fireballs, Poison and Similar Nastiness

In the case of magical missile attacks, such as fireballs, and including dragon breath, the first question to ask is, is there any chance that the character's defensive actions could get him out of the way, hiding behind a shield, or whatever. If the answer is no, as in the case of the victims chained up in the dragon's lair, then full damage must be administered to the constitution (and 30 points worth will char anyone). If some form of evasive action is possible, then make a saving throw as usual. If the throw is successful, it indicates the character has managed to avoid serious damage, and takes only half damage in hit points (this is the cost in energy of the defensive action, plus a certain amount of shock). If the saving throw is not successful, this shows that the defence was partially ineffectual; the character takes full damage from his hit points, plus half damage in constitution points (but no losses under the excess damage rule). The saving throw procedure works in the same way for poison; there is no chance of "evading" poison from a bite, but nor does poison wound in the same way as weapons. The saving throw thus simulates partly actions such as trying to suck the poison out, and partly the natural resistance of the body to poison.

Monsters

When applying the system to monsters, the general rule is that a monster is the same as the ganger. Monsters suffer the same checks and advantages as player characters. This does entail rolling a monster's constitution. This is determined by the size and build of the monster, taking into account the ease with which vital organs can be reached. The following table gives a guideline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monster size</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Constitution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very small</td>
<td>Spider</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Kobold</td>
<td>1d6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-human</td>
<td>Wolf</td>
<td>2d6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Man-type</td>
<td>3d6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superhuman</td>
<td>Ogre</td>
<td>3d6+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Hill Giant</td>
<td>4d6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, I have tended to extrapolate down rather than up. I don't think the very large size of monsters such as dragons should be counted for much for their benefit, since they usually still have vital spots (especially the head) to reach. Some monsters are exceptional, for instance the giant slugs which has no vital spots to speak of — also the redheaded hit points does not really relate to it, since no giant slug ever carried anything in its life. In such cases, treat the specified hit points as the constitution, and all hits as wounds. Common sense will usually suggest the best solution to any individual difficulty. With regard to the increase in wound levels with increase in fighting ability (additions to the constant 5) this should be applied to monsters sparingly. It is only really appropriate where the monster is likely to fight well as a result of skill rather than brute force — a high-level orc or bugbear are examples; these
creatures might reasonably adapt at avoiding being wounded, whereas anumber hulk is just an out-and-out slogger.

Spells and Fatigue (Optional)

Since hit points are strongly related to fatigue in this system, they can very easily double-up for a spell point or fatigue factor system, assuming that casting one spell costs hits, hit points per spell level, while a clerical spell would cost half that amount. The magician who casts a spell costing more hit points than he has ruptures himself with the strain! In fairness, first level magic users should be given 1d4+1 for hit points.

The two implications of this, that wounded magic users are impaired in their casting ability, and that the strain of casting spells has a crucial effect on their casting ability, both, I think, stand up to scrutiny. Other fatiguing activities (pushing boulders aside, etc.) can be reckoned similarly in terms of hit point loss according to taste. However, be warned that to use this sort of hit-point/spell-point system is tough on magic users who have no other line of defence besides their spells, and the system will fit in better with some campaigns than others. Also it is a matter of taste whether reading a spell from a scroll should count as equally fatiguing to casting it from memory. I favour the ruling that it should, and at the same time to do away with the read magic spell in favour of treating the reading of magic as an ability which all magic users receive in their training.

General Remarks

That concludes the basic system; a few remarks of a quasi-general kind will do to finish off with.

Firstly, one of the crucial parameters of the system is the figure 5 used as the base in the calculating of which hits wound. This can be altered to taste, according to the effect desired. The given value is appropriate to my own dungeon, which is pretty intense as dungeons go, with really nasty monsters confined strictly to very low levels, and few of those suicide squads that attack parties on sight. For heavier dungeons, increasing the figure may achieve a better balance for that particular dungeon. Monsters that deal out heavy damage at high hit probability are really dangerous (and so they should be) — if a stone golem lands a good blow it will stoke anyone’s head in.

Secondly, if any problems crop up, as in any aspect of D&D, the common sense should be the final arbiter, with the DM’s idea of common sense having the last word. Obviously, peculiar cases will crop up occasionally, especially when really weird monsters appear (gillocks?). It should be possible for the average DM to play any particular instance by ear; if anything really horrendous occurs you could in desperation write to me c/o White Dwarf if I’ve overlooked some vital flaw I wouldn’t mind knowing about it, anyway.

Thirdly, please note that I don’t believe in universal truth (as opposed to Universal Truth). There’s no need to take all the above personally if you don’t agree with the principles behind it; if you are contented with things as they are, you’re good for you.

Lastly, the effects of the above system are pretty wide-ranging, but I think most of them are to the players’ advantage. For instance, take the matter of the coup de grace. Suppose three adventurers are fighting a troll, and one loses all his hit points at one swipe from the troll. Normally, he would be just dead, but under this system he is lying on the ground with his head in his hands muttering “what hit me?” The troll could dispatch him then and there, but it would mean taking his eyes off his other two assailants, and he is unlikely to do that. And if they rout the troll, they can rescue their companion, who will be much recovered after a short rest. Result: less fatalities but with no loss of excitement. Dishing out mortal wounds rather than critical hits is a touch which allows remedial healing, but also (for those with a morbid humour) opportunities for uttering famous last words. There is an increase in complexity, but I think it is relatively slight in proportion to the gains in detail and credibility. Any minor section which players find too bothersome can, of course, be changed or discarded to taste. And if the desired effect of reducing the need for players to gain access to magic in order to survive is attained, then perhaps even Gary Gygax won’t object too strenuously.
What Makes A Good AD&D Character Class

by Lewis Pulsipher

won't necessarily do as well! A first level character should not
be more powerful than a first level ranger or paladin. So many
designers give all the known powers to low levels and then
device even greater powers for higher levels that I must emphasize
this point. Don't make the character more powerful at "name"-
level than he is in the source; and then don't make the higher
levels significantly more powerful.

Don't be afraid to change the rules as you gain experience
with the character. If another DM or player tells you that the
class is too powerful, listen to his reasoning. Don't pay much
attention to those who suggest increases to the character's
abilities; the average player is biased, so his advice is likely to
be intended, consciously or subconsciously, to increase the
power of the class. By the same token, you should not play
your class until you have finished it, to avoid bias. Use the class
as a monster to playtest the higher levels.

When you model a class after a group or character from a
particular story, there are several things to keep in mind. First,
it is not necessary for the character to do everything the hero
of the novel could do. Some abilities won't fit properly into
the milieu, others will be too powerful to introduce to the group
of abilities belonging to an existing class irrelevant. For example,
a character who can move ethereally - which makes him invi-
visible and silent - will make thieves useless.

Second, read your source carefully; don't rely on impressions
that so-and-so could do something like X. Find the actual pass-
age which says he could do X, and under what conditions.

Third, work from actual capabilities, not from relative
strength. There are many people who think Gandalf must have
been a 20th level wizard just because he was the most powerful
spell-user in Middle-earth, excepting Saruron. But if you look at
the spells he actually used in the stories, and remember that he
wore one of the Three Rings, it is evident that he was no more
capable than, say an eighth level AD&D cleric. This sounds weak,
but in a world virtually devoid of magic such a character, with
a magic Ring of Fire, is indeed incredibly powerful. Find analog-
ous D&D spells or abilities for each ability of your model per-
sonality; don't rely on relative strengths or impressions of
strength.

Fourth, remember that protagonists of epic fantasy are "born
lucky. They roll 19s and 20s for saving throws, and stumble
into good positions. Take this into account; luck should not be
"built in". The character class should be able to reproduce the
greatest feats of the model only when the character gets lucky,
not as a standard action.

After you've created the first draft of your class, and after
each successive draft, you should look at it in three ways.
Compare it with tradition or with the story it is derived from,
compare it with the strengths and weaknesses of existing classes,
and then look at the effect of the class on the game - is it
balanced, does it satisfy a need, is it fun?

I have discussed above the comparison of class to fiction. For
the second comparison, is your class much stronger than other
classes, particularly similar ones? For example, don't create a
"weapon master" class which is significantly better than a fighter
in almost every way at comparable experience point totals. In
that case the players who have fighters will be envious, if not
disgusted. If the character is as strong as a magic-user at high
experience totals you should weaken it.

How does the character affect the game? A "lister" or "idiot"
would only harm the campaign, making it a travesty of fantasy.
An overpowerful character would dominate the adventure, as
did our friend the guardian. A character who can do too many
things will make the other players envious, listless; they may
lose interest when they see how well another player can do
merely by virtue of having had good die rolls. You'll almost
certainly have to increase the experience point requirements for
the character at some point, though this is not the panacea for
every fault. Most of all, new classes should add variety to the
game.
Optional Skill Acquisition for Travellers

by Trevor Graver

In this article, I propose a system whereby players may choose skills, rather than acquiring them by random die rolls. The system revolves around the idea of skill points; these are earned as the character progresses through his or her service career.

Skill points are earned according to the character generation system in use. Table 1 is used for basic Traveller, Supplement IV, and other careers using the Book 1 system; Table 2 is used for expanded character generation systems such as Mercurian, High Guard, Criminals (White Dwarf 19), Star Patrol (White Dwarf 20), Merchants & Merchandise, etc. In these expanded systems, there are certain limits on the first skills acquired; these are stated in the appropriate system, e.g. the first skill acquired by a Mercenary character must be a Gun Combat skill.

### Table 1: Basic Characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per-four-year-term</th>
<th>25 skill points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For a commission</td>
<td>15 skill points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per promotion</td>
<td>15 skill points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Expanded Characters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic training</th>
<th>20 skill points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per promotion (E ranks)</td>
<td>3 skill points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per promotion (O ranks)</td>
<td>10 skill points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per successful Skill roll</td>
<td>10 skill points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per one-year assignment</td>
<td>3 skill points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Characters are run through their service careers normally, except that skills are not determined. Add up the skill points acquired by the character from the tables above; when enough skill points are accumulated, a skill can be purchased from Table 3, Skill Groups and Costs; alternatively, a characteristic can be increased, see Table 4. Note that a character may only choose a skill if it is one which he could acquire in the normal way, i.e. it must be available in his career to someone of his education. Skills and characteristic increases are purchased at the end of each four-year term, and any residual skill points after purchase are dropped. The character starting over from scratch in accumulating them.

### Table 3: Skill Groups and Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type A Skills</th>
<th>Cost (10 skill points per level up to level 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>Editorial/Research/Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base Combat</td>
<td>Assault/Gunners/Air Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-Mech</td>
<td>Surgery/Science/Pathology/Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>Nuclear/Nuclear/Aerospace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Construction/Engineering/Bioreactors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetics</td>
<td>Biochemistry/Genetics/Pharmacology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Anthropology/Arms/Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type B Skills</td>
<td>Cost (10 skill points per level up to level 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Nuclear/Non-Nuclear/Non-Nuclear/Non-Nuclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical/Chemistry/Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health/Science/Pathology/Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surgery/Science/Pathology/Engineering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Characteristic Increase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endurance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Standing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Special assignments are listed below, together with the number of skill points gained by attendance. Skill points thus gained may only be spent on skills available at the appropriate school; if a character knows at least half the available skills, and has at least one at a skill level of 3, he may acquire instruction skill.

### Star Patrol

- Recruiting
- Cross-Training
- Covet Survey School: 2d6 x 5
- Colony School: 2d6 x 3
- Synergy School: 2d6 x 3
- Contact School: 2d6 x 3

### Mercurian

- Cross Training: 10 skill points
- Specialist School: 10 (if Intel and Educ both 9+)
- Commando School: 2d6 x 4 skill points
- Protected Forces: 2d6 x 3
- Automatic Recruiting: 1, 50% chance of Admin—1
- OCS: None (but see description)
- Intelligence School: 2d6 x 3
- Command College: 2d6 x 2
- Staff College: 2d6 x 2
- Attaché/Aide: None

### High Guard

(Unless otherwise stated, results are as in Mercurian table above)

- Gunnery School: 2d6 x 3
- Engineering School: 2d6 x 3
- Command College: 2d6 x 3
- Staff College: 2d6 x 3

### Merchants & Merchandise

- Physical Development: 2d6 x 3
- Cross Training: See description
- Specialist School: 2d6 x 2
- Ship Security: 2d6 x 4
- Survival School: Survival—1 plus
- Merch Serv Academy: 10 plus points for promotion
- Trade Expansion: 2d6 (x 4 with interest)
- Intelligence School: 2d6 x 3
- Command College: 2d6 x 3
- Staff College: 2d6 x 3
- Div Tech School: 2d6 x 3
- Merch Serv Liaison: Liaison-1 plus 10 points
The Fiend Factory first appeared in White Dwarf 6, and sprang from an earlier series entitled Monsters Mild and Malign. It was originally edited by Don Turnbull, and was taken over by Albie Fiore in issue 18. The series has remained a constant favourite with readers and has featured well over 200 readers’ monsters at the time of this publication. In White Dwarf 29, the result of the second Fiend Factory poll was published. Readers had been asked to vote for the best monsters to have been published in White Dwarf up to the December ‘81 issue. The resultant Top Ten monsters are listed below. (The details of five are currently available in other publications as indicated. The remainder are reprinted here.)

**THE BEST OF THE FIEND FACTORY**

**SHADOW GOBLINS**

by Barney Sloane

No. Appearing: 4 – 24 (10 – 100)
Armour Class: 7+
Movement: 14”
Hit Dice: 1d4 + 1 (and better)
Treasure: L, X – individuals: J, K
Attack: Chaotic evil
Intelligence: High to genius
Monstermark: 2.43 (level 1 in 12 levels)

Shadow goblins are rare, three-foot tall impish creatures with small horns of varying numbers on their heads, black skin and a reptilian countenance. They are the result of crosses between drow and kobolds, though this is only speculation. Their usual weapon is a scimitar, but they often make use of slings, darts, nets and daggers when necessary. Many use shields in open confrontation.

They have very well developed sorcerous powers, similar to illusionists. Their power increases with their level:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Hit Dice</th>
<th>Hide in</th>
<th>Spells:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/4 +1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Shads: 1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 +2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30% 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 + 3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60% 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 + 4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80% 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4 + 5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100% 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5 + 6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100% 5 4 3 2 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SPILLS:**

- Level 1
  - Audible glamer
  - Change self
  - Dancing lights
  - Darkness
  - Detect illusion
  - Hypnotism
  - Phantasmal force
  - Wall of fog

- Level 2
  - Blindness
  - Blur
  - Fog cloud
  - Hypnotic pattern
  - Improved invisibility
  - Magic mouth
  - Mirror image
  - Missdirection

- Level 3
  - Continual darkness
  - Dispel illusion
  - Fear
  - Hallucinatory terrain
  - Invisibility 10’ radius
  - Non-detection
  - Rope trick
  - Spectral forces
  - Suggestion

- Level 4
  - Confusion
  - Emotion
  - Improved invisibility
  - Minor creation
  - Phantasmal killer
  - Shadow monsters
  - Web

- Level 5
  - Chaos
  - Demi-shadow monsters
  - Maze (1)
  - Projected image
  - Shadow door
  - Sunken shadow
  - Shadow magic

All shadow goblins have 1gp quartzes without which they cannot cast any spells. They are also very accomplished miners, being able to disguise their work as natural 80% of the time. They can disguise pits as sink holes, make secret doors, and dig...
FIEND FACTORY

A typical lair will contain many such items, secret and one-way doors, dead ends and mazes of tunnels interconnected by many of their own tiny passages (as well as 85% of the tribe).

They possess 100% invisibility, and are resistant to all illusions cast by anyone on their own level or lower. They sometimes work with jermlaine to cause the maximum of confusion to any intruders by stealing, tripping, charming, misleading, breaking or wounding. With prisoners, they show their chaotic nature and rarely kill; instead they usually strip, beat and eject them blindfolded out of the complex.

When a group is encountered, there will be some higher level types accompanying them, in addition to the number rolled, as indicated here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Higher Levels Accompanying:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appearing</td>
<td>2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 13</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 – 18</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 – 24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 – 30</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 50</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 – 75</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 – 90</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 – 100</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The line separates the 'war-band' figures from the 'lair' figures. Thus a war-band of 17 shadow goblins would be accompanied by 4 2nd level lieutenants, 2 3rd level commanders, and 1 4th level captain.

Shadow goblins have often been reported to have used giant rats and spiders to increase the effectiveness of their attacks, and in these instances victims may be killed as food for their steeds/guardians.

Dead shadow goblin lords, etc., are buried in secret and trapped catacombs near the lairs, with much treasure sacrificed to them.

WINTER KOBOLDS
by Jonathan Hardwick

No. Appearing: 20 – 100
Armour Class: 7 (6)
Movement: 6”
Hit Dice: 1d4 + 1
Treasure: Individuals: K; P in lair plus 15% chance of maps or magic
Alignment: Neutral evil
Intelligence: Average
Monstermark: 2 (Level I in 12 levels)

In the northern regions, homesteads are sometimes attacked in the dead of night, their inhabitants killed and their treasure stolen. The raiders are winter kobolds. They are more powerful than the normal kobold and originate in the northern wastes. They are not affected by any sort of cold-based spells and can move normally in all but the deepest snows. They favour a kind of studded leather armour, and sometimes use wickerwork shields. Typical weapons are:

axe – 30%  club – 20%  sword – 20%  crossbow – 15%  spear – 15%

Leaders have 5 hit points, use two weapons and attack as 1 – 1 hit dice monsters. When encountered, they will often (70%) be accompanied by their form of magic-users who can use: frost fingers, resist heat, darkness and chill metal (opposite of heat metal).

They fight equally well in bright sunlight or pitch dark. They favour caves and high places as bases, which will often (70%) have either 2 – 8 giant lynxes or 4 dire wolves as guards. These beasts are also used as steeds, but only on very rare occasions.

To protect themselves against the intense cold of the regions they inhabit, winter kobolds have evolved a thin coat of hollow shafted hairs. As an added benefit, the hairs can be fluffed out in combat, presenting a large attacking profile consisting solely of inflated hairs. Thus opponents with an intelligence of 'low' or under have to strike at an armour class 2 higher than normal, eg, 5 instead of 7.

Winter kobolds hate all other humanoid life, particularly elves and gnomes who will attack on sight. They speak their own, their alignment and often (80%) normal kobold tongues.

They live for up to 140 years.

MANDRAKE PEOPLE
by Glen Goddard

No. Appearing: See below
Armour Class: 5
Movement: 12”
Hit Dice: 1d8 + 1
Treasure: See below
Attack: 2 fists (1-4 each), or stone mace, plus special
Alignment: Unlawful neutral
Intelligence: Low

A mandrake resembles an extremely thin humanoid with very large genitalia and bark-like skin the colour of a beech trunk. Little of his skin actually shows through the great masses of dark green hair-like rootlets that cover his body. Red eyes glow from deep hollows above a hair-lip mouth with triangular teeth, similar to those of a shark.

The mandrake people are creatures of the forest. Their tie with the woodlands is so great that a mandrake will go to great lengths to avoid destroying living plants. They use coal or dung for their fires.

There are three types of forest giant: the rancorous and eschel (the female) are rare while the sentinel is very rarely encountered. All have wood-brown skin, but range in hair colour from sandy-brown to a golden colour for the sentinel; black for the rancorous and reddish-brown for the eschel.

All can use a large shield which would increase their armour class by 1; but do this rarely as their preferred weapon is a
Stone or tin for their utensils. Their warrens are usually rocky catacombs with dead grass or straw as beds.

Mandrakes are generally nocturnal and have an aversion to light. When encountered, they are between 50% and 20% of a warren party (4 to 20 appearing), 15% in ambush (4 to 20 appearing). In all cases the number appearing depends on the size of the group.

The relationship between mandrakes and humans is a tragic one. Mandrake females give birth to a mandrill, an aconite-like seed, which must rest under mistletoe in an oak or ash tree. If the mandrill is discovered (the rootlets grow above ground and sprout purple bell-shaped flowers) prior to birth, it can be cut out and used as an extremely powerful aphrodisiac. Mandrake root, as humans call it, will cure any impotency (including the inability to produce the rootlets) and is highly desired in females for their extreme desire for sex. Due to these properties a three-pound mandrill will sell for 1,000 to 3,000 gold pieces. Hourly especially prized mandrake root, and will either pay one or half times normal value or, lacking money, will use the dead root to fertilize it.

The mandrake people, quite justifiably, view this practice as genocide. Therefore, mandrakes are hostile to all humans except druids, being carnivorous, mandrakes will occasionally eat solitary humans who are caught in the forests. This, along with occasional raids into villages for livestock, will cause self-righteous humans (i.e., paladins), woodsmen, foresters, and peasants to attack the mandrakes whenever reason.

Druids and treants understand the mandrake people's plight and are extremely sympathetic. Both will intervene, usually peacefully, in which they are outnumbered in a conflict. Druids and treants will either attack immediately or extract revenge later when they witness or hear of a mandrill being up-rooted. Mandrakes revere the druids and if they encounter a druid, they will usually perform any one of the following acts of assistance they can within reason. (Mandrakes often have a stock of fresh mistletoe, 1 to 4 days old, in their warrens as a gift.)

The mandrake's favorite mode of attack is to overwhelm their opponents with superior numbers. They will avoid encounters in which they are outnumbered, unless there is a battle involved, in which case the mandrakes attack to the death with +2 to hit and damage.

Mandrakes attack with their fists or with stone cudgels which hit as maces. However, if a mandrake is hurt, he will scream in such a way as to cause all unprotected ears within a twenty-foot radius to save versus magic or sustain 1d4 – 1 damage. In extreme pain, such as death by blade, or the unearthing of a mandrill, all creatures within twenty feet must save versus magic or die. Creatures without ears, such as dogs, horses, and the like, can save at 2. Those with protected ears and those that successfully save must still amble the sound of the scream (by the blowing of a low-toned horn, for example) or take 1d10 damage. This scream also runs the danger (20% chance) of attracting other mandrakes or wandering monsters.

The Holy Symbol for mandrakes is the cross and they can be persuaded from attacking by gifts of small iron crosses. The only treasure a warren will have are number of gem and jewelled crosses (treating as Type A gems and jewellery only). Because of this worship of the cross, clerics and rangers will not fight them unless forced to defend themselves or their charges.

The final aspect of the mandrakes is that their young (from birth to five years of age) females can 'pass' as humans. Mandrakes, noting that life is easier for humans, will attempt to trade human babies for their own. These are sometimes viewed as faerie 'changelings,' which, depending on the area, can be a sign of extremely good or extremely poor fortune. The female mandrake, to preserve her human form, must consume an ounce of human blood daily until her twentieth year in human life. The mandrake-vampires are able to draw the blood straight through the skin pores, through processes as innocent as breast-feeding or simple kisses. Done with care this will rarely (5%) affect the victim. (If it does, the result is blood-poisoning.) Even after her twentieth year in human life, the changeling can be detected by her bones, which are porous and dark-brown rather than solid and ivory-white.

Comments: This monster is rare in that it would provide a conflict of alignments within a party (hence the Unlawful). Wise forest-types (elves, druids and rangers) would view them with compassion and sympathy, and even if they don't aid them, almost certainly wouldn't harm them. Other woodsmen, foresters and peasants would view their presence as a battle for survival. Paladins, repelled by the fact that they eat humans would hunt them down. Loyal good clerics would be caught in a dilemma of conscience - they are not evil, worship a god, but eat people. A thief wouldn't give a toot, but would seek out the root. A well-drawn monster that virtually cries out for its own scenario, it comes from Thomas Burnett Sward's story 'Mandragora's revenge' in The Darken and the Deep, which developed them from the mandrake of folklore.

PHUNG
by Simon Tilbrook

No. Appearing: 1
Armour Class: 9 (–4 for Dexterity)
Movement: 15'
Hit Dice: 3 or 4d8
Treasure: M, N and Q
Attack: By weapon type
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Intelligence: Average (exceptional cunning)

The phung could, from a distance, be mistaken for a tall, gaunt human, for individuals of the race dress in human garb. However, the head of a phung is that of a giant mantis, with the mouth in constant motion. They are, by human standards, insane.

Phung have only ever been encountered individually, though it is assumed that they have villages or strongholds in secret places. Each individual has a dexterity of 18 and functions as a thief or monk of level 8 times the phung's hit dice.

As air is known, phung do not use magic; nor, although adept, do they occupy themselves with the plebeian skills of physical combat unless necessary. Nothing gives a phung greater pleasure than to terrify its prey. There are countless cases of 'fun-loving' phung passing over an easy kill in order to track their victims for hours to wring every last drop of sweat from them. Their tactics are subtle - they prefer to rely on the imagination and fears of their victims, presenting them with 'unknowns' and 'unsens. They rarely close in for the kill, preferring to lead their prey in a state of abject terror.

Comments: Not every DM's monster, but a cert for those who enjoy an opportunity to terrify their adventurers without killing them off. Incidentally don't forget to roll for the morale of hirelings, especially if they start disappearing one by one. The phung is from City of the Chasms by Jack Vance. Some of Vance's other books that you may find interesting from a D&D standpoint are Showboat World, an enthralling though monsterless wilderness adventure, and The Dying Earth, the book that was originally rumoured to be the inspiration for the D&D magic system.
THE MUDSKIPPER
A MULTI-TERRAIN VEHICLE
by Dryden Badenoch

Construction
The original design for the 100 ton Multi-Terrain Vehicle was produced by CN Dubaric, the Commercial Transport division of Monark Transtel. The first model was sold in 827 and, though production ceased in 863, Mudskippers remain in service throughout the Imperium to this day. Several inferior models have since been produced by pirate manufacturers in the outlying regions.

Specifications
The standard Transtel Mudskipper has a crew of three (pilot, copilot and technician), with a passenger capacity of seventy and a cargo capacity of twenty tons. On most journeys, four stewardesses are also carried. The mudskipper is capable of three modes of travel: aquatic (sub-sea and surface), cross-country and arctic. If weaponry is required, hardpoints for two autocannons are fitted as standard, though these may be adapted for RAM auto-launchers for subsea use. The hull is fully airtight, and may be used in vacuum or at sea depths of up to 250m due to the strength of the hull armour.

Performance
The fusion reactor gives a Mudskipper almost unlimited endurance, but standard operational range is set at 10,000km, and onboard facilities in their basic form are not designed to cope with a journey of more than 12 hours, there being only limited facilities for the preparation of meals. The reliability of the Hunslett 2.7ves reactor is almost legendary, so the Mudskipper can operate on the minimum of maintenance (throw 1+ for a breakdown to occur, DMs -1 if the technician has Engineering-2 or Mechanical -2 (cumulative) and +1 per month without a maintenance period. Throw monthly for Transtel models, and weekly for others.

The cruising velocity of the Mudskipper in each mode over various terrains is shown below:
Crawler: 50km/h; 30km/h Rough; 20km/h Cross-country.
Floater: 25km/h Surface; 30km/h Submerged.
Skimmer: 75km/h Ice; 25km/h Snow.
N8 Skimmer and Crawler modes require the deployment of skis and tracks respectively. These are contained in the outboard pods and in the lower hull, controlled from the cockpit.

Suggestions for Use
Base price for the Mudskipper is MCx10 at TL9, so it is unlikely that any Traveller player should wish to own one, unless he has at his disposal a ship large enough to transport the craft from world to world. The standard Mudskipper is obviously a replacement for an airliner on worlds where, for one reason or another (lack of air, fluctuating gravitational and magnetic fields, etc) flight is impractical. Variations on the standard design include a cargo carrier, where the second-class section has been removed to enlarge the cargo bay, and a long-range version in which the seating is replaced by staterooms.

Due to their low TL, Mudskippers will be encountered mostly on frontier worlds as explorers and transports, though planetbound mercenaries or armies may invest in the vehicles as command bases. The possibilities are endless, but remember to use common sense: a Mudskipper will rarely be found in situations where a standard vehicle would be less expensive, faster and/or more suited to the task.

Interior Details
1. Second Class Passenger Seating. Cramped seating for fifty passengers; seats incorporate video screens and com-consoles for use during the journey. Relevant survival apparatus under each seat.
3. Fresher.
4. Equipment Locker. Tools, medical supplies and survival equipment relevant to the planet on which the Mudskipper is operating.
5. Galley. Designed to cater for the passengers during long journeys (over two hours), the galley consists mainly of a cold store and a series of microwave cookers for the preparation of freeze-packed meals. Lift to upper deck.
6. Cargo Bay. Twenty tons of cargo space, accessible by an armoured cargo door.
7. Lower Drive Access. Contains systems monitors and access to the fusion reactor, and controls for refuelling the ten-ton capacity fuel tanks.
9. Outboard Pod. A stabiliser/float for the ship when in float mode, incorporating ballast tanks and aqua-jets for use in submarine operations. Also contains a remotely deployable skis and crawl-tracks, and remote firing systems for the auto-cannon turrets.
10. First-class Lounge. A luxury lounge area seating twenty, with a bar and other comforts for first-class passengers only.
11. Fresher.
16. Fresher.
17. Cockpit. Control consoles for the pilot, co-pilot and engineer. The pilot console is on a raised dais to allow a view through the porthole cupola, which can be covered in seconds with an armoured shield. The vessel may be piloted by remote cameras and instrumentation instead. The area includes the onboard computer, which is equivalent to a Model/3 for programming and combat purposes. It provides complete autopilot facilities, as well as a library service for the passengers.

In practice, most commercial journeys are made on automatic, the crew taking manual control only in the event of emergencies.
THE BEST OF TREASURE CHEST

Magic Items

STAFF OF EARTHQUAKES
by Phil Masters

This magical staff, only usable by clerics, has one minor power, which drains no charges, and one major power, which uses one charge each time it is used. The staff can be recharged.

The minor power is that, so long as the user holds the staff with its butt firmly grounded, he or she is totally immune to all effects of earthquakes, either natural or magical. Even falling rubble will be deflected away.

The major power is released when the user smites the ground firmly with it while speaking a command word. Instantly, an earthquake spell of 20" range and 24th level power is cast; such release requires but one segment, and because of the staff’s minor power, the user may safely be within the area of effect of the spell.

The staff normally gains no bonuses when used as a weapon; however, if a hit is scored within on a clay golem, two charges are expended and the monster automatically disintegrates.

FAKE TORTURE ITEMS
by Roger E. Moore

This is a small kit, weighing between 5 and 10 lbs., consisting of a variety of needles, cords, iron rods, rusty knife blades, bottles of unidentified liquids, etc. It can be carried and used by parties that have an orientation more neutral than evil, and is used to encourage prisoners to become more verbal with regards to where their treasures are, what or who is guarding it, location of the home lair, etc. First, when the party has finished trying to question an orc, goblin, or whatever which was taken prisoner recently, they all go off into a huddled discussion in view of the prisoner but some distance away. One or two party members should suddenly look utterly horrified and ask the rest of the group not to go through with a certain plan. The rest of the party vehemently disagrees (“You can’t deal with orcs any other way!”) and orders the objecting member(s) to leave. While the other adventurers start unpacking the fake torture kit, laughing in a maniacal and sadistic manner, the member who objected to the plan goes to the prisoner and begs him/her/it to talk, as there is nothing that can be done to stop the other adventurers. “Please talk! I can’t bear to hear you screaming for hours and hours like the last one...” In the background, the adventurers can be heard making bets on how long the prisoner will last before... (at this point they all laugh again). Any real use of the fake torture kit as a real torture kit will mean alignment shifts to evil for all contributing party members, and all the negative consequences thereof. Using the kit in the above manner should produce at least one morale check on the part of the captive, and possibly several if the would-be torturers look gruesome and mean enough. If it doesn’t work, well, at least you tried.

BOOTS OF ADHESION
by Roger E. Moore

These magical boots are enchanted to grip any surface firmly, even slick and frictionless ones, to permit normal movement. At a special word of command, these boots will automatically lock in place to prevent the wearer from falling. A second word of command allows the wearer to walk up the sides of walls and across ceilings without falling off. The boots obey only the wearer’s commands, so an enemy cannot command a character’s Boots of Adhesion to lock in place and prevent the character’s escape. The boots will not stick to any living material.

PERIAPT OF BALANCING
by Roger E. Moore

This device appears to be a circular shield, concave, of about 3’ periapts, amulets, etc. When worn, it confers an extremely acute and precise sense of physical balance upon the wearer. This will make it 99% certain that he or she will not slip or fall on frictionless surfaces though the wearer will have no ability to grip such a surface. Skiing along frictionless floors is quite easy using this periapt. Wearers may also walk ledges and tightropes with 99% surety, even under moderately strong winds or vibrating rope. Because the wearer is intimately aware of his or her weight distribution, only half-damage will be taken from falls and the wearer can regain his/her footing quickly thereafter.

ATHENA’S TONIC
by James Meek

Drinking this oily fluid will bestow the following powers upon the drinker; a haste spell; restoration or addition of 2–16 hit points and +1 to dexterity and constitution. These effects last for six hours after which the drinker must rest for 12 hours. Any delay in resting will have the following effects: the 7th hour after drinking – the loss of all bestowed abilities plus slow; during the 8th – loss of 2–16 hit points; during the 9th – a loss of –1 on constitution and dexterity; 10th hour – total collapse (if constitution 10+ then sleep for a week, otherwise death).

Furthermore, if the tonic is thoroughly rubbed on any sleeping, paralysed, petrified, turned to ice, or otherwise suspended creature, it will restore that creature to normal in 1–6 turns.

DAGGER OF THE DUNEDAIN
by Matthew Williams

These daggers were forged many years ago by the men of Armur during their war against the Witch-King of Angmar. They are made of a strange metal—light, strong and untouched by time—and elaborately wrought, leaf-shaped with serpentine decorations. These daggers radiate magic if that is detected for. They can only be used by persons of Good alignment. True neutral or evil weapons will suffer 2d8 damage on grasping the dagger, and must then drop it, never again touching it. Evil persons will sense the powerful Good nature of the dagger and stay well away.

These daggers attack at +2 to hit and damage, and confer a bonus of +1 to all saving throws against attacks on the wielder. They will never attack. Good creatures or persons, but attack Evil ones at an additional +1 to hit and damage.

Any undead creature hit by a Dagger of the Dunedain is slain, and will crumble into dust. However, if the target had 10 or more hit dice, the dagger then withers and disappears. It has no effect on demons, devils, or other undead of 13 or more hit dice.

A minor type of Dagger of the Dunedain exists, which withers after destroying an undead creature of 5 or more hit dice, and cannot affect undead of 10 or more hit dice. Some of these Daggers were also forged, which in addition to their other magical powers could slay any undead being of 15 or fewer hit dice, and any demon or devil of 10 or fewer hit dice. These have no effect on more powerful creatures, and may only perform these functions in the hands of a Lawful Good.
The detective is a new **AD&D** character class whose functions are the solving of mysteries and the restoration of Law. Detectives may be human, half-elf or elf, and must be of Lawful-Neutral alignment. Since detective spells are quasi-clerical in origin any change of alignment may result in their loss. Detectives cannot be multi-classed.

The skills of a detective are similar to those of thieves and assassins plus limited spell use at fourth and subsequent levels. The spells used are quasi-clerical and restored by the passage of time.

Detectives fight as thieves of the same level, can use any weapon except spears, lances, oil and poison, and may use leather or light chain armour and small shields. Some of their thievish abilities (marked * below) cannot be performed in metal armour or while carrying shields. Detectives gain a 5% bonus on their hit probability in weaponless combat, as a result of special training they receive before commencing their adventures. This training also gains +1 hit probability when striking to subdue.

The minimum prime requisites for detectives are strength 14, intelligence 14, wisdom 10, constitution 10, dexterity 12, charisma 7. No bonuses are gained for high prime requisites.

Detectives can use those magical items usable by thieves plus chain mail and shields. They cannot make spell scrolls, but can use spell scrolls in the same way as a thief.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Hit Dice</th>
<th>Base Hit Dice</th>
<th>Spells</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0-2000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2001-4000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4001-6000</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6001-10000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10001-20000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20001-40000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>40001-60000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>60001-10000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>100001-150000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>150001-200000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>200001-250000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>250001-300000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>300001-350000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>350001-400000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>400001-500000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>500001-750000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>750001-1000000</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>100001-1500000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>150001-2000000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>200001-3000000</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At eighth level the detective must acquire a headquarters in a large town and advertise his services for hire. The detective must not refuse to aid any lawful cause of his clients.

At tenth level the detective will attract 1–6 loyal followers (who will not necessarily be of the detective’s alignment). If there is a single follower it will be a detective of level 2–5, otherwise the followers will be randomly chosen fighters, thieves or magic-users of levels 1–2.

By twelfth level the detective’s constant search for information will have given him an accumulation of knowledge similar to that of a sage. This knowledge will be general knowledge of a broad area (e.g., botany) plus special knowledge of a topic within that area (e.g., orchids). For a full list of the topics studied by sages see the AD&D DM’s Guide, or DM’s may like to pick their own topics. For each additional topic of the main area of information the detective must gain two levels and spend as much time studying as he would learning a language.

**DETECTIVES’ TIEF AND ASSASSIN SKILLS**

- **Pick Pockets** As Thief less 10%
- **Open Locks** As Thief less 10%
- **Find/Remove Traps** As Thief less 10%
- **Move Silently** As Thief less 5%
- **Hide in Shadows** As Thief less 5%
- **Hear Noise** As Thief
- **Climb Walls** As Thief less 10%
- **Read Languages** As Thief
- **Disguise Self** As Assassin less 10%

Detectives have an extra 10% chance of noticing disguised assassins, and consequently many Assassins’ Guilds declare vendetta against detectives entering their area of operation.

Detectives may also track in a manner similar to rangers, but under ground or in urban environments the detective must have observed the quarry within one turn (10 minutes) of commencing tracking, while outdoors the base chance is only 50% minus 10% for each twelve hours elapsed before tracking, minus 25% for each intervening hour of rain, and plus 1% for each additional creature.

There can be only one great detective in a city, and if another enters the two will either engage in non-lethal combat with the loser being downgraded to master detective and leaving the area, or enter an agreement where one specializes in consultancy work and never leaves his home while the other undertakes only active cases. This involves sharing fees and magical equipment, and the followers of the detectives must each decide if they wish to cooperate. If such an agreement is reached the detectives may set up a detective agency, which will attract 2–5 additional detectives of levels 1–4 and up to 12 (roll 1d12) others. Lower level detectives may also set up agencies but these will not attract followers; all staff will be hirelings.

**DETECTIVE SPELLS**

**Level 1**

- **Comprehend languages**: Identical to the 1st level magic-user spell.

**Date**: Range 1", duration special, area of effect ¾" level, components V, S, M, casting time 3 rounds, no save.

This spell establishes the elapsed time since a specific event with accuracy of 20%, improving by 1% per level. The spell is cast on evidence such as footprints, broken swords and the like using a mixture of powdered silver and graphite (minimum value 20 gp).

**Detect evil/path**: Range 6", duration ½ round/level, area of effect ½" path, casting time 1 round, save negates.

This spell is a weaker form of the clerical detect evil and will only detect strong sources. The detective must select whether he wishes to detect evil or good, and must cast separate spells for each. Material component is a reusable willow wand.

**Detect lie**: Range 1", duration ½ round/level, affects one person components V, S, M, casting time 5 segments, save negates.

By using this spell the detective can tell if the subject is telling a deliberate lie but cannot detect half-truths or evasions. The subject is under no compulsion to tell the truth. The material component is a reusable silver rod, value 25gp.

**Detect secret door**: Range 3", duration 1 round/level, area of effect 1 level, components V, S, M, casting time 1 round, no save.

This spell outlines secret or concealed doors in the area of wall or floor tested, provided that they are not protected by spells such as guards and wands. The spell’s material component is a bag of flour or soot which is hurled at the area tested and a reusable wooden rod cut from a doorframe.

**Detect undead**: Range 3", duration ½ round/level, area of effect ½" path, components V, S, M, casting time 3 segments, no save.

This spell informs the detective if there are undead along a narrow path provided they are not shielded in some way.
from detection. Material component is a bone rod.

**Grade metals:** Range object touched, duration special, area special, components V, S, M, casting time 7 segments, no save.

This spell identifies the metals in an object provided they are also present in the material component, a ring alloyed of up to six metals. The spell also indicates which metal is most common in the object but will not indicate if there are unidentified metals present, even if they are most of the metal in the object studied.

**Level 2**

**Detect chaos:** This spell is a modification of the detect good/evil spell and reveals strongly chaotic beings provided they are not protected against it, and fail to save. The spell's duration, range etc. are the same as for detect good/evil.

**Detect evasions:** This spell is a modification of detect lie and its range, duration, etc. are the same. The spell will not detect outright lies. If the detective is 11th level or higher the two can be cast as a single 3rd level spell giving tripled range and duration.

**Detect specific metal:** Range 2" and 1/8", level, duration 5 segments/level, area of effect 1/8" path, components V, S, M, casting time 5 segments, no save.

By use of this spell the detective can detect specific metals provided he holds the right material component, a rod of the metal he wishes to detect. Only one metal can be detected on each casting. The rods can be reused.

**Escapology 1:** Range 1 person, duration special, components V, M, casting time 5 segments, no save.

This spell causes rappes and simple bindings to fall from the detective or another person he touches, provided that he can pronounce a single polysyllabic word. The material component for this spell is a string made from the detective's hair then knotted, unknoted, and kept in contact with the detective's skin until the spell is used. Once the spell has been used a new string must be prepared. If the word of the spell is interrupted the spell will not work and the string will be of no further use.

**Read codes:** Range special, duration 1 round/level, area special, components V, S, M, casting time 4 segments, no save.

This spell allows the reading of any message seen or heard provided the message has been coded from a language the detective can read. The material component is a piece of paper impregnated with runes which must be burned as the spell is pronounced. This spell can be cast with the 1st level comprehend languages spell to give a 3rd level spell of double duration incorporating translation from unknown languages.

**Reflect the past:** Range special, duration 1 round and 1/4 round/level, area special, components V, S, M, casting time 3 rounds plus duration of effect, no save.

This spell produces an image of a past event in a basalt mirror (cost 50 gp), provided that the place observed is visible in the mirror before the spell is cast. The detective can see back 1 hour per level, but must know to within 10% how long has passed since the event to be studied occurred. If it was dark at that time the detective must have infravision in order to produce an intravisional image. Since the detective must concentrate on casting and maintaining the spell a second person must look at the mirror. The material components of the spell are the mirror (which shatters at the end of the spell) a gold wand (150 gp, reusable) and herbs and incense consumed in the casting. The efforts involved in casting this spell will leave the detective unable to fight for a number of melee rounds equal to 20 minus his constitution. Magical protection against observation may block this spell, and some of the more powerful Gods, Demigods, Devils, and Demons may notice and react to observation by this spell.

**Speak with animals:** This spell is identical to the 2nd level clerical spell.

**Level 3**

**Detect invisibility:** This spell is identical to the 2nd level mage-user's spell.

**Detect metals and kind:** An improved form of detect specific metals using a wand of mixed alloy rather than the pure metals used in that spell. The spell has the same range, duration, and limitations to its analytic powers as grade metals.

**Escapology 2:** This spell is similar to escapology 1 but causes locks on fetters and chains to open. The spell's material component is a small working silver padlock which must be locked then picked open by the detective and kept by his skin. The padlock can be reused but must be locked and repicked after each casting of the spell.

**Know alignment:** Identical to the 2nd level clerical spell.

**Locate object:** Identical to the 2nd level magic-user spell.

**Read hidden message:** An improved form of read code which makes messages in invisible ink, braille, knotted string and the like understandable. The spell's other specifications are identical to that spell and it can be combined with comprehend languages to give a 4th level spell of double duration.

**Speak with plants:** Identical to the 4th level clerical spell.

**Truth:** Range person touched, duration 1 round/level, area special, components V, S, M, casting time 1 round, save negates.

This spell compels its victim to give truthful but literal answers to all questions asked, but the victim will not volunteer information and can still attempt to escape or fight.

**Vision of the past:** Range special, duration 4 rounds + 1 round/level, area of effect 4+1"/level, components V, S, M, casting time 10 rounds plus duration of effect, no save.

This spell produces a three-dimensional image of an event that occurred in the area on which the spell is cast, provided it is known within 10% how long ago it occurred. The reach of this spell is 1 day at 11th level, doubling for each subsequent level. The area treated must be dusted with fine crushed jade-stone, ringed with crushed ruby (minimum value 200 gp), and the air above must be filled with fine incense smoke lit from one side by a lantern or similar strong directional light source. If no visible light was present at the original event an image will still form but it will be grey and ill-defined. The spells caster cannot observe the result due to the concentration the spell requires. The spell has the same hazards as the spell reflect the past and is also blocked by spells against observation.

**Level 4**

**Blink:** As the magic-user spell.

**Escapology 3:** An improved version of escapology 2 breaking welded and riveted chains.

The material component is a metal fetter which must be welded, riveted, and hammered closed then forced open by the detective by non-magical means. The detective must then keep the fetter, still open, against his flesh until it is used for the spell. A new fetter must then be prepared before the spell can be cast again.

**Fright death:** As the magic-user spell.

**Improved metal detection:** This spell extends detect metals and kind to detection of any of the common metals, not just those in the rod used. The detective will be able to detect any metal he has knowledge of, know its concentration in the object detected and know if other unknown metals are present. This spell has double the range and duration of the 3rd level spell.

**Improved vision of the past:** This spell gives a longer duration (10 rounds + 2/level) and a far greater penetration into the past, one year for each level above 14th of the detective. The spells casting and components are otherwise identical, as are its hazards and limitations.

**Polyphem self:** As magic-user spell.

**Unqag:** All specifications special, casting time 4 rounds, no components, no save.

This spell gives a detective a chance of escape if bound or chained and gagged. By shaping a precise mental pattern and thinking a series of polysyllabic words the detective causes the gag and gag to fall from his mouth, thus letting him cast one or other of the escapology spells. The base chance of this spell working is 10% plus the detective's level.

**Water breathing:** As the magic-user spell.