

\$2.50

MAY 1982

NUMBER 51

THE SPACE GAMER

THE MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

MEGASHIPS IN SPACE OPERA

SCENARIO FOR CHAMPIONS
MAGIC IN CAR WARS
1981 GAME SURVEY
HANDICAPS FOR TET CHARACTERS
WORLDS OF WONDER REVIEWED
THE COMPUTER AS FAMILIAR
STAR PATROL DESIGN NOTES
AND 8 PAGES OF REVIEWS

FRUNNER 78

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THE SPACE GAMER (ISSN 0194-9977,
USPS 434-250) is published monthly by
Steve Jackson Games, P.O. Box 18957,
Austin, TX 78760-8957. Second class post-
age paid at Austin, TX. POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to SJ Games, P.O. Box
18957, Austin, TX 78760-8957.

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Games. All rights reserved.

Printed in USA by Futura Press, Austin.

Subscription rates, as of 4-7-81:

In the United States — one year (12
issues) \$21.00; two years (24 issues) \$39.00.
A lifetime subscription is \$250. Outside the
U.S. — please add \$5 per year for surface
mail. Airmail rates vary by country — please
write for your current airmail rate. Inter-
national rates subject to change as postal
rates change. NOTE: All payments MUST
be in U.S. dollars, made by International
Money Order, or checks drawn on a U.S. or
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NUMBER 51 — MAY, 1982

IN THIS ISSUE

All right. So we lied. One of the articles listed in April's "Not In Next Issue" box was "Magic in Car Wars." If you'll check page 10, you'll find it. We probably ought to be ashamed of ourselves, but we're not. It's insane, but fun.

For you Fantasy Trip fans, we have "Handicapped Characters in TFT." Adaptable to any RPG, this concept lets you start with a more powerful character without ruining game balance, and encourages role-playing.

Our game supplement this issue is "School Holiday," by Aaron Allston. Designed for *Champions*, it turns supervillains loose in — a junior high school!

SF role-players will find two articles this time around: our cover story, on big ships in *Space Opera*, and Mike Kurtick's designer notes on *Star Patrol*.

—Steve Jackson

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Where We're Going

NEWS FLASH

As this issue went to press, TSR announced that it had bought out SPI! For details, see the May-June issue of our sister magazine, *Fire & Movement*, which will feature a four-page article on the takeover.

After 23 issues of hard work on TSG, Forrest Johnson is moving on to other things. During Forrest's tenure, TSG doubled in frequency, increased in size, and became steadily more professional... professional enough so that its editor got a good offer from the "big boys." Forrest is leaving us to accept a position as managing editor of the new *Softalk* magazine on the IBM personal computer. We're sorry to see him go — but the new job is a great opportunity, and we wish him the best. (This was supposed to be his good-bye column, but he tells me that he hates eulogies, so we'll change the subject now. Have fun in California, old friend, and write occasionally.)

Moving into the editor's position will be Aaron Allston. There should be no break in continuity; he's been on the staff for quite a while and has served as assistant editor for the last seven issues. Aaron's big interest is role-playing games; he's

possibly our best local referee, with a talent for strange situations. This issue features some of his work: a complete adventure for *Champions*. I believe I'll just give Aaron this column (next month) so he can talk about his own plans.

Box Day Arrives

At long last, we are in full production on the Pocket Boxes. The factory is turning them out, the labels are in, the shrink-wrapper is debugged... it all works. Unbelievable. All mail orders received to date have been filled, and wholesale orders are going out even as I write. And the boxes look good. I'm pleased, though right now everybody's too tired to celebrate.

Missing Persons

Does anyone out there know where we can find Roland Parenteau, Martin Halbert, or Timothy C. Weidel? When we sent out free copies of *The Ogre Book* to all the contributors, we couldn't find addresses for those three... our pre-independence files aren't as complete as we might like. If you have a clue as to their whereabouts, please let us know.

TSG Contest Prizes

Effective this issue, we're boosting the prizes on our contests, just as an experi-

ment. Not that this is going to turn into the Irish Sweepstakes... but the contests are fun, and if increasing the prizes will get more good entries, so much the better for everybody. The new prize structure will allow \$50 in merchandise credit to the winner, \$25 to second place; this is credit on any SJ Games product, not just TSG. This month's contest follows the "Magic in *Car Wars*" article — go to it!

PBM Ad Policy

The PBM field is growing, and we're doing our best to cover it. Unfortunately, a lot of companies get into the field before they're ready — sometimes with expensive and embarrassing results. While we can't police the whole hobby, we don't like to run ads that take our readers' money and return nothing but excuses. So:

(1) Effective this issue, we will accept no advertising from any new PBM game company until we are supplied with a copy of the rulebook, a couple of sample turns, and the names of several players who will substantiate that turns are, indeed, being received.

(2) You should be aware that all the PBM advertisers in this or the last issue (Schubel & Son, Big City, Flying Buffalo, Central Texas Computing, and GSI) are known to us to be reliable. Our "PBM Update" column is also a good indicator of which games are active.

PBM is fun; we're just trying to protect the gamers and the responsible companies from — shall we say, "overenthusiasm"? — on the part of new operations that could harm the whole hobby.

—Steve Jackson

GAME MASTER

GAME MASTER exists to answer questions on your favorite games. If you have a rules question or play problem, send it in. Questions to be answered will be chosen on the basis of general interest. They will be first referred to the game publisher or designer. If no response is received, *GAME MASTER* will offer its own interpretation of the rule. Sorry — no individual replies are possible.

High Guard

1. Several *Traveller* ship designs published by other (non-GDW) companies seem to exceed the limits set by the *High Guard* rules on weapons bays and turrets; a recent example is a 2000-ton ship with 3 weapons bays and 10 turrets, where (by my interpretation) it should be permitted a maximum of 2 bays and no turrets. Is a ship allowed one bay and 10 turrets per 1000

tons, or one bay or 10 turrets per 1000 tons?

2. The same company recently published two designs for ships under 1000 tons; both had weapons bays in addition to a full complement of turrets. Can vessels under 1000 tons ever have weapons bays?

—No Name

1. One bay OR 10 turrets per 1000 tons. The ships you saw were wrong.

2. No.

—John Harshman, GDW

Kung Fu 2100

Do the movement rules allow adjacent figures to switch places, or must one move and then the other? 4.6 is not specific.

—Randy Divinski

It is all right for adjacent figures to switch places, but one of them must end his movement with the switch... that is, he may only move one square that turn. The other figure may finish his move normally after the exchange of places.

—Steve Jackson

NEXT ISSUE

Now that *OGRE* and *G.E.V.* are available once again, it's time for a special *OGRE* issue. Next month will feature articles on basic *OGRE* defense, tournament *OGRE* / *G.E.V.*, *OGRE Squash*, and "The Lone *G.E.V.*," a fictional piece by Mike Stackpole, introducing two new units: a hovercraft missile platform and the Tactical Recon *Ogre*. Also in the June issue:

"More Organizations of Cidri," a *TFT* article;

Variant rules for GDW's *ASTER-ÖID*; and

A complete die-rolling program for programmable calculators.