

DragonNotes

A Regular Feature for DragonQuest Players by David Ritchie

Ares NR9 July 1981 p34

Directions

By the time this issue of Ares appears *DragonQuest* will be one year old. During that year, we have exhausted two full printings of the game (which has been out of stock twice when demand outstripped supply to an unprecedented extent), all but sold out our first two adventures and our GM screen, and taken the first steps toward establishing what we hope will be a world-wide network of *DragonQuest* players. It's been a good, if harrowing, year. We didn't do all we set out to do, but then we set some pretty high goals. Having somehow staggered and stumbled through one year of unexpected successes, the *DragonQuest* team is now taking stock in preparation for what we hope will be an even better second year.

As of this writing, the press sheets of *Frontiers of Alusia* are in and have been exciting considerable comment. Unlike most adventure maps, FOA includes a wide variety of realistic terrain (rapids, waterfalls, reefs and shoals, beaches, plains, fields, hills, wooded hills, woods, forests, brushlands, mountains, cliffs, escarpments, deserts, oases, islands, towns, castles, trails, roads, ruins, swamps, rivers, lakes, etc.) plus High and Low Mana areas and a rich overlay of place names evocative of the local myths and legends (which are explained in the accompanying Travel Guide). FOA should be shipping within a couple of weeks of this issue.

Next out of the starting gate will be Steve Jackson's *World Generation* supplement. I have now gotten to see about a third of this work and I remain unabashedly convinced that Steve is one of the best designers in our hobby. Though much of the material of necessity relates directly to *DragonQuest*, the chapters on creating and mapping a physical world are usable with any FRP system and are the clearest and most complete such rules I have yet seen. There are also a lot of fun ideas wrapped up in these sections:

I especially like the way Mana levels affect Fantastical Creatures (stunting them or robbing them of powers in Low Mana areas and causing some monsters and NPC's to *gain* unexpected magical powers in High Mana areas) and the presence of Magical Weather in the rules (rains of fine and the like). Among the sections which I have not seen are those dealing with religion, collective magic and the creation of political structures, all of which should be arriving in the next few weeks. We are still straining bone and sinew to get this product out by GENCON.

Paul Jaquays reports that he is manfully struggling with *The Enchanted Wood* and expects to have it done early in May, at which time we will be sending copies off to GM's around the country for testing, advice and preparation for this summer's round of conventions. No publication date has yet been set on this one, though I expect to see it on the shelves for Christmas.

Finally, we have reluctantly decided to cancel the planned publication of *Arcane Wisdom* and *Advanced Monsters* as separate supplements. After going over the numbers, the marketing committee came to the decision that the price we would have to charge for these items as separate products was far too high and that the work already done would serve as the basis for a single larger product. What we have tentatively titled *DragonQuest Level II* is a sort of advanced *DragonQuest* which expands upon the existing game, offering additional magic, skills and monsters, optional characteristics, more on High Holidays, some adventure elements we didn't have space for in the original and a variety of smaller features which serve to make *DragonQuest* into an even richer game. Happily, the *DragonQuest* team has been increased by the addition of Gerry Klug to the SPI staff and by the return of Nick (*Blade of Allectus*) Karp to the fold in June. With their help, we should be in a position to finish *DragonQuest Level II* in time for a January release.

Other *DragonQuest* products await the will of the feedback or are being held in reserve until the necessary prerequisites are in print. These include the remaining maps in the *Alusia* series, the *Randomized Dungeon Kit*, a sample city (pre-generated and "pre stocked") and a couple of mini-adventures.

Questions and Answers

Ray Price asks: When a person is randomly determining the characteristics of a monster, should he randomly determine the values for all the characteristics or should he use the tables in Character Generation to determine Secondary Characteristics?

Good Point. The spans of numbers given for monsters and NPC'S in the rules on Monsters are the operative numbers in this case.

The procedures for determining Second- any Characteristics in IV are used exclusively for generating *Player Characters*. NPC's will usually have a narrower range of possible characteristics attached to them specifically so that the characters generated will be plausible even if the most extreme numbers within the ranges given are chosen.

Ray also points out a contradiction in Section 30 (Book II, Page 6) where we say that the *casting character* rolls D100 to determine backfire results. Elsewhere we say that the GM performs this function. Obviously, only the GM can perform this function and that is the way the game was designed to be played. The section referred to should be amended by players to reflect this fact. Our apologies for this potentially serious glitch.

One of the ideas we toyed with which never made it into the finished *DragonQuest* rules was having PS affect damage in Physical Combat. For those of you who want yet more detail in the combat system (at the expense of additional record- keeping), we suggest the following. Any feedback would be greatly appreciated.

(19.9) Whenever a character makes a Strike attempt in Close or Melee Combat with a weapon doing Class B or C damage or with a Garotte or Shield or whenever the Thug Scarf is used in Close Combat, the chance of breaking or dropping the weapon will be modified as per the following chart:

PS REQUIRED	CHARACTER'S PS	DAMAGE	DROP/BREAK
9-10	12-15	+1	99-100
9-10	16-18	+2	96-100
9-10	19-21	+3	92-100
9-10	22+	+4	88-100
11-12	16-20	+1	99-100
11-12	21-24	+2	96-100
11-12	25-28	+3	92-100
11-12	29+	+4	87-100
13-14	20-24	+2	99-100
13-14	25-28	+3	96-100
13-14	29+	+5	92-100
15-17	25-28	+3	99-100
15-17	29-32	+5	96-100
15-17	33+	+6	92-100
18-20	27-30	+3	99-100
18-20	31-35	+5	96-100
18-20	36+	+7	92-100
21-25	35-40	+4	99-100
21-25	41-45	+7	96-100
21-25	46+	+9	92-100
26+	50+	+6	99-100

Key: PS Required =The minimum PS required to use a weapon effectively. **Character's PS** = The PS of the character using the weapon. **Damage** = A number added to the Damage die roll *in addition to any other modifications* to determine the damage inflicted on a target when the weapon is used by a character with that PS. **Drop/Break** =The numbers on which the character will drop or break the weapon as a function of a Strike Check.

Special Note: Strength should generally not impact upon Ranged Combat except in a minor way. GM's who wish to portray the effect of PS in this area should increase Range by 1% per point of PS above the minimum necessary to employ the weapon and should increase the chance of breakage by an amount similar to that shown on the chart above. Damage should as a rule not be increased.