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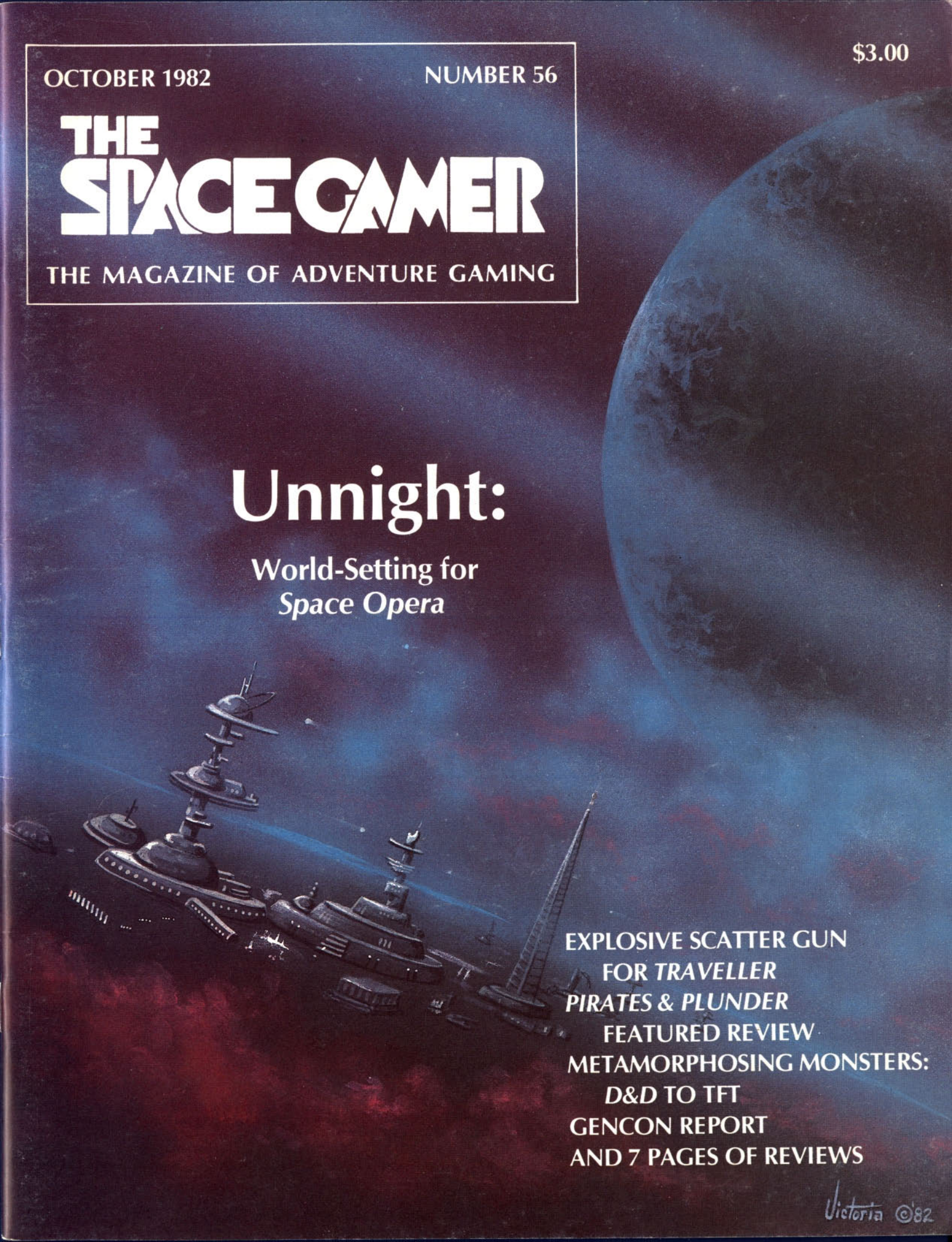
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# THE SPACE GAMER

THE MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE GAMING

## Unnight:

World-Setting for  
*Space Opera*



EXPLOSIVE SCATTER GUN  
FOR TRAVELLER  
PIRATES & PLUNDER  
FEATURED REVIEW:  
METAMORPHOSING MONSTERS:  
D&D TO TFT  
GENCON REPORT  
AND 7 PAGES OF REVIEWS

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—Aaron Allston

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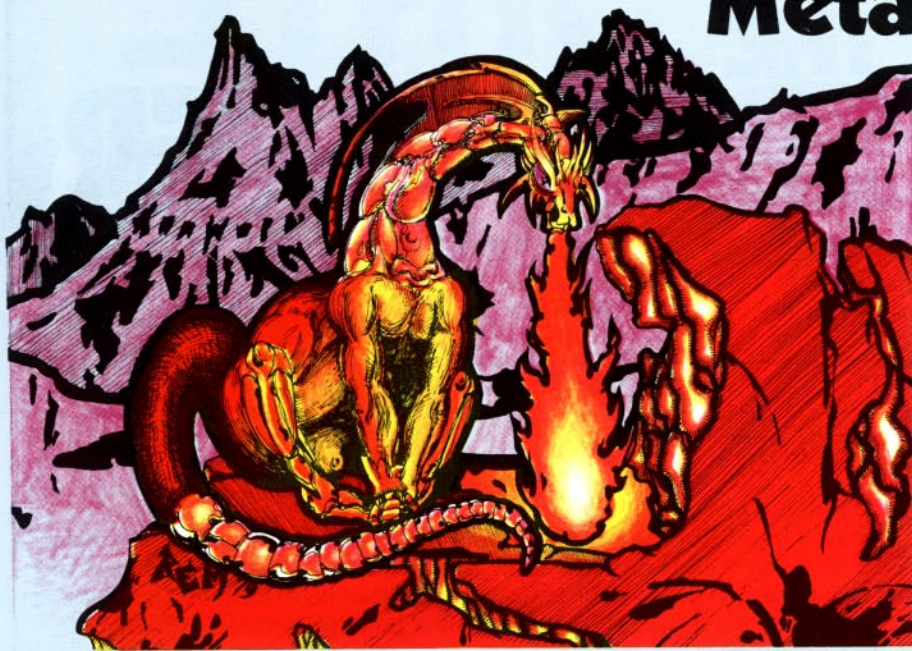
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**Metal \* John Rankin** . . . . . 14

## DEPARTMENTS

Game Master . . . . . 12  
Scanner . . . . . 40  
Convention Calendar . . . . . 41  
Index to Advertisers . . . . . 41  
PBM Update . . . . . 41  
Letters . . . . . 42



# Metamorphosing Monsters:

## Adapting *D&D* Creatures to TFT by Steve Jackson

A lot of you RPG fans out there are laying *The Fantasy Trip*; according to *Game Merchandising*, it's currently the second most popular role-playing game in the U.S. But one thing TFT lacks, compared to almost every other major fantasy system, is a "monster book." GMs are limited to the creatures in the original *In the Labyrinth* book, plus a few introduced in various supplements.

However, TSR's *Dungeons & Dragons* does have a monster book — in fact, it has several. In addition to the official *Monster Manual*, there have been any number of privately published collections of beasties. The Manual itself has over 350 different creature descriptions . . . and while some of them are trite (giant frogs) or repetitions of standard fantasy material (men, dwarves, elves, orcs) there is also a lot of original material. Such creatures as the ankheg, bullette, gelatinous cube, and rust monster are purely *D&D* creations.

True, the descriptions in the *Monster Manual* are incompatible with TFT. But this is easily dealt with. This article will offer a system for "translating" beasts to the TFT system. The translation is not exact; creatures from the Manual may be more or less deadly when converted to TFT. But it's fairly close, and it will certainly provide you with a horrid new batch of beasties.

Note that I've written this treatment in terms of *Original D&D* and variants; armor classes and hit dice may have to be modified for stats in *Advanced D&D*.

To take the characteristics in the order they're listed in the Manual:

*D&D* is a trademark of TSR Hobbies, Inc.  
*The Fantasy Trip* is a trademark of Metagaming.

*Frequency* is self-explanatory. Page 5 of the Manual gives "official" percentage chances for each frequency classification, but there's no real reason for you to be bound by these if the structure of your world demands otherwise. If a certain swamp is crawling with catoblepas, so be it! But remember that any thick concentration of a normally-rare monster would probably be known to natives of the area, and would not come as a total surprise to adventurers who had bothered to inquire about local conditions.

*Number Appearing* is also a general guideline; use it or not, as you see fit. As a guide to the "social" habits of the creature, it's good. If you're slavishly rolling dice, that's not so good. Use your judgment!

*Armor Class*, in the *D&D* system, is a catch-all for physical protection, magical defense, and the innate difficulty-to-hit caused by a creature's small size or high dexterity. TFT handles this concept by using two different numbers: a subtraction from the attacker's DX (for a target that is hard to hit) and a subtraction from damage done (if the target is tougher than unprotected human flesh). To translate a creature's "armor class" into the two TFT stats, proceed as follows:

(1) Compare the creature's natural armor with the list below to get a "natural armor class." This is the armor class the creature would have if it had no magical defenses and did not move about. Read across from the natural armor class to the "hits stopped" column. This shows how many hits, in TFT terms, that sort of armor absorbs from each blow that strikes it.

NATURAL ARMOR CLASS	HITS STOPPED IN TFT
AC 9: <i>soft body without protection</i>	0
AC 8: <i>thin chitin or light fur or shield only</i>	1
AC 7: <i>leather armor, medium fur, or light scales</i>	2
AC 6: <i>leather + shield, or heavier fur or scales</i>	3
AC 5: <i>chainmail, or heavy reptile scales</i>	3
AC 4: <i>mail and shield, or medium dragon scales</i>	4
AC 3: <i>plate armor, or a shell</i>	5
AC 2: <i>plate and shield, heavy shell, or old dragon scales</i>	6

(2) Take the difference between the creature's *natural* armor class and its *actual* armor class as given in the Manual. If the difference is only 1, ignore it. If it is more than 1, it will probably be due to either magic powers or great elusiveness on the part of the creature. Example: the Morkoth is shown as being vaguely octopoid; this would imply soft skin (AC 9). However, it is described as AC 3, which is much harder to hit. This difference of 6 must be accounted for. We do this by assessing a DX- on any attack against the creature. For every 2 points difference between the natural armor class and the "real" AC from the Manual, subtract 1 from the DX of any attack against it. Thus, the Morkoth, with its AC 9 skin and a "true" AC of 3 has a 6-point differential. Half of 6 is 3; any attack against a Morkoth in a TFT adventure will be at DX -3. However, the AC 9-equivalent skin means that no hits are stopped; if a sword hits home on a Morkoth, it's in trouble.

*Move* gives a distance in inches representing the creature's speed. The listings

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PBM Update . . . . . 41  
Letters . . . . . 42

# WHERE WE'RE GOING

It's celebration time. At long last, we have gotten *The Space Gamer* back onto glossy paper . . . and the better, cleaner printing that goes with it. We'll also be able to have more color on the interior pages. We hope you like the way the new TSG looks.

The new format will also allow us to print photographs inside the magazines with no risk of smearing or fuzziness. Thus, we'll be able to include pictures of

designers, box covers, convention scenes, etc. All in all, we think it's a big improvement.

The increased cover price is the worm in the apple (though we would have had to go to \$3.00 in a few months anyway). Subscription rates will stay the same for now. When we have to raise them, there will be enough advance warning to allow resubscriptions at the current rate.

Please send us your comments on the

new format, and your suggestions as to how we can best use it to improve TSG still more.

## Where "Where We're Going" is Going

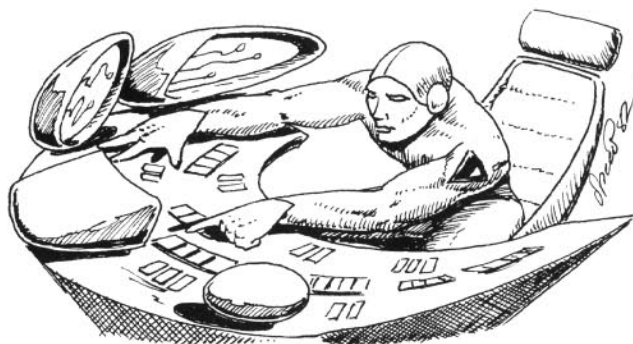
You probably noticed that this column isn't in its accustomed place on page 2. There's a good reason for that. Although SJ Games owns TSG (as well as *Fire & Movement*), neither magazine is a "house organ." But I use this column to talk about the magazine itself, upcoming SJ Games products, the state of the game industry, and anything else that crosses my mind . . . so "Where We're Going" is sort of a house-organ column within the magazine. And it's *not* the most important thing in TSG. So WWG is being moved farther back into the magazine, to leave the opening pages free for feature articles.

## And, Speaking of House News . . .

Several new products are under way around here. *Truck Stop* will add 18-wheelers to *Car Wars*; several other *Car Wars* supplements are in the planning stages. *Iron Men* (or *Ironmen* or *IronMen* or something like that) is an *Ogre*-universe game I've been talking about for years, in which each counter will represent a single infantryman in powered armor. It will not be "compatible" with *Ogre* or *G.E.V.*, since the scale will be different . . . but *Iron Men* could be used to play out what happens within a single hex in *G.E.V.* when opposing infantrymen meet. It will appear in the January TSG, and will probably be released later (in expanded form) in a Pocket Box version.

We are also, at long last, beginning to work on a new RPG system. It's too early to say much about it; for one thing, we don't even have a name picked out. For another thing, the market is clogged with role-playing systems right now. I don't want to spend a lot of time and money publishing "just another RPG." I have some ideas I *think* will turn into the first true third-generation role-playing game. If a couple of months of playtesting bear that out . . . great! If not . . . forget it. I refuse to publish a mediocre game, or even a good one that contributes nothing new. We'll see.

We've also added a new member to the



## NEXT ISSUE

*I've had it. No more promises. If you get anything at all in next month's TSG, it'll be by sheer luck.*

*But if you do get an issue, it may include:*

*"Westway," a British campaign setting for CAR WARS;*

*"The Great Buffalo Hunt," a comparison/contrast featured review of CATACOMBS OF CHAOS and HEROIC FANTASY;*

*"Submitting Your Game Design" (What? But that trick never works!);*

*Treacherous PBM fiction from the man who brought you "A Super Named John";*

*And a twit, an angel, and a blivit. Good luck.*