

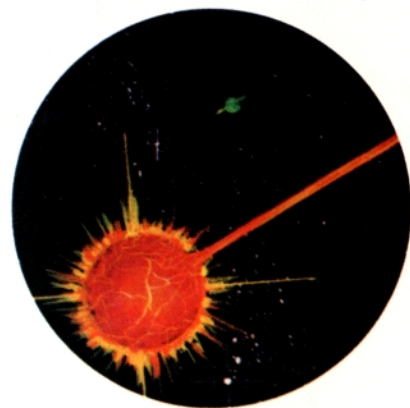
MARCH 1981

NUMBER 37

# THE SPACE GAMER

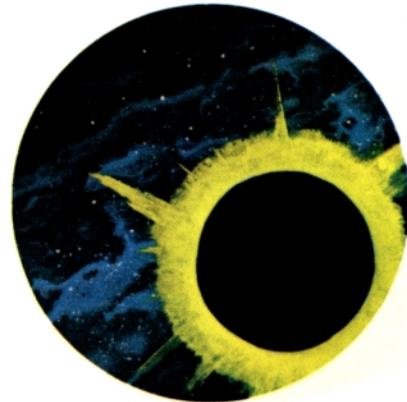
THE MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

\$2.00



## COSMIC ENCOUNTER

TROUBLES IN VALETIA  
*FREEDOM IN THE GALAXY* VARIANT  
HYBORIAN RISK  
WEAPONS CONTEST WINNERS  
PLAYING THE ALIEN  
FANTASY GAMES UNLIMITED  
AND 6 PAGES OF REVIEWS



# THE SPACE GAMER

NUMBER 37 – MARCH, 1981

## IN THIS ISSUE

Our cover article is a review of *Cosmic Encounter*, one of the most popular SF games ever released. Our thanks to Eon Products for their permission to reproduce art from this game.

There follows an article which should be of interest to anyone who has contemplated entering (or GMing) a commercial play-by-mail game. It will have a special interest for some hundreds of you . . .

For sadistic game masters, we have guidelines for playing the creature from *Alien*. Also, Bruce Webster concludes his two-part series on "The Ten Deadly Sins of Computer Game Writing." Our company report this issue is from Fantasy Games Unlimited, creators of *Chivalry & Sorcery*. For Conan fans, there is a *Risk* variant; for the hard-core board-gamers, there is a variant on *Freedom in the Galaxy*.

Towards the end is Nick Schuessler's eleventh and final game design article. Next month, Steve Jackson will take over the series.

Also, this month I have begrudged an extra column for letters. (It is a case of supply-side economics.)

—Forrest Johnson

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THE SPACE GAMER (ISSN 0194-9977, USPS 434-250) is published monthly by The Space Gamer, 7207 Onion Crossing Dr., Austin, TX 78744. Second class postage paid at Austin, TX. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Space Gamer, P.O. Box 18805, Austin, TX 78760.

All material is copyright 1981 by *The Space Gamer*. All rights reserved.  
Printed in U.S.A. by Futura Press, Austin.

Subscription rates, effective 5-15-80:

	U.S.	Canada	Other foreign
One year	\$21	\$24	\$41
Two years	\$39	\$45	\$79
Lifetime	\$250	\$260	N/A

All prices are in U.S. dollars; payment must be in U.S. dollars.

# Where We're Going

Thanks to all of you who wrote in answer to the survey — there have been a lot of responses! — and especially to the readers who answered the question I asked a few months ago in this column. The question if you've forgotten, involved TSG's content: specifically, should there ever be articles about historical games printed by Steve Jackson Games? The answer was a pretty thorough NO. The great majority of you don't want anything but s-f and fantasy.

That's the way it'll be, then. It's the answer I expected — actually, it's the answer I was hoping for, because I don't like the idea of changing the TSG format any more than you do. If there'd been a *big* popular demand in the other direction, we would have gone along. But there wasn't. Just as well . . . That means that, if and when SJ Games does a purely historical title, you won't see any long articles on it. Maybe a capsule review, if somebody writes one. *The Space Gamer* will remain what it always has been: a magazine of science fiction and fantasy gaming. And it will continue to be as unbiased as we can make it . . . reserving the right to put in an occasional, unabashed commercial plug in this column. Such as the following:

\* \* \*

We've got five new titles coming up in the next couple of months — all purely s-f/fantasy, and all of them (in my own highly biased opinion) pretty good.

First: more *Cardboard Heroes*. We've been reading the mail, and (even as I write this) Denis Loubet is working on figures for three more sets to fill the common requests.

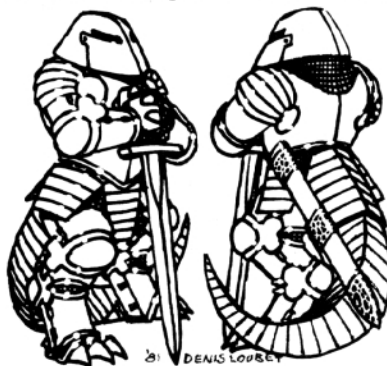
Set One, you remember, was *Player Characters*. Set Two is bad guys: *Goblins, Orcs, and Brigands*. The brigands are human nasties of various sorts; some would make good player-characters in their own right, others are just scum. (And a couple of the former are modeled after real people — the ones whose names we drew out of the slips returned to us by buyers.) After

## Errata

In issue 34 we listed Michael S. Matheny as the designer of *Marine: 2002*, but omitted Kerry Anderson, who was responsible for the original game concept.

lengthy discussion, we decided that Goblins are small, sinister, and green . . . and that's how Denis is drawing them. Orcs, of course, are nasty. They're not pig-faced, though. Big, husky, fanged, and a little pointy-headed — really rough looking.

Set Three is more humanoid types: *Half-Orcs, Reptile Men, and Kobolds*. The half-orcs are a little bit smarter-looking than the full orcs, and differently costumed (you could also play them simply as a tribe of orcs). Kobolds are small, husky, and blue-skinned. Reptile men look like a cross between men and dragons — beautiful and dangerous. Illustrated are the front and back views of one of the first to be drawn — the reptile man in full plate armor. This is just



the line-drawing — you should see the colored version.

Set Four is animals. We're planning 43 different beasts, from little apes and guard dogs all the way up to saber-tooth tigers. In between will be plenty of wolves, reptiles, giant insects, familiars, and other creatures.

These ought to be out by April. If work goes well, they'll be on the order blank in the next TSG.

\* \* \*

Also coming up are two new games. Format on both will be similar to the ones we've already done — with one difference. Rather than print the rules on the same sheet as the map, we're going to put maps/charts/tables on one sheet AND include a rulebook — probably 24 pages. A number of you have commented that the single-sheet rules in *Kung Fu* and *Iran* have sometimes been hard to handle — so we'll try it a different way. It'll cost a little bit more, but (unless inflation catches up to me faster than I expect) the new games will still be \$3.00.

The first new title is in mid-playtest right now. We know everything works; we're just getting it all fined down. The

## Next Issue

*Our April issue will feature "The Double-Timing, Double-Crossing, Pick-a-Past Paradox" (!); also:*

*The results of our 1980 Game Survey;*

*Conan's greatest battles, converted to scenarios for SPI's Prestags system;*

*The winners of the combination game contest;*

*An article on used ships for Traveller;*

*Steve Jackson's first article in the Game Design series;*

*And some substantial quantity of capsule reviews.*

