Questing

A Regular Feature for DragonQuest Players by Gerry Klug

First, some old business. For those owners of the First Edition *DragonQuest*, we have available the new, all-encompassing *DQ* addenda (including a summary of the revised combat system), which will bring your text up to the state-of-the-art. It is available if you send in a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your request for the *DragonQuest* Addenda Sheet.

I want to encourage all of you to write me directly and let me know your feelings on any subject related to *DQ*. I'll try my best to answer what I can, but, at least, you'll help keep me from feeling unwanted. I am also interested in feedback on what you would like to see appear in future Questing columns. I know what I'd like to write about, but would like to hear your input as well.

Character Generation

Perhaps no other system of *DQ* has received as much criticism (other than the original combat system) as Character Generation. I am not quite sure why, and so I'd like to share some changes I've made in it which have proven successful in my campaign.

First, players questioned why they rolled up their Aspects after they've made their characteristic and racial choices. They may have planned a Pacifistic Earth Healer Adept and rolled Death as their Aspect. Where does that leave them? So, Aspect is now rolled after point generation, but before the points have been distributed. This switch seems to make more sense, and allows the players to make more intelligent choices with their characteristics and their race. Also, the Aspect Table has been expanded to look like this:

01-05 Winter Stars, Air Sign
06-10 Winter Stars, Water Sign
11-15 Winter Stars, Fire Sign
16-20 Winter Stars, Earth Sign
21-25 Spring Stars, Air Sign
26-30 Spring Stars, Water Sign
31-35 Spring Stars, Fire Sign
36-40 Spring Stars, Earth Sign
41-45 Summer Stars, Air Sign
46-50 Summer Stars, Water Sign
51-55 Summer Stars, Fire Sign
56-60 Summer Stars, Earth Sign
61-65 Fall Stars, Air Sign
66-70 Fall Stars, Water Sign
71-75 Fall Stars, Fire Sign
76-80 Fall Stars, Earth Sign
81-85 Sun
86-90 Moon
91-95 Life
96-00 Death

The Signs, of course, correspond to the assumption in the world of DQ as to what the four elements are and the corresponding four elemental Colleges of Magic. Thus, whenever a player is involved in a situation in which his astrological sign comes into play (being affected by magic of an opposite element, for example), I allow a die roll bonus (up to plus or minus 10, depending how well that player has been role-playing his character's Aspect) in his favor to any roll affecting him. Also, if he chooses a College which matches his sign, all spells, rituals, and talents are given a + 1 to their Base Chance to begin with, which may later be taken away or increased depending on how well the character is played. This alteration gives a little additional flavor and comes closer to the original intent of the Aspect system.

I found the Characteristic Modifiers for each racial type extremely conservative, so I doubled each modifier except APA (or TMR) for each race (even this may still be too conservative). Try this method out and let me know your feelings.

Also, an Elf should receive a magical talent, Witchsight. Treat this as the Witchsight listed for the College of E&E (Ensorcelments and Enchantments, T-1). This talent works as described and may be advanced in rank as any Adept would advance it. It is not affected by the presence of Cold Iron.

I immediately struck out the nonsense about a player having to roll to see what sex he or she was. Any player may play any sex. Period.

I've added a couple of additional character races to liven things up. I run a very Tolkienesque campaign (with very significant additions and changes) and felt the two following races were needed: the Half-elf and Lizard-man.

[6.51] A Half-elf is a rare crossbreed between men and elves who may be found mingling with either race.

Traits: Half-elves are traditionally found in the role of mediators in disputes between men and elves. Upon reaching maturity, they must choose whether they will follow the "Doom of Men" or the "Doom of the Elves"; that is, whether or not to become immortal. In either case, they tend to live in populated areas and are often found as leaders.

CHARACTERISTIC	MODIFIER
Physical Strength	Subtract 2
Willpower	Add 3
Perception	Add 2
Endurance	Subtract 2
Fatigue	Add 2

Special Abilities: 1.) Half-elves receive a + 10 on reaction rolls involving men, elves, and dwarves. 2.) If the Half-elf takes the Healer skill, he expends *three-quarters* the Experience Points to progress in ranks. 3.) If the Half-elf takes the Military Scientist skill, he expends *three-quarters* the Experience Points to progress in ranks. 4.) The "resurrect the dead" ability of Healers is only avail- able to those Half-elves who choose the Doom of Man.

Estimated life span if Elvish Doom: Ca.30,000 earth years.

Average life span if Human Doom: 200 to 300 years.

To be a Half-elf, a player must roll an 09 or less. A Half-elf's Experience Multiplier is 0.9.

[6.81] A Lizard-man is a rebellious member of his parent race, the Suarime (see Monsters, 69.1).

Traits: Lizard-men (and women) have traditionally been looked upon by most other races as residing just below orcs on the social ladder, and thus have spent many long centuries as loners, very proud of their clannish heritage. They are convinced that if only they would be accepted for their merits they would prove a useful addition to society. They are rarely found much above the sub- tropical zone since they tend to retain their racial dislike for colder climates.

Special Abilities: 1 .) See 69. 1 for all abilities of Suarime. 2.) Lizard-men receive a - 10 on reaction rolls involving any other race except their own, where they receive a + 10. 3.) If a Lizard-man takes the Ranger skill and specializes in a Marsh environment, he expends *one-half* the number of Experience Points to progress in ranks. 4.) If a Lizard-man takes the Courtesan skill, he expends *double* the amount of Experience Points to progress in ranks. 5.) A Lizard-man character may never exceed the characteristic values listed in 69.1 by more than two in each characteristic. This replaces any characteristic modifiers normally used for character generation. The player may need to juggle his characteristic points at this juncture to meet the characteristic ranges given. 6.) A Lizard-man character is not limited by the weapon choices listed in 69.1 ; he may choose whatever he feels would suit him best. 7.) During characteristic point allocation, a Lizard-man character may ignore the maximum value assigned to his point group, but must still allocate at least 5 to each characteristic.

Life Span: 125 to 175 earth years.

To be a Lizard-man, a player must roll a 13 or less. Its Experience Multiplier is 1.3.

Giants

Giant characters have proven a problem for many GM's to create. The rules were unclear on this point and resulted in many arguments between players and refs. I will try to clear up the confusion. If a Giant is generated, the GM must do some interpolation to arrive at the correct values for PS, EN, and TMR. APA would be calculated normally.

To determine PS and EN, the GM must compare the character's chosen value for that characteristic as opposed to the average value for a human character (15). This plus or minus modifier is then compared to the average value in that characteristic for that particular type of Giant. The amount above or below the human average is then translated as directly as possible to the Giant's characteristic. For example, a character is generated with a PS of 20 and an EN of 12. Compared to 15, these values are +5 and -3, respectively. The player was successful in dicing for a Giant, and generated a Fire Giant. A Fire Giant's average PS is 24 and average EN is 29. Thus, the character's PS would be (24+51=29; his EN would be(29-3)=26. A more complex and accurate method would be to apply percentage differences (e.g., 20 is 33% greater than 15, therefore the average Giant PS of 24 should be increased by 33%, or 8, yielding 32). Whichever method you prefer should be used.

For a Giant's TMR, first a similar average TMR must be found for the particular Giant type to compare with the average human TMR of 5. For Fire Giants, the average TMR is 9. This replaces the TMA of 5 on the chart in 5.6. The TMR modifiers are then applied as if the midpoint was 9, so a Giant with a modified Agility of 18 would have a base TMR of 10 (9+1), just as a human would have a TMR of 6 with an Agility of 18. Then the racial modifier for Giant characters would bring that back down to 9. In this regard, Giant characters are slightly worse off than Giant NPC's, due to the hesitancy they have developed by dealing with the smaller, more delicate races of men and elves during their adventure life. They are more afraid of stepping on their smaller companions, while Giants living in the wild, so to speak, amongst their own kind have no such worry. They just stomp around wherever they like.

Experience Points

After any new characters have received their initial allotment of experience points, I allow the characters to expend those points in any fashion they see fit. I set no limit on the rank they can achieve through this method; this takes no time and requires no teacher. Many GM's do this also, and I mention it here simply to impart this knowledge unto those who are unaware. I find that characters created in this manner are more individualistic.

I am very interested in any alterations or additions you have made in character generation in your world. Please advise me and I will gladly share all those great ideas with everyone.

One last thing: We are actively soliciting capsule adventures for publication in Ares; see Dragon Quest Update in Designer's Notes for details as to how to go about get ting further info. This pays real money, folks, so get your pens out and start letting us in on your wonderful worlds.