

HERO

A Sourcebook for

CHAMPIONS[®]
THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

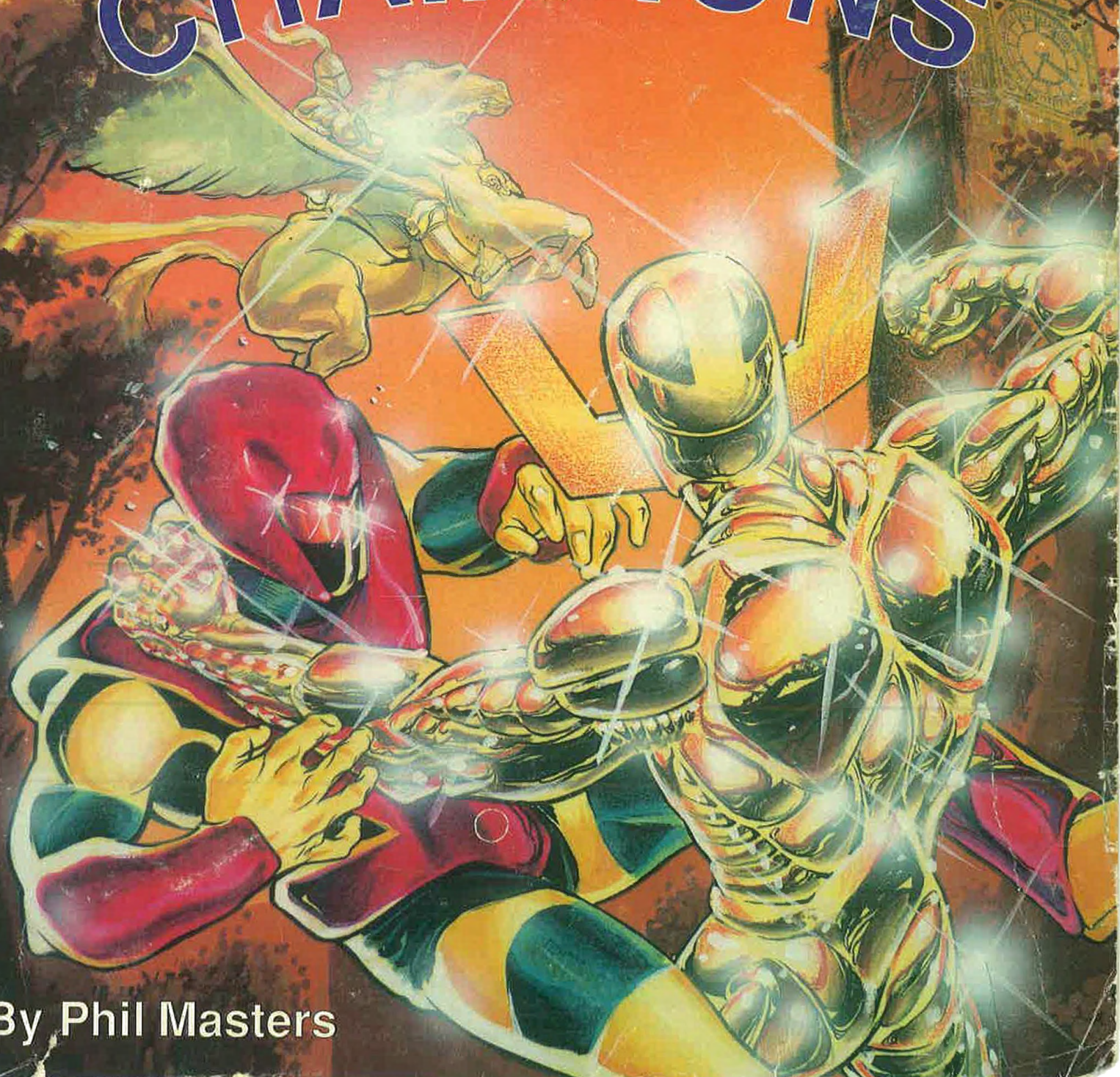
#410



GAMES



KINGDOM OF CHAMPIONS



By Phil Masters

KINGDOM OF CHAMPIONS™

SUPERHEROIC ADVENTURING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

by
Phil Masters

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Dedication: Much of the material in this book was inspired by games and campaigns played with a large number of people over an extended period. However, much adaption, re-working, and adjustment has been involved. Therefore, the authors would like to thank the following, without whom the interesting ideas would have been few and far between, but none of whom are in any way to blame for any failings: Alistair Archibald, Matt Baker, Steve Fearn, Jonathan Garnett, Karen

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Extra input and comments came from the following. Again, any faults were despite rather than because of these people: Scott Bennie, Jenny Hein, Quentin Long, Maggie McNair, Scott Ruggels, Bob Simpson, Jonny McNair for visual imagery, and a large number of contributors to Lee Gold's amazing apazine, Alarums & Excursions. Special thanks also to Angela Masters for tolerance, suggestions, and references. To all these people, this supplement is dedicated.

Special Note: Throughout *Kingdom of Champions*, we have used the British form of spelling. This is not an oversight: we simply thought it appropriate to discuss "Armour" in a British sourcebook.

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HOPE AND GLORY?

Kingdom of Champions is HERO Games' guide to adventuring in the United Kingdom. In here, you'll find all the real-world facts and game ideas you'll usually need when your role-playing game plots visit the UK.

This book was written by British authors, so we know our subject — as well as most Britons, anyway. We talked to Americans, Canadians, and Australians while we were working on it, and *Kingdom* was then edited by Americans — so it should cover what an outsider needs to know. We hope you'll agree.

Anyway, welcome to a country which has been producing heroes for two thousand years or more, and which once ruled an empire where the sun never set (because, the joke goes, God wouldn't trust an Englishman in the dark). Many visiting Americans think that the natives speak their language, but they're wrong; the British speak their own languages, and America borrowed one of them. Which gives the British some hope for America yet. Is Britain a land fit for Heroes? Well, it depends how you like your weather...

AUTHOR'S NOTES

The story of *Kingdom of Champions* goes back a while. The original idea was for an article for the *Adventurers' Club*, but Aaron Allston, who was editing the magazine then, suggested that it would make a good full-sized supplement. Then the concept knocked around the HERO Games offices a while, not developing too fast, until Rob Bell picked it up as one of the projects that could be attached to the *Champions* revision. At which point I went back to Alison Brooks and Dave Flin, who'd shown an interest in the idea from the first, and we started talking. And talking...

But that's just personal history. The real reason we did *Kingdom of Champions* — apart from the money and fame — was a lot of comics. The superhero comic is an American invention, but it sells in Britain. And one of the great unintended jokes of the form is the game played by UK readers whenever a non-UK writer takes a storyline to Britain. It's called "spot the mistake", and most times, the list it generates is long. London looks totally Victorian, cars drive on the wrong side of the road, policemen are armed... And that's just the easy stuff. The hard stuff is very hard; we've learned a lot about the UK while writing this book, and all of it seems important once you know it.

There's one other thing about setting superhero stories in a country we know from the inside; we've tried to be subtle about the characters. We wanted to give you archetypically British figures, but we couldn't sink to joke stereotypes. There's no Captain Beefeaters here; sorry, if that's what you wanted.

But we're not here to lecture; we're here to help you expand your gaming. We like the UK; we hope you enjoy a visit.

— Phil Masters

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is for a lot of different people. It's for players and (especially) GMs; the GM is the best person to use the facts, ideas, and NPC descriptions it contains. However, players and their characters sometimes need facts and ideas too, so there's nothing wrong with players looking at this book. (It's all sales for us.) All we do suggest is that players refrain from using knowledge of which their characters would be ignorant, and from looking at ideas that their GM might wish to use.

Kingdom of Champions is written as a *Champions* supplement, but it's also designed for use in other games. Any game with a contemporary (or near-future or recent-past) setting can involve trips to the UK, and we've tried to keep the "real world" and "possible superhero game" ideas clearly distinct. The latter draw on the former, of course, but you should be able to see where cold hard reality ends and superhero fantasy begins. Furthermore, any sensible player of a non-Hero game should be able to adapt the Hero System stats we've included. So, if your spies or detectives are UK-bound, you'll find plenty to use in here.



"Good day, ladies and gentlemen. You are, I think, the — ahem — 'All American Heroes'? Jolly Good.

"Now, You've all had to come over to Britain for some reason. Chasing someone? A puzzle? You needed a holiday? Well, whatever the reason, we're sure you'll like it here. However, there are a few things you'll need to know.

The fact is, we do things a bit differently here. We drive on the left, so do be careful with that car of yours. And our police aren't usually armed. In fact, guns are a bit of a rarity. Perhaps we can make some arrangements for your equipment, but don't expect us to appreciate it if you go waving your bally artillery around in public!

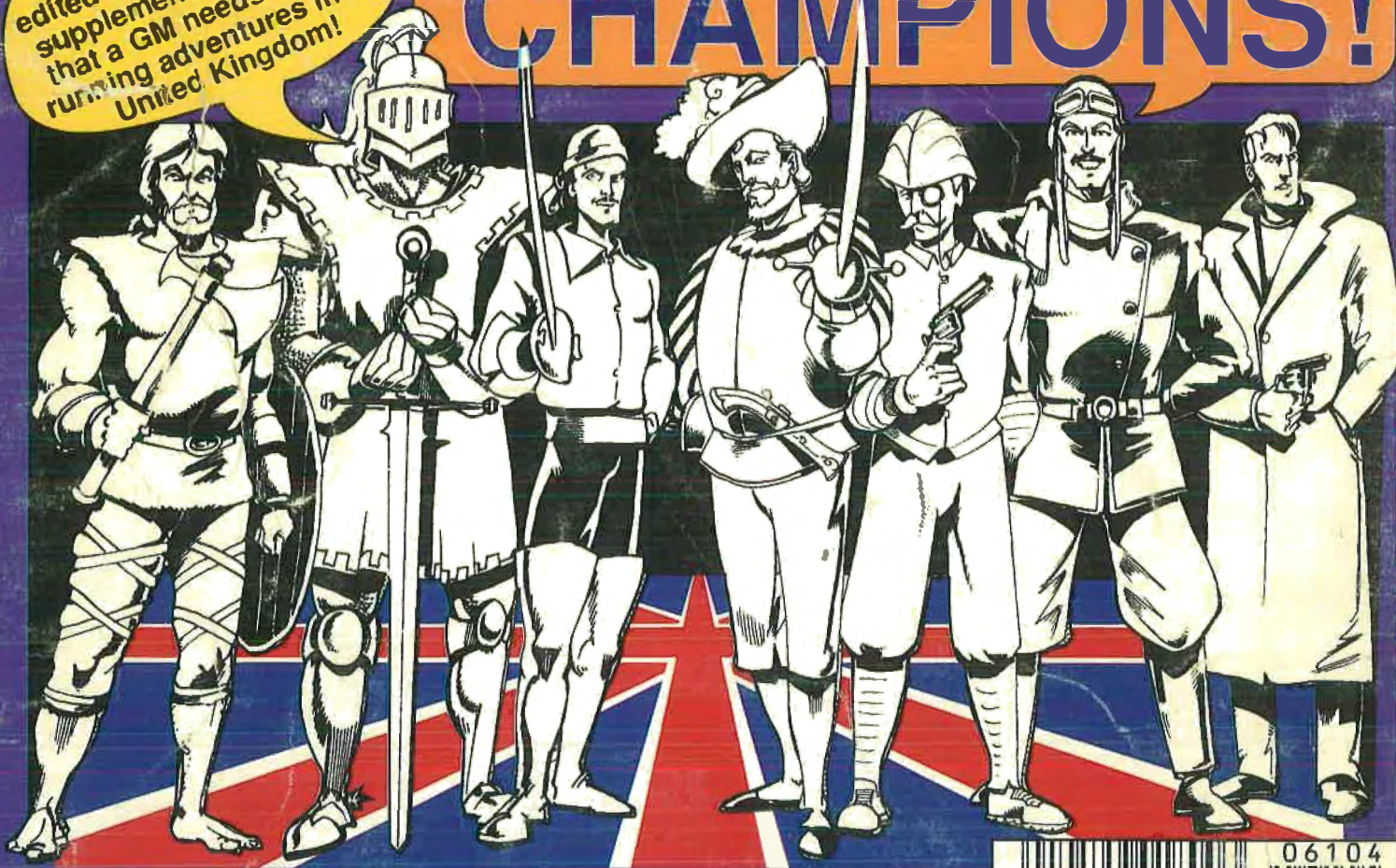
Not that we don't have problems of our own; you can expect some supervillains of course, especially M.A.C.E. We have heroes too, such as the New Knights of the Round Table — Her Majesty's Government needed something — and freelancers, of course. What you'd expect, really, given that we had King Arthur and Robin Hood centuries before Columbus was playing with toy boats.

"Yes, maybe you should read a bit before you rush in. Fortunately, we have just what you need... It's time to leave the New York skyscrapers, the Mojave Desert, even the depths of space, and come to a country where the traditions go back centuries and you'll think you speak the language.

"This is Modern Britain, the ...

Written by native Britons, edited by Americans, this supplement contains all that a GM needs to start running adventures in the United Kingdom!

KINGDOM OF CHAMPIONS!



Playable with

CHAMPIONS
THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

and all other
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