



A Campaign Book for

**CHAMPIONS**  
THE ROLE-PLAYING GAME

#423

# DARK CHAMPIONS™

## HEROES OF VENGEANCE



By Stephen S. Long



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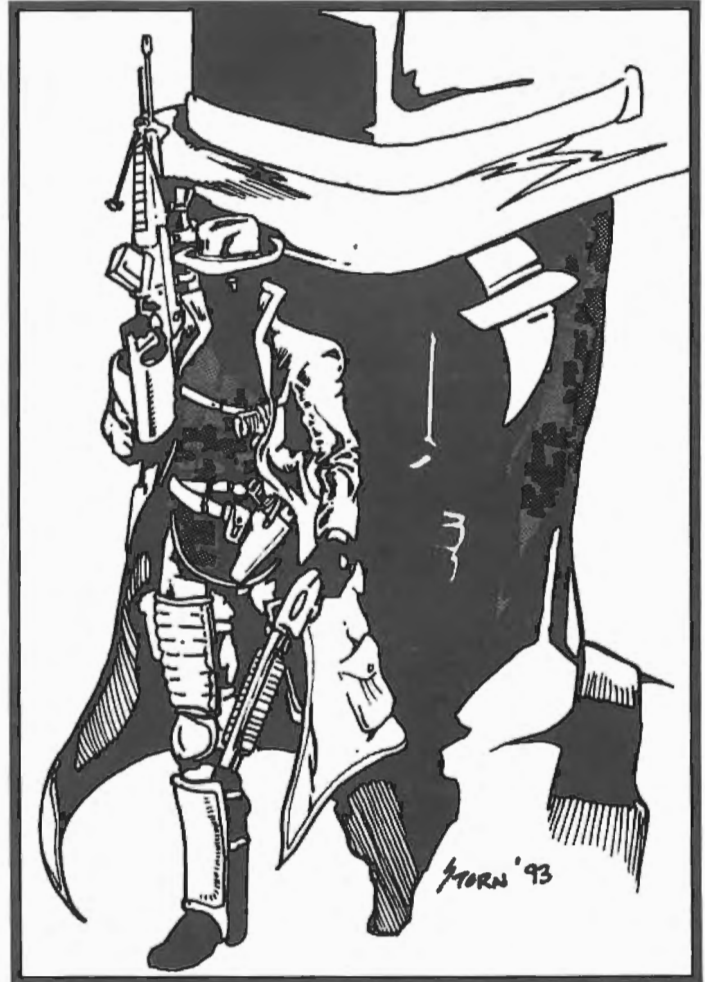
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# INTRODUCTION

## Operations Of 4/7/90, 10:40 PM, Patrol Pattern 7-J, Near Intersection Of Commerce and Murphy Streets

*While on patrol in the southeastern sector of the city, I heard a scream coming from an alley near the intersection of Commerce and Murphy Streets. I immediately stopped the car and ran silently towards the alley's mouth.*

*When I got there, I found three members of a gang, the Satanic Skulis, attacking a young woman. Whether their intentions were rape, or robbery, or both, I did not know. Nor did I care—Justice demands that both offenses be appropriately punished. I stepped into the alleyway and said in a loud voice, "Enough!"*

*The three maggots turned to see who would dare spoil their fun—and felt in themselves the fear that they had so often inflicted upon the innocents of society. The first one started to run, but he made it less than five steps before I brought him down with my Mark I Wire Gun. He would do for interrogation.*

*The second maggot drew a knife and ran at me. When he got close enough, I grabbed his knife hand and broke it in three places—three very painful places. He screamed once, fell down, and lapsed into shock. If he does exactly what his doctor says, he may regain the use of that hand someday.*

*The third maggot thought to use his victim as a shield. He grabbed her, pulled a .38 revolver, and said, "Back off, man! Do it now, or she gets her head blown off!" I began to lower my gun, waiting for him to make his move. As I expected, he was too stupid to press his momentary advantage and immediately turned his gun on me. In the blink of an eye I retrieved my Mark I Pistol and shot him in the head. One execution.*

*The woman looked at me in horror, afraid that I would shoot her next. Her reaction was all too typical, but it is not something which overly concerns me. Though I regret that the press sees fit to spread misunderstandings about me, I do not fight crime to become popular. As I left my "calling cards" on the corpse and the man in shock, she took her purse and fled. When she recovers from her terrifying experience, she will be thankful that I was there.*

*After interrogating my prisoner, I returned to my car. I happened to glance up and see The Champions flying overhead, returning to Homestead after attending a charity banquet held that night in their honor. I hoped that no one attacked the banquet in an attempt to kill them—too many innocents also attend such events. What has always puzzled me, though, is how they can go to banquets and to Sanctuary when there are still people like those three criminals loose on our streets.*

—Excerpt from the journals of  
the Harbinger of Justice

Some heroes fly above the streets, dressed in colorful costumes, dealing with menaces that the average man can barely comprehend. These heroes stay the evil hands of Dr. Destroyer, King Cobra, Sunburst. But in their appointed role as guardians of the world, they too often overlook the more common crimes that occur in our cities every day—murder, rape, robbery, drug offenses, organized crime, and a myriad of other evils. The police work hard, but they are too often outmanned and outgunned. *You* must take a stand to aid the police and provide what protection you can for the potential victims of these crimes. The press may hound you, the police may hunt you, and you may be derided as a "vigilante" who is no better than the criminals he fights. So be it. The people may fear you, but so do the criminals, and that is what counts—this is not a popularity contest, it is a war. The Champions wage their war, and you wage yours—in this era of the revolving door justice system, you are the best defense the innocent man has against organized crime, ruthless drug dealers, psychopathic youth gang members, serial killers, and other criminals which afflict modern life. The guilty must pay for the evil they have caused, and you are the one who is going to make them do it.

Welcome to *Dark Champions: Heroes Of Vengeance*, the HERO System supplement for **Champions** which shows you how to run "street-level" **Champions** campaigns. In the street-level subgenre, most characters are very different from those in a normal "four-color" **Champions** campaign. Often they are "merely" normal human beings with some training, some Skills, and a gun. Many of them do not wear flashy costumes, preferring instead black or other "camouflage" colors. Their attitudes towards crime and how to deal with it are often very different from those of normal **Champions** characters.

*Dark Champions* is designed for GMs and players who enjoy "action" comic books such as Marvel Comics' *Punisher*<sup>™</sup> or *Daredevil*<sup>™</sup> or DC Comics' *Batman*<sup>™</sup> or *Vigilante*<sup>™</sup> and want to re-create them in a roleplaying setting; and for gamers who want a little bit more "realism" in their **Champions** games.

The first part of *Dark Champions* deals with the basics of street-level campaigning: the different type of street-level campaigns; vigilantism in **Champions** campaigns; street-level character creation; and street-level campaign creation and gamemastering.

The second chapter is a brief discussion of superhumans and the law. It discusses how the law would "adapt" to the presence of superpowered humans, and how the law would affect them.

The third chapter deals with combat. It covers a lot of different combat options for street-level campaigns, provides some new combat modifiers and maneuvers to help simulate the genre, and discusses how to construct guns and other weapons in the HERO System.

The fourth chapter is the Sourcebook, which will be useful for GMs running just about any modern-day campaign. The first section covers "tools of the trade"—weapons and gadgets for street-level characters. The second section is an in-depth discussion of the street-level hero's enemies—organized crime, street gangs, serial killers, terrorists, and other evil people who are all too common in modern society. This part of the Sourcebook includes numerous NPC writeups, from Mafia dons to yakuza oyabuns, to street-level "supervillains" and villainous organizations. The last section includes several scenarios which can be used by street-level characters or, with a little reworking, superpowered characters.

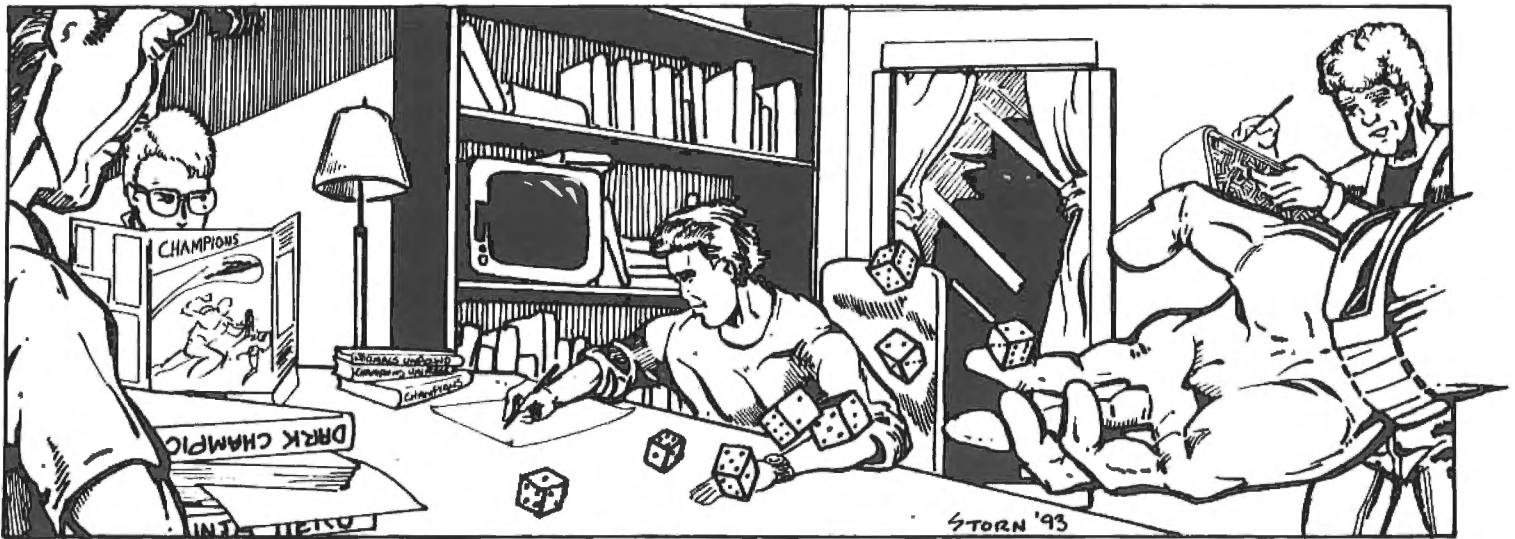
## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

*Champions* players can use *Heroes Of Vengeance* in one of three ways. First, they can use the ideas and rules presented here to change the focus of a regular *Champions* campaign by coming up with street-level characters and scenarios. Second, a GM can use *Dark Champions* to create an entire street-level *Champions* campaign, one where all the PCs are vigilantes or other street-level characters. Such a campaign will usually feature "trained paranormal" characters—persons with few or no superpowers, just skills and abilities which they have learned to help them fight crime. Third, a GM can simply read through this book and use the NPC and gadget writeups for his campaign, and ignore the rest of the material. When used this way, *Dark Champions* becomes a combination Organizations Book and Enemies Book.

## A FEW NOTES ON REALISM AND GAMING

Despite the fact that one of the chief hallmarks of the street-level subgenre is its increased "realism," there is always a certain amount of realism that has to be sacrificed in favor of playability—after all, *Champions* is a game, not a training exercise at the police academy. Therefore, although this book tries to be as realistic as possible in its portrayal of characters and equipment, where necessary that which enhances playability is favored over that which is realistic. Thus, in the discussion of guns and ammunition, there is less concern with what types of guns and ammo really exist, or how they really work, than there is with increasing the playability of the game by providing different ways to simulate different powers and attacks. Similarly, in the Sourcebook's coverage of modern-day organized crime groups, the intent was to provide interesting and fascinating foes for the heroes to encounter and, hopefully, defeat. In most cases, the real facts were sufficient—modern-day real-world criminals are evil and powerful enough to provide a challenge for any street-level hero. However, where necessary, we have perpetuated genre stereotypes which are more "fun," more playable, over the real facts. Those who want more realism in their street-level *Champions* campaigns should have no trouble revising the rules given here to suit their own tastes.

In short, even though the genre is designed to simulate reality much more closely than the average comic book or *Champions* game, don't let an interest in realism compromise the fun of the game!



**Crime Has New Enemies, and They're Called...**

# **DARK CHAMPIONS™**

## **HEROES OF VENGEANCE**

**T**his is the ultimate source book for the twilight world of vigilante superheroes who walk the line between justice and vengeance! Experience gritty, intense adventures that bring you new shades of four-color action in the tradition of your favorite hard-hitting superhero comics. *Dark Champions* creates a new universe of super excitement for you to explore—or a new dimension of roleplaying for your existing *Champions* campaign!

***Dark Champions* is jam-packed with rules and information for both players and GMs. Here's some of what you get:**

**PLAYERS:** This is an incredible sourcebook for any streetwise superhero. It's the ideal way to give more oomph to your detective, martial artist or vigilante. Surprise your friends and amaze the villains!

- Extensive new weapons list for modern weapons
- New variations on Character Disadvantages
- Extensive writeups on Skills, Talents, and Perks new & old
- New suggestions and variations on Powers, Limitations, & Advantages
- New gun design rules
- New combat modifiers and maneuvers

**GMs:** If you've been looking for a way to do something new with *Champions*, look no more! Thrust existing heroes into dangerous new situations or create a whole new campaign that explores the raw-edged realism of street-level adventures. *Dark Champions* gives you everything you need!

- New campaign styles and backgrounds, at several power levels
- New weapons, gadgets, equipment, and vehicles
- New organizations included: Yakuza, Tongs, The Mob, and more
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- Useful for any modern or near future campaign



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