QUEENSLAND

WARGAMER

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EDITORIAL

Well, here we are still going strong with the second issue for 1980. I must apologise for last issue's late appearance; the "March" on the cover should have read "February", but production problems delayed us for three weeks. Anyway, we hope there won't be any more snafus of that kind.

My article on wargaming apparently provoked howls of rage in some quarters, and I have been assured of replies at length - which will be appearing in our June issue. It seems that the airing of controversial topics is a most effective way of generating contributions; so sensitive readers can expect to have their fingers burnt a few times as your humble editor drums up copy!

However, once again readers will notice that the magazine is being supported by a small coterie of hardened egomaniac self-publicists. This is not in the best interests of either the UQWS or wargamers in general. Doubtless some of us are more willing than others to commit themselves to print, but I would be a lot happier (as Editor) if we could organise a broader spectrum of authors into writing for QW.

David Bugler

CLUB NOTICES

The listing of members' armies and boardgames, as proposed in the last issue of QW, is going ahead. If any UQWS members have not yet done so, please give Noel Bugeia or myself a list of your figure armies and/or boardgames (with brief descriptions) before the next meeting.

The next meeting will be in Union College Conference Room on May 11th. Note that general business will be conducted at around 2.30 pm, but wargame/boardgame sessions will begin at 11.00 am and probably continue after the more formal business is over.

DB

FANTASY GAME REVIEWS

Kevin Flynn

1. Chivalry and Sorcery

I can describe this game in one word - "superior". That is what it is, in all aspects, to any other game of its type, which by the way is Fantasy Role-Playing. However, as with most large games (over 100 small-print pages of rules) it has errors. With this game the designer/creators' major error is that, in attempting to establish a realistic social background for a fantasy game, they have covered up the really great potential of their ideas. Had they written the basic systems first and then added sections on social class, type of society setting, etc., the rules would probably be 100% clearer. Clarity is itself another bad point; as with the original D&D, the rules don't go fully into all areas - but unlike D&D it is hard at first to fill in the gaps. You have to read and re-read the rules, and even then you can miss a lot. For best results I suggest you get others to read them, and then discuss or try out what you have learned. Understanding all the various sections is the hardest part, and this alone will discourage any but the devoted.

The writers of the game have tried to develop a fantasy game system around a Mediaeval Chivalric society; they say their own campaign is based on Chivalric France circa 1170, and they recommend that other Game Masters (GMs) do similarly. With such in mind they have then laid out rules to suit. It is my experience with players that few of them actually "play a role"; they are interested mainly in developing their character's abilities, gaining strength and fun. Very few are willing to develope their "character" as such, or to play a role in a set social order or to accept any social order imposed upon them (they usually try to wipe it out in some way).

This fact establishes a great difficulty with respect to the players, who after all are there to make the game fun. The rules introduction says that the different sections of the book can be deleted without great effect; for a few sections this is true, but with others it requires a lot of thought (though it isn't impossible). For example, the game includes rules (quite good ones) for social influence and advancement, gaining favour, the championing of noble ladies; these can't really be deleted as your character will eventually have to use them if he is to get

anywhere. However, if you include these rules then you have a hard time eliminating any other sections; though it can be done.

Actually you might ask why we should eliminate sections of the rules at all. I do so myself because I don't have the time to do all the extra work involved. With the full set of rules in action you have to list every important person in the Kingdom, characterise each one, and work out what happens to them all through the game - an enormous task, as the nobility of even the smallest kingdom will run to over 300 people. I for one do not like this sort or amount of work. A solution to the problem is to have the players run this aspect of the game, but those sort of players are few and most are already in Midgard (my own game - free plug!).

Enough of the bad parts and on to the good bits. Character types consist of the four basic classes Hero, Cleric, Thief and Magic-User; you also have the usual four racial types of Men, Elves, Dwarves and Hobbits (real hobbits, not phony halflings). Socially the players are classed on a scale from Noble down to Peasant; this has a bearing on abilities, as for example noble fighting men tend to be stronger than non-nobles. Paladins are a mixture of Hero and Cleric; there is also a difference between monks and normal clergy.

Magic-Users can be of 22 different kinds, and this is the really outstanding area of the game. Each of the 22 different classes has different methods of spell-casting (although the spells are all common) and has varying capabilities with regard to the different areas of spells. There are 7 areas of spells: of Detection, of Communication and Transport, of Command, of Ancient Lore, of Illusion, of Black Magic, and lastly Basic Magick. Each spell area is divided into levels, and certain types of Magic-User may only advance to a certain level of power. Basic Magick is a realm all to itself, subdivided into Earth, Air, Fire and Water; it represents manipulation of matter in all forms.

Complete enchanting rules, plus extensive extras in the realm of magic, make these the most comprehensive Magic Rules I've come across - putting D&D to shame. I might add that the magic rules are initially a bit hard to understand - but perseverance will eventually lead to comprehension.

The combat rules are basically similar to D&D, with a percentage chance to hit a specific armour class. They are modified by the existence of 5-minute "rounds", during which a particular weapon

gets a specific number of blows; the ability of the user may add blows to the basic amount. Damage is a set amount multiplied by a value found from the ability of the character. Defence is based on armour, shield plus extras from weapon parries, dodging, and tactical manoeuvres. Overall I consider the combat system an excellent extension of the basic D&D system. The outstanding addition is the "bash" - the ability of a fighter or monster to physically disturb or overcome his opponent by sheer weight (which makes dragons real murder!).

Characters advance by levels, but these play a lesser role than in D&D, espacially with Magic-Users who rely on other ratings to measure their power. Level does measure the damage a character can take, but again not to the same extent as in D&D.

Monsters are given, but the list could be extended further. Encounter tables are also given; but the one item not provided is a treasure table, which would be very hard to do due to the mechanics of the game. For those interested in such things an extensive set of fortification rules are provided. There is also a set of army combat rules, similar to table-top rules; in fact the rules for a full campaign are all there - troop payment, fief income, living costs, troop equipping, etc.

To finish it all off, I can't say the game is perfect, but it is by far a superior game to D&D, only requiring a bit of work. Even if you don't play the game it's worth looking at just for the ideas contained, and is certainly worth $15 when you consider each of the new D&D books costs this much.

2. The Campaign (D&D)

Running a Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) campaign is an outright pain in the rear. Those of you who do will realise the amount of work required to make a game interesting; for those just starting, or thinking of it, you'll just have to believe me. And the worst part is that the longer the game runs, the more work it creates, as the people who play in it demand more entertainment. With this fact established I will say now that a D&D game (whether it be Advanced D&D or not I don't care; as far as I'm concerned there is only D&D) is its creator's baby, and as such the creator is allowed to do as he chooses. If he does all the work then he has all the rights. The exceptional case - a single campaign being run by several players - I haven't seen or heard of.

Players gain the privilege of enjoying the creator's work; if they don't like it they don't have to play in it. If they do, they should be allowed to contribute to the game and the Game-Master (GM) shouldn't rule over them like a god; he is the coordinator of a world but he is an individual with only so much ability. Basically he has the right to do as he wishes, but he should remain open to suggestions.

Having established all this, I will say that I believe it is a GM's right to fix die rolls, change treasures and other important occurrences, and generally keep the game in balance.

Die rolls in D&D are the basic component of the game; everything works or depends on the roll of dice in some fashion. In my game I allow players to perform all die rolls caused by their characters (hits, saves, abilities etc.); I perform all others. All theses die rolls are usually done in the open - player rolls always, and it is good policy here to keep an eye on all player rolls; but when it comes down to it, I tend to be secretive about my own rolls unless the result will have little effect. The main roll I am secretive about is treasure and related functions (lairs etc.). A treasure should never be left to random chance; I am absolutely convinced that all treasures should be adjudicated by the GM, and matched to the performance of the players.

Magical treasure above all else should be guarded against. Magical devices of power should never be given to low-level characters, as this would upset the game balance drastically (when I say "magical devices of power" I don't consider a fireball wand as such, although I would require a good fight for one). Nothing spoils a game more than a player who zaps through the first five levels in a couple of encounters; not only does it ruin your and his fun in developing a character with a reasonable history, but it's also downright boring. With this in mind, the GM should guard how much money he gives away. Level-gaining should run like a meandering river, not like a cataract. Players who don't like the low levels obviously don't appreciate the finer points of the game.

Having got this far, your player will now be entering 6 - 10th level, a stage where they are becoming strong but still lack the really tough stuff. Again level progress should be constant and not jumpy. Money won't have to be fiddled so much, as characters now need large sums to go up further levels. Magic can be a bit more common, but still rare (in fact magic should always be rare;

face it, every time you meet other men they will only have <u>one</u> of every type of item they can use <u>at the most</u>. Now everyone knows that at various stages of the game your character will tend to have lots of items - why then shouldn't other men? The trouble here is that your group of players will usually beat their opponents and thus gain more magic. If you give your men encounters more magic then it's just the same as giving it to your players, or at the other end, killing your players). A point to remember here is that higher-level players will tend to have large sums of money saved up, for which they can ransom their lives (a fairly common practice). Players may also do this, but no experience will be gained for the money of course. This sort of action will largely depend on alignments.

Lastly we come to the high-level characters, who should by now have gathered together a quite reasonable quality (not quantity) of treasure. These blokes are capable of beating most creatures and tend to act as such: a nasty trick to pull on a really obnoxious group is for them to encounter themselves, right down to magical items and all. After a while I find these types very boring to run, and the only solution (apart from raising the number of monsters) is the Quest.

The Quest can be after a really good magical item, or to find a particular person or item or such; anything will do, but the whole thing should be pre-planned - don't have the players run through the wilderness until they reach a certain point. Develop an entire Quest with clues, strange encounters which are specially worked out, <u>competitors</u>, assassins, guardians, and so on, the whole bit. It takes time to work out, but with good players it can be a lot of fun.

THE MACEDONIAN ARMY OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Kevin Flynn

The army of Alexander was developed mainly by his father
Philip; however, it took the genius of Alexander to refine it and
use its strength to the greatest advantage. Historically the basic
manoeuvring units of the army were as follows:

Hoplites - 64 men (8 x 8)

Phalangites - 256 men (16 x 16)

Light infantry - 128 men (16 x 8 deep)

Cavalry - 64 men in a diamond formation.

Converting these to figures (at 20:1) we get:

Hoplites - 3 figures

Phalangites - 13 figures

Light infantry - 6 figures

Cavalry - 3 figures.

These are unrealistic levels in wargaming terms; a unit has to
have at least 5 figures, and you will never get enough command
factors. Therefore they will have to be increased; this is
allowable, as Macedonian organisation was based on multiples of
the basic unit. The following is my opinion of exactly what units
should be in a Macedonian army, and how big they should be.

To begin with you have 18 regular and 6 irregular command
factors, more than most in the listing. This is an advantage to be
used as much as possible; if you have more units than the other
guy, you tend to be able to outmanoeuvre him, and as the
Macedonian army has no effective heavy shock troops this is
essential.

The most manoeuvrable troop type is cavalry, and of these the
most powerful are the Companions. Very few armies can claim to
have 36 A class cavalry, so these should be used as much as
possible. I find that 6 units of 6 Companion figures make a strike
force equal to 50% greater numbers. With 6 A class cavalry units
you can do nearly anything you want. In a rather silly game I once
played, I charged all my Companions headlong into several Roman
heavy cohorts; they lost (obviously!) but it took four rounds to
beat them off, and this can allow other troops to gain flanking
positions. I'm not suggesting that the above is a good tactic, but
it does point out that Companions can be used defensively by the
sheer power of their morale in a tight situation. Their one
drawback is the lack of a shield, giving the enemy a one-factor

advantage. Towards this end it is worthwhile considering using javelins when fighting armies equipped mainly with kontos-armed cavalry. Units of 6 also form nicely into wedges.

The remaining cavalry is mostly light, and javelin-armed. I tend to use these in groups of 9 to form a diamond, which is extremely manoeuvrable. If a large game is played it is a good idea to have the Regular LC in two groups of 6, but the Irregular LC is best left in units of 9 or even 12 (although the larger group needs plenty of room). The Scythian horse archers I use either in one unit of 15 (which spends most of its time in Cantabrian Circle) or in two units of 7 and 8. Their poor morale however requires large units, so I would never use units of 6. The Greek heavy cavalry is almost useless - unless you have points to spare, in which case this will determine their number and unit size. The Persians will rarely be used, due to the advantages of Companions with kontos; however, they are a nice extra when used, and units of 6 are ideal as they have good morale.

Lastly come the Sarissaphoroi; the idea that Alexander's army had only so many kontoi to pass around grates on my nerves - quite often Alexander used Sarissaphoroi with Companions on the same battlefield. I don't know the reason for the restriction, but it is there and we have to live with it. The Regular Sarissaphoroi can be in units of 6 or one of 9; the Irregluars should be in a unit of 9 at least. Sarissaphoroi are best used to outflank an enemy and strike at his rear areas, possibly combining with other units to make two-sided attacks.

Elephants - at least one should be used at all times, and usually only one if the other side also has elephants. If he doesn't, then all three should be used in one unit. Never have more than one unit of elephants, it's far too dangerous.

Phalangites are best used in masses: 50 figures to a unit and field two units of them. You could, if feeling particularly adventurous, put on three units of 40, but I prefer two units.

Hypaspists can be used in nearly any fashion; they are fast and fairly powerful, making them good troops to fill gaps between the fast-moving cavalry and the slower MI/HI. They are glorious in defensive terrain. They do, however, require two ranks for best performance, which generally forces you into one unit. I generally use 20 figures, adding more if I have points to spare.

It is important to maintain a "natural superiority" with

Hypaspists; never admit defeat, and always try to bluff your opponent with them. It is also handy to have a leader figure with them to distinguish them – not a general, just a prominent figure. I myself use a hypaspist coated in milk-white paint, who I claim to be the "Ghost of Craterus"; ever since I started this superstition my Hypaspists have beaten <u>all</u> comers, including a head-on charge into a 24-figure Praetorian Guard unit (no mean feat!!!).

Cretan archers should be in one unit. Any slingers used should also be in one unit. Javelin-armed light infantry should be deployed in units of 12, two ranks deep. Even though the second rank is of no use, it can absorb casualties, and can be used to expand frontage if needed or to envelop an enemy.

Thracian peltasts should be deployed as one unit in a rear area. They are no good in the front line unless in defensive terrain. Always equip them with javelins and two-handed sword. They are glorious at carving into flanks or rears; by tempting enemy units to charge nearby friends, these flank/rear attacks can be devastating.

Use of Hoplites and Peltasts will depend on terrain and points available. The light mediums are excellent troops against the right opponents, and can be used nicely as skirmishers if no cavalry is around. Hoplites are a bit chancy and I tend to use them as a reserve these days, filling gaps or holding flanks. Stuck in between two phalanxes they can extend the front nicely; they should hold back on charges, allowing the phalanxes to receive them and charging in on the second round.

I hardly ever use ballistas; they are fair enough against elephants, as long as you can get a hill to fire from.

When it comes to playing a game the following points should be remembered:
a) for maximum use of the army never play for less than 1600 points;
b) if possible field a sub-general, and place him with a phalanx;
c) try for terrain – the Macedonian army can use as much terrain as it can get;
d) use unit superiority to overcome deficiencies in power;
e) the main use of the phalanx is to pin the enemy. Due to its power the enemy will have to leave a fair force to watch it; if he doesn't then don't stop till you reach the other side. If he

does all the better; you can now gain numerical superiority
elsewhere and turn the flanks;

f) make maximum use of the Companions; these above all else will
make or break a game. Don't be afraid to lose one or two units
as long as the end justifies it; an A class unit can easily
stand three or four routs and still come back for more.

The following is a set-up I generally use; modifications can be
made for terrain, the enemy you face, etc., but this is pretty
basic:
Right flank to left - 4-6 units Companions / Hypaspists /
Phalanxes / Peltasts / Light Infantry / Light Cavalry and perhaps
a few Heavy Cavalry units. The Thracian Peltasts can be placed
behind the phalanxes at right-angle to the front. Elephants can be
placed behind the cavalry at an appropriate distance.

Bows and slings should be deployed across the front to screen
set-up changes. The horse archers can be used near the Companions
in some fashion, or on the left flank if you feel vulnerable.

Flank marches with light cavalry can be very handy, normally
using the Irregular LC with perhaps a Companion unit, marching as
far down the side as possible. Persian or Greek heavy cavalry
should be used on the left to replace Companion units, or kept as
a reserve in the centre rear. If enough light cavalry is available
it can be worthwhile to swap a Companion unit from right to left
in exchange.

THE ARMY OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS (193-211 AD)

David Bugler

The legionary structure of Severus' army is drawn from
Vegetius' description (Mil.2.6) of what he calls antiqua legio (ie.
"the old-style legion" - he is writing 200 years later). This
description was first applied to the Severan legion by Platnauer
(p.171f.). Webster (p.116) and Parker suggest, on the basis of
inscriptions (CIL viii 2554, 2555, 2562, 18072) that Vegetuis'
organisation does not apply until the reign of Gallienus (253-268),
but Birley (p.68) demolishes their arguments and supports
Platnauer.

Basically the legion has ten cohorts - nine single and one
double. The single, or quingenary, cohorts each have 555 infantry
(six centuries of 80 men, plus officers) and 66 attached cavalry
(two squadrons of 30 men). The double, or milliary, cohort has
five "double centuries" of 160 men (1,105 including officers) and
132 cavalry in four squadrons. This produces a total parade
strength of 6,100 infantry and 726 cavalry, which is an increase
over the Trajanic legion of 20% in infantry and more than four
times the cavalry.

Praetorian cohorts were reorganised in the first year of
Severus' reign (193). Previously quingenary, each cohort was now
milliary (Durry, pp.81-87) on the same lines as the legionary
double cohort, with five double centuries but no cavalry.

When considering a legion in the field, we must remember that
it was unlikely to have all men present; some would be detached
for garrison or convoy duty, some would be absent sick or with
fatigue parties. So probably one, possibly two cohorts would not
be present with the colours.

It would also be unlikely to see the Praetorian Guard present
in its full glory. However, since the Praetorians had a dual role
as the Emperor's personal guard and as the army's Staff College,
at least one cohort would be present if the Emperor was with the
army. Also, Severus was the first Emperor to envision a mobile
field army - hitherto the legions had watched the frontier while
the Guards protected Rome; it is therefore possible to suggest
that up to six of the ten Praetorian cohorts (equivalent to
another legion) may have appeared in the battle line whenever the
Emperor took personal command.

Auxiliary units are more difficult to describe; firstly because there was a variety of standard types as well as special units, and secondly because – in their role of local police forces – they tended to shed small detachments at the drop of a scutum, as Davies (p.108ff.) explains. But in general there were cohorts of foot and wings (alae) of horse; each could be either quingenary or milliary. An infantry cohort could be either peditata (purely infantry) or equitata (with added organic cavalry). There is known to have been a rare beast called ala peditata – cavalry with a few infantry – but the sources are universally silent on its composition, and it is probably best left alone! The table, from Breeze and Dobson (p.13), shows their structure, bearing in mind that a century is about 80 men and a squadron about 30.

Type	Centuries	Squadrons
coh.quin.ped.	6	–
coh.quin.equ.	6	4
coh.mill.ped.	10	–
coh.mill.equ.	10	8
ala quingenaria	–	16
ala milliaria	–	24

The above table shows nominal establishments, but the habit of shedding vexillationes is well exemplified by the Second Tungrian Cohort (cohors II Tungrorum milliaria equitata), which in the middle of the second century split to provide one quingenary cohort, which remained at Hadrian's Wall (six centuries and four squadrons), and a vexillatio (four centuries and four squadrons) which was sent to Switzerland (Davies, p.108ff.). This practice seems to have been particularly common in the second century; it would have died down with the creation of smaller units and a mobile field army later in the third century.

There is little evidence as to the composition of a field force in the Severan period, but what there is has been assembled by Barker (p.14) to provide a suggested "typical" army. Together with about 5,000 troops of a legion and 1,500 auxiliary cavalry, there would be up to 3,500 auxiliary light infantry. In all this is 10,000 men or more – on the wargame table, 500 figures or about 4,000 points!

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