

Table of Contents

HERO HIGHWAY

WHEN LAST WE LEFT OUR HEROES...

Keep up with the news from Hero Games. This issue – there’s *Villainy Amok* in your city; are you the heroes to stop it? 2

HEROGLYPHS

See how Steve Long himself answers rules questions. This issue – whittle away your pain with expanded Damage Reduction rules. 3

YOU GOTTA HAVE CHARACTER

The most famous and beloved luchadore (masked wrestler) of all time, El Santo became a hero and symbol of the sport. 5

LEFTOVER HERO

Hudson City has had its share of super-soldier programs, with more failures than successes. 16



RESOURCE ROAD

ASSASSIN’S ART

Hired killers sometimes have a particular means to their bloody ends, by using this martial art. 20

BLOOD BROTHERS

Vampires and other bloodsuckers from around the world come in more varieties than you might suspect. 25

MINIATURE HERO

Miniature gaming can quickly drain the wallet. These “terrain on a budget” tips can stretch your buying power. 51

THE WHOLE PACKAGE

Add some of your favorite movie hero types to your *[Dark] Champions* campaign with these package deals. 58

BONUS FEATURE

CHAMPIONS CROSSWORD

Every now and then, we need an extra page to fill out an issue. So, sharpen those pencils for the Champions Crossword. 64

DIGITAL HERO

Publisher

Hero Games

Editor

Dave Mattingly

Authors

D.T. Butchino
Bill Keyes
Steven S. Long
Dave Mattingly
Michael Surbrook
Jason Walters
W. Ross Watson

Artists

D.T. Butchino
Christopher Cooper
Brad Parnell
Josh Richter

Photography

Bill Keyes

Cover Artist

Shawn Richter

Online

herogames.com

To Subscribe

herogames.com/digitalhero

HERO System™ is DOJ, Inc.'s trademark for its roleplaying system.

HERO System Copyright © 1984, 1989, 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

Champions Copyright © 1984, 1989, 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

Justice Inc., Danger International, Dark Champions, Fantasy Hero, and Star Hero Copyright © 2002 by DOJ, Inc. d/b/a Hero Games. All rights reserved.

No part of this electronic magazine may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or computerization, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher: DOJ, Inc., 1 Haight Street, Suite A, San Francisco, California 94102.

Issue #28 (March 2005)



guys, or *Los Rudos*, employed greater strength, crowd provoking antics, and ruthlessness. Additionally, while the *Technicos* typically embodied the ideals which poor Mexicans aspired to, such as honor, skill, and bravery, the *Rudos* characteristically represented the various ills which afflicted them in their everyday lives: bullies, devils, incompetent quack doctors, tax collectors, and Texas Rangers, to name but a few.

By the 1960s, the availability of better materials allowed *Enmascarados* to experiment with the design and coloration of their masks just as color television and glossy magazines became widely available in Mexico. One of Lucha Libre's foremost idea men, promoter Vincente Perez, made the most of these new mediums by creating dozens of new characters including the now legendary *Mil Mascaras* (The Man of 1,000 Masks) and the galactic hero *El Gigante Tinieblas* (The Space Giant). The decade also saw the masked wrestler leap into the public consciousness through an explosion of multimedia products. Million-selling comic books,

El Santo

Background/History: The man who was to be known as El Santo was born Rodolfo Guzman Huerta in the Mexican state of Hidalgo (now considered to be the holy land of Lucha Libre) on September 28th, 1917. The fifth of seven children, young Rodolfo excelled at several sports including baseball and football. At this time, many sporting and social events in Hidalgo took place in casinos, and he would frequent them from time to time with his family. It was in these gambling houses that the Huerta children first set their eyes on a wrestling ring. They were all immediately hooked on masked wrestlers with their mysterious dramatic personalities and impressive athletic skills. Rodolfo was actually the fourth member of his family to wrestle professionally: his brothers Miguel "Black" Guzman, Jimmy Guzman, and Pantera Negra all laced up their masks before he entered the ring.

In 1934 at age 17 Rodolfo, who had come to the conclusion that he wasn't going to make it as a professional baseball or football player, began to train seriously for a wrestling career under the guidance of his older brother Miguel. He also began to practice both jujitsu and Greco-Roman wrestling to give himself an edge. Later that year he made his debut in the ring alongside his brother as "Rudy Guzman," and they were quickly signed by the prestigious EMLL (Empresa Mexicana de Lucha Libre) wrestling league. From there, Miguel "Black" Guzman's career took off. He won a long series of matches, awards, and accolades that included becoming the 1939 EMLL "rookie of the year."

Unfortunately, Rudy seemed stuck in his brother's shadow, shackled with a role as his older brother's sidekick. So he dissolved their tag-team partnership and struck out on his own, trying out a variety of masked personas including *El Hombre Rojo* (the Red Man) and *El Murcielago Enmascarado* (the Masked Bat) II. He even left the well-established EMLL to join a new league that had been formed by renegade wrestling talent scout Jesus Lomeli. Together the two of them brain-stormed various ironic masked personas in which an image of good could be worn by an evil ruffian.

El Santo was born as a *rudo* (or villain) on July 26th, 1942 when Rudy entered the ring dressed in an inexpensive silver mask and costume he had purchased with his remaining meager wages from the EMLL. The match was an eight-man elimination battle royal with the two finalists wrestling under a 2/3 falls stipulation. The last two men standing were El Santo and *Ciclón Veloz* (Fast Cyclone). The first two falls were unremarkable, but in the third fall El Santo displayed such unrelenting *rudeza* (or villainy) that he became an immediate hit with

the fans. He poked his opponent in the eyes, brawled without restraint, and attacked the referee (Jesus Lomeli himself) when he got in the way. El Santo lost the match by disqualification but the fans were hooked. A *rudo's* *rudo*, Rudy exhibited his plentiful and devious talent in dozens of subsequent matches against all takers, going so far as to land eight straight low blows against an opponent in a single match.

Villain or not, El Santo's masked visage was turning up in the sports sections of all the newspapers and magazines in Mexico City. He defeated *Ciclón Veloz* to win the Mexican National Welterweight in 1943 and, ironically, the original *El Murcielago Enmascarado* for the National Middleweight title becoming Lucha Libre's first double champion. He inaugurated the completion of the Arena Coliseo by wrestling *Tarzan Lopez* in a main even mask versus hair match. In 1944, after recovering from a near-fatal automobile accident involving one of his beloved convertible sports cars, El Santo teamed up with Gory Guerrero to form *La Pareja Atomica* (the Atomic Pair) to form one of the most influential teams in wrestling history. It was during this period in his career that El Santo experienced a radical change of heart, one that was to win him not only a world title but the hearts of fans throughout Mexico as well. The EMLL held a tournament to determine who would hold the recently vacated NWA Welterweight title. The final match boiled down to a contest between El Santo and The Bulgarian Pete Pancoff. Santo had just made his opponent submit to a Boston Crab when something odd happened. For the first time, the crowd was cheering *for* him rather than booing *against* him. In defeating a foreign threat to his native land, El Santo has ceased to be a *rudo* and become a *tecnico* (or good guy).

Over the next several years, a series of talented new *enmascarados* (or masked men) began to enter the leagues, posing a serious threat to El Santo and Gory Guerrero's titles. One of Lucha Libre's most legendary feuds was born in a match between *La Pareja Atomica* and the tag team of *Blue Demon* and *Black Shadow*. When the veteran luchadores triumphed, *Black Shadow* swore dire revenge, setting off an epic rivalry that culminated with El Santo taking his mask in 1952. To avenge his friend, *Blue Demon* took Santo's NWA welterweight title the following year. This victory elevated *Blue Demon's* status amongst wrestling fans at exactly the same time that Lucha Libre began to get major television coverage in Mexico. Almost overnight El Santo became a recognized symbol of rising Mexican national pride and ideals, with *Blue Demon* as his trusted companion (sidekick would be pushing it). They both became the

Blood Brothers

by Michael Surbrook

Vampires and Other Creatures that Drink Blood from Around the World

Count Dracula: This is very old wine. I hope you will like it.

Johnathan Harker: Aren't you drinking?

Count Dracula: I never drink wine.

Dracula

The belief in dead (or undead) beings that prey on the blood of the living goes back for centuries, and one can find accounts of vampires, or vampire-like beings, in cultures the world over. Not all of these creatures are “undead” blood-drinkers, however. Some of these vampiric creations are human witches, evil spirits, demons, monsters, or other supernatural entities.

In many cases a certain fear of the dead, as well as strong beliefs in the inherent magical power of blood, led to the creation of vampire myths. Many cultures blamed the vampire or a vampiric creature for otherwise unexplained deaths, especially of young children. In other areas, the vampire myth was used to reinforce the need for specific burial practices, by stating that an unburied corpse (or one that wasn't properly blessed) would rise as a vampire. Finally, vampire tales were also used as a warning to young people – especially young women – in order to maintain proper social conventions needed for survival in small villages.

It was in Eastern Europe that the vampire with which we are most familiar found its strongest adherents. The Slavic peoples believed in vampires utterly, creating an entire mythology detailing the habits of the vampire, as well as its appearance, ways to protect against it, how to detect one, and how to destroy one. In general, a life of evil could cause one to rise as a vampire; garlic was commonly used as protection; an undecomposed corpse was a sure sign of vampirism; and the best way to destroy the body was through staking or burning. These beliefs were so strong that vampire hysteria swept through regions of Eastern Europe several times during the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, resulting in the mass desecration of graves and the burning of exhumed bodies.

The Vampire in Europe

Loy Colton: Caleb, those people back there, they wasn't normal. Normal folks, they don't spit out bullets when you shoot 'em, no sir.

Near Dark

The concept of the vampire filtered into Western Europe slowly. In the twelfth century, Englishman William of Newburgh reported a number of cases where the dead had returned to attack the living. No further reports of this kind surfaced, however, until January 7, 1732, when an Austrian physician named Johannes Fluckinger published an account of his investigations of vampirism in Serbia. According to the report, a number of deaths in the village of Medvegia had been blamed on a man by the name of Arnold Paul, who himself claimed to have bitten by a vampire. When his body was dug up, it was found to be well-preserved and fresh blood flowed from the body when it was staked. A number of other bodies were then unearthed and four that were considered unnaturally fresh were burned.

The report was quickly published in publications all across Europe. The report's appearance in *The London Journal* and *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1732 is thought to be the point at which the word vampire (or vampyre) first entered usage in the English language. The story was widely read and circulated, and created much debate as to how one could rationally explain the reports. A number of theories were presented, and in some places laws were enacted to prevent the exhuming of suspected vampires and the burning of corpses. On top of all this, French naturalist Georges Louis Leclerc de Buffon named and classified the South American “vampire bat.” He chose the name “vampire” due to the bat's habit of drinking blood from sleeping animals and people.

In the 19th Century, the idea of the vampire had become so ensconced in the popular imagination that a number of novels and short stories were written. They included John Polidori's “The Vampire,” James Malcolm Rymer's *Varney the Vampyre*, and Sheridan Le Fanu's “Carmilla.” These stories all culminated with the publication in 1897 of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Stoker's novel, with its powerful aristocratic villain and such memorable supporting characters as R. N. Renfield and

A VAMPIRE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

Vampires are known by an almost bewildering variety of names throughout Europe. A sampling of these names include: *baobban sith*, *Bluatsauger*, *callicantzaros*, *eretik*, *kosac*, *lampir*, *lupi manari*, *mulo*, *Nachttoter*, *Nachtzeher*, *nelapsi*, *obur*, *opyri*, *sanguisuga*, *strix*, *tenatz*, *upierzyca*, *upir*, *upyr*, *ustrel*, *vampir*, *vapir*, *vjesci*, *vjeszczi*, *vrykolakas*, *vukodlak*, *vurvulak*, and *wupji*.